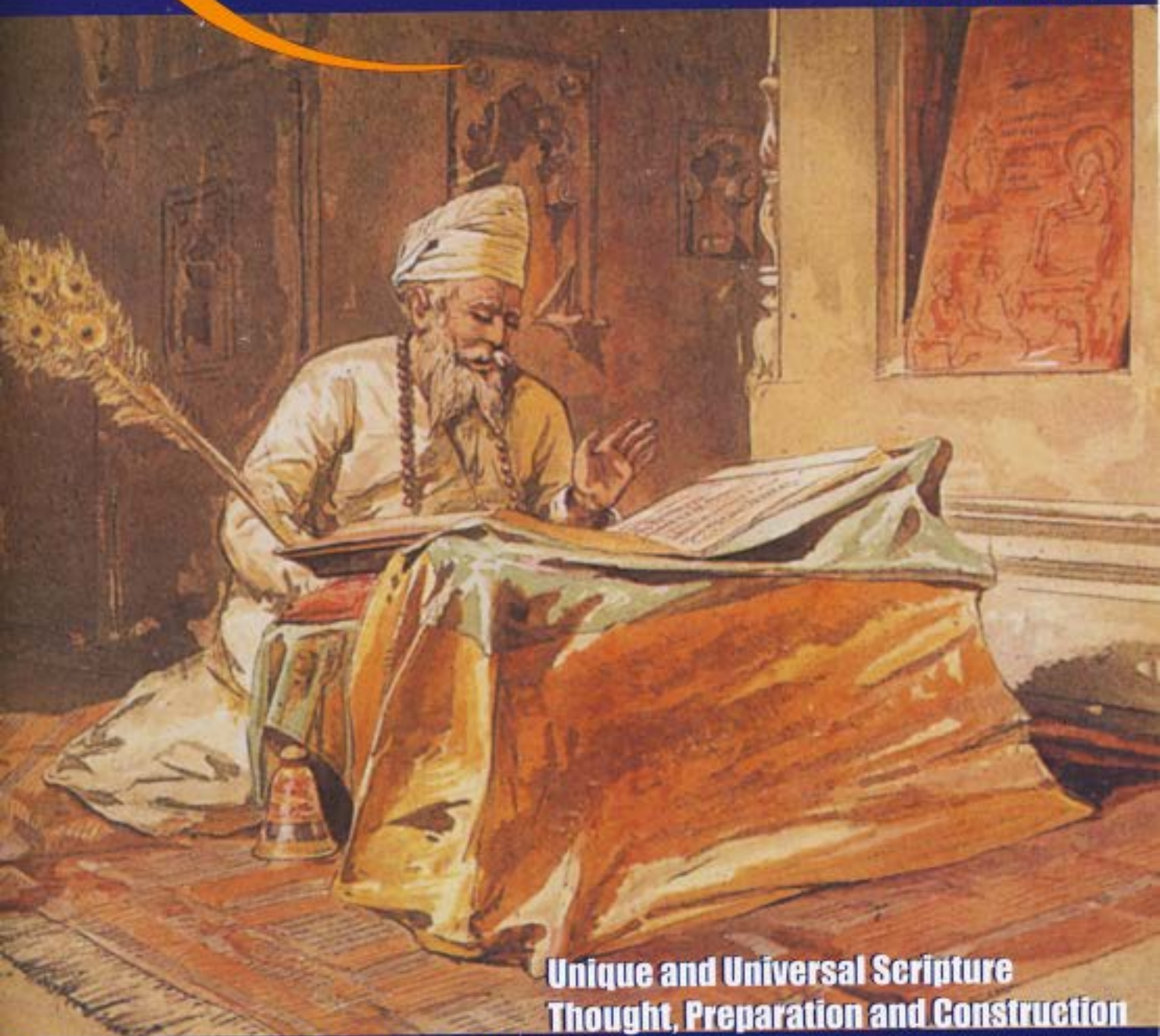


NISHAAN

IV/2003

NAGAARA



Guru Granth Sahib

**Unique and Universal Scripture
Thought, Preparation and Construction
Sikh Scriptural Manuscripts
Victories of Guru Gobind Singh
"Camp Sikhi"**



Cover: Reading from the Guru Granth Sahib: Painting by William Simpson, 1867 from "India: Ancient and Modern". Executed in chromo-lithography. (Courtesy: The Imperial, New Delhi)

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SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

In his foreword to a selection of translation of Sikh scriptures, the well known Professor Arnold Toynbee* stated that "the Adi Granth is part of mankind's common spiritual treasure. It is important that it should be brought within the direct reach of as many people as possible" and that "a book that has meant, and means, so much to such a notable community as the Sikh Khalsa deserves close study from the rest of the world."

Of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, he goes on to say "the Adi Granth is remarkable for several reasons. Of all known religious scriptures, this book is the most highly venerated. It means more to Sikhs than even the Qur'an to Muslims, the Bible to Christians and the Torah to Jews. The Adi Granth is the Sikhs' perpetual guru (spiritual guide). It was formally invested with this function by the last in the succession of human gurus, Guru Gobind Singh that began with the founder of the Sikh religion, Nanak."

Writing about the contents and their import he states "the greater part of the Adi Granth consists of hymns written by Nanak and the gurus who succeeded him until the succession of human gurus was closed in favour of their holy book. But the Adi Granth is a catholic anthology. It also includes hymns written by earlier Indian seers in whom Nanak and his successors recognised kindred spirits; and some of these contributors to the Granth are Hindus, while others are Muslims. Their writings have found a place in the Adi Granth because the compilers of it held, and this surely with good reason, that these seers were Sikhs in fact, though they lived and wrote before the Sikh religion took institutional form. They were Sikhs because they brought

out and emphasised the universal spiritual truth contained in their respective religious traditions; and these truths belong to all ages and to all faiths."

Toynbee concluded that "Mankind's religious future may be obscure; yet one thing can be foreseen: the living higher religions are going to influence each other more than ever before, in these days of increasing communication between all parts of the world and all branches of the human race. In this coming religious debate, the Sikh religion, and its scripture the Adi Granth, will have something of special value for the rest of the world."

Leading from the above statements of the learned professor, it would be appropriate if deeper insight is sought into the purposefulness of the message of this Holy Book.

Ever since man came into being, he has sought answers for the reasons of his existence and the mysteries behind his life, death, its joys and sufferings. In fact the primary question has always been as to "why was I born if I have to die", "where is the beginning" and, "where is the end of it all?" The awe of the eternity of life and man's inability to rationalise existence *per se* and to influence the environment, made the human being create and believe in various mythological forms of Divinity. From the Sun, the harbinger of seasons, to elements of Nature, to the supermen of various mythologies, to varied manifestations of 'Avtaars' and soon, man has sought explanations to understand the Divine creation and the infinity of existence.

The protagonists of the absolute explained with logic absolute, or with the supra analysis as in the Vedas and

*Prof. Arnold Toynbee was an English historian from Oxford University, who became an acknowledged authority on cyclical development and decline of civilisations. The thesis was that civilisations grow by responding successfully to challenges under the leadership of creative minorities. Toynbee saw history shaped by spiritual, not economic forces.

After World War II, Toynbee shifted his emphasis from civilisation to the primacy of higher religions as the historical protagonists.

the *Shastras*. These varied explanations could have served their purpose during the theoretical 'yugs' that they were propounded in.

In the 15th century a Super Sensitive Divine person, Guru Nanak saw that mankind was suffering in all aspects: spiritual, economic and political. He so protested to the Creator! While denouncing the failure of the system to protect itself from *Prahar* (devastating oppression) of the invaders, he did not stop at that. He explained in his own inimical manner the limitations of life and the grandeur of the Lord.

He went on to lay the foundation and framework of a society whereon one was tormenting the other (ਧੈ ਕੋਏ ਨ ਕ੍ਰਿਮੇ ਰਹਦਿਦਾ), where humans were transmuted into gods in a trite (ਮਾਨਸ ਭੇ ਦੇਵਭੇ ਕੀਏ ਤਰਤ ਨ ਲਾਗੀ ਵਾਰ), where in the later words of Sri Guru Gobind Singh "with the scythe of knowledge ignorance is to be uprooted".

The founder of Sikhism propagated a way of life, a *Dharam*, based on *Naam*. The infinite glories of the Creator and of the Universe could only be suggestively described or could be realised in His manifestation. Guru Nanak found that while the learned, the *siddhs* had gone into seculsion and isolated themselves in "ivory towers" (or went away to Mount Kailash) the ਲੁਕਾਈ, as Guru Nanak called the common man, suffered for lack of spiritual leadership. Such was the desperation in Guru Nanak's soul that he asked Him to give succour to everyone from whichever path he approached Him (ਜਿਸ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਫੁੱਧਰੈ). But for himself and his followers (the *Panthis*) the Guru went about systematically to lay down a way of life, a *Panth* a *Dharam Marg*. He felt the necessity of an organised society where the purpose of his mission would be realised and where, so to say, a kingdom of heaven on earth could be established.

For this the prime requirement was to spell out and document the message which the Guru had received and according to which the *Panth* had to traverse. His path was of love and total submission to His will, of service and sacrifice, to speak up for the oppressed and stand up for fundamental human values with irrevocable commitment. He sang songs in His praise and of His glories, seen in various facets of God's creations. This was the Guru's Message Divine (*Bani*). This he wrote down in a *Pothi* and passed it on to his successor, and

his successor Gurus added their own compositions to these.

Thus, the fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev at a time when the *Panth* was well established and the need arose for authentic documentation of the Message, with superhuman effort, endeavour, far sight and scholarship compiled the writings and sayings of all his predecessors. To this he added his own writings and also those of thirty other contemporary and preceding men of learning of the spirit, whose thoughts were synchronous with those of the House of Nanak and thus compiled a Granth, a large anthology, which had the distillate of almost five centuries of the sub-continent's wisdom of life. The Granth not only contained deep discourses and philosophic precepts but also embodied description of complete spectrum of the way of life of the people, the social parameters, the folk lores prevalent, the beliefs and much more. All this was set to chosen modes of Indian classical music (*raags*) and various folk tunes such as *Vaars*, *Ghorian*, *Alahanias*, *Sads*, *Chhants* etc known as *Dhunan*.

This Granth containing the distilled wisdom of five hundred years of thought process of the subcontinent, was to become the 'Guide' of the *Panth*. When the Tenth Master found that the followers of Guru Nanaks' way had attained status of the Khalsa, the archetype human of the Guru's vision, he dissolved the human leadership (Guruship) into the *Panth* and the knowledge, the wisdom, the Message Divine, the *Bani*, as documented in this great Granth was made the Guru Granth and the message, the *Shabad* (word) became the presiding deity, the *Shabad Guru* and the *Pothi* of Guru Nanak became the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* for the Sikhs — their eternal Guide, their Guru.

The year 2004 CE marks 400th anniversary of the completion of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and its installation at Harmandir Sahib. We celebrate the year of annointment of the *Shabad* (the Message) as the focus of the Sikh worship and the factom of establishment of rule of *Dharam*, of *Law above the King*.

The *Nishaan* humbly dedicates the coming Issues to this *Ishat* of the Sikhs.

God's Gift to Humanity

On 20 October of the year 1708 CE, Guru Gobind Singh canonised the sacred pothi of divine scripture into our Eternal Guru that we now worship as the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. This is the day to commemorate as the most significant event in Sikh history as our present and our future would have been very different without this.

Guru Granth was given to the world to inspire us and to inculcate certain philosophy and certain principles in our life. We have our Guru Granth with us for three centuries and we bow to its authority every day. Let us then ask ourselves this question: are Sikh communities in the world truly inspired to comprehend and cherish the principles by which we are called by our Guru Granth to live?

Among other things, we believe that the Guru Granth is God's gift to humanity. That our Guru spoke to individuals and at specific historical events, but the Guru's wisdom is God's gift to all humanity. Second, our Guru will come a thousand steps to receive the one who takes the first step towards the Guru. Third, all doors lead to the Divine and the entrants are loved irrespective of the door through which they choose to enter. Fourth, all human beings are created equal and deserve the same rights and opportunities in the court of our Guru.

These are some of the facts, certain claims and pronouncements. The responsibility of those who maintain to be the followers and those who argue to be the seekers, and even those who boast to be guardians of the faith are to take the lead and make the creed of our Guru a living truth for us and for the entire world.

Guru Gobind Singh installed the Granth as the Guru in 1708; its tercentennial celebration is approaching. The purpose of our commemorations, seminars, conferences and celebrations of the forthcoming tercentennial is for something more than making claims and pronouncements; even conferences of most fascist societies claim relevance of their system for all world citizens.

The purpose of our enthusiasm to commemorate and celebrate is that we might come to understand the concept of the Word as the Universal Guru and its associated implications in our lives and that we might be fueled in our actions by our own resources of depth and intelligence to share God's gift with others. We may energise ourselves not just to serve the pronouncements but to make those pronouncements alive.

In the next years, you must all be leaders in the tercentennial celebrations but you cannot lead what you are ignorant of. Therefore, those of us who are behind in understanding the Guru must endeavour to not only catch up but also significantly advance themselves. The decade of Guru Granth, launched in 1998 moves toward the celebrations which will take place in 2008, a unique opportunity.

Signs of advancement are when organisation of religion is less important than the Truth it propagates, when guards are less important than the treasures they are guarding and, finally, when prescription paper is less revered than the taking of medicine it prescribes. Let us make these advances a great reality.

*Prof. Harbans Lal
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Guru Granth Sahib

unique and universal scripture

Guru Granth Sahib is universal scripture of the world. This is so because it is fountain-head of the universal message of love, truth and harmony and also because of its universality, profundity and out-reach which has a distinct universal significance. Hence stated Prof. T.L. Vaswani in 1922, "It is a wonderful scripture, the *Sikh Granth*. I regard it as the World-Scripture. This scripture was completed in 1604. After three (now nearing four) centuries, it has a message for us, a message for the world."

Guru Granth Sahib is a unique repository of the Revealed Word. It is a record of the Voice of God and echoes the Divine Truth. "It remains unique in consisting solely of the meditation of God-inspired men, who have communicated the Divine Word in a spirit of deep humility and compassion for mankind." Moreover, it is "a compendium on spiritual science" and "a symbol of spiritual synthesis..." As the movement of the Siddhas was a vast social synthesis, so the religion contained in the *Guru Granth* was a vast spiritual synthesis. Prof. Toynbee has therefore aptly claimed it to be a "part of mankind's common spiritual treasure." Hence he stated, "It is important that it should be brought within the direct reach of as many people as possible ... A book that has meant, and means, so much to such a notable community as the Sikh Khalsa, deserves close study from the rest of the world."

As Toynbee prophesied in 1960: "Mankind's religious future may be obscure; yet one thing can be foreseen: the living higher religions are going to influence each other, more than ever before, in these days of increasing communication between all parts of the world and all branches of the human race. In this coming religious debate, the **Sikh religion and its scripture, the *Adi Granth*, will have something of special value for the rest of the world.**"

This will, of course be so, because this Holy Granth enshrines the ideals and institutions of a modern and universal religion as well as of an excellent and comprehensive ethical system which has the entire human race, its welfare and uplift, in view and "gives the healing outlook on life." It has brought forth a new conception of the Ultimate Reality, a new vision of the Universal Man, a new ideal of democratic polity and a new pattern of non-discriminatory society, based on equalitarian and pluralistic concepts, as expressed for instance, in the following verses the first being by Bhagat Kabir (1398-1448), the second by Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606) and the third by Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539):

God, at first, created His Light;
Then all the people were made from it.
As the entire world
Has come from that One Light,



*Then who are superior, who inferior?
O folk, bretheren!
Be not strayed by illusion;
For, the Creator is in the created
And the created in the Creator,
Who pervades all, everywhere.*

SGGS p.1349

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ, ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ
ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ, ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ
ਲੋਗਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਛੁਲਹੁ ਭਾਈ। ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਖਲਕਿ ਖਲਕ
ਮਹਿ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ, ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਚਿ ਸੂਝ ਨਾਈ।

ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ

*Neither is any my foe, Nor am I enemy of any ...
I have made all and sundry my loving friends,
And I am a friend of one and all.*

SGGS p.671

ਨਾ ਕੋ ਮੇਰਾ ਦੁਸਮਨੁ ਰਹਿਆ, ਨਾ ਹਮ ਕਿਸ ਕੇ ਬੈਰਾਈ।
ਸਭ ਮੇ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮ ਅਪਨ ਕੀਨਾ, ਹਮ ਸਭਨਾ ਕੇ ਸਾਜਨ।

ਧਨਸਰੀ ਮ: ੫

*Let universal brotherhood be
The highest aspiration of your religious order.*

SGGS p.6

ਆਈ ਪੰਥੀ, ਸਗਲ ਜਮਾਤੀ ...

ਜਪੁ

The religion projected in Guru Granth Sahib is concerned with the creation of a just, liberal, cosmopolitan and altruistic social order; and is committed to mutual love, moral conduct, social equality and peaceful co-existence in the world. The basic principles, enunciated by the Divine Masters, the Gurus, for the achievement of this ideal, are astonishingly similar to those mentioned, for example, in the following statement and declaration of the Third World Conference on Religion And Peace held in 1979 at Princeton in New Jersey, United States of America:

"We believe that, as religious people, we have a special responsibility for building a peaceful world community and a special contribution to make.

We realise that far too often the names of our various religions have been used in warfare and community strife. Now we must reverse this, in short, by

- Breaking down barriers of prejudices and hostility between religious communities and institutions;
- Confronting the powers of the world with the word of the teachings of our religions rather than conforming them when they do wrong and act contrary to the well-being of humanity;

(c) Building inter-religious understanding and community among ourselves on local level, particularly where prejudices run strong. We all acknowledge restraint and self-discipline in a community of giving and forgiving love as basic to human life and the form of true blessedness. We are all commanded by our faiths to seek justice in the world in a community of free and equal persons. In this search, conscience is given to every person as a moral guide to the ways of truth among us all."

The prophet-preceptors of the Sikh religion demonstrated these ideals during their life-times (1469-1708) both through their oral and written utterances, as preserved in the original *Guru Granth Sahib*. They visualised, preached and practised such a religion which initiated and successfully pursued the performance of all those functions in the best interests of humanity at large. They proved, both by precept and practice, that it knows no ethical, racial or regional limitations; recognised no distinctions on account of birth, sex, caste, creed, calling, colour or country; and embodies, on the other hand, universal respect and concern for all, regarding all as equal and respectable. Its Founder, identifying himself with the lowliest of the creatures, enjoined all of humanity to:

*Call everyone high (noble),
For, none seems low (mean);
As God, the Only 'Potter' (Maker),
Has fashioned all 'vessels' alike.
And it is His Light alone
That shines in all creation.*

SGGS p.62

ਸਭ ਕੇ ਦੂਚਾ ਅਖੀਐ, ਨੀਚ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਕੋਇ।
ਇਕਨਾ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਸਾਜਿਐ, ਇਕੁ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਰਿਹੁ ਲੋਇ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਗ: ੫

Guru Arjan Dev, the holy compiler-cum-editor of this Sacred Volume underlining such a radical concept of unity, fraternity and universality went to the extent of asserting:

*None is our enemy, Nor is anyone stranger to us
We are in cordial accord with one and all.*

SGGS p.1299

ਨ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ, ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ, ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ।

ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮ: ੫

Thus they broke down centuries ago all "barriers of prejudice and hostility, not only" between religious communities and institutions but also between all individuals who constitute these."

Keeping such catholic aspirations and universal convictions in view, the Sikh Gurus also "confronted the



powers of the world with the word of the teachings of their religion rather than conformed to them when they acted contrary to the well-being of humanity", as exhorted in the above statement of the said World Conference. Guru Nanak Dev, founder of the Sikh religion, not only 'confronted' in 1521, the invading Emperor Babar, founder of the Mughal Empire in India, but also called him the 'regent of death'; condemned the tyrannical deeds of his hordes and voiced the agony of the oppressed humanity in some of the most heart-rending hymns contained, as for instance in *Guru Granth Sahib*:

*Babar, the Mughal, has descended from Kabul
With the wedding party of sins;
And demands, in forced marriage,
The surrender of our womanhood...
The paeons of blood are being sung,
And blood is being sprinkled
For saffron on the wedded ones.*

SGGS p.772

... ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਜੰਝ ਲੈ ਕਾਬਲਹੁ ਧਾਇਆ, ਜੋਰੀ ਮੰਗੈ ਦਾਨ, ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ
ਖੂਨ ਕੇ ਸੋਹਿਲੇ ਗਾਵੀਆਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ, ਰਤੁ ਕਾ ਕੁੰਗੁ ਪਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ।
ਤਿਲੰਗਮ: ੧

*Nanak utters the word of truth;
He utters the truth, for,
Now is the time to utter the truth.*

SGGS p.723

ਸਚ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ, ਸਚੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਸੀ ਸਚੁ ਕੀ ਬੋਲਾ।
ਤਿਲੰਗਮ: ੧

*You, O God! saved Khurasan from Babar's invasion
And have let loose terror on Hindustan.
The people were tortured so ruthlessly
That they, in agony, cried to heaven.
Did it not awake any compassion for them in You, O Lord!
You, O Creator, Who belong to all, pray listen!
If the powerful one smites another equally powerful,
Our mind is not much grieved over it.
But when a tiger falls upon a herd of kine,
Then the Master of the herd must answer for it.*

SGGS p.360

ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨ ਕੀਆ, ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਡਰਾਇਆ। ...
ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕੁਰਲਾਣੇ, ਤੋਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦ ਨ ਆਇਆ।
ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਸੋਈ ਜੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੈ
ਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਰੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ਸਕਤਾ ਸੀਹੁ ਮਾਰੇ ਪੈ ਵਗੇ
ਖਸਮੇ ਸਾ ਪੁਰਸਾਈ। ...

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

Guru Nanak not only "confronted" the invaders and appealed to the Creator-of-all in such touching verses, but also rebuked the then rulers (Lodhi Pathans) of Hindustan

for their not putting up a strong fight and allowing such a precious gem (i.e. India) to be ravaged and snatched away so easily. It was because they

*The rulers had lost their senses
In the pursuit of sensuous pleasures.
Now, when Babar's command rules supreme,
Even their own princes go about without a crust.*

SGGS p.417

ਸਾਹਾ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗਵਾਈਆ, ਰੰਗਿ ਤਮਸੇ ਚਾਇ।
ਬਾਬਰਬਾਣੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਗਈ, ਕੁਇਰੁ ਨ ਰੋਟੀ ਖਾਇ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

The Guru not only exposed their betrayal of trust and moral degradation, but also their poor administrative set-up in no less forceful terms, such as these:

*The rulers are turned tigers and their officers hounds.
They do not let people to rest in peace.
Their servants wound them with their claws.
And lick up all the blood and marrow that is split.*

SGGS p.288

ਰਾਜੇ ਸੀਹ ਮੁਕਦਮ ਕੂਟੇ, ਜਾਇ ਜਗਾਇਨਿ ਥੋਨੇ ਸੁਤੇ।
ਚਾਕਰ ਨਹਦਾ ਪਾਇਨਿ ਘਾਉ, ਰਤੁ ਪਿਤੁ ਕੁਤਿਹੋ ਚਟਿ ਜਹੁ।

ਮਲਾਰਮ:੧

Guru Arjan Dev, whose own contribution to the content of *Guru Granth Sahib* is the largest, pronounced the following 'Divine Manifesto' when, during his time and pontificate, people were threatened with another onslaught on their life, honour and fundamental rights:

*The gracious Lord has now
Promulgated His Ordinances:
None shall domineer over others
Or cause pain to them.
All shall abide in peace and joy,
As the governance shall be gentle and compassionate.*

SGGS p.74

ਹੁਣਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੋਆ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਣ ਦਾ, ਪੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸੈ ਰਵਾਣਦਾ।
ਸਭ ਸੁਖਾਲੀ ਫੁਨੀਆ, ਇਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਲੇਮੀ ਰਾਜੁ ਜੀਉ।

ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗਮ:੫

While preaching their message of amity, unity, equality, love and truth on the one hand while also confronting the native and foreign "powers of the world" so candidly and courageously on the other the Sikh Gurus also roused the conscience of the people to make them fearless, good and true and endeavoured to take them on the path that led to God's presence. But denial of freedom and suppression of human dignity by the government of the day, obstructed that peaceful common path. In order, therefore, to safeguard that path, to uphold the freedom of conscience; to defend human rights on the one hand, and to uproot intolerance,



indignity and tyranny on the other, two of its holy contributors, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur laid down their lives in 1621 and 1675 respectively, under specific orders of the then Mughal emperors, Jahangir (1569-1627) and Aurangzeb (1618-1707). Mentioning the cause and effect of the unique and supreme sacrifice made by the latter for this very purpose, contemporary evidence (in the words of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the 10th Guru) states:

The Divine Master (i.e. Guru Tegh Bahadur) protected their (the Hindus) religious right to apply frontal caste-marks and wear sacred threads. (their Sacred Thread):

*He performed thereby
A great feat in this Age of Darkness.
He went to the utmost limit (of sacrifice)
For the sake of the men of faith.
He gave away his head*

*Without uttering even the whisper of a groan.
He endured this unique martyrdom
For the cause of Truth and protection of Faith.*

*He readily offered his head for sacrifice,
But didn't give up his ideal and conviction.
(freedom of conscience & worship)*

*He, Guru Tegh Bahadur, refused to perform
Any miracle as, according to him,
Display of such miraculous powers
Or performance of bogus tricks and petty practices
Would be a shame for the men of God.*

*He smashed the potsherd of his life
On the head of the king of Delhi
And departed for the Abode of God.
None else has ever performed a feat
As noble and great as Tegh Bahadur.*

Dasam Granth

ਤਿਲਕ-ਚੁੰਨ੍ਹ ਰਾਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤਾ ਕਾ, ਕੀਨੋ ਬਡੇ ਕਲ੍ਹ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਕਾ ।
ਸਾਧਨਿ ਹੇਤਿ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰੀ, ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਯਾ ਪਰੁ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ ।
ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ, ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰੁ ਸਿਰਤੁ ਨ ਦੀਆ ।
ਨਾਟਕ ਚੇਟਕ ਕੀਏ ਕੁਕਾਜਾ, ਪ੍ਰਭ ਲੋਗਨ ਕਹ ਆਵਤ ਲਾਜਾ ।
ਭੀਕਰ ਫੋਰਿ ਦਿਲੀਸ ਸਿਰਿ, ਪ੍ਰਭਪੁਰਿ ਕੀਜਾ ਪਜਾਨ
ਤੇਗਾ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਸੀ ਕੀਆ, ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨ ।

ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ

The earlier martyr viz. Guru Arjan Dev's valiant son, Guru Hargobind, the sixth Divine Master, had then to take up arms for defending human rights and protecting the dignity and liberty of human kind. His grandson, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the Tenth Divine Master, had to create in 1699 an indomitable force of martial and self-sacrificing saint-soldiers called The Khalsa (i.e. God's Elect) and take recourse to arms to fulfil his mission of upholding

Dharma and smashing the wicked and tyrants, unequivocally proclaiming:

*I have come into this world
For this avowed purpose:
The supreme Lord has sent me here
To uphold Dharma (Righteousness).
He has commanded me
To spread true faith everywhere; and
Seize and smash the wicked and tyrants.
Understand this in your hearts, O pious people!
I have taken birth only for this purpose
To promulgate true religion;
To exalt the virtuous and
Uproot all evildoers.*

Dasam Granth p.174

ਹਮ ਇਹ ਕਾਜ ਮੋਂ ਆਏ, ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵਿ ਪਨਾਏ ।
ਜਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਭੁਮ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਥਾਰੇ, ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਦੇਖੀਅਨਿ ਪਕਾਰਿ ਪਛਾਰੇ ।
ਜਾਹੀ ਕਾਜ ਧਰਾ ਹਮ ਜਨਮੈ, ਸਮਝ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸਭ ਮਨਮੈ
ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ, ਸੰਤ ਉਥਾਰਨ, ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੈ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨਿ ।
ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ

*When an affair is past beyond all other means.
It is just and righteous to draw the sword.*

Guru Gobind Singh

ਚੁ ਕਾਰ ਅਬ ਹਮਰ ਹੀਲੇ ਦਰਗੁਜ਼ਸ਼ਤ,
ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਖੁਰਦਨ ਬਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਸਤ ।

ਜ਼ਫ਼ਰਨਾਮਾ ਪ: ੧੦

Guru Gobind Singh, the creator of the Khalsa and the installer of the Holy Granth as his successor and the Guru Eternal for the Sikhs, sacrificed his own father, mother, all four sons and eventually himself in his colossal and beneficent effort to defend the dignity and fundamental rights of the people.

The Sikh prophet-teachers did all this to promote those lofty ideals which, as projected in *Guru Granth Sahib*, equate the Supreme Lord with Truth and Love of Him with Service of Humanity. They also enjoined upon all human beings mutual love and understanding on one hand and truthful living and social responsibility on the other, invoking thereby both social service and social action. They believed, as is stated in *Guru Granth Sahib*, that

They who love God, love everybody.

SGGS p.557

ਜੋ ਰਤੇ ਸਹਿ ਆਪਣੇ, ਤਿਨ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਭ ਕੋਇ ।

ਵਫ਼ਾਸ਼ਾਹ: ੧



*A man or woman without true love is an empty shell
Which soon crumbles and is reduced to dust.*

SGGS p.62

ਅੰਦਰੁ ਖਾਲੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਬਿਨੁ; ਢਹਿ ਢੇਰੀ ਤਨੁ ਛਾਨੁ ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਗ ਮ: ੧

*They who do not cherish loving emotion,
Do not know the taste of the Beloved.
They are as a guest visiting a deserted
House and returning empty and disappointed.*

SGGS p.790

ਜਿਨੀ ਨ ਪਾਇਚਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਰਸੁ, ਕੰਤ ਨ ਪਾਇਚਿ ਸਾਉ;

ਸੁੰਦੇ ਘਰ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਗੁਣਾ, ਜਿਉ ਆਇਆ ਤਿਉ ਜਾਉ ।

ਸੁਰੀ ਮ: ੧

and,

*All living beings are Your own creatures.
But none can obtain any reward
Without rendering devoted service
To You and to Your created ones.*

SGGS p.394

ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਰੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ,

ਵਿਨੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ ।

ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੧

*A resting place at the Divine Portal
Can be found only
Through the devoted service
Of the people in this world.*

SGGS p.26

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ; ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਬੈਸਨੁ ਪਾਈਐ ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਗ ਮ: ੧

Envisioning and preaching thus, a new cultural ethos and an ideal social order and emphasising social justice, obligations and service to humanity, Sikhism, the latest world-religion, as projected in *Guru Granth Sahib* has always been exhorting and asserting for liberation of the human kind from all kinds of degrading bondage, mental, spiritual, social, political and the like. "Long before the modern kind of idea of social freedom was evolved in the West, it has brought to mankind the message of freedom. In its social aspects, it was a freedom movement from formalism and caste-tyranny; while Spirituality brought to man freedom from suppression and those false beliefs which enslaved man to a selfish or ignorant priesthood, whether the priest was called a Brahman, Yogi or Mullah."

Not only its history and heritage (whether principles, doctrines and pronouncements or in the practical lives of its founder, his successors and followers), the sacred

writings also present impeachable evidence to the aims, impact and beneficence of that radical and dynamic movement, initiated by the Sikh Gurus in the 15th century for the liberation and well-being of all human beings. Thus spoke Guru Arjan Dev, the founder of its holiest shrine, Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar, while summing up its impact and influence:

*The egg-shell of doubt has shattered
And the mind is illumined.*

*The Master has freed us from bondage
By taking off fetters from our feet.*

SGGS p.1002

ਭੁਟੇ ਆਂਛਾ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ, ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਚਿ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ
ਕਾਟੀ ਬੇਰੀ ਪਗਹ ਤੇ, ਗੁਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਚੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੁ ।

ਮਾਰੂ ਮ: ੫

As regards the third postulate of the above statement read at the World Conference on Religion and Peace, "the Ten Sikh Gurus, *Guru Granth Sahib* and their teachings have always been striving to build inter-religious understanding in our local communities, particularly where prejudices run strong," Sir Arnold Toynbee tells us: "The Indian and the Judiac religions are notoriously different in spirit; and where they have met, they have sometimes behaved like oil and vinegar. Their principal meeting-ground has been India, where Islam has impugned on Hinduism violently. On the whole, the story of relations between these two great religions on Indian ground has been an unhappy tale of mutual misunderstanding and hostility. Yet, on both sides of this religious barrier, there have been a minority of discerning spirits who have seen that, basically Hinduism and Islam are each an expression of the same fundamental religious truth and that these two expressions are therefore reconcilable with each other and are of supreme value when brought into harmony." "The Sikh religion" he adds, "might be described not inaccurately, as a vision of this Hindu-Muslim common ground. To have discovered and embraced the deep harmony underlying the historic Hindu-Muslim discord has been a noble spiritual triumph; and Sikhs may well be proud of their religion's ethos and origin." According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the blessed founder of their religion Guru Nanak, "strove to bring Hindus and Muslims together. His life and teachings were a symbol of the harmony between the two communities. A popular verse describes him as a 'Guru for the Hindus and a Pir for the Muslims:'

ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹ ਫਕੀਰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੂ, ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕਾ ਪੀਰ ।

This in spite of the glaring fact that he "was critical of the formalism of both the Hindus and the Muslims" and his revelation when he took up the mission of his life, was:

ਨਾ ਕੋ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹੈ।

There is neither a Hindu Nor Muslim.

All are human beings, born of the One Supreme Being.

It was Guru Arjan Dev, the compiler of this Sacred Volume who in a single hymn, indicative of his cosmopolitan attitude and universal goodwill, and using a good number of the attributive names of God, drawn from both the Hindu (e.g. Jagannath, Rishikesh, Narhar, Gopal, etc.) and the Muslim (e.g. Maula, Allah, Khaliq, Khuda, etc.) traditions and shattering age-old doubts and illusions about His names, declared:

*The Master has lifted my illusion
About the name of God
And has enabled me to realise
That Allah (Muslim name of God)
And Par-Brahm (Hindu name of God)
Are one and identical.*

SGGS p.897

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਸੋਏ ਭਰਮ, ਏਕੋ ਅਲਹੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ।

ਰਾਮਕਲੀਮ:੫

It was he, again, who transcending all sectarian and parochial limits, and using a composite name, Allah - Rama, for God, also proclaimed unequivocally:

*I neither observe fasting (like a Hindu)
Nor keep the fast during Ramzan (like a Muslim)
For I serve only Him who saves at the last.
The Gosain of the Hindus and, Allah of the Muslims
Are one and the same to me;
For, I have found release from the rituals of both.
I neither go to Kaaba to perform the Hajj
Nor to Hindu pilgrim-stations
For ritual bathing and worship,
For I serve only the One God, and no other.
I neither worship in the Hindu Way,
Nor say prayers like the Muslims,
For I bow, within my heart, only to that One Formless
We are neither Hindus nor Muslims
For our body and soul belong to the One Supreme Being,
Who alone is both Rama and Allah for us.*

SGGS p.1136

ਵਰਤ ਨ ਰਹਉ ਨ ਮਹ ਰਮਦਾਨ, ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵੀ ਜੋ ਰਖੈ ਨਿਦਾਨ,
ਏਕੁ ਗੁਸਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ, ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਨੇਥੇਰਾ।
ਹਜ ਕਾਥੇ ਜਾਉ ਨ ਤੀਰਥ ਪੁਜਾ, ਏਕੋ ਸੇਵੀ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ।
ਪੁਜਾ ਕਰਉ ਨ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਉ। ਏਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਲੇ ਰਿਦੈ ਨਾਮਕਾਰਉ।
ਨ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ, ਅਲਹੁ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਿੰਡੁ ਪਰਾਨ।...

ਏਰਉਮ:੫

Guru Granth Sahib transcends not only such religious barriers, mutual hostility and strong prejudices but also all types of religious exclusiveness, dogmatism, formalism, chauvinism and egocentric individualism. It preaches that God, the Creator of all, being One and all people being His Own Creation, there is therefore only one basic religion for the whole humanity and that religion is Truth which can be adopted and practiced by anybody, any time, anywhere.

Expressing this conviction in very clear terms, is stated:

*He, who grasps the Truth, realises that
As the Creator is One and is ever the same age after age,
There is, therefore, One religion of all mankind.*

SGGS p.1188

ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ, ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ।

ਬਸੰਤਮ:੧

Enunciating its own concept of that One religion of all mankind and the definition of its true adherent, is also observed:

*Religion consists not in mere talk.
He who looks on all alike
And considers all as equals,
May be acclaimed as truly religious.*

SGGS p.730

ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ, ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਹਿ ਜਾਣੈ
ਜੋਗੀ ਗਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ।

ਸੁਹੀਮ:੧

Indicating also the way to such an ideal and equitarian religion, is maintained:

*The way to true religion is found by dwelling in God.
And remaining detached
In the midst of worldly attachments.*

SGGS p.730

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ, ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ।

ਸੁਹੀਮ:੧

Guru Nanak, the first and foremost author of this great Granth, holds therefore that as a tree is known by the fruit it bears, so a man's religion is known by the deeds he performs. Denominational robes, symbols, rites, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments precepts, dogmas, doctrines, theories, miracles, outward garbs and visible marks which do not lead to righteous deeds, will not take anyone far on the path of religious and spiritual progress. Hence, Guru Arjan Dev, its prolific author as well as compiler-cum-editor defines true religion and righteous living in his masterpiece Sukhmani Sahib:

*The most exalted of all religions
Consists of love of God's Name and purity of conduct.*



*The highest of all actions
Lies in the effacement of impure thinking
In the company of the holy.*

SGGS p.266

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਧਰਮ ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ, ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ।

ਸਗਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਮਹਿ ਊਤਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ

ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰਿਆ ।

ਗਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਮ: ੫

Guru Granth Sahib has given optimistic hope to every person belonging to any caste or creed, sex or stratum, for his or her liberation even when he or she exists in this very world, as stated by its major contributor:

*Khatris, Brahmans, Vaisnyas and Sudras
All can swim across the Ocean of Existence,
Through loving devotion to the name of One Lord.*

SGGS p.1001

ਖੜ੍ਹੀ ਬਾਹਮਣ ਸੁਦ ਵੈਸ ਸਭ ਏਕੇ ਨਾਮਿ ਤਰਾਲਾ ।

ਮਾਰੂਮ: ੫

and the foremost author:

*He who enshrines the Name of God in his heart
Is emancipated even when alive.*

SGGS p.412

... ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤੁ, ਮਨਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਸਾਏ ।

ਆਸਾਮ: ੧

They have likened the human soul to a bride and God to a bridegroom; and have assured everybody, man and woman, that:

*Liberation can be attained
By cherishing loving devotion to God,
Accepting His will and dwelling in humility.*

SGGS p.470

ਭਾਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਨੀਚੁ ਸਦਾਏ, ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੋਖਿਤਰੁ ਪਾਏ ।

ਆਸਾਮ: ੧

This can surely be attained while leading a normal householder's life of virtuous conduct, remembering God, adoring His Nature, doing honest work, performing social and familial duties, earning livelihood and sharing earnings with the needy, as opposed to pursuing enforced celibacy or barren asceticism and mortification of the body. According to Guru Nanak Dev,

*The body is the palace,
The Temple and the House of God,
In which He has placed His infinite Light.*

SGGS p.1256

ਕਾਇਆ ਮਹਲੁ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ, ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਪਾਰਾ ।

ਮਲਾਰਮ: ੧

By following the aforesaid way of living, under the guidance of the True Master, it reassures everyone in these very words:

*Such is the distinctive greatness of the True Guru
That through his grace and guidance
One can attain salvation
Even while living a normal domestic life.*

SGGS p.664

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ, ਪੁਤ ਕਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ।

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮ: ੧

*By meeting with the True Guru
One comes to know the right way of living,
Which leads one to the union with God.
Under his kind guidance and by the grace of God
One attains liberation,
Even while leading a full life
Of smiling playfulness and
Cheerful enjoyment of wear and food.*

SGGS p.522

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭੇਟਿਐ, ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ।

ਹਸੀਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੀਦਿਆ ਧੋਨੀਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੀਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ।

ਗੁਜਰੀ ਮ: ੫

Guru Granth Sahib has addressed itself, thus, to the common man of the world and not to an ascetic or a recluse. It has brought religion out of the cloister and related this to all living beings and to the realities of life, adding a noble ideal, practical approach and social meaning to its fold. It advises and tells humanity to

*Contemplate and praise One alone.
Meditate only on that One God.
Seek and cherish Him alone.*

SGGS p.289

ਏਕੋ ਜਪਿ, ਏਕੋ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ, ਏਕ ਸਿਮਰਿ, ਏਕੋ ਮਨਿ ਆਹਿ ।

ਗਉੜੀ ਮ: ੫

*We should keep communicating
With the fellow-beings,
So long as we live in the world.*

SGGS p.661

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਰਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ, ਕਿਛੁ ਸੁਣੀਐ, ਕਿਛੁ ਕਹੀਐ ।

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮ: ੧

*The human body
That does not do good to others, is worthless.*

SGGS p.269



ਮਿਥਿਆ ਤਨ, ਨਹੀ ਪਰਦੁਪਕਾਰ।

ਗੁਰੂਤੀਮ:੫

Sweetness and humility are
The essence of all virtues and good qualities.

SGGS p.470

ਮਿਠਤੁ ਨੀਵੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ, ਗੁਣ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਤਤੁ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

Truth is higher than everything else;
But higher by far is truthful living.

SGGS p.62

ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ, ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ।

ਸ੍ਰੀਰਾਗਮ:੧

Where there is enlightenment, there is righteousness.

Where there is falsehood, there is sin.

Where there is covetousness, there is death.

Where there is forgiveness, there is God Himself.

SGGS p.1372

ਜਹਾ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਤਹਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਹੈ, ਜਹਾ ਬੂਠੁ ਤਹਿ ਪਾਪੁ।

ਜਹਾ ਲੋਭੁ ਤਹਿ ਕਾਢੁ ਹੈ, ਜਹਾ ਖਿਮਾ ਤਹਿ ਆਖਿ।

ਸਲੋਕ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ

Everyone has himself to bear

The consequences of his good and bad actions.

SGGS p.472

ਮੰਦਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ, ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਵਣਾ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

Everyone is answerable to God.

No one is saved but for his good deeds.

SGGS p.952

ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ, ਕਰਣੀ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਤਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ।

ਰਾਮਕਲੀਮ:੧

Depriving others of their dues,

Is like eating pork to a Muslim or beef to a Hindu.

SGGS p.141

ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ, ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰੁ, ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ।

ਮਾਝਮ:੧

Whatever pleases God,

Is the best of all things and actions.

SGGS p.726

ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ, ਸਾਈ ਗਲ ਚੰਗੀ।

ਤਿਲੰਗਮ:੪

Such of God's servants have become God's Own,

Who know the way of loving devotion to Him.

SGGS p.654

ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਜਨ ਭਏ ਖਾਲਸੇ, ਧ੍ਰੋਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਜਿਹ ਜਾਨੀ।

ਸੋਰਠ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ

He that pervades the universe
Also dwells in the human body.
He who searches Him
Shall find Him there.

SGGS p.665

ਜੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡਿ, ਸੋਈ ਖਿਡਿ, ਜੇ ਖੋਜੇ, ਸੋ ਪਾਵੈ।

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਪੀਪਜੀ

The craving for supernatural
And miraculous powers, is an irrelevant taste.

SGGS p.6

...ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਅਵਰਾ ਸਾਦ।

ਜਪੁ

The holy Word is the
Essence of all meditations and austerities.

SGGS p.661

ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ, ਇਹੁ ਸਥਦੁ ਹੈ ਸਾਧੁ।

ਧਨਾਸਰੀਮ:੧

Man degrades himself in the human order
Because of his egoism.

SGGS p.466

ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਤੀ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਖੋਵੈ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

Self-assertion gives man his individuality
And leads him to action.

SGGS p.466

ਹਉਮੈ ਏਹਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੈ, ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਹਿ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

Eating that kind of food
Which causes torment to the body
And breeds evil thoughts in the mind
Is distressful, O friend !
Wearing that kind of dress
Which causes torment to the body
And breeds evil thoughts in the mind!
Is distressful, O Friend!

SGGS p.16

ਬਾਬਾ ! ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ,
ਜਿਹੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ, ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ...
ਬਾਬਾ ! ਹੋਰੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ,
ਜਿਹੁ ਪੈਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ, ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ।

ਸ੍ਰੀਰਾਗਮ:੧

Why revile woman,
From whom also kings and great men are born?

SGGS p.473

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਅਖੀਐ, ਜਿਹੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ ?

ਆਸਾਮ:੧



The aim and object of such instructions and exhortations has obviously been the all-round uplift and welfare of human-kind through love, devotion, service and righteous deeds, contributing to universal peace, pleasure and prosperity. They embody the message of unity, equality, compassion, tolerance and non-violence; and evince socialistic and altruistic approach which is one of optimism, faith and joy in natural phenomena. They also aim at promoting such lofty ideals, as are projected in this Holy Scripture, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, equating the Supreme Lord with Truth, and Love of Him with service of humanity. They also enjoin upon its followers truthful living and social responsibility, invoking both social service and beneficent action, as advised in the following verse by Founder of the Sikh religion:

*They alone have known the right way
Who eat the fruit of their own toil
And share it with those in need.*

SGGS p.1245

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ ਨਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ ।

ਸਚੀਗਮ:੧

He believed and stated that such active social service and devoted beneficent action, called *Seva*, is very essential not only for the fulfilment of our objectives had but also in the hereafter:

*All living being are Your Own creatures;
But no one can obtain a reward
Without rendering devoted service.*

SGGS p.354

ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ, ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਹੀ ।

ਆਸਾਮ:੧

*If we want to get a seat
At the Divine Portal;*

We should dedicate ourselves

To the active service of the people in this world.

SGGS p.26

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ, ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ।

ਸ੍ਰੀਰਾਗਮ:੧

Man is further advised to uphold his firm faith in God's Will, Grace and Law; and remain grateful to Him and be content with whatever He bestows upon him in His Wisdom and His Will. Recording the Guru's message of hope and cheer for all humankind, this Holy Book encourages and assures the down-trodden and the wavering ones in such inspiring and enthusing words as:

*Why do you waiver and fall into suspense?
He, Your Creator, shall surely sustain you.*

*He, who has created this world,
Also takes care of it.*

SGGS p.724

ਤੁ ਕਾਹੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ । ਤੁਹੁ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ।

ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾ ਇਜਿ ਤੂ ਕੀਆ, ਸੇਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ ।

ਤਿਲੀਗਮ:੫

These and all other counsels, teachings and exhortations of *Guru Granth Sahib* are meant not only for its adherents but also for entire humanity, as is stated in the *Guru Granth Sahib* in the following verse by *Guru Amar Das* (1479-1574), the Third prophet-preceptor of Sikhism:

*Great men speak in terms of the particular,
But their wisdom is applicable to the whole world.*

SGGS p.647

ਪਰਥਾਇ ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਾਪੁਰਖ ਬੋਲਦੇ, ਸਾਝੀ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨੇ ।

ਸੋਰਠਮ:੬

As far as caste-ridden India, in particular, is concerned, these are common and applicable to all its castes and creeds, so tells *Guru Arjan Dev*, its holy compiler-cum-editor:

*This common spiritual message
Is meant for the people of all the four castes:
Kashatriya, Brahmin, Sudra and Vaishya.*

SGGS p.727

ਖੜੀ ਥਾਮਣ ਸੁਦ ਵੈਸ, ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨਾ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ ।

ਸੁਹੀਮ:੫

*Such is the teaching and message of Guru Nanak,
Whoever listens to it is ferried across
The Ocean of Existence.*

SGGS p.1001

ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਹਤੁ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਸੁਣੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਰਿ ਪਰਾਨਸ ।

ਮਾਰੂਮ:੫

Apart from all that, those are also specifically addressed to various persons belonging, to some particular categories, creeds and callings, such as:

To Yogis:

*Yoga consists not in mere talk or chatter.
He, who looks on all alike
And regards all as equals,
May be acclaimed as a true Yogi.*

SGGS p.730

ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ । ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਚਿ ਜਾਣੇ

ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ ।

ਸੁਹੀਮ:੧



To Hindus:

*The Hindus having strayed from the Primal Lord,
Are going the wrong way.
They worship idols, as instructed by Narad ...
They, the ignorant ones, worship stones,
Not realising that stones,
Which themselves sink, cannot ferry others across.*

SGGS p.556

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਲੇ ਬੁਲੇ, ਅਖੁਟੀ ਜਾਹੀ, ਨਰਦਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਿ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਾਹੀ । ...
ਪਾਥਰੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਮੁਗਧਾ ਗਵਾਹ, ਓਹਿ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਡੁਬੇ, ਰੁਮ ਕਹਾ ਰਣਹਾਰੁ ?
ਬਿਹਾਗੜਾ ਮ:੧

To Muslims:

*Let compassion be your mosque, faith your prayer-mat,
And righteousness your Quran.
Let modesty be your circumcision,
And uprightness your fasting.
Thus you will become a true Muslim.*

SGGS p.140

ਮਿਹਰ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਦਕੁ ਮੁਸਲਾ, ਹਕੁ ਹਲਾਠੁ ਭਰਾਣੁ ।
ਸਰਮ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ, ਸੀਲੁ ਰੋਝਾ, ਹੋਹੁ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ।

ਮਾਝ ਮ:੧

To Jains:

*The true Digambar (ascetic) Jain is he
Who cherishes compassion and probes his innerself.
As he kills (i.e. subdues his own self),
He does not kill (i.e. hurt) others.*

SGGS p.349

ਦਾਇਆ ਦਿਕੀਬਰੁ, ਦੇਹ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ, ਆਪਿ ਮਠੈ ਅਵਰਾ ਨਰ ਮਾਰੀ ।

ਆਸਾ ਮ:੧

To Farmers:

*Let the mind be the ploughman,
Good deeds the ploughing,
Honest strivings the water
And your body the field.
Let God's Name be the seeds,
Content the leveller,
And humility the garb.
Let your actions be
Those of love and amity.
The seed will then sprout,
the crop will grow.
And you will see your home
Blessed with prosperity.*

SGGS p.595

ਮਨੁ ਹਾਲੀ ਕਿਰਸਾਣੀ ਕਰਣੀ, ਸਰਮੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਰਨੁ ਖੇਤੁ ।
ਨਮੁ ਬੀਜੁ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸੁਹਾਗਾ, ਰਖੁ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਵੇਸੁ ।

ਭਾਉ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਜੀਮਸੀ, ਸੇ ਘਰ ਭਾਗਨ ਦੇਖੁ ।

ਸੋਰਠ ਮ:੧

To Traders:

*Carry on your trade
For gaining your objective (profit).
Lest you should repent afterwards.*

SGGS p.418

ਵਣਜੁ ਕਰਹੁ ਮਧਸੁਦ ਲੋਹੁ, ਮਤ ਪਛੋਤਾਵਹੁ ।

ਆਸਾ ਮ:੧

All beings are advised, thus, to be true and firm believers in their respective faiths; and alert and active workers in their respective callings. Such sincere advice and impressive guidance to the followers of other religions and professions, etc. in the sacred scripture of one's own faith does not seem to have been in this manner in holy books of any other religion.

The fervent appeals, prayers and pleadings included therein are also applicable to entire humankind. These have been made by the Sikh Gurus to the Creator of all, for and on behalf of entire humanity, for the maximum good of every creature, for the well-being of the whole world. They find their highest and noblest expression in the following verses, for example as when Guru Nanak Dev pleads with God:

*All creation is yours, O Lord!
And You are the Only Master of all.
Why are they visited, then, with Your wrath?
In spite of Your having wrath on them,
They are still Yours and You are theirs, O Lord!*

SGGS p.25

ਤੇਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਤੋਹਿ, ਕਿਤ ਕਉ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆਵਹਿ ਰੋਹਿ ।
ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆਵਹਿ ਰੋਹਿ, ਤੂੰ ਚਿਲਾ ਕਾ, ਤੇਰੇ ਓਹਿ ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਗ ਮ:੧

Guru Amar Das, the Third Guru, appeals to God:

*The world is in flames!
Save it, O God, out of Your mercy;
Save it, through whichever dispensation
It can be saved, O Lord!*

SGGS p.853

ਜਗਤੁ ਜਲੰਦਾ ਰਖਿ ਲੈ, ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ।
ਜਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਉਥਰੇ, ਤਿਥੇ ਲੋਹੁ ਉਥਾਰਿ ।

ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਮ:੨

Guru Ram Das, the Fourth Guru, prays to God:

*Listen to our prayer, O God!
And let Your Grace rain over the whole world.*

SGGS p.652



ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ! ਸਭ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਵਰਸੇ ਮੇਰੁ ।

ਸੋਰਠ ਮ:੪

Guru Arjan Dev, the Fifth Guru supplicates to God:

Be merciful, O God!

And keep all beings in Your care.

Let grain and water be in plenty,

Shatter their suffering and penury,

And ferry them across the Ocean of Existence.

SGGS p.1251

ਸਭੇ ਜੀਅ ਸਮਾਇ, ਅਪਣੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਕਰੁ ।

ਅੰਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਮੁਖੁ ਉਪਾਇ, ਦੁਖ ਦਾਲਦੁ ਭੀਨਿ ਤਰੁ ।

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮ:੫

What universal appeal, embodying such marvellous altruistic spirit, cosmopolitan outlook, liberal essence and tolerant attitude, seeking boons and blessings for the peace, prosperity and welfare of every human being, irrespective of his or her belief and faith, caste or creed, colour or country, sex or status!

Such prayers and teachings of *Guru Granth Sahib* have contributed considerably to the uplift and welfare of humankind. These have encouraged goodwill, general happiness and collective moral values of society for building a new, peaceful, prosperous and pluralistic world order, based on the vision and pattern of such an ideal city-state as is envisaged, defined and projected in its following matchless evocative hymn by Bhagat Ravidas, one of the saint-authors in this holy book:

The name of my city is 'Griefless'.

Suffering and sorrow do not abide in it.

There is neither any worry of paying taxes or trade,

Nor any fear of a default in the one

And anguish for a decline in the other.

I have now found a wonderful place in my homeland.

Where there is always peace, my brother!

Its sovereignty is firm and inviolate for ever.

There is no second or third class,

As all are alike, being in the first class

It is ever populous

And enjoys ever-enduring reputation.

Its residents are prosperous and contented.

They go about as they please.

As they are intimates of the Mansion and its Lord,

No one prevents their entry into it.

So says Ravidas, the liberated cobbler,

To whom all fellow-citizens are loving friends.

SGGS p.345

ਬੇਗਮ ਪੁਰਾ ਸਹਰ ਕੋ ਨਉ, ਦੁਖ ਅੰਦਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਤਿਹਿ ਨਉ ।

ਨਾ ਤਸਵੀਸ ਖਿਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਮਾਲੁ, ਖਉਰੁ ਨ ਖੜਾ ਨ ਤਰਸੁ ਜਵਾਲੁ ।

ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੂਬ ਵਤਨ ਗਰ ਪਾਈ, ਉਹਾ ਬੇਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ !

ਕਾਇਮੁ ਦਾਇਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ, ਏਮ ਨ ਸੋਮ ਏਕ ਸੋ ਆਹੀ ।

ਆਬਾਦਾਨੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਸਹੂਰ । ਤਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਮੈਲ ਕਰਹਿ ਜਿਉ ਭਾਵੈ

ਮਹਰਮ ਮਹਲ ਨ ਕੋ ਅਟਕਾਵੈ । ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਖਲਾਸ ਚਮਾਰਾ

ਜੋ ਹਮ ਸਹਰੀ ਸੁ ਮੀਰੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ।

ਗਉੜੀ ਰਵਦਾਸ ਜੀ

Herein lies the power, modernity and universality of the revelation, thought, teaching, message and appeal of *Guru Granth Sahib* which has been emanating new rays of love, light and liberty, peace, hope and happiness for mankind all over the world. Pearl S. Buck, the Nobel Laureate, in 1962, describing her personal experience after reading the four volumes of its English version "slowly and thoughtfully" in her "quiet Pennsylvania home" in the United States of America, wrote "*Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is a source book, an expression of man's loneliness, his aspirations, his longings, his cry to God and his hunger for communication with that Being. I have studied the scriptures of other great religions, but I do not find elsewhere the same power of appeal to the heart and mind as I find here in these volumes. They are compact in spite of their length, and are a revelation of the vast reach of human heart, varying from the most noble concept of God to the recognition and indeed the insistence upon the practical needs of the human body." Proceeding further, she added, "There is something strangely modern about these scriptures and this puzzled me until I learned that they are, in fact, comparatively modern, compiled as late as the 16th century, when explorers were beginning to discover that the globe upon which we all live is a single entity divided only by arbitrary lines of our own making. Perhaps this sense of unity is the source of power I find in these volumes. They speak to persons of any religion or of none. They speak for the human heart and the searching mind." Concluding, she stated, "It is impressive and significant that in the study of these Sikh scriptures we see the affirmation of the essential unity of science and religion... Through them we see a Beyond that belongs to us all. The result is a Universal revelation".

Dr. J.C.Archer, Professor of Comparative Religions at the Yale University, Princeton had said in 1946: "The religion of the *Guru Granth* is a universal and practical religion... The world needs today its message of peace and love." Herein lies the unequalled greatness, beneficence and significance of *Guru Granth Sahib* — the holiest scripture of Sikhism, the unique scripture revealed in India to become universal scripture of the world.

Dr. Harnam Singh Shan

Guru Granth Sahib

The Thought, Preparation and Construction

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ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰ
ਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰ
ਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾ
ਦਿ॥ ॥ ਜਪੁ ॥ ॥ ॥

Sri Guru Arjan Dev's

Nisaan (handwritten) Mool Mantar from the
Kartarpuri Bir of Sri Guru Granth Sahib

Sikhism, as founded by Guru Nanak, is essentially a religion of the Name. The most obvious religious exercise is the recitation or the singing of the Guru's word. Suján Rai of Batala, writing about the Sikhs in 1696, says in his *Khulasatut-Twarikh*: "The only way of worship with them is that they read the hymn composed by their Gurus and sing them sweetly in accompaniment with musical instruments." Seeing the importance of the practice, many clever persons, like Prithi Chand, the elder brother of Guru Arjan, had begun to mix their spurious writings with the true compositions of the Gurus and to make them current among the Sikhs. There was a danger of composition in the creed and the ritual; and Guru Arjan, as the leader and organiser of the Sikhs, felt bound to ensure uniformity of belief and practice among them. He undertook therefore to collect and collate the genuine writings of his predecessors and adding to them his own, to prepare an authentic volume out of them.

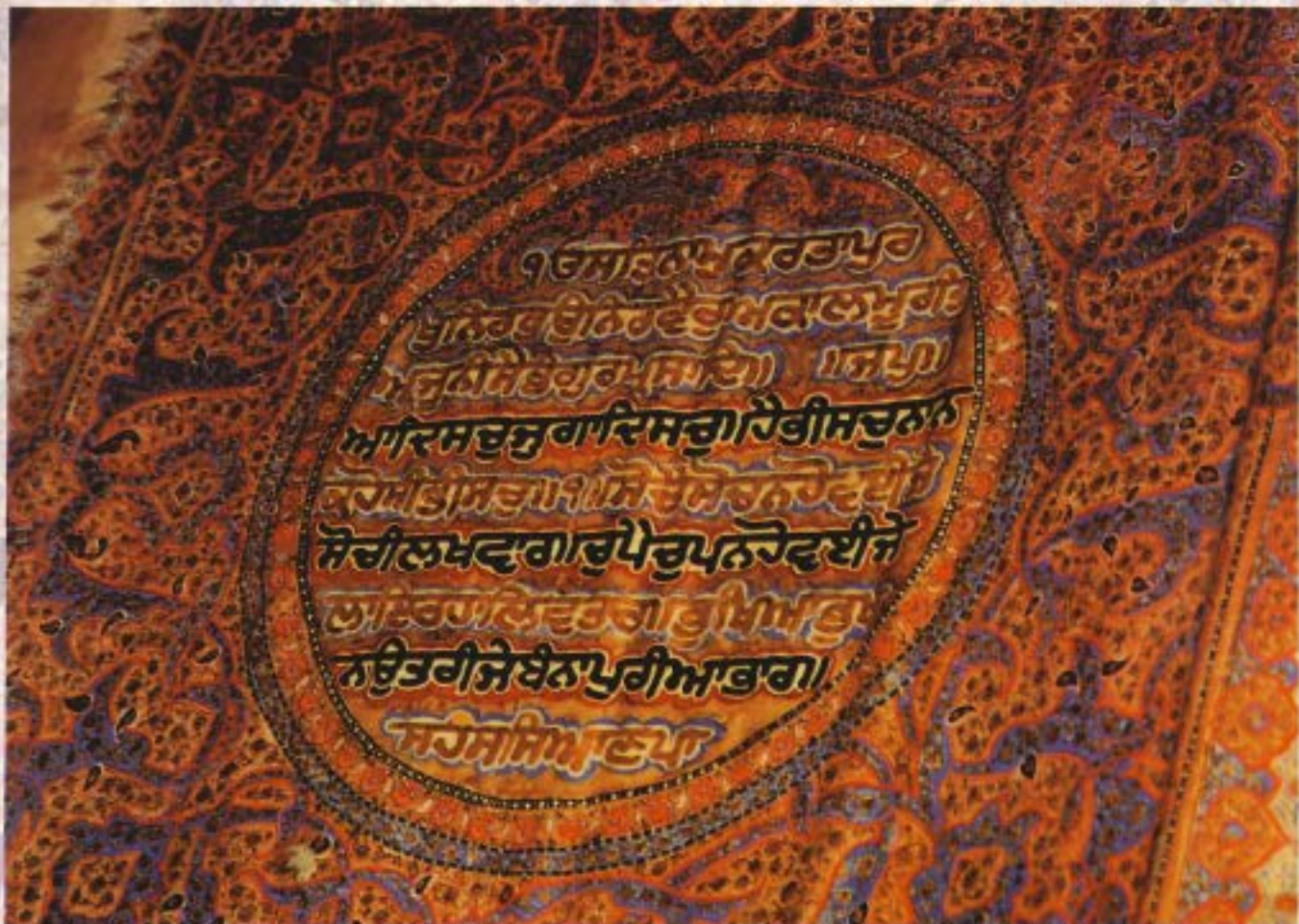
The idea of making this collection was not new. It was inherent in the cosmopolitan nature of Sikhism, and began with its Founder, who during his long tours must have come across many compositions similar to

his own. That Guru Nanak had with him the writings of the medieval Saint is proved by the following facts.

Many expressions, sometimes whole lines, are the same with Guru Nanak as in Kabir. The famous line of Guru Nanak's *Japji*, 'To conquer the mind is to conquer the world,' is found in Kabir's *Maru*. 'Impurity will enter into our kitchens' is found in Guru Nanak's *Asa-di-Var* as well as in Kabir's *Gauri*. 'Live pure in the midst of the impurities of the world' is word for word the same in Guru Nanak's *Suhi* as in Kabir's *Gauri*. 'The mind is born out of the five senses', occurring in Guru Nanak's *Asa*, is the same as Kabir's saying. 'The mind is a creature of the five senses in his *Gauri*. 'Without the true Guru they shall not find the way', found in Guru Nanak's *Var Asa*, is also found in Kabir's *Basant* and Beni's *Prabhati*. Many verses in Guru Nanak's 5th stave of the 12th stanza of the first Ode in *Ramkali* are the same as Kabir's verses in *Bhairo* about a Qazi. 'Whatever is in the cosmos is found also in each single body' is common to both Guru Nanak (in *Maru*) and Pipa (in *Dhansari*). Some couplets of Farid are embodied in the writings of Guru Nanak (e.g. 113 and 114). Sometimes the Guru criticises the views of Farid and inserts his own couplets after his (e.g. 119-120 and 123-124). See also Farid's *Suhi* (ii) and Guru Nanak's reply to it in the same measure, *key* 6 (ii).

A similar identity or correspondence in expression is found between the Second, Third and Fourth Gurus, on the one hand, and Farid and Kabir on other. This could only be explained by the supposition that the predecessors of Guru Arjan had before them the writings of these Saints, and had compiled a collection of their verses.

of 19) as were used by Guru Nanak; (b) he composed an acrostic of the same kind, called *Patti*, and in the same measure called *Asa* as did Guru Nanak; (c) his elegiac verses, called *Alahmian*, correspond to the elegiac verses of the same name and in the same measure (*Vadhans*) by Guru Nanak; (d) his *Solhe* verses in *Maru* are of the same type as



From Bhai Sahib of Bagrian's collection.

Guru Nanak carried with him his own compositions as well as those of the Bhagats collected by him, and when departing handed them over to his successor. Guru Angad gave his own compositions, along with the collection already made to Guru Amardas. That Guru Angad had his predecessor's writings with him is proved by the fact that many of his own compositions have a direct bearing of Guru Nanak and echo the very expression of the latter. [See his staves attached to the 22nd stanza of Guru Nanak's *Var Asa*. Also compare the two staves of the 17th stanza of *Var Majh*.]

Guru Amar Das too had with him the compositions of Guru Nanak, as is evident from the following facts: (a) Guru Amar Das used almost the same musical measures (17 out

the *Solhe* of Guru Nanak in the same measure; (e) he composed his shloka about Lahore (*Lahore shahr—amritsar sifiti da ghar* : The city of Lahore is a pool of nectar, a home of graces) only in reply to Guru Nanak's pronouncements about the same city (*Lahore shahr zahr kahr saru pahr* : The city of Lahore for some hours is full of poison, a veritable hell)? There are other verses of Guru Amar Das showing traces of a wide reading in Guru Nanak's literature.

His own composition, along with his predecessors' collections, were put together by his grandson, Sahansar Ram, son of Baba Mohan. He also made a selection, on his own account, of lyrics from the Bhagats whom he used to admire in his Vashnavite days, and adding his own comments here and there's left them for posterity. These

collections, called *Goindwal Manuscripts*, having come into public view only recently, require closer study, which will throw interesting light on the work of Guru Arjan as editor of the Holy Granth.

It took Sahansar Ram two years (1570-1572) to complete the Manuscripts. They are in two volumes, one containing 300 leaves, and the other 224. Each page contains 13 lines and each line has exactly 13 well-rounded letters. The script used is Gurumukhi, which bears close resemblance to Takri and Sharda. The short-vowel marks are rarely used (on page 216 of the Second Volume appears a note in the margin: "Guru Angad fashioned the Gurmukhi letters, and presented in them the hymns." The writing is in a different hand, not that of Sahansar Ram.

The first volume contains 10 musical measures: *Sulhi*, *Prabhati*, *Dhansari*, *Basant*, *Tilang*, *Gujari*, *Bhairi*, *Asa* (only first two staves of *Var Asa*, one of Guru Nanak and the other of Guru Angad), *Maru* and *Kedara*. The second volume contains only four musical measures: *Ramkali*, *Sorath*, *Malar*, and *Sarang*. This makes a total of 14 Raags, as against 30 of Guru Arjun's volume.

The authors included are Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Kabir, Namdev, Trilochan, Sain, Ravidas and Jaidev.

An author's name is given only once at the start. It changes only when the author changes.

The second volume bears the marks of revision, which seems to have been made by Guru Amar Das.

Guru Arjan personally went to Goindwal, and with great difficulty was able to persuade Baba Mohan to lend these manuscripts to him. He brought them in a palquin to Amritsar and bestowed great respect on them.

While returning from Goindwal, the Guru stopped at Khadur and requested Baba Datu, the eldest son of Guru Angad, to show him any manuscripts containing the sayings of the Guru, if he had any with him. Datuji pointed at some loose papers lying inside his room, saying, "See if there is anything there to interest you." Guru Arjan took some material for his use. What material could this be? It must have been the compositions of Guru Angad, which does not figure much in the Goindwal collection. There must have been something from Guru Nanak too, whose *Sri Raag* and other measures are missing from the above-mentioned collection.

As this does not account for the whole content of the Holy Book, Guru Arjan must have resorted to some other sources as well, such as the big volume kept at the Dharamsala of Bhai Butta Singh, a well-known pharmacist of Rawalpindi, and then brought to Delhi. In addition to many other things, this also contains two passages, in continuation of the *Var of Satta* and *Balvand*, in praise of Guru Hargobind; but these additions, from their language and construction, appear to be spurious. The volume may have formed a small nucleus when used by Guru Arjan; but, it contains several hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur too, besides those of Guru Arjan and some pieces showing clearly that there have been additions made later on. The manuscript is written in several hands, representing the various styles of Gurmukhi calligraphy current at different stages of its development. One part, written in Sanskrit, mentions the date 1693 Bk. (i.e. 1636 AD). These are eight pages of Punjabi prose, reporting certain instructions of Guru Amar Das to his followers, who are informed that the whole world consists of Sikhs and potential Sikhs, some already having entered the Guru's fold, others on their way.

Guru Arjan had to reject some compositions offered by eminent writers like Chhajju, Kahna, Shah Hussain and Peelo. Some of them were considered unsuitable because of their leaning towards pantheism, others because of their hatred for the world or for womankind. The Guru wanted healthy optimism and joy in one's worldly duties and responsibilities, and not mere tearful ecstasies or other worldliness.

Guru Arjan, with all this material, moved to Ramsar, a beautiful and solitary spot to the south east of Amritsar, and began his work of composition and compilation. His amanuensis, Bhai Gurdas, a great scholar of Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi and Punjabi, was with him. He wrote what the Guru dictated. The manuscript copy kept at Kartarpur bears traces of instructions given by Guru Arjan and so carried out by Bhai Gurdas. This is evident from such expressions appearing here and there as 'may be corrected' and, 'corrected'.

The huge material selected for incorporation was arranged in three parts: (1) Daily Prayers, consisting of Guru Nanak's *Japji* (taken from the carefully preserved copy of Guru Ram Das), along with devotional pieces culled from the rest of the book to serve as morning and evening prayers; (2) the Main Body containing 30 Raags or musical measures (to which was added by Guru Gobind Singh a short Raag, called *Jaijivanti* by Guru Tegh Bahadur, as the 31st measure); and (3) concluding portion, called *Bhog di Bani*, including the *Funhas* of Guru Arjan, *Shlokas* of Kabir and Farid, *Swayyas* of Guru Arjan and of 11 Bards, *Panegyrics* of the first five Gurus, Extra Staves left over from the *Vars*, miscellaneous *Staves* of Guru Nanak, Guru Amar

Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur, and a coping piece, called *Mundavani*, which contains two passages from Guru Arjan himself, who says:

"In this Book I have put together three things: Truth, Harmony and Discernment.

These are seasoned with the Name of God, which is the ground of all.

Who ever partakes of it and digests this will be saved."

And then he adds with a genuine pride in his work:

"It is what you cannot afford to ignore:

You must clasp it to your heart."

According to the instructions of its Author, the Granth was to be translated into various Indian and foreign languages, so that it might spread over the entire world 'as oil spreads over the waters of the sea'.

The date of completion of the Granth is taken to be 1604, when it was installed in the Golden Temple and Baba Buddha appointed its custodian.

The Granth was brought to its present final form by Guru Gobind Singh, who added Guru Tegh Bahadur's hymns under different Raags and his Shlokas at the end. As the Guru Granth Sahib now stands, it contains the following number of distinct pieces from different authors: Guru Nanak - 976; Guru Angad - 61; Guru Amar Dass - 907; Guru Ram Das - 679; Guru Arjan - 2216; Guru Tegh Bahadur - 118; and the Bhagats, Bards, etc. - 937. The total comes to 5894.

Compilation and Editing of The Granth Sahib

The contents are arranged according to musical measures, those measures being rejected which are calculated to work the mind to extremes of joy or depression, e.g. *Hindol* and *Megh*, led people to wild transports of joy, and *Deepak* and *Jog* made people too pensive. Both these extremes were against the spirit of Sikhism which works for *Sahj* or steadiness of life. These measures were therefore omitted, except when they could be employed to modify other Raags; as for instance, *Hindol* was combined with *Basant* to vivify serene contentment, and *Deepak* was used to heighten the seriousness of *Gauri* and to make this more vigorous. In *Tilang*, *Asa* and other Raags of the Frontier, a visible combination was effected not only in the execution of music, but also in the composition of the pieces set to music. Arabic and Persian words were used frequently as words in Hindi, *Ramkali*, which was favoured by Yogis was freely used when addressing monks of these orders. *Asa*, *Suhi* and *Tilang*

were often used in the hymns meant for Muslims, because they were more current among Sufi fakirs.

Each measure is integrally connected with its contents; e.g. *Suhi*, a nuptial measure, contains only those pieces which extol joy and contentment of a reunion: so is *Bilawal*. *Maru* is a martial measure. Therefore it contains teaching of a vigorous kind about true heroism, which lies in self-control. Its long sweeping passages refer to the long sweeps of time, occurring before and after our brief existence.

Within each Raag, or measure, the passages are arranged according to subject and thought, and groups of hymns forming single paragraphs always begin with an invocation to God. Single self-contained pieces, like *Japji*, *Anand*, *Sadd*, *Onkar*, *Siddh Gosht*, *Odes* and *Calendars*, which were composed entirely on single themes, are marked with the figure '1' at the end. There is a similar significance attached to the numerals given throughout the Book. For instance, the *Swayms* of the Bards are given towards the end. When the figure given along with the total changes, it shows that the author too has changed. This is the key to the question of ascertaining the authorship of those compositions, which otherwise and in many cases could not be located at all.

These compositions, are not 'abject flatteries' or 'without any intrinsic value', as asserted by some misguided critics, but are character-sketches of the Gurus, who are, according to the fundamental belief of Sikhism, to serve as exemplars to their followers. The Third Guru, for instance, is described as one 'whose banner of Patience flutters eternally over the bridge of heaven.' Satta and Balvand also describe him as one 'as firm as the mountain of Meru', which he was. The Fourth Guru is praised as one 'who refilled the empty reservoirs'. Was this not literally as well as metaphorically true? The Guru had provided so many water tanks around the city of Amritsar, as also provided congregations of holy men and many pools of immortality, raising hymns of glory to God.

First come writings of the Gurus in the order of their succession, each calling himself by the common appellation of *Nanak*; then follow those of the Saints, beginning with Kabir and ending with Farid.

These show link of thought running through them. Take for instance passage 102, under the *Asa* measure of Guru Arjan, about the birth of Guru Hargobind. If read as an isolated passage, it will appear as describing an historical event happening in the family of the Guru, but if we connect this with the preceding passage, it will appear as a hymn of thanksgiving about the Guru, who is being praised all along as a bountiful given granting gifts to his disciples,

one of whom is Guru Arjan himself who has received the much-needed gift of a son. In the former case, it would have been a mere historical piece of information or a private exultation over a family affair, which should have no place in a book of spiritual value. But if we assume this in its proper context, it has much spiritual significance and a universal application.

Under *Ramkali*, the *Anand* and the *Sadd* are linked together by the subject which is common to both, that is the supremacy of the Guru's word. For want of this realisation, people often misinterpret the meaning of the *Sadd* in which they see approval of certain old rites and ceremonies, which appear to be superseded by the Guru's word, if we take that word to be the subject matter of the *Sadd*. In the *Anand* he had insisted that his followers should use only the Guru's word as the authentic guide for their lives and in the *Sadd* too he is reported to have laid down the same instruction for his Sikhs that they should perform no obsequies for him other than the singing of the Guru's hymns in praise of God. The offering of barley-rolls, lamps, etc., has no place in Sikh ceremonies.

Similarly each piece, within itself, is polytechnically well-constructed, its component parts being interconnected and evolving growth of the inner idea. This could be shown by reference to any compact compositions like the *Japji*, *Asa-di-Var*, *Siddh Gosht* or *Onkar* of Guru Nanak, the *Anand* of Guru Amar Das, or the *Sukhmani* of Guru Arjan.

If we study the *Japji* from its polytechnical side, it displays a well-designed and well-built pile, with symmetry and interrelated corridors, hard to establish in buildings of brick and mortar. Like so many other aspects of large dimension, it comprises 40 component parts, 38 in the middle, one before and one after. It is further integrated in groups of four. The stanzas containing the stages of development are also four, although the stages depicted are five. Not to break the prevailing symmetry, therefore, two stages—of Action and Truth—are compressed into one stanza.

In Guru Nanak's *Var Asa* too the same kind of linked thought and evolved construction can be traced. A man of ordinary calibre comes to the Guru, who transforms him into a veritable god. He is progressively shown the way to get rid of his weaknesses, born mainly out of the various kinds of egoism, and to imbibe corresponding truths which build up his nature on new lines and ultimately make him an angel out of a mere man.

In *Sukhmani*, or the *Psalms of Peace*, a perfect man's make-up can be traced in its various Cantos.

Beside this overall consistency in the contents, there is a linked growth within each component part of a piece. This passage in the *Psalms of Peace* illustrates this:

*"Of all religion the best is
The practice of the Name with purity of conduct.
Of all rites the best is
To purge one's heart of filth and evil tendencies by
Associating with those who have disciplined themselves.
Of all devotional practices the best is
The constant application of the heart to the Name.
Of all sacred texts the most sacred is
That by which one hears the praise of God and utters
This to others.
Of all holy places the holiest is
Where one feels the stir of the Name in one's heart."*

Does this not contain references to all the paraphernalia of religion — rites, devotional exercises, a holy book and a temple? And consider the order in which they are mentioned.

Often an idea is conveyed through an image, maybe of a fisherman, a gardener, a merchant, a player, a wife, a deer or a dog. Unless we find out the image chosen, we cannot get at the idea implied in all its details. Take the following from Guru Nanak's *Sri Rag*, xi:

*"In the commerce of life we have to trade through the
Agency of the Guru, with Truth as our objective and
Truth as capital.
When—thanks to the perfect guide—a purchase is made
of Truth,
The Master-Merchant will recognise the consignment
As tallying with the sample of Truth kept by Him."*

It would be difficult to understand the real meaning unless one knows the procedure of foreign trade prevalent in those days. The master-merchant sitting far away would send his trader to a land, like India, to make purchases, say of cloth from Dacca. The trader would approach a *gumāstā* or local agent, through whom he would be able to contact some weavers for buying the commodity required. The cloth thus bought would be sent home to the master-merchant, who would compare the purchased cloth with the sample kept by him and make payment only if they tallied in texture and design.

Considered the following description of a man engaged in falsehood: It is from *Sri Rag*, xix:

*"The practice of falsehood turns a man into a dog;
He lives on garbage, such as that of a good man's slander,
And like a stray cur he prowls about in Unbelief,*

Suffering much harassment, until he meet Death which takes out his brains."

There are four things mentioned about a stray dog : it lives on garbage; it prowls about; it is kicked or beaten by everybody; and it often meets a violent end, as may be seen everyday in the streets of India.

There is a query as to why the Guru included the compositions of certain medieval Saints whose views on some matters did not always tally with those of the Gurus. The Gurus themselves were strict monotheists and had no truck with avatar-worship. The Holy Granth begins with an invocation to God who is "unborn and undying." Guru Arjan says, in Bhairi: "Accursed be the tongue that says that God is born." The Saints of the Bhagti movement, on the other hand, rarely rose above the belief in Rama and Krishna as the incarnations of God. They were not averse to idol-worship. Farid, as a Muslim, curses himself for not going to a mosque five times a day for offering Namaz. He also refers to the soul waiting in the grave for the day of resurrection, which clearly cuts across the Gurus' belief in the transmigration of souls (see Farid's couplets 70 and 97). We must know that these antithetical sayings are given an honoured place in a Book which not only holds a scriptural position among the Sikhs but weilds authority equal to that of the Guru whose word is law.

My view is that these apparent contradictions are not only consistent with the tolerant spirit of Sikhism but lend an additional charm to the Holy Granth which includes them.

The Sikh Gurus ushered in a new era in the religious history of mankind when they declared that true religion consisted of two things only: love of God's Name and purity of conduct. In the line quoted from the *Psalm of Peace*, the Guru dispenses with all formalities in favour of these two things, which are nowhere contradicted by these Saints. They may be differing from the Gurus in their method of worship, but did not differ in their aim, which was to love God and to do good. Their writings were included not for their doctrinal value but for their ability to create a 'stir of the Name' in one's heart.

There was another teaching introduced by the Gurus which sanctioned association with those who differed from them in doctrine. It said:

"The world is burning; save it, O God, out of Thy Mercy. Save it through whichever dispensation it can be saved" —Bilawal.

This was a new orientation of religion which

revolutionised the old conception that one's own *daxi* was orthodoxy and everybody else's was heterodoxy. The Gurus made religion untheological. They preached that the world was aflame in the fire of passion, and it was the duty of Religion to save it in whichever way it could be saved. Whatever an allopath or a homeopath, it is the duty of a doctor to save the patient and not to make any fuss about the manner or methods. When a house is on fire, all right-minded persons should pour water over the fire to extinguish it. They are not true neighbours if they insist that the fire should be extinguished with their own buckets only. It does not matter, the Gurus said, if the fire is put out with the buckets of a Mohammed, or a Rama, or a Nanak. Let the buckets not clash, being only meant for extinguishing fire. As long as the aim of the Saints was to foster love for God, in whichever form they conceived Him, and as long as their writings had the effect of suppressing evil tendencies in men, the Gurus welcomed them and gave an honoured place to them as co-workers. It was not weakness but the glory in Sikhism that such differences in means were tolerated, when the aim was assuredly the same. Religion, according to the Gurus, was not a set of doctrines, but a clean way of life dedicated to God. A man of religion has to build a bridge which should span the flood of passions running through his nature. It does not matter which branch of mathematics was used in measuring distances, be it trigonometry, conic section or plane geometry. Some may be quicker methods, others lengthy and involved; but if they served the builder's purpose all right, they were good enough for him. Similarly, idolatry and avatar-worship may be crude methods of approaching God, but are methods after all, and those who follow them may be groping in the dark, but they are groping their way towards the house of God, who will embrace when they come to Him after long and tortuous wanderings.

If the Guru had given high place to those views only which were identical with his, it would have served no purpose, because he needed no confirmation of his views. The value of the Granth Sahib is enhanced by this accommodation of spirit, which is the essence of Sikhism, and for which many people, outside the pale of Sikhism, have been acknowledging their connection with the Holy Granth.

The Guru's religion was the integration of India and the unification of its people, who needed a Book to synthesise their beliefs and cultures. The Holy Granth is the only intercommunal Book in India, if not in the entire world.

A great curse which stood (and still stands) in the way of India's unity is provincialism. This Book was by design made interprovincial, by including the writings of Saints drawn from all the corners of this vast continent—Jaidev a Brahmin from the east, Farid a Muslim from the west, Kabir a Muslim-born weaver from the north, Namdev a calico-printer from Maharashtra, Ravidas a shoemaker from the banks of the Ganges and Ramanand a disciple of Ramanuj from the south.

Most of them were from the so-called "untouchable classes", so that to give their writings as scriptural position was a practical means of abolishing untouchability and caste prejudices, which was a very desirable reform from the Sikh point of view.

There were many important Saints in India, such as Chaitanya and Mirabai whose writings were not included. Only those who were active craftsmen, working with their own hands, and not likely to lead men towards ecstatic mysticism or idle aloofness were honoured.

When taking down the Bhagats' compositions from Sahansar Ram's manuscript, Guru Arjan used his editorial pen frequently. He omits many hymns given in the manuscript. Kabir's hymn about *kushal* is transferred from *Suhi* to *Gauri*, 45. Kabir's hymn beginning with the words '*Antar mail*' is taken from *Ramkali* and inserted under *Asa*, 37. A passage in Kabir beginning with the words '*Dhanda kart charan kar thake*' was given under *Ramkali* in the manuscript, but the Guru under *Suhi*, after making many changes in the wording. The last hymn, in *Sarang* appears in the manuscript under the heading '*Sarang Kabir-Nama*' and begins with the words '*Jaise min parti men rahai*'. It appears in the Granth as belonging to Namdev alone.

He also made spellings uniform, keeping in mind the use of the terminal short-vowels, which follow a fool-proof system throughout the Book. It is a marvellous consistency, which was not observed anywhere else, not even in European languages of the time.

Essential Teachings of The Holy Granth

What has been said about the liberality of the Gurus in giving a place to the Saints' writings in the Holy Granth does not mean that they had no definite views of their own or that they cared any less for them. The Holy Granth, with all the variety of its contents, is a corporate entity and has to be interpreted consistently in the light of the over-all teaching of the Gurus. The following are highlights of that teaching:

Only Way For All

The way of Yogis is the way of philosophy, and that of Brahmins to read the Vedas;

The way of Kshatriyas is the way of bravery, and that of Sudras to serve others;

But to one who understands the matter, there is only one way for all. — Var Asa.

What is That Way?

Religion does not consist in mere talk;

He who looks on all men as equals is religious.

Religion does not consist in wandering to tombs or places of cremation, or sitting in yogic postures;

Religion does not consist in wandering from country to country, or in bathing at sacred places;

Abide pure amid the impurities of the world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion. — Sudi.

The Idea of Purity

The heart gets impure with greed, and the tongue with lying;

The eye gets impure by staring at another's wealth, his wife or her beauty;

The ears get impure by devouring the slander of others; Nanak, these impurities lead the soul of man bound to hell.

All other impurity supposed to be contracted from touch is superstitious.

Birth and death are ordained; we come and go by His will.

All eating and drinking, which God gave as sustenance, is pure.

Nanak, they who have realised this through the Guru do not believe in that impurity. — Var Asa.

They are not to be called pure who only wash their bodies; Rather are they pure, Nanak, who enshrine the Lord in their hearts. — Var Asa.

He who worships stones, visits places of pilgrimage, dwells in forests,

Renounces the world, only wanders and wavers.

How can his filthy mind become pure?

He who meets the True One shall obtain honour.

— Dhanasri

God and His Relation with The Creation

The One Supreme Being, of the true Name, the Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self-existent and the Enlightener: by His grace. — Japji.

God created the avatars by His will. — Maru Solhe.

God made certain kings of their times, but people sing of them as Avatars. — Asa.

He Himself is the creative agencies, like the Maya, the Word and Brahma;

He Himself is Truth, Beauty and the eternal yearning after Goodness. — Jappi.

God is self-existent; so is His Name.

Beside Himself He made Nature, wherein He has His seat and looks on with fondness. — Var Asa.

He who fashioned the body of the Real is also the creator of the five elements and their matter, the Mind. — Suhi. In the beginning came Air from God; then from Air, Water;

From Water was created the Universe, with individualised life inspired by Spirit. — Sri Rag.

Real are Thy universes, regions, Countries and created objects. — Var Asa.

This world is an abode of God; He lives in it. — Var Asa.

Whatever is seen or heard is in the order of Nature; so is the consciousness of fear and comfort.

The nether regions, the heavens, and the forms in creation came in the course of Nature;

So did the Vedas, the Puranas, the western books, and all the way of thought,

And all ways of eating, drinking, dressing, and all the ways of love.

Nature prevails in the animal kingdom, its species, genera and colours.

Nature works in the virtues and evils of men, in their feelings of honour and dishonour.

Nature works in the air, the water the fire and the dust of the earth.

Thy Nature works everywhere; Thou art the master of Nature; Thou the Creator; Thy Name is the holiest of the holy.

Nanak, God looks to everything with His will, and works most intelligently. — Var Asa.

In all orders of beings is Thy light, and all orders are in Thy light:

Thou fillest all things by an art that is artless. — Var Asa.

The body is the palace, the temple, the house of God; into it He puts His eternal light. — Malar.

The body is the earth; the wind speaks therein.

Consider, O wise man, what it is that dies —

It is the contentious and proud Understanding; The conscious Soul dies not. — Gauri.

We earn our body from our parents,

And get it inscribed with the gifts of Spirit and Uprising tendency;

But by coming in contact with worldliness we lose her consciousness. — Maru.

Highest Object of Life is to Love God

He alone lives who enshrines the Lord in his heart. — Var Majh.

If a man loves to see God, what cares he for Salvation or Paradise! — Asa.

O my soul! how can you be saved without love? — Sri Rag.

They who are attached to the three qualities, of Peace, Desire and Passion, have to be born and die again and again.

All the four Vedas talk of the phenomenal nature and describe the three conditions,

But the fourth unconditioned state is known from the true Guru alone.

By loving God and serving the Guru man is saved, and does not have again and again to be born and die.

Everybody talks of the four objectives, and the Smritis and Shastras, together with the Pandits who read them, do the same.

But without the Guru the meaning of the true objective is not found.

The object of salvation is obtained from loving the Lord. — Gauri.

How to Love God?

What shall we offer to Him that we may behold His council-chamber?

What shall we utter with our lips, which may move Him to give His love?

In the ambrosial hours of the morn meditate on the grace of the true Name.

For, your good actions may procure for you a better birth, but salvation is from Grace alone. — Jappi.

We should worship the Name, believe in the Name, which is ever and ever the same and true. — Sri Rag.

By praising God we get established a bond with God. — Sri Rag.

Love Means Service

They who love the Lord love everybody. — Vadhas.

There can be no love of God without active service. — Jappi.

When one does active service within the world, Then alone can one win a place in heaven.

— Sri Rag.

Characteristics of God's Servant

True service can be rendered by those alone who, free of all personal ambition and in perfect contentment, pay homage to truth alone.

They refrain from treading in the path of evil, and doing good practice honestly.

They break the bonds of worldliness and eat and drink moderately. — Var Asa.

Nanak, life is most fruitful, when we meet with those Who are humble and gentle even when they are strong. — Sri Rag.

Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtue. — Var Asa.

Faith and Resignation are given to the holy; sobriety is the virtue of angels. — Sri Rag.

To conquer the mind is to conquer the world. — Japji.

Without the fear of God none shall be saved. His fear keeps the love for Him in a good trim. — Gauri.

All are liable to err; only the divine Guru is infallible. — Sri Rag.

Ego Responsible For Errors — As Also For Virtue

Governed by his free will man laughs for weeps;
Of his free will he begrimes or washes himself;
Of his free will he degrades himself from human order;
Of his free will he befools himself or becomes wise. — Var Asa

Self-assertion gives man his individuality and leads him to action;

It also ties him down to the world and sends him on a round of births and deaths.

Where from comes his assertion of self? How does it leave?

It comes to man from the will of God, and determines his conduct according to his antecedents.

It is a great disease, but its remedy also lies within itself. When God sends grace to man, he begins to obey the call of the Guru.

Nanak says: Hear ye all; this is the way to cure the disease. — Asa-di-Var

Give Up Egoism

There are lowest men among the low;
I shall go with them; what have I got to do with the great?

God's eye of mercy falls on those who take care of the lowly. — Sri Rag.

Nonsense is caste, and nonsense the titled fame. — Var Sri Rag.

What is in a caste? Only worth should be tested. — Var Majh.

Nanak, nobody is without some worth. — Ramkali.

How can you call woman inferior, when it is she who gives birth to great men? — Var Asa.

Give Up All Error of Custom

Put away the custom which makes you forget the Loved Lord. — Vadhans.

My friend, the enjoyment of that food is evil which gives pain to the body and evil thoughts to the mind.

My friend, the wearing of that dress is evil which gives pain to the body and evil thoughts to the mind.

— Sri Rag.

Follow Truth

Truth is the remedy of all; only truth can wash away our sins. — Var Asa.

Falsehood exhausts itself; only truth prevails in the end. — Ramkali.

Truth never gets old. — Ramkali.

Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is true-living. — Sri Rag.

That is being true, when the True One is in the heart, When the filth of falsehood departs, and life is made clean.

That is being true, when man fixes his love on Truth, And finds pleasure in hearing of the Name; thus is it that he finds himself liberated.

That is being true, when man knows the art of living, And preparing the field of his life puts the seed of God in it,

That is being true, when one receives true instruction, Understands mercy towards living things, and performs some acts of charity.

That is being true, when man resides at the sacred font of spirit,

Where ever consulting the true Guru, he abides in peace. — Var Asa.

And Honest Labour

Touch not at all the feet of those Who call themselves gurus and pirs, and go about begging.

They who eat the fruit of their own labour and share it with others

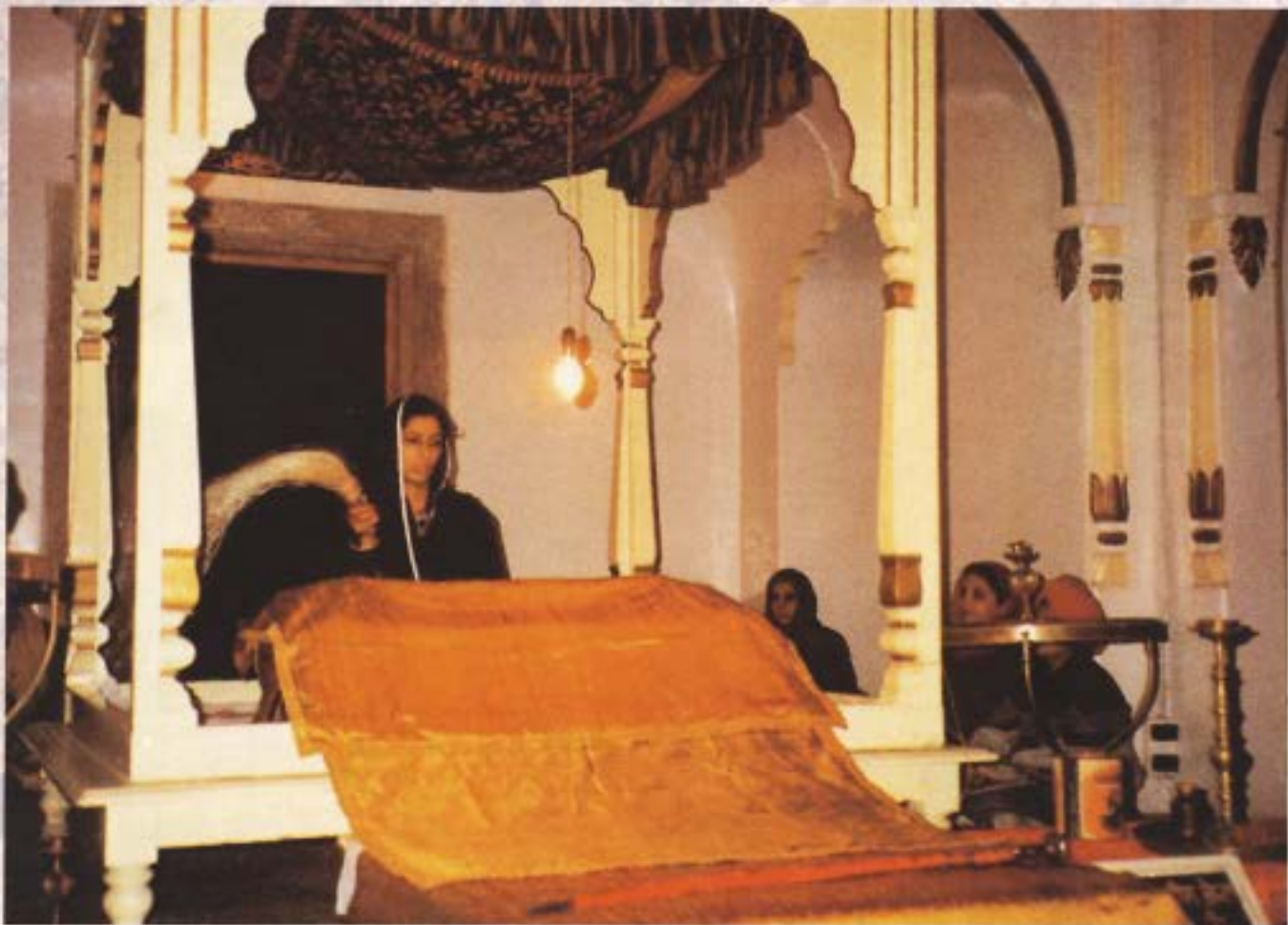
Are the people, Nanak, who have found the right way. — Var Sarang.

Be Temperate

One man brings a potful, and another fills his cup from it.

As he drinks it, his senses leave him, and his brain is fuddled.

He is unable to distinguish his own from what belongs to others, and is spurned by God.



The greatest of respect to The Granth Sahib.

The drink makes him forget his Lord, before whom he stands convicted.

As far as it lies in us, therefore, we should not drink wine at all. — Var Bihagra.

Love What Is Best

Man becomes what he loves best. — Sukhmani.

Never Fear Circumstances

White things remain white, inspite of the darkness of the night. — Suli.

Death is Privilege of The Brave

Death is the privilege of brave men, provided they die in an approved cause. — Vadhans.

Respect To The Holy Granth

Great respect is shown to the Guru Granth Sahib when opening, reading or closing it. Kept in clean cloth, is opened under a canopy and a *chaur* is always kept at hand to wave over it. When the Granth Sahib is brought in, all those present stand with bowed heads and folded hands.

These signs of royalty and the marked attention paid by Sikhs to the Holy Book give an impression to others that Sikhs worship their Book. This is wrong. Sikhs are enjoined to worship nothing but the Name (see Guru Nanak's *Sri Rag*, viii.3). They can offer respect to any person or thing worthy of praise, but worship is to God alone. Perhaps the bowing of Sikhs before the Book is misunderstood by Westerners whose way of salutation is different. They kiss their book as Sikhs bow before theirs, both conforming to the local custom of paying respect. Both ways of salutation are highly personal, but cannot be called idolatry, as long as the Book is not given the place of God. In Sikhism the highest respect is paid to the Word, as in a modern state the greatest homage is paid to the Law, which stands even above the king.

This sovereignty of the *Shabd* or the Word was acknowledged by the Gurus who bowed before this in reverence.



Guru Granth Sahib

contents and presentation

Guru Granth Sahib begins with *Ik Onkar* – THE ONE ALL PERVADING BEING, WHO IS EVER CONSISTENT. From this Word to the tenth Word *gur-parsad*, is the *Moolmantra*. After this comes the composition *Jap*, composed by Sri Guru Nanak Dev. This comprises 38 *Pauris* or stanzas, a Prologue and an Epilogue.

This is the morning prayer of the Sikhs.

The next composition has two parts *So-dar* which contains 5 Shabads and *So-purkh* which contains 4 Shabads. This is the evening prayer of the Sikhs and is also called *Rehras*. After this comes *Sohila*, which contains 5 Shabads. This is the prayer before sleep.

Following the above, most of the compositions are divided into the following 31 *Raags* or musical measures, as sub headings:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. Siri Rag | 2. Majh | 3. Gaurhi |
| 4. Asa | 5. Gujri Gandhari | 6. Dev |
| 7. Bhangrha | 8. Vad-hans | 9. Sorath |

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 10. Dhanasari | 11. Jaitsari | 12. Todi |
| 13. Bairarhi | 14. Tilang | 15. Suhi |
| 16. Bilawal | 17. Gaund | 18. Ramkali |
| 19. Nat Narain | 20. Mali Gaurha | 21. Maru |
| 22. Tukhaari | 23. Kaidaara | 24. Bhairau |
| 25. Basant | 26. Saarang | 27. Malar |
| 28. Kanra | 29. Kalyan | 30. Parbhati |
| 31. Jaijawanti | | |

Following the above *Raags*, the undermentioned compositions are given:

	Sloks
1. Slok Saihskriti, Guru Nanak Dev	8
2. Slok Saihskriti, Guru Arjan Dev	67
3. Gaatha, Guru Arjan Dev	24
4. Phunhe, Guru Arjan Dev	23
5. Chaubole, Guru Arjan Dev	11
6. Slok, Bhagat Kabir Ji	243
7. Slok, Shaikh Farid Ji	130
8. Swayye, Sri Mukh Vak	9

9. Swayye, Sri Mukh Vak	11
10. Swayye, 11 Bhattas	123
<i>The Swayyas of Bhattas constitute those</i>	
<i>In Praise of Guru Nanak Dev</i>	10
<i>In Praise of Guru Angad Dev</i>	10
<i>In Praise of Guru Amar Das</i>	22
<i>In Praise of Guru Ram Das</i>	60
<i>In Praise of Guru Arjan Das</i>	21
11. Sloks in addition to those in Vaars are of:	
<i>Guru Nanak Dev</i>	33
<i>Guru Amar Das</i>	67
<i>Guru Ram Das</i>	30
<i>Guru Arjan Dev</i>	22
12. Sloks of Guru Tegh Bahadur	57
13. Mundawani, Guru Arjan Dev	1
14. Slok, Guru Arjan Dev	1

The Sequence of Compositions in Raags

Within each Raag section, the Compositions are arranged in sequence:

Shabads – *Astpadis* – *Chhants* – Compositions of the Bhagats.

These *Shabads*, *Astpadis*, *Chhants*, etc. are arranged in the order:

Guru Nanak Dev – Guru Amar Das – Guru Ram Das – Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur.

There are no *Shabads* of Guru Angad Dev. He wrote only Sloks, which appear with the Pauris of various Vars.

At the end of *Shabads* in each Rag, are given the *Astpadis*, in the order of the Gurus. There is no *Astpadi* written by Guru Tegh Bahadur.

After *Astpadis*, *Chhants* are again given in the same chronological order of the Gurus.

The Contents of 31 Raags

	Shabads	Astpadis	Chhants	Total
Guru Nanak Dev	209	123	25	357
Guru Amar Das	172	79	19	270
Guru Ram Das	264	58	38	360
Guru Arjan Dev	1322	45	63	1430
Guru Tegh Bahadur	59			59
Total	2026	305	145	2476

Vaars (Odes)

There are in all 22 Vaars in Guru Granth Sahib. Out of them 21 Vaars have been written by the Gurus, and one by Satta and Balwand (Bards with the court of Guru).

The details of Vaars are given as under:

Guru Nanak Dev	- Rag Majh, Asa and Malar	3 Vaars
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Guru Amar Das	- Rags Gujri, Suhi, Ramkali and Maru	4 Vaars
Guru Ram Das	- Siri Rag, Gaurhi, Bihagrha, Vadhans, Sorath, Bilawal, Sarang and Kanrha	8 Vaars
Guru Arjan Dev	- Rag Gaurhi, Gujri, Jaitsri, Ramkali, Maru and Basant	6 Vaars
Satta and Balwand	- Rag Ramkali	1 Vaars
	Total	22 Vaars

Details of Vaars in order of Raags

Gaurhi 2, Gujri 2, Ramkali 3, Maru 2	9 Vaars
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The remaining 13 Vaars are in the following 13 Raags, one in each of the following:

Siri Raag, Majh, Asa, Baihagara, Vadhans, Sorath, Jaitsri, Suhi, Bilawal, Basant, Sarang, Malar and Kanra.

Except for Satta and Balwand's Vaar in Raag Ramkali and the Vaar in Basant Rag of Guru Arjan Dev, in all the remaining Vaars, Sloks of first five Gurus have been attached to the Pauris of the Vaars. The details of Pauris and Sloks of these Vaars are:

Guru Nanak Dev	78 Pauris (begh)
Guru Amar Das	85 Pauris
Guru Ram Das	183 Pauris
Guru Arjan Dev	117 Pauris
Total number of Pauris of 21 Vars	463 Pauris
Satta-Balwand's Var	8 Pauris
Grand Total of Pauris	471 Pauris

Details of Sloks of 21 Vars

Guru Nanak Dev	227 Sloks
Guru Angad Dev	63 Sloks
Guru Amar Das	343 Sloks
Guru Ram Das	105 Sloks
Guru Arjan Dev	252 Sloks
Kabir Ji	4 Sloks
Total	994 Sloks

Compositions of the Bhagats

The composition of the Bhagats appear in 22 Raags out of the 31 Raags in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. There are a total of 349 *Shabads* of various Bhagats, including 3 *Shabads* of Guru Arjan Dev in those sections. The grand total is 352:

	Shabads
Kabir Ji	224

Namdev Ji	61
Ravidas Ji	40
Trilochan Ji	4
Farid Ji	4
Beni Ji	3
Dhanna Ji	3
Jaidev Ji	2
Bhikhan Ji	2
Parmanand Ji	1
Sain Ji	1
Pipa Ji	1
Sadhana Ji	1
Ramanand Ji	1
Soordas Ji	1 ((one verse only))
Guru Arjan Dev Ji	3
Total	352 Shabads

In addition to the Shabads, there are 3 more Compositions of Sri Kabir Ji in Rag Gaurhi. They are Bavan Akhari, Pandrah Thithi, Satt Vaar.

Through tradition at the end of the Banis in the Guru Granth Sahib is reproduced a Raag Mala. This composition is neither of any theological merit nor ascribed to any of the Gurus or Bhagats. This has mysteriously found its way into the holy book. Reading it reminds one of reciting a catalogue of Raags and Raagnis of Hindustani music.

Research has it that Raagmala is a composition of one Alam, a muslim poet and has no relationship to the text or ethos of the Guru Granth. Rehatnamas too accepts that it is not a *bani* and recommends its reading as optional only.

Prof. Sahib Singh

Gurmukhi – English Glossary

<i>Adi Granth</i>	The Granth Sahib, the sacred scripture of the Sikhs compiled by Guru Arjan in 1603-4.	<i>Chaupad</i>	An Adi Granth shabad consisting of four verses with a refrain.
<i>Akal Purakh</i>	The one beyond time; Sikh concept of the divine being analogous to God.	<i>Chauri</i>	A fan made from yak hair or peacock feathers which is waved over an open Guru Granth Sahib, designating royal authority of the scripture.
<i>Akal Takht</i>	Timeless throne; seat of temporal authority of the Guru (especially Guru-Panth) located on the premises of the Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar.	<i>Dasam Granth</i>	Books of the tenth Guru, the scripture whose authorship is attributed to Guru Gobind Singh or his time.
<i>Akhand Paath</i>	An uninterrupted recitation of the entire Guru Granth Sahib by a relay of readers.	<i>Dhadhi</i>	Village bard or minstrel.
<i>Amrit</i>	Nectar of immortality; the sanctified water used in initiation ceremony of the Khalsa.	<i>Dharam</i>	Religious and panthic duty.
<i>Amrit-dhari</i>	A Sikh who has taken amrit; an initiated member of the Khalsa.	<i>Giani</i>	A learned person, especially well versed in Sikh scriptures.
<i>Amrit-Sanskar</i>	The initiation ceremony of the Khalsa.	<i>Granthi</i>	A reader of the Guru Granth Sahib; the functionary in charge of a gurdwara.
<i>Anand Karaj</i>	The Sikh marriage ceremony.	<i>Gurbani</i>	Compositions of the Gurus.
<i>Anand Sahib</i>	A forty-verse liturgical composition of Guru Amar Das in <i>Ramkali</i> mode. Its short version, first five verses and the last one, is usually recited at the completion of every Sikh service or ceremony.	<i>Gurbani Kirtan</i>	Devotional singing of the Gurus' compositions.
		<i>Gurbilas</i>	Praise of the Guru; hagiographic narratives of the lives of the sixth and tenth Gurus, stressing their role as warriors.
<i>Ardaas</i>	Petition; the daily Sikh prayer recited at the conclusion of every Sikh ceremony.	<i>Gurdwara</i>	The Guru's door, the Sikh place of worship; the temple or house in which the Guru Granth Sahib is kept.
<i>Asa</i>	A raga; one of the sections of the Adi Granth.	<i>Gurmat</i>	The view of the Guru, the sum total of the Gurus' teachings; the doctrines referred to as Sikhism.
<i>Astapadi</i>	An Adi Granth shabad of eight verses with a refrain.	<i>Gurumata</i>	The Guru's intention, a resolution passed by the Sarbat Khalsa in presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.
<i>Bani</i>	Utterance; works of the Gurus and the bhagats recorded in the Adi Granth.	<i>Gurmukh</i>	One who faces towards the Guru; a follower of the divine, of the Guru.
<i>Benati Chaupai</i>	A liturgical composition which forms part of the evening prayer, <i>Rehras Sahib</i> , is actually from the <i>Pakhyani Chritar</i> of the Dasam Granth.	<i>Gurmukhi</i>	From the Guru's mouth; the script in which the compositions of the Gurus were first written. It has become the script in which Punjabi is written by most Sikhs, and by some others.
<i>Bhai</i>	Brother, title of respect given for piety and learning.	<i>Gurpurb</i>	Celebration of the birth or death anniversary of one of the ten Sikh Gurus.
<i>Bhog</i>	The ceremony which concludes a complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib. In early manuscripts <i>bhog</i> marks (usually the symbol of <i>Ik Oankar</i>) are found at the end of the volume.	<i>Guru</i>	A spiritual 'preceptor', either a person or the divine inner voice. The divine Guru became manifest in
<i>Chamkhi</i>	A division of each day in the larger gurdwaras in which a particular selection of bani is sung. There are five chamukis each day.		

	the form of ten human Gurus (from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh) and is now in the form of the twin doctrine of Guru-Granth and Guru-Panth.	<i>Prasad</i>	Sacramentally offered food; cf. <i>karah prasad</i> .
<i>Guru Khalsa</i>	The Khalsa in its role as Guru.	<i>Raga-mala</i>	The garland of musical modes, a controversial text containing the list of eighty-four ragas of north India noted at the end of the Guru Granth Sahib.
<i>Guru Panth</i>	The Panth in the role of Guru.	<i>Ragi</i>	Sikh hymn singer.
<i>Harimandir Sahib</i>	The Golden Temple at Amritsar.	<i>Rahau</i>	Refrain; the rahau-verse is repeated during the musical performance. It represents the central theme of the whole hymn.
<i>Hukam</i>	Divine order; a passage from the Guru Granth Sahib chosen at random.	<i>Rahit</i>	The code of conduct of the Khalsa.
<i>Ik-Oankar</i>	The one being; benedictory formula from the Adi Granth.	<i>Rahit-Nama</i>	Recorded version of the rahit.
<i>Jajivanti</i>	A raga; a section of the Adi Granth. This is the last raga of the standard version of the Sikh scripture.	<i>Ramakali</i>	A raga; a section of the Adi Granth.
<i>Jathedar</i>	Commander of a Sikh takhat; or the leader of a military group.	<i>Rehras</i>	The supplication, the evening prayer.
<i>Karah prasad</i>	Sacramental food made of flour, sugar and clarified butter, prepared in a large iron dish (<i>karahi</i>). It is distributed after each gurdwara service.	<i>Rumala (Romila)</i>	A cloth for covering the Guru Granth Sahib.
<i>Kaur</i>	Princess, a name used by female members of the Khalsa, as a parallel to Singh (lion) for men.	<i>Sabha</i>	Society, association.
<i>Khalsa</i>	The religious order established by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.	<i>Sahaj</i>	The condition of ultimate bliss resulting from the practice of nam simaran.
<i>Khandi di pahul</i>	Baptism of double-edged sword as initiation of the Khalsa.	<i>Sangat</i>	Congregation, group of devotees.
<i>Kirtan</i>	Singing of hymns.	<i>Samsar</i>	Transmigration.
<i>Langar</i>	The community kitchen attached to every gurdwara from which food is served to all, regardless of caste or creed; the meal served from such a kitchen.	<i>Sant</i>	One who knows the truth; a pious person; an adherent of the sant tradition.
<i>Mahala</i>	Code word used to distinguish works by different Gurus in the Adi Granth. For instance, Guru Nanak, as first Guru, is designated 'Mahala 1' or simply 'M1'; the second Guru Angad, is designated as 'M2' and so on.	<i>Sarbat Khalsa</i>	The entire Khalsa, representative assembly of the Khalsa.
<i>Majha</i>	Middle; the area of central Punjab lying between the Beas and Ravi rivers.	<i>Sat-Nam</i>	[Your] name is truth.
<i>Malwa</i>	The plains tract extending south and southeast of the Sutlej river, particularly the area occupied by Ferozepore, Ludhiana and Patiala districts.	<i>Seva</i>	Service offered in a gurdwara.
<i>Miri-Piri</i>	Temporal-spiritual, the Sikh doctrine that maintains that the Guru possesses temporal as well as spiritual authority. It goes back to the sixth Guru, Hargobind, who symbolically donned two swords, one for each type of authority.	<i>Seva-Panthi</i>	Fellowship of service; member of the Sikh sect founded by Bhai Ghaniya, a disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. During the siege of Anandpur, Bhai Ghaniya toured the battlefield, carrying water to wounded, friend and foe alike.
<i>Nam</i>	The divine name, a summary term expressing the total being of Akal Purakh.	<i>Shabad</i>	Word; a hymn of the Adi Granth.
<i>Nam Japn</i>	Devoutly repeating the name divine.	<i>Shabadarath</i>	Meanings of words; synonyms of difficult words.
<i>Nam Simran</i>	The devotional practice of meditating on the divine name or nam.	<i>Shabad Kirtan</i>	Hymn singing in Sikh tradition.
<i>Nirankar</i>	Without form, a name of Akal Purakh used by Guru Nanak.	<i>Shabad Vichar</i>	Reflection on the word; the mode of interpretation of the hymns of the Adi Granth.
<i>Nirguna</i>	Without qualities, formless, non-incarnated.	<i>Shalok</i>	A short composition (normally a couplet) from the Adi Granth.
<i>Nit-Nem</i>	The Sikh daily liturgy.	<i>Siddh, Siddha</i>	Eighty-four men believed to have attained immortality through the practice of yoga and to be dwelling deep in the Himalayas. The figure in the janam-sakhis, where they are confused with naths.
<i>Panth</i>	The key word which refers to the Sikh community; path, way or system of religious belief.	<i>Singh Sabha</i>	Reform movement initiated in 1873. The Singh Sabha became an arena for struggle between the conservative Sanatan Sikhs and the radical Tat Khalsa.
<i>Paratal</i>	Changing of drum-rhythms; hymns of the Adi Granth which must be sung in paratal style based on the changing of drum-rhythms.	<i>Siri raga</i>	A raga; one of the sections of the Adi Granth. This is the first raga of the standard version of the Sikh scripture.
<i>Pauri</i>	Stanza of a var.	<i>Sorathi</i>	A raga; a section of the Adi Granth.
<i>Pothi</i>	Tome, volume.	<i>Takhat</i>	Throne; one of the five centres of temporal authority within the panth. The five takhats are located at Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Damdama Sahib (Bhatinda district), Patna Sahib (Bihar) and Hazur Sahib, Nander (Maharashtra).
<i>Prabhati</i>	A raga; one of the sections of the Adi Granth.	<i>Vaak</i>	Saying; a passage from the Guru Granth Sahib chosen at random.
		<i>Vaar</i>	Ode, a poetic form. An Adi Granth arrangement consisting of stanzas (<i>pauris</i>) with preceding shaloks.
		<i>Waheguru</i>	Praise to the Guru, the Sikh name for God (wonderful lord).

ILLUSTRATION AND ILLUMINATION IN SIKH SCRIPTURAL MANUSCRIPTS



Illuminated Adi Granth folio with nisaan of Guru Gobind Singh. The manuscript is of the Lahore recension, late 17th to early 18th century. (Collection of Takht Sri Harimandir Sahib, Patna.)

The study of art depicting Sikh themes or patronised by Sikhs has in the last forty years moved far beyond Ananda Coomaraswamy's claim that Sikh painting is "decadent" in comparison to its Mughal and Rajput predecessors. In recent years, Sikh painting has been studied on its own terms and with increasing sophistication. This has particularly been the case with miniature painting, but some notice has also been taken of other forms of painting such as murals and manuscript illustration. At the same time, art-historical scholarship in general has begun to set out the broader contexts and frameworks within which we can begin to understand Sikh art. One particularly important contribution has been work on the patronage and production of illustrated and illuminated texts in the Kashmiri style, which was popular in Punjab from the late 18th century onward. Although it has proven impossible so far to isolate stylistic or chronological developments within the broad Kashmiri style of manuscript illustration, recent writing has emphasised the distinction between hastily finished "bazaar" illustrations produced by itinerant artists of varying skill and those carried out under elite patronage. Other studies have outlined the presence of two broad substyles, one based on Persianate models and the other on Indian ones. The contexts outlined by these studies are invaluable for the understanding of a number of key aspects of Sikh manuscript illustration, ranging from patronage and collecting at 19th-century royal courts to popular styles such as those represented by the illustrated *janamsakhis* of Guru Nanak's life. The importance of further research is increased by the remarkably broad geographical diffusion of extant illustrated texts depicting Sikh themes or commissioned by Sikh patrons, ranging from central Asia and Afghanistan in the west to Patna in the east and Burhanpur in the south.

One type of manuscript that has received only sporadic attention in art-historical scholarship are the illuminated and illustrated texts of the Adi Granth, the Sikh holy scripture. While textual work on manuscripts of the Adi Granth has gained increasing momentum during the last sixty years, the study of the manuscripts as cultural productions or as objects in themselves has tended to lag behind. Only in passing has the subject received some attention from art historians: Ananda Coomaraswamy mentions an illustrated manuscript of Kashmiri origin, Karuna Goswamy cites illuminated texts and recent exhibitions have presented detached folios associated with illustrated volumes. This article attempts a tentative reconstruction of the genre as a whole. The enterprise is not without its problems: the vastly reduced extant corpus of Adi Granth manuscripts in the 20th century and the often limited information available about texts in institutional

collections render generalisation difficult. Using available material, we shall deal here with three types of adorned and illustrated manuscripts: early manuscripts bearing pieces of paper with the handwriting of a Guru (*nisaans*) on their opening folios, those with illumination or decoration (usually called *minakari* or *belbuta* in Punjabi), and illustrated manuscripts proper. Both adornment and illustration are usually found at the beginning of manuscripts before *japu*, the first composition in the Adi Granth text, although illumination is occasionally also found at the beginning of each raga section of a manuscript. Illuminated manuscripts of all the known Adi Granth recensions exist, while the known corpus of illustrated texts consists of 19th-century manuscripts of the Damdami and Banno recensions, the most popular versions of the text during the period.

Manuscripts With *Nisaans*

Pieces of paper bearing the handwriting of the Gurus (*nisaans*) are found as a form of adornment exclusively in early Adi Granth manuscripts and other volumes of the Gurus' compositions. Most *nisaans* (lit. seal or banner) occur at the beginning of the text before *japu*, and extant *nisaans* almost invariably consist of separate pieces of paper pasted onto a folio of the manuscript proper. It would appear that the *nisaans* were placed in the manuscripts both to act as "blessings" that increase the sanctity of the volumes and to protect the *nisaans* themselves from loss or damage. Such *nisaans* normally consist of the *moolmantar* (the invocation that is found at the beginning of the Adi Granth and at the head of most raga sections and major compositions in the text) or of a *saloka* (couplet) from the body of the text. Most extant *nisaans* are attributed to the ninth and tenth Gurus, although two are said to be in the hand of Guru Arjan, three in the hand of Guru Hargobind, and one in the hand of Guru Har Rai. Most manuscripts bearing *nisaans* date from the 17th century, although there are isolated examples of *nisaans* pasted into later texts and at least two examples of forged *nisaans* placed in manuscripts sought to be dated to the 17th century. Two early 17th-century compilations of the *bani* that appear to be from independent textual traditions separate from the Adi Granth also contain *nisaans*. A number of extant 17th-century Adi Granth manuscripts combine *nisaans* with illumination; illumination is used here to frame the *nisaan* and enhance its presence in the manuscript. The folio illustrated here, from a manuscript from Patna bearing the *nisaan* of Guru Gobind Singh (third quarter of the 17th century) differs from most 17th-century exemplars in that it eschews the more usual Islamicate blue and gold geometric patterns of illumination in favour of floral decoration in yellow, gold, and blue. Most other early texts, on the other hand, use a

version of the Islamicate *sarlah* to frame their *nisaans*. Another shows a typical *sarlah* and frame adorning a blank folio facing the opening page of a Banno manuscript: these were presumably intended to frame a *nisaan* that for some reason was not included in the final manuscript.

Illuminated Manuscripts

The second major technique for adorning Adi Granth manuscripts is illumination by itself, found in texts ranging from early manuscripts written in the 17th century to those completed during the final years of manuscript production in the second half of the 19th. In addition to being used in Adi Granth manuscripts, illumination was also a feature of 17th-century non-Adi Granth compilations of the works of the Gurus: for instance, the two volume known as the Goindval *pothis* begin with illuminated folios. An Adi Granth manuscript in the British Library probably dating from the period 1660-80 is adorned with a typical Islamicate blue and gold *'urwan*, while one of the decorated folios of Guru Nanak Dev University ms. 1245 bore a *shamsa* that had unmistakable links with high Islamicate traditions of manuscript decoration. It is likely that these illuminations, like those in other early texts with clearly Islamicate stylistic precedents, were carried out by artists who had prior experience of illuminating Arabic and Persian manuscripts. This would appear to suggest that the manner in which early texts are decorated is at least partially a function of the availability of artists trained in Islamicate styles in Punjab in the 17th century. It probably also represents an attempt to appropriate to early Sikh scriptural volumes the cultural prestige of the Islamicate book. Both explanations apply equally to the physical form of early manuscripts: they take the shape of the Islamicate book rather than the Indic *pothi* (which is shorter and wider in form), and are bound in the stamped leather bindings with protective flap characteristic of Islamicate manuscript production. In the mid-18th century, a shift occurs and manuscripts adopt the shape of the Indic *pothi*, at the same time admitting a wider range of decorative forms and motifs in the Kashmiri style, while retaining the Islamicate form of binding.

The fact that most extant illuminated Adi Granth texts are both undated and unprovenanced, renders a detailed chronological understanding of the genre almost impossible. In broad outline, though, it is clear that illumination moves away from purely Islamicate models through the course of the 18th century. By the early decades of the 19th century, illumination in Adi Granth manuscripts is almost exclusively in the Kashmiri style. At one level, this shift is presumably the result of a conjunction between the ready availability of a pool of itinerant Kashmiri artists and the resources for patronage created by new Sikh

political formations. At another level, it seems to be part of a wider shift in models of cultural prestige away from Islamicate templates toward Indic ones, a transformation encouraged by the collapse of Mughal political power in the region. Most illuminated manuscripts produced in the mid to late 18th century already exhibit the vine and floral decorations characteristic of Kashmiri illumination work rather than the geometric patterns of the Islamicate *sarlah* and *'urwan*. Extant examples include a text at the National Museum, New Delhi that retains the traditional Islamicate blue and gold colour scheme and another at Punjabi University, Patiala that introduces fine floral decoration in a wider palette of colours. Some of the Kashmiri styles of the 19th century reached a high degree of standardisation: one template characterised by intricate vine and floral decorations is represented in a number of volumes, including a Damdami recension manuscript presented to the District Commissioner of Jalandhar by Sodhi Sadhu Singh of Kartarpur in 1859 and a contemporaneous Banno text from Pind Dadan Khan in Pakistan. While we cannot trace the geographical diffusion of styles of illumination in the present state of research, the evidence that we do have points to a wide geographical diffusion: manuscripts have been reported from Akhnur in Jammu and districts of Punjab now in Pakistan, while extant texts are from locations as diverse as the Malwa region of Indian Punjab, Pind Dadan Khan and Patna. Such a wide dispersion reflects the general pattern of the production of illustrated and illuminated manuscripts in the Kashmiri style in general.

In addition to more widely available manuscripts in standardised styles, a small number of lavishly illuminated manuscripts was produced as a result of courtly patronage. Among these is a manuscript of the Damdami recension presented by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Baba Sahib Singh Bedi of Una, a major recipient of land grants from the Lahore court, in the 1820s or 1830s. The first two folios of the text are illuminated in blue, gold, and red, the invocations and interlining throughout are in gold ink, there is a painting of Guru Nanak with Bala and Mardana before the beginning of the text proper, and a single painting of *raginis* occurs at the beginning of the Sri *raga* section. According to tradition, the maharaja had three such manuscripts written, one of which may have been presented to the Hazur Sahib shrine in Nanded. The third may well have been the lavishly illuminated volume that was at the main gurudwara in Dera Baba Nanak until at least the late 1970s: like the Una manuscript, the text had invocations and interlining in gold ink, although it is said to have had a differently patterned margin on every folio. A manuscript of a similar standard of decoration was



One page of the illuminated opening bifolio of an Adi Granth manuscript is of the Damdani recension, produced for Sodhi Sadhu Singh of Kartarpur, district Jalandhar, Punjab, Kashmiri style, circa 1859. Reproduced courtesy of the British Library.

created in Dhaka in the late 18th century for Lala Nand Lal, the brother of a *munshi* of Navab 'Alivardi Khan, although it is unclear whether the text is still extant. Perhaps the most lavishly illuminated manuscript that has been reported was a volume prepared for Maharaja Ranjit Singh by a scribe named Sudh Singh: one of a pair, the text was written entirely in an ink mixed with gold, diamonds, and emeralds, and the scribe was given the revenue of two villages as a reward for his labours. It is unclear whether the manuscript still exists.

Illustrated Manuscripts

The final category of manuscripts to be considered here are those in which painted folios appear, again usually at the beginning of the text of *lapu*. The reduced size of the corpus of extant Adi Granth manuscripts renders almost impossible any judgement on when the first illustrated texts were produced, although all known examples date from

the 19th century. As with illuminated manuscripts, the limited information that we have confirms the broad geographical spread of illustrated texts: a scholar working in the 1960s noted an illustrated volume from Gujarkhan in Pakistan, while extant manuscripts are from locations as diverse as Dina Kangar in Indian Punjab and Jhelum district in Pakistan. It is worth noting as well the existence of manuscripts in which independent paintings of the Gurus have been pasted onto the initial folios, presumably for much the same reasons as *nisaans* in earlier texts: a painting of Guru Nanak with Bala and Mardana has been pasted into a 19th century Damdami manuscript in Patna, and one depicting the same three figures now faces the final index folio in a Banno manuscript dated 1776.

Currently known extant illustrated Adi Granth manuscripts were produced by Kashmiri artists, and the corpus as a whole displays the expected variation in quality

between popular and elite productions. There is also an important thematic distinction between the manuscripts: some of them depict only the ten Gurus on their opening folios, while others add Indic gods and goddesses (usually Devi, Sarasvati, or Ganesh). Since most of the manuscripts are unprovenanced, it is difficult to generalise about the meaning of this distinction. Some of the manuscripts depicting gods and goddesses may have been created for Hindu patrons or for use at Hindu or folk shrines, but one significant extant example discussed below is known to have been commissioned by a member of a Sikh religious lineage. A further complicating factor is the practice of Kashmiri artists themselves, who often seem to have followed set templates for illustrating texts even when the content of manuscripts was altered by scribes or patrons. What we do know with certainty, though, is that there were readers and patrons who were opposed to the presence of Indic deities in Sikh texts: 18th-century manuscripts of at least two Sikh texts excise narrative references to Indic deities, as do some manuscripts of a 19th-century chronicle of the life of the sixth Guru, Hargobind. As the case of the *Adi Granth* manuscripts presented here shows the same situation holds for illustrations in Sikh texts. While only the discovery of further provenanced manuscripts will allow us to discuss the presence or absence of Indic deities in *Adi Granth* manuscripts with any nuance, it is at least clear at present that those who excluded them did so with deliberate intent.

Two illustrated 19th-century opening bifolios will represent here the class of texts in which illustrations of the ten Gurus alone appear. A Lahore-Banno manuscript from Dina Kangar in the Malwa region of Punjab presumably completed during the period 1820-40 moves somewhat away from the stereotypical Kashmiri template of a circular or lotus-petal arrangement of figures around a central roundel. Instead, sequential panels of illustrations are grouped around a central scallop-shaped text area, proceeding from left to right and downward. The illustration fills most of the central rectangular area of the folio and is surrounded by a border composed of intricate vine decorations in blue, gold, and red. Many of the iconographic features in the illustrations make individual Gurus instantly recognisable: Guru Nanak is shown with his musician companion Mardana, Guru Arjan with a scriptural volume, Guru Har Krishan as a beardless child, and both Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh on horseback. In addition to this illustrated bifolio at the beginning of the text, the manuscript contains decoration on each of the folios of *Japu* and illumination at the beginning of each raga section. A detached bifolio from roughly the same period in the Spencer Collection, New

York Public Library is a more typically Kashmiri composition with a series of figures grouped around a central text roundel and a ground of vine and floral decorations. While the illustration of the human figures is of roughly the same standard as in the Dina Kangar volume, the execution of the illumination and decoration of the central roundel is of a slightly less accomplished quality. The order of the Gurus is more haphazard than in the previous manuscript, but Guru Nanak is instantly identifiable on the left-hand folio and Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Krishan, and Guru Gobind Singh on the right-hand page.

A number of 19th-century manuscripts include depictions of Indic deities along with the Sikh Gurus on their opening folios. A figure shows a manuscript of the Damdami text, probably completed in the period 1820-40, and now at Punjabi University, Patiala. It arranges each of the leaves of the bifolio in a typically Kashmiri lotus-leaf pattern with the text in alternating lines of black and gold ink in the central roundel. The illustration on the left-hand folio places Ganesh and Sarasvati at the top and the first four Gurus around the lower portion of the central roundel; the painting on the right-hand folio depicts the remaining six Gurus. The sequence of figures on both folios proceeds from left to right and downward. The figures are carefully composed, with many displaying the iconographic characteristics usually associated with them: Guru Nanak appears with Mardana, Guru Arjan with a scriptural volume, Guru Har Krishan as a beardless child, and Guru Gobind Singh on horseback.

Somewhat uncharacteristically for Sikh iconography, Guru Tegh Bahadur is also shown armed and on horseback. The ground displays fine floral decoration in a vine pattern with four small examples of the cone-shaped decorations characteristic of Kashmiri shawl embroidery.

By far the most lavishly illustrated *Adi Granth* manuscript in a public collection is one of the rare volumes about which we know a fair amount. A text of the Damdami recension, it was produced between the years 1839-43 for Sodhi Bhan Singh of Haranpur, district Jhelum by the Kashmiri artist Miha Singh and the Kashmiri scribe Misar Prakas. The manuscript is in the National Museum, New Delhi. It has 29 folios of index and 895 of text, and is a lavish production with a number of full-page paintings and profuse illumination at the beginning of each raga section. It also contains minor illuminations at the beginning of subsections of the text and a number of small paintings depicting contributors to the *Granth*, the later Gurus, and the text's patron. The text of the manuscript begins with an illustrated bifolio consisting of two *dvadashakamalas*



Detached opening bifolio of an *Adi Granth* manuscript, left hand folio-above, right-hand folio below. Kashmiri style, circa 1820-40. Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

(twelve-petalled lotuses) on a blue and gold ground, the first with oankar, Sarasvati, and the ten avatars of Vishnu in the petals, and the second with Shiva and Parvati, Narayana, Brahma, and the ten Gurus surrounding the central roundel. The image of the symbol *oankar* on the first folio subsumes within itself Devi, Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu-Lakshmi: it therefore simultaneously contains and supersedes the classical *pancha-deva* in a representation of the formless Sikh deity. The image is of great importance to the text, appearing at the top of the index folio, at the beginning of the text proper, and at the beginning of each *raga* section. Four extant detached painted folios are also usually assumed to belong to Sodhi Bhan Singh's *Adi Granth*. The first three of these refer extensively to the universe of classical Indic myth and tradition: a lavishly illuminated folio with a *dvadashakamala* whose petals contain images of Kashyap, Surajvanshi, and the ten Gurus with Bhan Singh offering ablutions to Mahakal and Kali in the central roundel; an illustrated folio depicting Arjuna and a figure identified as "*Sodhi, bans*" (representative of "the Sodhi clan") worshipping the Virata-rupa form of Vishnu-Krishna; and an illuminated folio depicting ten gods and goddesses in a lotus-petal arrangement around a central figure of Vishnu Sheshashayi with the 24 avatars of Vishnu shown in the margins. The fourth detached folio depicts a number of ragas and was most probably originally appended to the Ragamala composition that ends the text of the *Adi Granth*. It

is unclear where in the manuscript the other three painted folios were intended to be placed. The volume ends with a number of illuminated folios and at least one illustrated folio depicting a number of ragas.

The colophon, appearing on two blank folios at the end of the text, is worth quoting in full for the information it provides on the manuscript's patron and the artist and scribe who produced it.

Sodhi Bhan Singh, resident of Haranpur, had the Granth Sahib begun in 1896 VS [1839]. The glory of working on it was obtained by Miha Singh of Kashmir and the scribe

of descendants of the Gurus. As part of this process, the Haranpur lineage received extensive land grants from Sikh Sardars in the 18th century and from Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the 19th. The senior member of the lineage in his generation, Bhan Singh seems to have been a keen patron of manuscripts, since an illustrated anthology of texts commissioned by him in 1838 is also extant. Mina writing and scriptural exegesis displays a strong affinity with classical Indic tradition and mythology, and 17th-century sources indicate that texts such as the *Bhagavatapurana*, *Bhagavadgita*, and *Mahabharata* were regularly expounded



Opening bifolio of an *Adi Granth* manuscript. The manuscript is of the Damdami recension, Kashmiri style, circa 1820-40. Gold and colours on paper, folio size 305 x 340 mm, painting size 220 x 245 mm. Reproduced courtesy Punjabi University, Patiala ms. 115593.

Misar Prakas of Katra Ganpatyar, near Basant Bagh, Kashmir. It was completed after four years.

Only the writer of (this) manuscript knows how much effort has been expended—[just as] only Hanuman knows how difficult it was to cross the ocean.

The Sodhis of Haranpur were descendants of Prithi Chand, the eldest son of the fourth Sikh Guru, Guru Ram Das. Prithi Chand and his descendants were stigmatised as “Minas” by the mainstream Sikh community due to the family’s contention that they constituted a separate lineage of gurus. In the 18th century, the family and their followers were included in the list of “five reprobates” (*panj mel*) to be spurned by initiate members of the Khalsa. During the 18th and 19th centuries, many Mina lineages regained a measure of social status due to patronage by Sikh rulers, who sought prestige and legitimation through patronage

at Mina centers. It is perhaps this strong leaning toward classical texts and traditions that is reflected in the repeated depiction of Hindu deities and themes in Bhan Singh’s *Adi Granth*.

The size and sumptuousness of the present manuscript seem to imply that it was intended for public display. Such a ceremonial use would be in consonance with long established Mina traditions of publicly exhibiting scriptural volumes, a practice referred to in accounts of the lives of the 17th century Mina gurus. Sodhi Bhan Singh seems to have continued these traditions, deploying the illustrations in his *Adi Granth* to project a number of messages about his lineage and position. The painting at the head of the manuscript’s table of contents (figure 8), for example, clearly aims to bolster the manuscript’s textual legitimacy. It depicts the denouement of the traditional story of the

compilation of the first manuscript of the Adi Granth, written by Bhai Gurdas at the dictation of Guru Arjan. According to the story, Bhai Gurdas's volume was copied with the addition of a number of apocryphal compositions by a Sikh named Banno. In the illustration under discussion, both scribes present their copies to Guru Arjan for his approval: the Guru points to Bhai Gurdas's volume, indicating his acceptance of it. By extension, the illustration also legitimises the Damdami recension, seen by tradition as the linear descendant of the Bhai Gurdas text. Since the Bhan Singh manuscript is of the Damdami recension, the painting serves as a visual testament to the volume's authority and that of its patron.

Some of the illustrations in the text testify more directly to the prestige that Sodhi Bhan Singh wished to secure for himself and his newly elevated lineage. The depiction of the ten Gurus in the opening bifolio of the text and in the detached folio usually associated with the manuscript both show Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan with scriptural volumes in front of them. Since mainstream Sikh tradition assigns the compilation of the Adi Granth to Guru Arjan and does not associate a scriptural manuscript with Guru Ram Das, it is clear that Sodhi Bhan Singh is trying to convey a specific message through these images. His aim is presumably to add to his family's prestige and standing by showing its own lineal ancestor to be the possessor of a scriptural volume in the same way as Guru Arjan was. In doing so, he draws on Mina tradition, according to which Guru Ram Das possessed a volume belonging to the earlier Gurus that was passed down to and publicly displayed by Prithi Chand and the later Mina gurus. (This is said to have been the manuscript in the possession of the Sodhi lineage of Guru Har Sahai, district Firozepur until its theft from a train compartment in 1970.) Depictions of Sodhi Bhan Singh himself elsewhere in the manuscript convey a message about his own status as a religious figure: they portray him as a classical Indic ritual patron (*yajamana*), who gains merit and religious prestige through his ritual acts. The central roundel of one of the folios associated with the Adi Granth manuscript shows Bhan Singh offering ablutions to Mahakal and Kali, while an illustration in the body of the text itself depicts him offering ritual ablutions to a fire. Both are clearly intended to represent Bhan Singh as a *yajamana* at the same time as they restate and reinforce his association with the manuscript. By having himself depicted as the classical Indic ritual patron, Sodhi Bhan Singh attempts to equate his act of commissioning a religious manuscript with traditional ritual sacrifice, thereby appropriating to himself the resulting merit and prestige. Clearly then, Bhan Singh

uses his Adi Granth manuscript to convey a public image of himself that bolsters his authority and legitimacy, demonstrating a sophisticated and direct relationship with the product of his patronage and the artists who created it.

Conclusion

The close of the 19th century brought an abrupt end to the production of Adi Granth manuscripts. Traditions of illuminating and illustrating scriptural texts also fell into a fatal decline. Although the practice of decorating the margins of Adi Granth volumes has continued into modern printed editions, figural illustration is found at the beginning of only a very few early lithographed or printed Adi Granth texts. Most printed and lithographed volumes are completely devoid of illustration or major adornment. This move away from decoration is most probably the result of a number of concurrent social and cultural shifts. The most salient of these was the reduction in the pool of available artists and illustrators caused by the end of manuscript production in the second half of the 19th century. To this must be added the new economy of scale created by lithograph and type printing in the second half of the 19th century, which fostered a new high-volume, low-cost context in which elite patronage of illumination and illustration was unable to sustain itself. These factors combined to spur a general abandonment of many features of manuscripts - including illustration in Punjabi printing at the tail end of the 19th century. In temporal terms, these changes in the nature of the Punjabi book and its production coincide with the beginnings of the wider cultural and religious shifts that dominated the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century in the Punjab.

In a very real sense, then, illustrated and illuminated Adi Granth manuscripts are a window into a lost Sikh cultural universe. Their disappearance marks a major change in notions of cultural prestige and attitudes toward the physical form of scripture. At this stage of research, we know regrettably little about the geographical, temporal, and social distribution of adorned manuscripts and even less about the patrons, scribes, and artists who created them. Until this changes, it will remain extremely difficult to understand the multiple meanings and intentions that lay behind their creation and use. As future research expands our knowledge of these vitally important manuscripts, it will also ensure once and for all their place in the social history of Sikhism, the Punjab and the history of Indian art.

edited by Kavita Singh



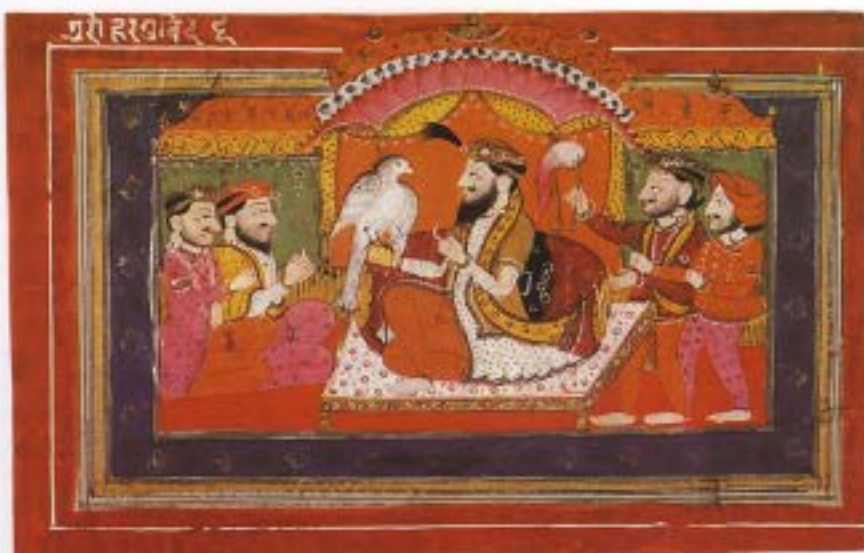
Young Bhupinder Singh of Patiala on horseback, signed "Shiv Ram, Painter, Patiala", circa 1900-05. Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, Acc. no. 3962. Photograph: Surinder Dhami, by kind permission of the Government Museum.

New Insights into Sikh Art, ed. Kavita Singh (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2003) pages 148; profusely illustrated. Rs. 2250.

The year 1999 marked tercentenary of the founding of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur Sahib, as well as the bicentenary of the coronation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (r. 1799-1839), the greatest Sikh ruler. The occasions proved catalytic for the study of some hitherto ignored aspects of Sikhism, including the Sikh arts. Three major exhibitions showcased the arts of the community Piety and Splendour, curated by art historian B. N. Goswami, at the National Museum, New Delhi; *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms*, curated by Susan Stronge, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and *Maharaja Ranjit Singh: Lord of the Five Rivers* curated by the French scholar Jean-Marie Lafont, at the Ram Bagh Palace Museum, Amritsar.

The tercentenary celebrations also included a conference on the subject of "Sikh Art". The book under review incorporates the revised versions of the papers presented at the conference and some other articles specially written for the volume, eight in all. Added to these essays is an introduction by the editor Kavita Singh, and an index.

The editor introduces the volume with a succinct account of the history of the Sikhs, from the birth of Guru Nanak Dev in 1469, up to the merging of the Sikh States of the Punjab in Indian Union in 1948. Then follows an assessment of the few previous studies on the subject, their biases and lacunas; an account of what constitutes "Sikh Art" and its time span. The essay closes with a discussion on what would constitute "Sikh Art" in the 20th and 21st centuries. The editor's answer to the query "Here, Sikh art would



(Top): Guru Hargobind. Inscribed at upper left margin in Devanagari, "Guru Hargobind: 6". Kashmir-style painting, probably intended for a manuscript, circa 19th century. Opaque watercolour on paper. Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, Acc. no. 3508. Photograph: Surinder Dhami, courtesy Kavita Singh, reproduced by kind permission of the Government Museum.

(Above): Devotee prostrating himself before the seventh Sikh Guru, Har Rai. Fresco from the Masnad Hall, Qila Mubarak, Patiala, mid to late 19th century. Photograph: Surinder Dhami, courtesy Kavita Singh.

mean the art made by artists who are Sikh" does not appeal to the reason. A number of ace modern artists like Paramjit Singh (painter), Balbir Singh Katt (sculptor), Prem Singh (painter), Pirthipal Singh Ladi (sculptor), are Sikhs by religion. But I wonder if any of them would like his work to be labelled as "Sikh Art". The religious labels are applicable to arts only up to a certain limit and can not be over-stretched.

In the opening article "The Sikh Tradition in the Pre-Modern Period" Pashaura Singh narrates the history of the evolution of the Sikh religion in some more detail, providing a background for the other essays.

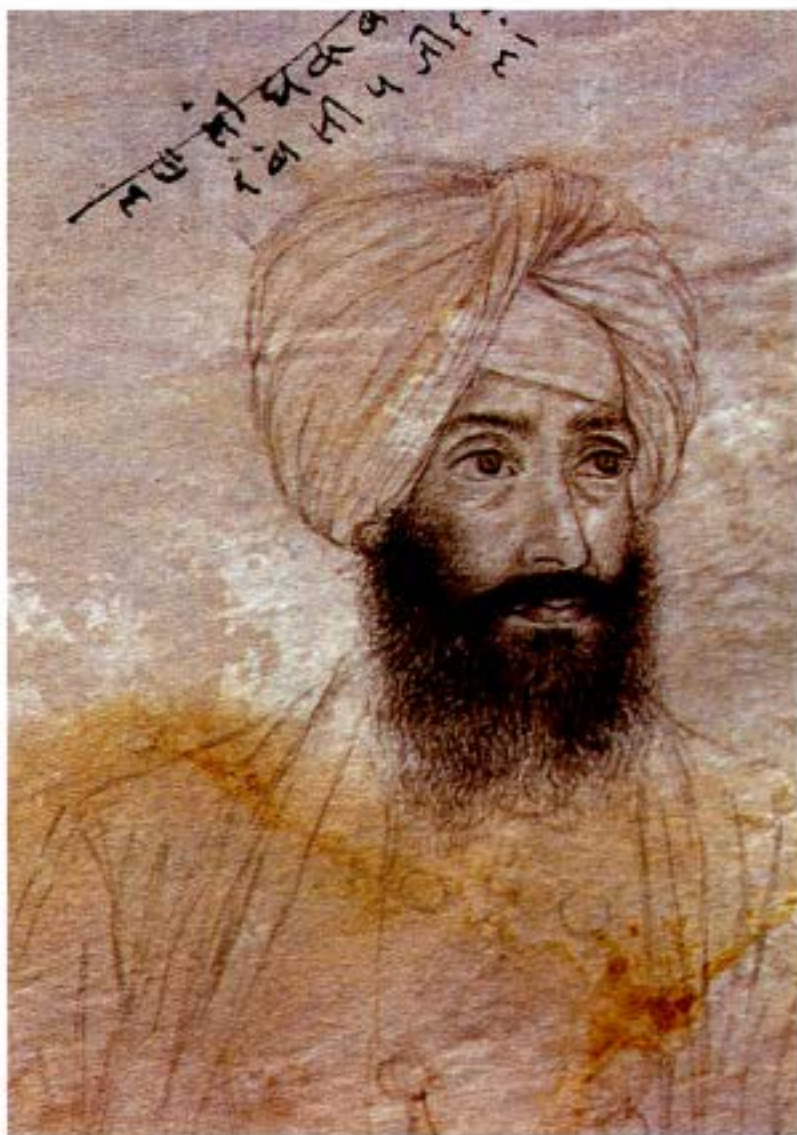
The next article "Brick by Sacred Brick: Architectural Projects of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind" by Gurmeet Rai and Kavita Singh is not a piece of research but of journalistic level. Some of its errors may be pointed out here. The baoli at Goindwal was built by Guru Amar Das in 1559, most probably, just to supply the much needed water to his followers as well as to the travellers along the Mughal Highway from Agra to Lahore on which the town was situated. This entire route was marked with baolis and tanks. Within the present Punjab, baolis along the route can still be seen at Doraha, Kanech, Sultanpur Lodi (2) and Sarai Amanat Khan. Besides these, baolis are also known to have existed at Rajpura, Sirhind (2), Khanna and Nurmahal. The location of Goindwal at the ferry of River Beas made it a significant halting stage along the Highway and the baoli along with the others of its class quenched the thirst of the travellers along the route. It must have developed into a place of pilgrimage at some later stage. A four decade-old picture of the original brick structure of the baoli, before it was clad in marble, can be seen in the book entitled Punjab, edited by Dr. M.S. Randhawa (Patiala: Languages Department, 1960, plate opposite p. 480).

In the same article, the authors attribute the tankside pavilion at Thatte Khera to the late sixteenth century. But the architectural features of the structure, particularly its bangala roof and curved chhajja, warn against such early date for its construction. These two architectural features were first introduced in northern India in the buildings of the reign of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1627-58).

The authors' attribution of every building at Sri Hargobindpur to Guru Hargobind appears to be based on mere oral tradition which rarely forms a convincing basis for fixing the chronology of a monument. The architectural style of the Gurudwara Granthian and Hanuman Mandir places their erection not earlier than the nineteenth century. The mosque of the town is an older building. It looks attractive to attribute the construction of these places of worship of

three religions to the Guru but if he himself was to maintain the differences between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs by erecting their separate religious places, then what Sikhism stood for?

Many statements of the authors in the article betray their ignorance of the working of the Mughal government. It is unthinkable that the Mughal State would allow any one of its subjects to build a fort or keep a personal army without the royal sanction.



Lehna Singh. Mid to late 19th century, Patiala. Brush drawing on paper, inscribed in Devanagari, "Lan Singh Kabirbansi Pajore wala".

In his article "Illustration and Illumination in Sikh Scriptural Manuscripts", Jeevan Singh Deol presents a survey of three styles of illustrating and illuminating Adi Granth, the Sacred Book of the Sikhs.

The article "Allegories of Good Kingship: Wall Paintings in the Qila Mubarak at Patiala" by Kavita Singh (the editor of the present book) is an enlightening study of the Patiala frescos on Vaishnava themes. It certainly expands the notion of what constitutes a Sikh subject. The paintings on



"Bhai Jaita Taking the Head of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur", by Jaswant Singh, 1976-83. Oil on hardboard; 145 x 203 cm. Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Museum, Anandpur Sahib.

When Bhai Jaita escaped from Chandni Chowk with the Sis (head) of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib, the Mughal soldiery was in hot pursuit and by sunset had closed in on him. Bhai Jaita entered a village to hide himself and spend the night. There lived a Sikh in that village whose visage resembled the Guru somewhat. This devout follower of the Guru offered that his head be cut off and presented to the Mughal persuaders as the Guru's head so as to deflect them. This was done, the Mughals were misled into believing that they had achieved their task. By the time realisation came, Bhai Jaita had made his escape on to Anandpur.

On the national highway from Delhi to Ambala there is sign read *Badd-Khalsa* which is the village where this unique sacrifice took place.

Vaishnava themes were also there on the Akal Takht (destroyed in 1986 and then rebuilt). One can still witness the similar themes painted in the Lahore fort, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Kavita correctly points out that for "the more fluid form of Sikhism that existed prior to the Singh Sabha reforms of the 20th century" the Vaishnava themes were not alien. These mythological themes were a common heritage of Sikhs and Hindus. The drawing of definitive boundaries around Sikhism was the work of the Singh Sabha activists.

Dr. B.N. Goswami's article "The Changing Face of Things: Little-Known 'Sikh' Portraits from Patiala" is a penetrating study of nine brush-work portraits, belonging to two collections from the city: the Sheesh Mahal Art Gallery and a private collection. Masterful rendering of individual character, so beautifully analysed by the author, is the hallmark of the works. Although dating from the second half of the nineteenth century, this bunch of portraits has a remarkably modern academic look. The author successfully traces their origin in the works of the court painters of Patiala. Divia Patel in her article "Symbols of Identity: Photographs of a People" traces the role of photography in establishing the traditional image of the Sikhs, as well as changing that image in modern times.

Urmi Kesar's article "Twentieth Century Sikh Painting: The Presence of the Past" brings forth the salient features of the oeuvre of the four prominent twentieth century Sikh

painters, namely, S.G. Thakur Singh (1894-1976), Sobha Singh (1901-86), Jaswant Singh (1918-91), and Kirpal Singh (1923-90). The author calls for a reassessment of their paintings. I am aware that theoretically, there is no place for caste system in Sikhism but it may be interesting to note that the largest number of the prominent Sikh artists (and litterateurs too) including the above-mentioned four, belong to the carpenter caste.

The last article in the book "The Khalsa Heritage Complex: A Museum for a Community?" by Anne-Colombe (Sat Kaur) discusses various controversies and questions associated with the proposed mega Complex. Fortunately, it ends with a note of hope.

The book is free from any printing mistakes. There are only one factual error—the caption of figure 7 (p. 27) gives the name of the main figure in the fresco as "Guru Prithi Chand Ji" but the painting itself has the name "Sri Guru Mihrbanji" inscribed on it.

The production of the book is of a remarkably high quality carrying finely reproduced colour and black & white plates.

The study of "Sikh Art" is still in its early stage. The foundations are being laid. The book under review will serve as one of the foundation stones on which the unified edifice of the "Sikh Art" will be built in due time.

Subhash Parihar

Guru Granth Sahib

The Book itself is not my king

Not paper nor ink the thing

That commands my respect.

It is not the *palki's* beauty

Nor even yet a sense of duty

That causes me to reflect.

Not coloured edges not the binding,

Not the *pulkan* nor the winding

Cloth my bow inspire.

It is the resonate song of praise

Teaching me the value of my days

That leads me ever higher.

A velvet *romala*, gold-trimmed replete

Does not bring me to the Guru's feet.

Mere print removes not anger, lust nor pride,

But the essence that is found inside.

In the end suffices

To free me of pain and greed

And relieves me of the need

To heed attachments devices.

It is the meaning of each word

That my thirsty soul has heard

(Longing like the *chatrik* for God's Loves Nectar),

Where is written in every sector

The sweet *Shabads* that the Gurus spoke

To fill the *sangat* with *santokh*.

No mere book with pagination

Inspires my soul to contemplation

Of the bounty of God's gifts,

Not incense wafting that lifts

My wayward mind in meditation.

Not a *chaur* waved in an arc

Has placed upon my soul mark

Of God's unmerited Grace

And revealed to me the treasure

Composed in many a raag and measure

That makes the worlds wealth commonplace.

Not the Book, but what is contained therein

Brings me to the Guru's feet again.

Before the Guru Granth Sahib I stand

With prayerful heart and folded hands.

To Gurbani - it is my Teacher now

To the essence of Ten Masters I bow.

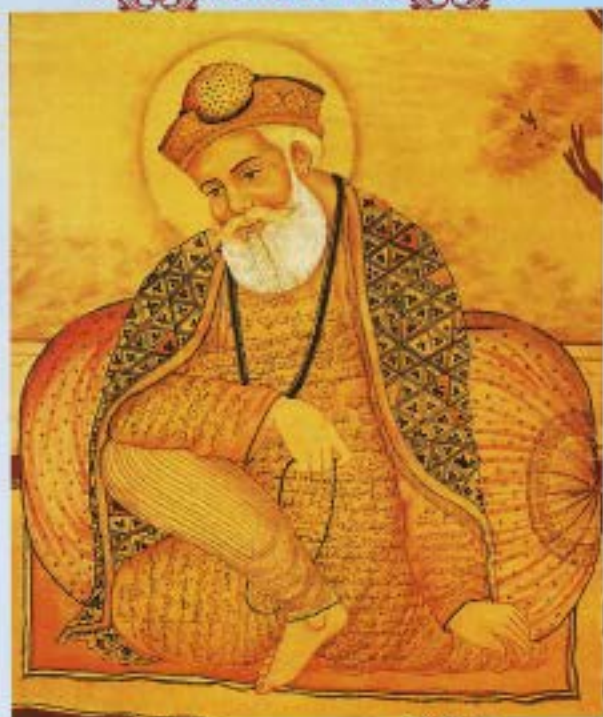
Waheguru di kirpa nal

Jivanjot Kaur

(An American Sikh from New Orleans, she first encountered Sikhi through a granthi whom she was helping study English in the USA. The first time she saw Sikhs paying obeisance to the Guru Granth Sahib, she assumed it was a sort of idol worship. This poem explains to Sikh and non-Sikh alike what the Guru Granth Sahib means to her and why she bows before it.)

THE 'JAPUJI' OF GURU NANAK

The modern age has been auto-suggesting through its false science of political economy that man lives on bread alone. Miserably small and depressing is this animalistic view of human life. The greatest thinkers of the world have not put faith in bread alone. Pregnant with spiritual beauty are the memorable words of Jesus Christ, "Thou shalt not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." All animals get hungry; they must go to the manger, but to glorify this physical necessity, as does the modern world, is the outcome of ignorance and blindness to spiritual values. My eyes turn upwards and kiss the lotus feet of the Great One who dwells within me when I read the hopeful message, "Thou shalt not live by bread alone." My thirst for reality is greatly assuaged. And when I reflect that Sikhs of the olden time, the disciples of the Guru, lived on the hymn of 'Japuji' I am filled with joy and thankfulness. So profound has been the influence of the constant repetition of this divine lyric by my Sikh ancestors, the ancestry that started only 450 years ago, that when I dip myself in cold water, involuntarily escapes the song out of me as birds cry out at break of dawn. To have dissolved its pure cadences in the blood of the Sikh children is a great artistic work. For this hymn gives joy; it vitalizes the whole of our spiritual being, and elevates and ennobles. Its touch cools down all fires of desire and the peace that was of Buddha comes to the Sikhs, to both men and women as they chant the Guru's songs. Today if you ask any Sikh child to choose between *Japuji* and bread, he will answer unhesitatingly "*Japuji*" for the wealth of the three worlds, for the comforts of a Paradise or the joys of a dream-world of intense pleasure. With a broken shoe, a tattered turban, and a threadbare shirt, a poor toiler on the earth, without name or caste reads *Japuji* as he sits clothed in the colour of the false dawn under a tree in the wilderness. His eyes grow red with delight and as he opens them there is the red sun trembling in the east. The Sikh is one with nature and it is *Japuji* that has brought this about. *Japuji* is a hymn that has in its ring the tremble of the stars, the flickering lamps of this blue-domed Temple. They who live on the surface rebuke the Sikh for wearing a white turban, but as he raises his head, the clouds disperse and reveal the snow-covered mountain. I sometimes wonder because the mountain is such a splendid Sikh of the Guru. The Sikh copies his fashions of dress from the beautiful in nature. Of what use is life, if my head does not rise above all its circumstances and conditions even as the high white mountain rises above the plains? Seeing the river that comes out of the mountain like a song, is it mainly for me to have a heart that is not the fountain of all the rivers that flow?



Japuji has in it the inimitable rhythm of life in Nature; it makes man a fountain that flows with the milk of human kindness. *Japuji* is the text of the art of living in unison with Nature and with Nature's God. It describes creation, as the divine poet sees it and suggests the realisation of cosmic consciousness. Our reasons are of the material and therefore negligible; but feeling is of the spiritual. Nothing in the other scriptures and Bibles of men equals *Japuji* in its wonder, its depth and its simple clarity of perfect revelation of personal truth. Those who have the likeness of God in them dwell within the inmost circle of the family that is Nature. Is it not crude to speak of 'one's own family' and not to be of all families? What is that courtyard which has not the moon and the mountains within its small expanse? What is that house which has not the wondrous expanse of the whole universe? It is miserable to be small. I wonder we do not suffocate in mental misery because of this ignorant exclusiveness. But by its rhythm, *Japuji* of Guru Nanak lifts us up to great heights. We clasp the stars in one hand and the roots of life on earth in the other.

It is a charmed hymn. In its repetition is life. It is wonderful that Guru Nanak resumes his personality in this one hymn of His. We meet the master in its

The 'Japuji' In Brief

O Beloved

Thy name is Truth

Thou art the Person who creates

Thou art the humanity that hath no fear, no enmity.

Thy shining spiritual form is above time and space.

Thou art immortality,

Self-radiant Thou, O' Love,

Whom no birth can envisage

And no death can remove

O' Beloved,

Sacred, secret is Thy name.

*And it opens like the flower of life in the kindness of
the Guru.*

Thou art eternity

The beginning Thou,

The end Thou.

O' Beloved,

Thou art beyond the wings of thought,

Thou art beyond the plumbings of silence.

Without Thee desire is not sated

*And all wise proposings sink with sorrow, nothing
avails without Thee.*

Living with Thee,

In Thee, O'Great Love,

*Consenting to be Thine for ever and ever is life's
fulfillment.*

At the signal of Thy brow

The forms rise,

The souls are cast,

*And glory gilds the brow even of the smallest, the
meanest.*

At the signal of Thy brow

Life is scattered in myriad positions, low and high,

And the souls rise up through pain and pleasure.

Some are the gifted beings in union with Thee

*And others wander away, in their orbits, for ever and
ever.*

All is the superb creation of Thy eyes, O Beloved.

Thou art.

Glory, glory, O' Beloved.

All are in Thy sunshine.

Thieves, they say,

Cut-throats, robbers who live on other's blood,

Sinners, slanderers, liars,

They say these are mean and small,

But when Thou shinest, all is beautiful.

I am attracted out of myself,

Fascinated by Thee I sacrifice myself to Thee.

Glory, glory, O' Beloved,

All is well.

Thy place is of music made,

On its walls the universe breaks in song,

Its sky is full of fair dancers,

*The space resounds with the rhythm of soundless
bliss,*

*The rivers and the continents sing Thy Name,
O'Beloved,*

The stars beam with Naming Thee

The mail-clad warrior is fierce,

*But his heroic death on the battle-field sings in faint
tunes of love Thy anthems of personality-music.*

Thy dream rolls on.

Life is inspiration of Thy Beauty,

*And they are the princes of Heaven who love, who
love,*

*In that still repose of soul, in the infinite rapture of
silence.*

When one buds forth into a million,
 When the voices of the rivers become my voice.
 And the cries of birds on wing my own,
 And the leaves of the forest and the blades of grass
 my myriad tongues.
 When one call of mine to Thee, O' Beloved, becomes
 a million, and that million becomes a million
 again.
 And the wheel of the whole universe moves as a
 wheel in wheel of song Naming Thee,
 O' Beloved, and ever in harmony with the
 celestial music within my soul of Thy Love.
 And my once saying "Thou, Thou", O' Beloved, starts
 the countless ages of life saying "Thou Thou".
 Of this music is made the ladder that rises up to
 Thee.
 And they meet Thee who scaling this shining ladder
 cross the frontier.
 Beyond, there, up, above, the highest art Thou,
 O' Beloved,
 And higher floats like the nimbus around Thee Thy
 song of Nam.
 And the entrance upto Thy Palaces is according to
 the assonance of one's soul; they enter whom
 Thou callest,
 And the smiths that make men of themselves toil
 hard at their craft.
 They cast and recast their souls in the mage of Thee,
 O' Beloved,
 From near and far, It is the music of life that ascends
 to Thee.
 Born of waters,
 We children of earth
 Hear news of Thee from the winds.
 Day and night nurse all life.
 According to the actions of each soul are appointed
 places for all, be they near or far,
 Those who Name Thee, Beloved, are perfected,
 Bright are the faces of the victors who have learnt
 to live in the maddening music of Thy Presence.
 O' Love, my Love!

sound. They of this earth have not yet heard of it, but the
 Heavens resound with its lilt.

I think it is of no benefit to translate it. Having translated
 it once, in another mood, I am impelled to translate it again.
 At least I wish to translate it endlessly. And it is for ever
 impossible to translate it. In its vision swing many universes.
 In its sound live many beautiful gods and goddesses. In its
 movement there is the thrill of the silver steps of a myriad
 dancers of the sky. In its repetition is the assonance of a choir
 of Heaven, and the companionship of the liberated souls. It
 teaches no philosophy but it imparts of the spark of life. Be it
 true or false, in its chant is the secret of the future esoteric
 religion of the whole mankind. And one never has enough of
 this spiritual chant. *Japuji* will make the little sweet intense
 language of the Punjab the universal language of man.
 "A fond hope!" you may say. But love has its ways. And a
 small track may lead to a new continent I do not know. Love
 works all miracles. And Guru Nanak's chosen language may,
 by the love of His name, be the chosen of the people of this
 earth. Its cadence is audible in Heaven: this much I know.

Some of you will say this is not a translation of *Japuji*. True,
 it is not the million readings we can have of it, but it is one of
 those readings. Music has an infinite number of moods and
 meanings. Moreover, this translation is absolutely literal. I
 should be a blasphemer if I were to give any sense differing
 from that of the Guru in my translation of His hymns. I like
 the short rendering given above better than that I gave in 1921
 in *The Sister of the Spinning Wheel* and I still like some of the
 passages in my earlier versions. And when out of the million
 more renderings I have yet to give in centuries to come, I shall
 have selected the best, pearl-like in their beauty, and have
 strung them on a thread of light, I shall then make still other
 translations and become so vain with pride of wearing the
 garland, that then perhaps my ambition of translating *Japuji*
 will have its first crude fulfilment.

I make a personal confession here. I have been saved from
 death by the love of the maker of *Japuji*. I have doubted
 frequently with others of the age the merit of repeating the
 psalms of the Guru, but by actual experiments conducted by
 myself on myself, I find that without *Japuji* one dies, that the
 personal love for the Guru falls into the dust and dirt of daily
 life and that without *Japuji*, one is famished. Without the
 repetition of the psalm of the Guru one becomes heavy of
 soul—and knows it not! Repeated singing of the psalm is to
 me the very essence of the best ethical state of mind. But all
 lyrical repetition follows love, it cannot precede it. No one
 who has not learnt the lesson of the sorrow of this life is capable
 of love of the Guru and without His love there can be no life
 of the spirit.

THE VICTORIES OF Guru Gobind Singh

سکزد بربر دو عالم تیغ نانک دایمب است
فتح گو بند سنگھ شاه شایان فضل سچا صاحب است

Original in Persian, transliteration into Gurmukhi, into English



ਸਿਕਾ ਜ਼ਦ ਥਰ ਦੋ ਆਲਮ
ਤੇਗ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਾਹਥ ਅਸਤ
ਫਤਹ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹ ਸਾਹਨ
ਫਜ਼ਲ ਸਚਾ ਸਾਹਥ ਅਸਤ

By the grace of the True Lord is
struck the coin in the two worlds;
the sword of Nanak is
the granter of all boons and the
victory is of Guru Gobind Singh,
the king of kings.*

* Inscription on coins struck by
Banda Bahadur.

Dashmesh Pita, Guru Gobind Singh ji's expanse of operations were as multi-dimensioned as was his personality multi-faceted. His triumphs lay in every field of life: **spiritual, cultural, social, economic, political**, as well as **military**. From any angle and any manner of view that we may look, we get fresh light, new disclosures, new revelations, new glow and a new *Darshan*. For a human being, he was above approach and comprehension. One can only greatly admire and greatly wonder: ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ।

To understand him and his actions logically, it would be necessary to always keep in mind the unity of the Guru in all the ten human forms and His omnipresent and directing force functioning within us. Guru Gobind Singh brought to final victorious fruition the seed which was sown by Guru Nanak and cultured, nurtured and fortified by his eight successors. The only new and manifestly significant manner was discontinuation of the Guru in any bodily form after him and the sequence related to this. The institution and position of the Guru in the Sikhs is very peculiar and special and calls for a proper appraisal and right understanding.

The whole structure of Sikhism is based on the Absolute, Formless One (*Nirgun-sarup*). Our God that we worship is Absolute Formless (*Nirgun*). It is His *Nirgun-sarup* that is permanent and ever(no-)lasting Truth.

*My tongue hath uttered only Thy acquired names, O God
But "Ever-Abiding" Truth is Thy age-old Name.*

SGGS P 1083

ਕਿਰਤਮ ਨਾਮ ਕਥੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਜਿਹਥਾ, ਸਭਿਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਪਰਾ ਪੂਰਬਲਾ।

(ਮਾਰੂਮ:੫)

The *Sargun* Forms are liable and amenable to change. And they keep on changing, although the ultimate Unity of God is the same in both His *Nirgun* and His *Sargun Sarups*. We have definite injunctions on this point.

*True in the Beginning, True in the Primal age,
True He is, and True He shall be*

SGGS P.1

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦ ਸਚੁ। ਹੈਤੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ।

(ਜਪੁ)

*He is the Absolute, Yea,
He the Immanent Related One.*

SGGS P.287

ਨਿਰਗੁਨੁ ਆਪ ਸਰਗੁਨੁ ਭੀ ਚਿਹੀ।

(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਗਉੜੀ ਮ: ੫)

*O Man, worship none but the Creator,
Not a thing created by Him.*

*Know that He who was in the beginning,
Invincible and indestructible is God.*

ਬਿਨ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਨ ਕਿਰਤਮ ਮਾਨੈ।

The way we worship Him is also *Nirgun*, without any form, being music, singing His praises. *Kirtan* is the sole form of worship in Sikhism.

Our Guru also is now *Nirgun-sarup*, being the *Gur-Shabad*, the *Bani*.

*Word is Embodiment of the Guru
And the Guru is in the Word.*

SGGS P. 982

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ।

(ਨਟ ਨਾਰਾਇਨ ਮ: ੪)

There are three wings (aspects or elements) of the Guru;

*The Light was the same, the Way the same,
Only the Body changed.*

SGGS P. 966

ਜੇਤਿ ਚਿਹਾ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਇ ਸਹਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰ ਪਲਟੀਐ।

(ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਵਾਰ)

So Light (*Jyoti*) and the Way (*Jugta*) are conserved in the *Gurbani*—the *Shabad*, the body part (*kaiya*) of which was delegated to the *Khalsa* when the Tenth Guru abolished the system of the Guru in any perceptible bodily form. Any reference to any body of the Guru like "*Pargat Guran ki Deh*" (ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ) are only allegoric. Sikhs are spirit-born people. The very idea of anybody or form (*Deh*) is materialistic. The Guru is *omni-present* and *omni-potent* and he functions in us meticulously. In reality, the Guru and the Sikh cannot be separated. There can be no Guru without having a Sikh, and similarly a Sikh itself means a Sikh of the Guru. When thus we realise the presence of the Guru in us, the Sikhs, we see that the Guru is not shorn of his powers and forces. They all accompany him. That is how a single Sikh becomes equal to a lakh and quarter (ਸਢਾ ਲਖ). Next comes the realisation of oneness of the Guru and God. They are inseparable. In our *Mool Mantra* Guru is an attribute of God. That is why amongst the Sikhs the name mostly used for God is *Wah-Guru*. *Wah* in *Gurbani* is used for God. So *Wah-Guru* (God-Guru) is taken as one identity. Thus all three, the Sikh, the Guru and God are inseparable. It is only ignorance and lack of light (ਅਗਿਆਨਤਾ) and what is called the curtain of *Maya* that make them appear separate. This curtain and this ignorance the Guru removes when we surrender our "Self" to Him. That is how we the Sikhs become mystics also. With the spirit in the *Gurshabd* as the guiding power, the implementation part of this was transferred and entrusted to the *Khalsa*. This process was complete when the *Satguru* received the *Amrit* himself from

the "Five Beloved Ones" at Anandpur in 1699. When we pay our homage and obeisance to the *Guru Granth Sahib*, it is because the *Gurshabd* is conserved thus in its purity. The tenets laid down in *Gurbani* cannot be touched. They reign supreme. This rule has most strictly been observed and always enforced from the beginning.

Some of us behave in a manner that the *Guru Granth Sahib* is given the place of an *Idol*. *Idol* worship is against the very basic principles of Sikhism. *Idol* worship is as much prohibited to us as is the idea of *Avtars* (incarnations), which are unacceptable in Sikhism.

*Burnt be the mouth which says the
Master takes birth and dies.*

SGGSP. 1136

ਸੇ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਹਿ ਜਿਹੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਨਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੋਨੀ।

(ਭੈਰਵੀ ਮ: ੫)

From Sikh history, it is clear that there was no volume of the *Guru Granth Sahib* present at the *Anrit* ceremony at Anandpur in 1699. Rather we find that the volume of the *Adi Granth* which the Fifth Nanak prepared was in the *Guru's Darbar* only for a short time after the Fifth Satguru's martyrdom and during the Sixth *Guru's* period. This volume came into possession of the *Sodhis* of Kartarpur who refused to lend it even to the Tenth Satguru when he prepared the final edition of the *Granth Sahib* at Damdama. At Nander, a copy of the final edition of the *Granth Sahib* was specified from which the Sikhs were to take Guidance and Light. This was very necessary because by then some copies of the *Granth Sahib* had come into circulation in which the *Gurbani* had been adulterated and corrupted. Since then the final edition completed at Damdama by the Tenth Master himself came to be known as *The Guru Granth Sahib*. This was obviously a miracle that the Satguru brought about in order to protect and save us from becoming "Book-Worshippers." This particular original volume of the *Guru Granth Sahib* has disappeared and in spite of all efforts cannot be traced. The dynamic presence of the *Guru* in *Gurshabd* now functions in the *Khalsa* and thus the *Panth*. There are definite injunctions in the *Gurbani* on this point:

*Blessed, Blessed is the true Guru,
The Formless Being, Infinite is whose End.*

SGGSP. 1421

ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਹੈ,
ਜਿਸੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰ।

(ਸਲੋਕ ਵ: ੨: ਮ: ੪)

*The image of the Guru
Is in the Gurshabd.*

Bhai Gurdas

ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਹੈ। (ਭਾ: ਗੁ: ਦ:)

*Reflect thou over the Guru's image in thy mind, and by
Guru's instruction propitiate the soul, with Guru's hymn's*
SGGSP. 864

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ। ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨੁ।

(ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮ: ੫)

Nevertheless, we still find there are two extreme types amongst us. One turns the *Guru Granth Sahib* into an *Idol*. In cold weather they place warm clothes and in hot weather switch on fans. Eatables are offered and some even bow and touch with their forehead the right foot (leg) of the *Manji* (the cot on which the holy book is kept) and lull the *Guru Granth Sahib* to sleep. Let Satguru be thanked that no attempt is made to bathe the *Granth Sahib*! Readings of the *Guru Granth Sahib* (paaths) are sold for money to absentees and are prepared as in "mass production" sometimes in scores and even hundreds by having simultaneous recitations. They buy visas to Paradise by proxy! Such visas are sometimes despatched even to those who have already taken off from this world. When they offer *Aarti* with burning candles, incense, beating drums, and sometimes even blowing of conches and collecting around the *Guru Granth Sahib* to shower flowers, they not only carry out the observances of *Idol-worshippers*, but also add insult to injury when they sing *Shabads* from the *Gurbani* which unequivocally and definitely ban and prohibit such actions. While announcing the Master's Commands one does in practice what the Master actually forbade; the announcer is not only disobedient but a disloyal saboteur. When confronted with the letter and spirit of the Satguru's teachings, these actions look ridiculous, and are opposed to the real idea of Sikhism. They are an open affront to the Teacher – the *Guru*.

On the other hand, there are some others who are unaware and unmindful of paying proper respect to the *Guru Granth Sahib*. It has become a general fashion to have all sorts of meetings in the presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, but we altogether forget the august presence when we start swearing at each other and come to blows, and draw swords aiming at each other's turbans. Adoption of a middle course is the necessity. While full respect has to be given and proper protocol and *maryada* observed towards the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the spirit of the *Gurshabad* should be kept in mind, remembering that the Tenth Satguru abolished the system of the *Guru* in any tangible perceptible body. I have dealt with this essential point because of the position and function, the ever-present guiding force of the *Guru* in us, to be properly understood before we move to the continuous and ever-lasting victories of *Guru Gobind Singh*.

The Guru's greatest victory lay in transmuting human beings into 'gods' (ਮਾਨਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ); turning serfs, and slaves into Sardars and valiant knights; transforming sparrows and cows into hawks and lions; and transforming the lowest castes, the oppressed and the depressed exploited by the high castes, into indomitable and formidable fighters before whom the Rajas and Nawabs trembled.

Spiritually, it was the victory to free us from rituals and superstitions and bondage to gods and goddesses and avtaars who take birth and die. He showed us the way and put us directly in contact with the Creator.

Sikhism is a way of intellectual understanding of the *Shabad* and its interpretation in actual life. The mind is to be controlled, trained and moulded into a correct attitude where it is attuned with the Divine Will. This is the purpose of what is called *Simran*, which, in other words, means the *practice of the presence of God*. It is open for anyone (though only a rare person through His Grace is blessed with it), to attain a position to understand the Will, the Command (*Hukam* and *Raza*). No monopoly is claimed for this. The inclusion of the *Bani* of those men of God, who were not Gurus, in the *Guru Granth Sahib* is the proof of this. Until that height is attained the *Hukam* and *Raza* are available to us in the *Shabad*, the *Gurbani*,

*I know not what to say;
I repeat the commands I get.*

SGGSP.763

ਹਉ ਆਖਹੁ ਥੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ।

(ਸੁਹੀਮ: ੫)

This was another victory when the Satguru emancipated us from the multi-pronged tentacles of the Hindu priest class. This grip or oppression was so strangulating and deep rooted that signs and effects of its deadly finger-prints are still perceptible in our society.

It was following the battle of Kalinga when Ashoka embraced Buddhism and abjured the sword, that the downfall of Hindu supremacy in India began. Consequently we have seen India's borders shrinking from the Hindu Kush to the Beas and Hussainiwala on the Sutlej, and from Duzab-Zahedan on the Iranian border to Rajasthan in the west, and from Burma to almost the walls of Calcutta in the East. In the North too, Gilgit and half of Ladakh and Kashmir have been eroded away. History tells us that India never had the courage nor capability to make an attack across its borders. We only please and deceive ourselves by calling this our greatness and our peace-loving tendencies. The first move across the Indus from the Indian side was made by the Khalsa Army during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's suzerainty over the Panjab.

It was a victory of the Satguru when for the first time a picture of India as an integrated whole was projected, when the "Five Beloved Ones" volunteered to offer "their heads on their palms" to the Guru at Anandpur in 1699. This call was originally made by Guru Nanak, and the commitment demanded which the followers of the Satguru then so freely and spiritedly fulfilled.

*If thou art zealous of playing the game of love;
Then enter upon my path with thy head on thy palm;
Yes, once thou settest thy foot on this path
Then find a way out, and lay down thy head;*

SGGSP.1412

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਧ੍ਰਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ। ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਭਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ।

ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੇ। ਸਿਰੁ ਈਸੇ ਕਾਟਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੇ।

ਸਲੋਕ ਵ: ੯: ਮ: ੧

Besides bringing about an integration of the country, this also showed how successfully the Satguru had repudiated the *Varanashram*, the mainstay of Hinduism, and brought about the total integration of varied castes into a casteless society (the *Khalsa Panth*). Daya Ram was a Khatri from Lahore in the North, Dharam Dass was a Jat from Delhi in the Centre, Mohkam Chand a calico printer belonged to Dwarka in the West, Sahib Chand, a barber, hailed from Bidar in the South, and Himat Rai, a washerman, was from Jagannath Puri in the East.

It was Guru Gobind Singh who in 1703 laid the first brick of what is now called the Red Cross movement (epitome of humanitarian empathy), when his Sikhs led by Bhai Kanhaya attended to the wounded in battle irrespective of their being a friend or a foe. The Satguru's own arrows were tipped with gold so that he who survived the injury could afford to be treated.

His victories in the literary and cultural field were also unique. Translations of old classics, epics, Samritis and Shastras into the common man's language, from the original works, were so voluminous that it is said that several cart-loads had to be carried at the time of evacuation of Anandpur but to our misfortune, most of these were swept away in the stream when crossing the Sirsa while the enemy was in pursuit of the Guru. All this work had been done during a short period of some 7 years.

In personal humility also the Guru stands unsurpassed. No religious leader, Avtaar or Prophet, has treated his followers with such love, adoration and reverence as was shown to the Sikhs and the status given to them which Guru Gobind Singh did. Followers of other great spiritual leaders have been regarded as herds of 'cows' and 'sheep' under the herdsman'ship of other preceptors. It was Guru Gobind Singh who, after administering *Amrit* to the "Five

Beloved Ones", begged of them to administer the *Anrit* to him, and thus the Guru became the Sikh and the Sikh the Guru. He declared that his greatness was owed to their (the Sikh's), devotion and kindness, otherwise there were crores of poor people like him in the world.

ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕਥਿਐ ਕੇ ਸਨੈ ਹਮ ਹੈ, ਨਹੀ ਮੈ ਜੋ ਗਰੀਬ ਕਰੇਹ ਪਏ।

ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

The foundations of a democratic society that the Satguru laid are so deep far-sighted and perfect that present-day political developments in the World have in not even come close to his ideals. The greatness and wonderment of all this is that it was brought about by voluntary effort and peace and tranquility of mind with faith and devotion to the Will of the Creator, attachment and love for the Guru and commitment to service and sacrifice for the needy. Force or compulsion or imposition were completely kept out from the great Guru's mission.

His victory was significant in providing us with an anchor in God and emancipating us from fear of the priest, fear of the high class, fear of the State and fear of the Ruler, mental fears created by supersition and institutionalised formalism and ritualism of religion, and above all, any fear of death.

We can only admire and wonder at his ultimate victory when we see that after leaving Chamkaur, from a worldly point of view, he had lost his four sons, mother, father and everything at Anandpur. When he left Chamkaur, there were no followers left either. Yet with miraculous rapidity he recouped and reorganised his forces and gathered around him the same band of selfless God-conscious men, out to exterminate evil and tyranny as per in the victorious strains in which he wrote his Epistle of Victory—*Zafarnama*—to the Mughal Emperor. The spiritual reawakening and regeneration of man, resurrection of human values and restoration of consciousness of the self, mental, moral and social uplift were thus brought to perfection.

One also wonders at the far-sighted planning of the Great Master. There were no important leader or Sikhs in great numbers from the Malwa present at Anandpur in 1699 when the two different Swords of *Miri* and *Piri*, worn by the Sixth Satguru, merged into one brilliant form of double edged Sword, the *Khanda*, in the hands of the Tenth Master. This *Khanda* became symbolic of the new Order of the Khalsa. During subsequent developments at Anandpur too, no one of note from this area appears to have been present, although families named Behloke, Rupeke, Bhagtuke, Dalleke, Phulke, Sidhu, Brar and others were known for their devotion to the Satguru. According to the plan in his mind the Satguru, after escape from Chamkaur, headed

for Dina in the neighbourhood of Bhai Rupa, the centre of Sikh mission established by the Sixth Guru, and for Damdama. It was at these places that Sikhs of the Malwa under the leadership of Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Karam Singh, sons of Bhai Roop Chand and Bhai Bhagtu and Sidhu Brars and others, gathered around the Guru, received the *Anrit* from him, and completed the reorganisation of his forces. Evidently, they were deliberately kept away as reserves for this very purpose. Not only that, the Jathas from the Malwa were constantly and closely observing the hard fight and movements of the Guru. That is why Rama and Taloka, the Chandheres of Phul, were promptly at Chamkaur to cremate the dead bodies of Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh and other martyrs. That the Satguru had complete confidence in the Sikhs of this area is borne out by the guarantee of safe passage extended to the Mughal Emperor in the *Zafarnama*. This guarantee was given relying on the absolute obedience and devotion to the Guru of the Brars and others of the Malwa.

Looking at the victories of the Tenth Guru on the battle field, we are wonder-struck as to how he faced such enormous opposition from hordes of the tyrannous and unscrupulous rulers that happened to be Mughals at Delhi and Hindu Rajas in the Hills and eventually triumphed. In a long drawn war, battles are sometimes won and sometimes even lost. The Satguru fought fourteen battles and lost only two. The struggle was prolonged because the Hindus, for whom he took up the fight, completely let him down. We all know that his father, the Ninth Nanak, Guru Tegh Bahadur, had given word to the persecuted, oppressed and helpless Hindus at the hands of bigotted Mughal rulers, that their *Dharam* (faith) would be protected and that the Mughal tyranny extirpated. In consequence, Guru Tegh Bahadur and the band of his devoted Sikhs laid down their lives for the cause of these Hindus at Delhi. It was the young Gobind Rai who himself had prompted his father, suggesting that there could be no holier a person than him fit for such a sacrifice. Such sacrifice offered for the principles of others and not for one's own is unique and stands unparalleled in the annals of history. When his son and successor was preparing to take up the task, it was the Hindu hill Rajas who began to harass and then attack him. The first battle, he had to fight was against the perfidious attack of these Hindu Chiefs at Bhangani near Paonta Sahib. The Guru never took an initiative to fight. All battles he fought were in self-defence or to help a deserving cause. About the attack of the Hill Rajas, he says:

He attacked me without any cause.

Bachitar Natak

ਏਹ ਪੜਾ ਹਮ ਮੇ ਖਿਣ ਕਾਜਾ।

ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ

The battles against the Delhi forces were also brought about by these Hindu Rajas who, after being routed by the Guru, approached the Mughal Emperor at Delhi and begged for Imperial forces to support them against the Guru. Thus, it was they who lit the fire and conflict with the Delhi powers was begun.

It is completely wrong to say that the Guru's clash was with the Muslims. Were it so, Muslims of standing like Syed Budhu Shah, Syed Beg and Maimu Khan would not have fought on side of the Guru against the Mughal forces. They did so because they appreciated the rightful stand of the Guru and the just cause he was fighting for; or if it were so, Mata Sundri would not have established her residence at Delhi itself after the evacuation of Anandpur and the barbarous treatment meted out to her family and innocent children, and she could not have issued her writs to the Panth from under the nose of the Emperor after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh.

Unfortunately Sikh history has never been written without an ulterior motive and an outside, biased edge to it. Attempts have been made by some men of letters to probe and in search of facts to narrate the happenings without any bias and so project a factual picture. But writing or rewriting history is a colossal job, which can be tackled effectively by the state only, rather than by individuals. With a lurking fear of the majority ruling class and the wish to appease and please them is a significant portion of our intellectual class, and with the tendency for self-aggrandisement and self-interest, besides lust for power even at the cost of compromising basic principles in most of our political leaders, it will be a miracle if the true image of Sikh history is projected in our times.

Reading between the lines of whatever narration of facts we have, we see that the first to perceive Light and Divine Glow in the Satguru were Muslims like Rai Bular in the case of Guru Nanak and Bhikhan Shah in the case of Guru Gobind Singh. It was a Mohammadan bard, Mardana, who was the first companion of the Satguru when the initial note of his call and teaching was struck, and who remained in his constant service till very end. To sing the Word (*Shabad*) to the world, the instrument selected was a Central Asian Muslim Rabab. Living in the district of Karnal, Bhikhan Shah bowed to the East. His followers were surprised and asked the reason for it, because Muslims bow towards the Mecca in the West. Bhikhan Shah replied that the Divine Light had flashed in that direction and he went eastwards until he reached Patna to see the child Gobind. It was a Muslim man of God, Hazrat Mian Mir, who was brought to Amritsar to lay the foundation stone of

Harimandar Sahib. We all know how Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, the two Pathan brothers of Machhiwara, risked their lives and staked everything to take the Guru in a palanquin on their shoulders. With the timely assistance of Qazi Pir Mohammad, they got him through enemy lines to safety after his escape from Chamkaur, even while the Hindu and Mughal Imperial forces were in hot pursuit. And it was the Muslim Nawab of Malerkotla who had the courage and daring to protest when the two youngest sons of the Guru, innocent children of 7 and 9 years, were cruelly tortured and put to death by Wazir Khan at Sirhind. This devotion and love towards the Guru and the Sikhs of the house of Malerkotla continues till this day. On the 9th March 1969 the Nawab got an Akhand Paath of the Guru Granth Sahib read in his Darbar Hall at Malerkotla. At the throne of the Nawab, Sri Guru Granth Sahib was opened. Personally a perfect and ideal Muslim, His Highness the Nawab and the Begum Sahiba stood in attendance with the *charwar* in their hands. I had the pleasure and privilege to be personally present on the occasion.

Five thousand acres of land belonging to the Nanak Matta Gurdwara in the U.P. was an offering from a Muslim Begum. Two orchards and a village presented to the child Gobind by Nawabs Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh are, to this day with the Patna Sahib Takhat. When studying, without prejudice, the *Zafarnama*, epistle of Victory written by the Tenth Guru to Emperor Aurangzeb, it is clear that there was no bitterness nor any enmity between them. The manner in which the Satguru reprimands the Emperor for having lost his sense of duty and his failure to administer justice evenly to the subjects who were put under his charge by the Almighty God, reminds him of the day of reckoning, and describes to him the atrocities and tyrannies that his men had perpetrated on innocent citizens of the land. This is certainly not the normal manner to address an enemy. Following this epistle, a meeting between the two was being negotiated when the Emperor expired. After the death of Aurangzeb, we find Guru Gobind Singh taking part in the war of succession and winning the throne for Bahadur Shah. Surely no enemy would have done that!

On the other hand, there was an important element amongst the Hindus that invariably opposed the interests—actually the very existence—of the Sikhs. They may call Sikhs as one of them, but in reality, they mean denial of any separate Sikh identity. The Sikhs have had to contend with the Chandus and Sucha Nands, while there were Hill Rajas and Lakhpat Rai who personally commanded the Lahore Forces firing the first salvo and his tirade for

extirpation of the Sikhs. This Hindu mentality has persisted upto our own present times. I will give you just one instance about this and that too of no other person than M.K. Gandhi himself.

In the mid-1930s, alarmed by the spate of conversions of untouchables to Islam and Christianity, the great Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Dr. Ambedkar realised that salvation of the depressed scheduled castes, being subjected to unjust oppression and cruel tyranny at the hands of the so-called higher castes since time immemorial, could only lie in their mass conversion to Sikhism. In their wisdom, and foresight, they drew up a scheme and agreed to a pact and started to implement this. Dr. Ambedkar paid visits to Amritsar and left some of his fellow workers there to study and understand Sikhism and its institutions. The Khalsa College at Bombay is one of the outcomes of this fact. But to the misfortune of all concerned, this scheme of things was confided to Mahatma Gandhi on the definite understanding that it would not be revealed until the proper time. The "Mahatma's" mind was obviously swept by rank communalism and prejudice against the Sikhs, he threw the confidence reposed in him to the winds and without any qualms of conscience, committed a breach of faith by premature condemnation of the scheme, to the extent of saying that *it would be far better that the crores of untouchables of India got converted to Islam than that they became Sikhs!* Eventually at his threat to fast unto death, the whole scheme collapsed. Friends who negotiated with Dr. Ambedkar and once even met him at Janjira, a small island in May 1937, would bear this out. They included Sardar Narain Singh, then Manager of Nankana Sahib, Bawa Harikishan Singh Principal, Master Sujjan Singh, Principal Kashmira Singh, and Sardar Gurdit Singh Sethi, President of the Singh Sabha at Bombay.

There was another instance, which I presume most of us remember. In 1929, Sikhs were given a solemn assurance by Hindu Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, Pandit Jawahar Lal and substantiated by a formal resolution of the All India National Congress at Lahore, that no constitution of free India would be framed by the majority community unless it was freely acceptable to the Sikhs. Until August 1947, this was repeatedly reiterated. But soon, Jawahar Lal Nehru when reminded about of this assurance, blandly told the Sikhs that circumstances had changed. As if pledges are given to be discarded when convenient. Not only that, we all know that a circular was circulated in the Punjab soon after partition of the country that an eye be kept on the Sikhs, who have always been looked upon as if they were aliens.

The same mentality was obvious when the present Punjabi suba was brought about: a torso of a State (Suba) without head, arms, or legs.

There obviously are friends and foes amongst both Hindus and Muslims. But we are generally shown only one side of the picture and that too after this having been purposely drawn and prejudicially coloured. I have mentioned all these facts, some pleasant and others not, to show that the Guru and his Sikhs had to fight on both fronts. Where there was frontal confrontation, as was the case during conflict with the Mughal forces and the Pathan and Durrani invaders, the matter was straight forward enough. The steel clanks and blood flows, strong sinews and hardy muscles with a courageous heart, perseverance and faith, along with fighting tact and will to sacrifice, ultimately count. But when the attack is cloaked, is surreptitious, camouflaged and from within, a stab in the back, a hit below the belt, sugar-coated poison administered through our hearths and homes, the matter becomes serious and dangerous and the conflict complicated and difficult. You have to guard and protect every nook and corner. This is what we have to face today.

Sikh culture, Sikh history and tradition, the Sikh religion and very way of life are being subtly and surreptitiously, ridiculed, and belittled in books, papers, and even textbooks. Patronage and promotions of the apostates (the Patits) is another instrument with which attempt is being made to tarnish and disfigure the Sikh figure and image. Even our language is being corrupted.

People who do not wish the Sikhs well sometimes say that Guru Nanak Dev was a man of peace, and that he taught only spiritual values and guided us in spiritual developments (but) it was the Sixth and then the Tenth Guru who turned the Sikhs into a militant form. Nothing could be more misleading than this statement. As far as peace of mind is concerned, it is an essential thing but depends on the correct attitude of our mind which can only be achieved by intellectual understanding (*Gian*) and knowledge of the Gurshabad and its interpretation in everyday life. On the political and worldly plane, peace means status-quo and contentment results in inaction. Inaction, in other words, means death. But the Satguru enjoined upon us to live a life of action, an integrated whole of spiritual, intellectual, social and political activity, which aims at progressive movement on all planes of mankind towards God-head, to be achieved not by *renunciation* but in *Sangat* (congregation). Since his living is a dynamic movement for emancipation, struggle becomes a part of Sikh life. It was Guru Nanak Dev himself who set the example not only by raising his voice in protest but actually courting arrest at Saidpur during Babar's invasion of India. The human span of life is to be

lived effectively, purposefully, usefully, forcefully, successfully, in accordance and in tune with the Will of the Master. The Tenth Nanak Guru Gobind Singh endorses this in these words:

*Blest is his life in this world who repeateth
God's name with his tongue and mediateth
Struggle in his heart.*

ਧੰਨ ਜੀਉ ਤਹਿ ਕਉ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਤ ਮੈ ਸੁਧ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ।

The body is fleeting and shall not abide for ever,

Men embarking in the ship of fame shall

Cross the ocean of the world.

ਦੇਹ ਅਨਿਤ ਨ ਨਿਤ ਰਹੈ ਜਸ ਨਾਵ ਚਰੈ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰ ਤਾਰੈ।

Make this body a house of resignation;

Light thine understanding as a lamp;

ਸੀਰਜ ਧਾਮ ਬਨਾਇ ਦਿਹੈ ਤਨ ਬੁਧੁ ਸੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਜਿਉ ਉਜੀਆਰੈ।

Take the broom of Divine knowledge into

Thy hand, and sweep away the filth of timidity.

ਗਿਆਨ ਹਿ ਕੀ ਬਛਨੀ ਮਨੋ ਹਾਥ ਲੈ ਕਾਤਰਤਾ ਕਤਵਾਰ ਬੁਧਾਰੈ।

Dasam Granth (ਦਸਮ ਗਰੰਥ)

The conflict, the struggle, the fight on all fronts has to be continuously and persistently fought. A Sikh has to remain ever ready (ਖਿਆਰ ਬਰ ਤਿਆਰ) for this. Sikhism is based purely on rational understanding, intellectual argument, realisation of the Truth and enlightenment through knowledge (Gyan) and interpretation of the word (Shabad) in actual life.

In 1634, the Sixth Satguru imparted to Ram Das Samrath, the Maratha Saint, knowledge that the essence of Sikhism is to be an ascetic within (ਬਾਤਨ ਫਕੀਰੀ) and a prince without (ਬਾਹਰ ਅਮੀਰੀ). Wielding of arms mean protection to the weak and the poor, and destruction to the tyrant. One must transcend the ego and appearances, but not to renounce the world. It should be noted that Ram Das who specially came to the Satguru in search of light and guidance from Maharashtra, later became the spiritual guide of Chatrapati Shivaji. These contacts created since Guru Hargobind Sahib's time were perhaps one of the reasons of the Tenth Guru's visit to the Deccan.

All these were victories of the Satguru in various spheres.

I wish to put in a word with our younger brothers and sisters, the younger generation, wherever they may happen to be, in schools or colleges, in government service or private enterprise, in any industry or farm, or any line or profession, at home or abroad. The future of the Panth and Sikhism lies with them. Sooner than later they will have to shoulder the responsibility. They will have to take up the gauntlet. Let them be fully prepared for this, ever ready

and in high spirits (ਤਿਆਰ ਬਰ ਤਿਆਰ and ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ), to hold aloft the triumphant banner of victory that the Satguru has entrusted to us and to keep in mind forever the guiding principles of Khalsa Ka Bol Bala and the independent, separate identity and image of Khalsa, remembering for always:

So long as the Khalsa retains independent identity,

ਜਬ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਨਿਆਰਾ।

I will give it full glory.

ਤਬ ਲਗ ਫੇਜ ਦੀਓ ਮੈ ਸਾਰਾ।

Those who adopt Brahmanical ways,

ਜੋ ਗਹਿ ਹੈ ਬਿਪ੍ਰਨ ਕੀ ਰੀਤਿ।

I will not trust them.

ਮੈ ਨ ਕਰਉ ਫਿਨ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ।

Dasam Granth (ਦਸਮ ਗਰੰਥ)

We have to guard against Brahmanical ways. If we lose the Satguru's *parteet*, all is lost. It is not only a sentimental warning, but an argumental, reasoned hard political fact. If we lose our image, we lose our identity, and get dissolved and lost in the ocean of mire from which the Satguru had extricated us. The Order is:

Do no present yourself without Keshas and Arms.

ਬਿਨਾ ਕਸਕੁ ਕੇਸੇ ਦਿਉ ਨਾ ਦੀਦਾਰੈ।

It is a painful sight to see some of our young brothers, armed with scissors cutting down their own figures and image. Let the saner intellectual elements rise to the occasion and put back on rails those of us who have gone off track. Uncut keshas are the only effective protection to our image and identity. They are the distinguishing mark which protect us against falling into bad company. Once we lose them, there will be nothing left to save and prevent us from drowning in the fathomless and indefinable morass of what is called Hinduism. Our sisters will have to play even a greater part in this resurrection. Sikh history stands evidence that they have always fulfilled their responsibility with glorious results.

Without mincing words I would like to submit that no education, no institutions, no advancement or so-called progress will be of any use to us if our image and identity is tarnished and lost. It is this present generation, old and young, that must be responsible for upholding the victories won by the Guru Dev and the Khalsa so very dearly.

Ardaman Singh

The Bhayee Sahib of Bagrian

(The above address was delivered by Bhayee Sahib at the 9th Annual day celebrations of Guru Nanak Mission at Bangla Sahib School, New Delhi on 6th April 1969 —the contents are even more relevant today: Ed.)

Miracles of Ardaas

The book *Miracles of Ardaas - Incredible Adventures and Survivals*, by Capt. Mohan Singh Kohli, I.N., was released by Dr. Karan Singh, M.P. at a well attended ceremony at the India International Centre, New Delhi on 23 September 2003.

Capt. Mohan Singh Kohli is not only a legend in his own manner, being amongst the world's greatest mountaineers and adventurers, but has become a prolific writer, this being the 18th book written by him.

The first, *Last of the Annapurnas* in 1962 became a classic even before he led India's first successful expedition to Mt. Everest in 1965, which was wonderfully recorded in his *Nine Atop Everest* some years later.

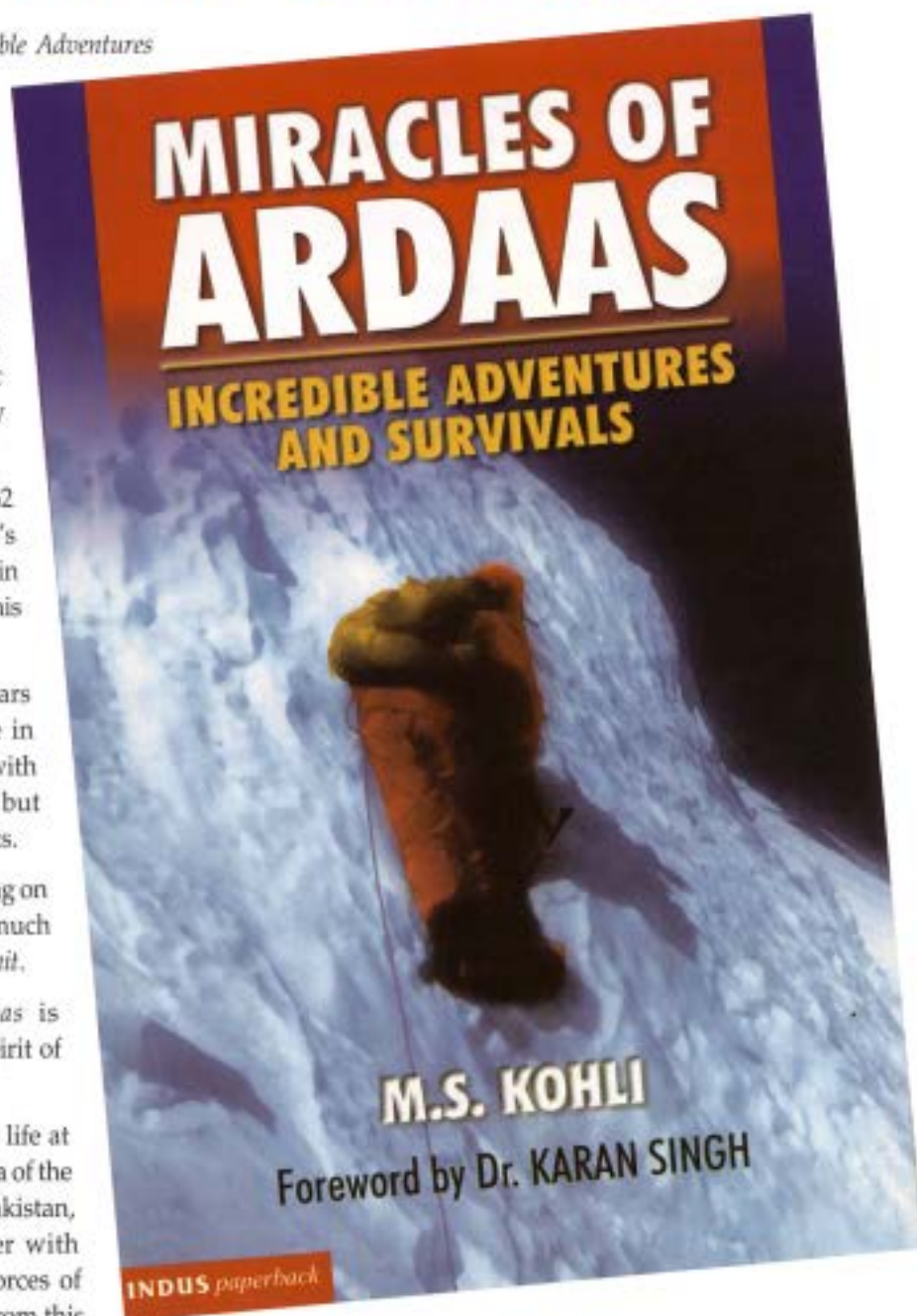
The naval officer thereafter spent years with Air India, including a key tenure in Australia and has since kept very busy with not only providing mountain tourism but continuing to pen books on allied subjects.

Two more books are in the offing, being on Bhutan *A Kingdom in the Sky* and his much awaited autobiography, *Summit to Summit*.

The preface to *Miracles of Ardaas* is reproduced for readers to imbibe the spirit of inspiration behind the author.

"I spent the first sixteen years of my life at Haripur, situated in the mountainous area of the North West Frontier Province, now in Pakistan, which shares a porous 720-km border with Afghanistan. Ages ago, the invading forces of Alexander the Great were turned back from this area. Haripur was the only town founded in 1822 by the most outstanding general of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, then Governor of Kashmir.

I spent my childhood among the harsh and unruly frontier tribes, always in turmoil and frenzy. At the tender age of 15, in 1947, I witnessed large-scale killings, arson and brutality during the time of partition of India. Later, I had to face unknown challenges during scores of my Himalayan expeditions, which included three attempts on Everest. All these years I continuously played on the frontiers of life and death. Fortunately for me, during all these trials and tribulations, I derived incredible strength and confidence from *ardaas*, the Sikh invocation to God. Thus, *ardaas* became a constant and important part of my life since early childhood.





[Left to right]: Capt Mohan Singh Kohli, Dr. Karan Singh, Sardar Tarlochan Singh, Mr. S.P.S. Chatwal, Chief Justice Ranjit Singh Narula.

I was also privileged to have a unique family heritage. Some 300 years and nine generations ago, the oldest known ancestor of our family, Sardar Kirpa Singh Kohli, was among the most exclusive band of Sikhs who were personally admitted to the faith, you can say baptised, by Guru Gobind Singh, in 1699 on the historic occasion of the crowning of the Khalsa. One precious element of the faith was *ardaas*, the Sikh prayer and its great spiritual powers.

General Hari Singh Nalwa used to religiously perform *ardaas* before proceeding on every military campaign. He was known to have never suffered defeat in his life. His heroic exploits made me develop absolute faith in my Gurus and God, and in the hidden power of *ardaas*. My father, who lived a full 96 years of perfect health and peace of mind, had inherited the immense value of *ardaas* from his forefathers and passed this on to me through his personal example.

There are many religious books on *ardaas*. This book, however, is different. It is based purely on first-hand accounts of some amazing incidents and personal experiences. Other religions too have similar practices though *ardaas* enjoys a very special and high status in the Sikh faith. I am sure, many of the followers of other faiths too have experienced the divine powers through their own version of invocation.

All these years I felt that these divine experiences were a part of my personal heritage and did not include them in any of my earlier publications. Only now, for the first time, I felt the pressing desire to share this with others.

My life has been full of events and expeditions. In this book I have included only those events in which *ardaas* had played a dominant role. There were many other incidents such as my father accompanying me to the summit of Tateyama, the second highest peak of Japan, at the age of 79, my ascent of the 'Trois Freres' in the Seychelles, Mount Kinabalu in Malaysia, a brief trip to McKinley in the USA, Kaghan peaks in Pakistan - which I have not included although *ardaas* has been part of these ascents too.

I am grateful to R.S.Somi in assisting me in writing this book. My special gratitude goes to Yogendra Bali for editing the Manuscript. To Bhai Harbans Lal, an eminent Sikh leader based in USA, my childhood friend and classmate, I express my sincere thanks for checking the manuscript for any inaccuracies and for writing the introduction. He is a world authority on Sikhism and *Guru Granth Sahib*. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Karan Singh, a great son of India and an authority on India's spiritual heritage, for writing the Foreword.

I hope my experience will encourage people from all walks of life and all faiths, particularly the young students, to develop a strong faith in God and derive strength from the Almighty through the power of *ardaas*.

For the Girl Child

Inauguration of the free educational centre for girls



In a backward area of West Delhi, at Rohini, the Sikh Humanitarian Society have set up a *Vidya Kender* to provide education, absolutely free, to nearly 125 girls and about 50 boys, under the age of 10 year. Established in 2002 is the School headed by the former Chief Justice Ranjit Singh Narula, with qualified staff, engaged in imparting education to the young Sikh girls and boys in Gurmukhi, Gurbani, Kirtan, including playing the harmonium and tabla, as well as English, tailoring and embroidery.

A non-residential institution at present, the Kender attracts students from the nearby vicinity and as financial support grows, it is planned to add not only additional courses but set up a free residential institution.

The centre was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Vijai Kapoor, the Lt. Governor of Delhi who was received with great affection by members of the Society and who then listened to the *Shabad Kirtan* and partook the langer.





At the Vidya Kendra in Rohini, West Delhi, with Chief Justice Ranjit Singh Narula and the Hon'ble Vijai Kapoor, Lt. Governor of Delhi (top right).

Who Are You?

At a distance
I see a vision
Of a serene looking man
Standing alone.

His beard sways in the wind
His turban glows
His head turns towards me
His eyes pierce my soul.

I am drawn towards him
For reasons unknown
Before I know it
I am standing before him.

His face speaks volumes
His eyes are gentle
He emits a wonderful aura
I feel secure.

Who are you?
Where have you come from?
I whisper -
Ever so gently.

He smiles at me
His face lights up.
In a hypnotic voice, he says
I am a Sikh.

I come from a distant land
The land of the Five Rivers
From the state of Punjab
Which lies in India today.

His eyes grow misty
I know he is in deep thought
Dare I break the silence
And disturb his train of thought.

Before I know it
The question is out
Why do you wear the turban?
I really want to know.

I shudder at what I've said
Have I insulted him?
Will he be generous
And forgive my ignorance?

I look into his eyes
And feel overwhelmed
I need not have feared
There is no anger.

The turban I wear
Is a sign of commitment
To the path I follow
In this journey of life.

What is this path?
What does Sikh mean?
What else do you have to do
To walk on this path?

He smiles at me, and says
You have many questions
But what is it
That you truly seek?

I confess
I don't know
Life as I know it
Makes little sense.

I saw you from a distance
Looking so serene
I want that serenity
To radiate from me.

Please share with me your path
I mean no disrespect
It may hold the answer
In my search for peace.

He looks into my eyes
And takes me by my hand
Come my child
Let's sit under this tree.

A Sikh is a disciple
A seeker of truth
Who commits to follow the path
Ordained by his Guru.

You have a Guru?
Who is he?
Can I meet him?
Maybe he can help me?

He raises his hands
And calms me down
My Guru is not a person
It is the Divine Word.

I am confused
He is amused
Ever so gently
He continues his talk.

In 1469 Guru Nanak started a new Order
Proclaiming, there is only one Creator.
The Divine Light that was in him
Passed on to the succeeding nine Gurus.

In 1708 the Tenth Guru ended human Guruship
Proclaiming the Holy Scripture
As the ever-lasting Guru for the Sikhs.
The Divine Light now rests there.

Your Holy Scripture -
What does it contain?
Are there any prophecies
About what is to come?

There is, just a hint of a smile
As he continues his talk.
The Holy Scripture reveals Divine experiences
through profound metaphors.

It is an expression of man's loneliness,
his aspirations, his longings,
his cry to the Divine and
his hunger for communications for that Being.

Our Scripture is our living Guru
Which we revere
And seek its guidance
As we journey through life.

I am committed to this Path
And to its teachings
To guide me
In my spiritual quest.

The turban is a gift
A gift from my Guru
That I may never forget
The path that I am on.

It is a spiritual bond
It is a spiritual union.
It is the only answer
To why I wear my turban.

I sit in silence
There is much to absorb.
I am awed
By his spiritual commitment.

I wonder
Will I ever be that committed
In my spiritual journey
Or will I, forever be a drifter.

I voice my fears
He smiles and says
We are all travelers
In this journey of life.

"CAMP SIKHI"

at CHHAPRI FARMHOUSE



Young Singhs registering on arrival at "Camp Sikhi".

Wonderfully planned and extremely well attended was the first *Camp Sikhi* at the Chhapri farm house near Gurgaon on 15-16 November 2003.

Organised by S. Rajbir Singh and Arvinder Singh of the *Khalsa Environment Project* and hosted by Sardarni Sarabjit Anup Singh, mother counsellor of the *Kaurs and Singhs*, there were over 240 children who attended the Camp, with most of their parents joining in on Sunday for sharing their thoughts and interacting with the counsellors.

The Camp was created as representative of Anandpur Sahib, the city. The theme of the camp was "Anand", the *Baani* and being. Anandpur Sahib has six forts or *garhs* – Anandgarh, Fatehgarh, Taragarh, Lohgarh, Holgarh, Keshgarh. These six were the names given to six places at the camp where different activities were held. This was devised in a way that made it easy for all to remember the

names and the history attached to these places, and there were posters with history of the *garhs* written on them.

The first day of the camp started with a *deewan* where the children took the *vaak*, did the *aridaas* and the *kirtan*. The *Vaak / Hukamnama* was explained to the children and the children did the *Sukhasan*. This was followed by thirty minutes of play time for making the children relax. The children then formed into different groups and went for their activities. From an initial survey it seems the participants liked the *Gatka* the most – this was expected and *Gatka* will be a part of the *Kaurs and Singhs* class every month.

We had tried to create a village scene of the Punjab where there was the *charkha*, a *madhuani* and *phulkari* work on display. The song – *charkha chandan daa*—was playing in the background. The older kids were made



Forming up for their exercise.



Langar was served on the lawns of Chhapri farmhouse.

to understand the meanings of the folk song and also did a Gurbani related shabad from *Asa Dee Var*. This is a way of acquainting the children with the language and culture of the Punjab.

On Sunday the children made a large collage collectively: this was a treat to watch, and one can stand and read what the children have written, comments and drawings put up for the regular class. We are trying to get it laminated so it lasts longer. This activity was Gagandeep's creation.

We had a long and comfortable interaction with the parents. It is great to share our thoughts with others. There are some suggestions which we are going to implement in the near future, one of them is to have a regular parents class along with the *Kaurs and Singhs* sessions – which will happen from the next class onwards.

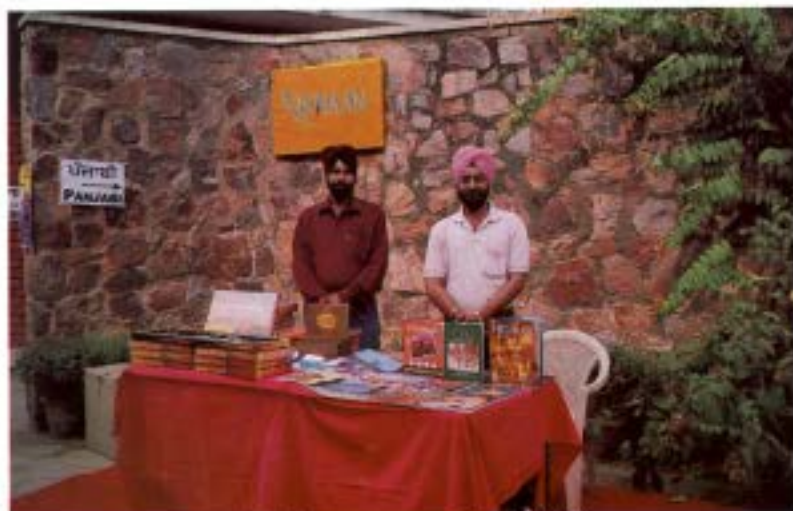
The Vision of Kaurs and Singhs

This is a welcome November afternoon when we have found the time and the opportunity to congregate as a community, to meet as sangat and to glance into our own Khalsa psyche. May be amongst the many faces we see today we will find ourselves. Such collective gatherings have all the potential to agitate our subconscious and to trigger our emotions. The fragrance of this dust could remind us of the soil of a forgotten land, the glance of a face could signal the memory of a friend from bygone times. The harmony of the music could bring us close to the celestial beauty of our Guru. The meeting of many like ourselves could inspire us to love and give us the strength to dream again. The love of our land, our community, the Khalsa panth brings us together here today: *Kaurs and Singhs* is a Khalsa community bound in love and common desire to know oneself in everyway.

I will attempt to share the vision of *Kaurs and Singhs* and let us try and see if we all share this same spirit and how and what we need to do to make this vision a reality. It is said that everyone has two lives. One is our life and one the life of our children. To me this is an opportunity to live the Sikh life twice and with *Kaurs and Singhs* I think I am living my second life as a Sikh. I was born in Delhi and my life came with all its pressures and complexities. As I was growing up, I did see and hear so much about the Gurdwara politics, the era of morchas and visit to jails. This is what I grew up seeing, but even then I always felt this void in "knowing" who is a Sikh and who is Guru? I remember that I did have this desire to meet someone who lived the Sikhs life. This is probably because the way in which life has emerged out of the pains of Partition of the Punjab. I do take this opportunity to salute those amongst us who saw the pain and terror of 1947 and yet bounced back into vibrancy. The work in which the community had got involved took them away from the issue of creating a method in which the community could teach its children about their religion. It was left to the Gurdwara managements to look into and work towards creating an atmosphere which could inspire the youth to live a vibrant life, pursuing the goals of truth and free spirit. The Guru Harkishan Public Schools have unfortunately failed to live up to our expectations, but this is no surprise considering the



Parents came in on Sunday to interact with the counsellors.



*The Nishaan counter at "Camp Sikhi",
manned by Parambir Singh and Kishan Singh.*

politicised atmosphere there. Under these conditions there seems to be very few options for us to take stock of the situation and lay the foundation for educating our children. This cannot be at the cost of academics; it is not happening in our homes because of the lack of time and knowledge amongst us. The only way this is possible now in an organised way is to have parallel workshops, camps of this type and other activities in parallel with the schools. *Kaurs and Singhs* is a beginning to try and create this. The dream is far in the horizon, but we have just stood up to look towards it, *Kaurs and Singhs* as it is today.


When he created the first congregation and Sangats Guru Nanak called them *Dharamsaals*: a place of spiritual meeting, where the hungry and the satiated met and shared their spirit; where like grace, *Kripa* would find its place in the open and trusting hearts which came there, where the harmony of music would elevate the spirit of those that were there, where the common bond of Guru was the signal of total surrender to all who entered with love in their hearts. This is what our Gurdwaras are supposed to be. Not a place of judgment of competition of wealth but a

place of love, a chance to help a fellow person, a fellow Sikh, to wipe the tear from the pained. Love and awareness guides the moment to flow into the next, living the moment to the fullest and realising its potential. We all look forward to an inspired community group from the movement called *Kaurs and Singhs*.

It is interesting that *Kaurs and Singhs* as a name does not signify any specific age group. This programme is for the next generation, but it has all the potential for being one for the present generation as well. The need for spiritual guidance is amongst us all, that is what a Sikh attitude brings with it: asking the right questions a Sikh is finding his or her way into the meaning of life. We all want to know where the mystery of life leads us. What meaning do we draw out of our own sorrows and our joys? Where do we find the equilibrium of life, where we do not draw from it more than we can sustain? Where does one find the abundance of "Anand" which Guru talks to us about? All of us have, at least some time in life, found ourselves in a situation of abject misery and frustration, when we tell ourselves "I don't want to be here." An honest introspection might lead us to these questions within us or around us and may be many more. The key is, how does Guru Nanak answer these issues for me? How my being a Sikh can change my state of mind and empower me enough to deal with the trials that life brings with it? I would like this sangat of *Kaurs and Singhs* to address these issues of my life as we proceed. Then to me *Kaurs and Singhs* would become the transformation of my life.

I invite all of you to join this effort and meet this challenge of life together. Let us move towards a revolution within us to convert our sorrows into joy and have within us the ever present abundance of bliss and ascendance – the *Charidi Kala* which is our USP. Let us take a step today to break away from not that which is gifted to us, but that which binds us. Like the royal bird of freedom – the *Baaz* – which was so dear to our Guru Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh.

Rajbir Singh



Letters to the Editor

Sir,

Along with your Editorial in Issue II/2003, I have read the other articles, "The Turban as a Sikh Form & Symbol" and "A Salute to the Turban", with great interest.

Guru Gobind Singh's *hukum* on the five Ks, including the *keshas* is well accepted by the ardent Sikh community. There are no two views about this.

But the conception of turbans was well before Guru Gobind Singh's time. Historically it is a fact that a country's climate has played a major role in forming the habits of people. "Hot in summer and cold in winter", brought about the necessity of covering one's head, with suitable headgear. It has been so all over the world. For our part, cloth has played the dominant role, whereas in very cold regions of the world, like Europe, a top hat or cap, made of cloth and leather or fur was in common usages (leather gave more protection from cold).

Once walking down the beach along a sea shore, somewhere in Greece, I was stopped and greeted by a Greek priest. He had mistaken me for an Indian orthodox Christian priest, thanks to my turban and was keen to entertain me. This was in 1994. Someone explained to him that I was a Sikh who wore a turban made of cloth alone and not reinforced with leather.

Another instance from my life was while playing cricket (and top class cricket at that). As a medium pace bowler, I had found the turban to be cumbersome. Whatever one did to keep the turban on tight, it would become loose, after say 3-4 overs. At lunch and tea intervals, I would re-tie my turban. The *patka* conception was not in vogue in my days of cricket (1950s and 60s), which gradually became an accepted form after Bishen Singh Bedi and Maninder Singh, who later captained and played test cricket for India. Throughout my playing days, both in England (Cambridge University, Warwickshire, M.C.C.), and in West Indies (with an England XI), I did not take off my turban for the *patka*. Back in India, at the Test level too, I had kept the turban. I wish I could have used the *patka* during my time!

After all, there is no difference between the material of a *patka* and turban. Both are of cloth, except that the form is different. There is nothing wrong about it.

Accept the changes, as they come. We do not travel in bullock carts any more. We accept the changes for our benefit. Let us enjoy these, without breaking the essential code of conduct laid down by our Gurus.

Swaranjit Singh
15, Ajnala Road
Cantonment
Amritsar 143001

Ed. Here is a "live situation" for the community to respond to. Reproduced is the communication received by S. Hardev Singh Dadyala of the Construction Management Division in Washington D.C. concerning wearing of a "hard hat" while working in the field :

"You were appointed to a temporary position with the Construction Branch as a Davis-Bacon Sheet Metal Worker, effective August 26, 2002, not to exceed August 25, 2003. At the time of your appointment, you were issued all safety equipment, including a hard hat. It was understood that you would be working both in the shop and in the field.

It has been brought to my attention that when you have recently been needed to work in the field, you told Donald Phares, Sheet Metal Mechanic General Supervisor, that you did not mind working in the field, but due to religious reasons, you cannot remove your turban, which makes you unable to wear a hard hat.

According to section 3.5.1 of the AOC Safety Program # 10-3, Personal Protective Equipment, issued by Alan M. Hantman, Architect of the Capitol, on May 16, 2001, "Employees are responsible for attending training, wearing appropriate PPE, and following sales work procedures". PPE includes hard hats.

I am requesting that you provide me with a solution that will permit you to wear a hard hat while working in the field.

Gary L. Vawter
Director, Construction Management
The Architect of the Capitol"

Sir,

Interpretation of the evolution of the symbol of the *chakar* with *khanda* and two *kirpans* as published in your journal Issue IV/2002 is to, my knowledge, not founded on any historical fact. It appears to be the imagination of

Dr Kuldip Singh and so cannot be accepted as an authoritative explanation on its evolution.

I would request that this letter may be published in your esteemed journal to put the record straight and set at rest any avoidable controversy within its readership.

Anup Singh
16-A Palam Marg
New Delhi 110057

Ed. We have not come across any credible data about the evolution of this symbol. The interpretation given is as per Dr.Kuldip Singh's own understanding.

Sir,

Thank you for the most recent copies. They are superb and I have given the two extra to Gursikhs who will appreciate them a lot.

By producing a magazine on the Sikhs of such a high standard, you have taken the Sikh Community across the world from the bottom of the pit and have put them on a golden throne. You have raised the Image of our fine community as no one else has done in the last 56 years. Congratulations!

Rajinder Singh
107 Newcomen Road
Wellingborough NN8 1JT
England

Sir,

With reference to the proposal on Constitution of the SGPC and DSGMC, I suggest that Members of the SGPC and DSGMC may be drawn from three categories as below:

- a) One-third from amongst religious preachers
- b) One-third from amongst Singh Sabhas and Societies
- c) One-third from amongst those Sikhs who have achieved excellence in their field of activity and made substantial contribution to the *Sikh Panth*.

Mode of Selection of the Members

There should be an electoral college for each of the above categories, and within that electoral college, they should elect members to represent that category in the SGPC and DSGMC.

Formation of Electoral Colleges

Religious preachers: an electoral college of 250 members for the SGPC to be constituted by the Head Priest in consultation with the SGPC.

In the case of DSGMC, an electoral college of 100 members should be constituted by the Head Priest in consultation with the DSGMC.

The term of the electoral colleges shall be 6 years, and one-third of the members shall retire every two years. The vacancies to the electoral college would be filled by the Head Priest in consultation with the SGPC or DSGMC, as the case may be.

This electoral college will elect from amongst itself One-third members for the SGPC or the DSGMC.

The electoral college of Singh Sabhas and Societies

Every Singh Sabha and Religious Society registered, having more than 500 members, shall be eligible to be member of this electoral college. For ascertaining the membership of the Singh Sabhas or the Society, one person can be a member of one Singh Sabha and one Religious Society.

Electoral college of Sikhs, who have achieved excellence in various fields, such as business, education, medicine, law, journalism, writing, defence, civil services, sports, engineering and other professions.

An electoral college of 250 members be constituted by the Head Priest in consultation with SGPC and of 100 members be constituted in consultation with DSGMC.

The term of the electoral college of the category (i) and (iii) shall be six years.

One-third of the members shall retire every two years. The vacancies shall be filled up by the head priest in consultation with SGPC or DSGMC. This electoral college shall elect from amongst itself one-third members of the SGPC and DSGMC.

Qualifications for being elected as a member of SGPC or DSGMC.

The same qualifications as have been prescribed in the present Act, such as *Amritdhari*, non-alcoholic, having knowledge of Punjabi, etc. may be enforced.

Manner of introducing the new system of election

The Gurdwara Act, 1925 and the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Act, 1971 can be suitably amended to introduce this system of election of the members.

Harvinder Singh Phoolka
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