

NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY

The Term Defined

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ABSTRACT

Sikhi (Sikhism) is based on the philosophy of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak promulgated a unique and original philosophy for the welfare of the humanity. The next nine Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak, preached and strengthened his philosophy. Since a new precise and specific term was needed to represent his philosophy to the humanity of the Science Age, a new term, Nanakian Philosophy, was coined based on the information given in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib and Sikh literature. Some Sikh scholars think that the use of this term is disrespectful and blasphemous to Guru Nanak. This article shows very clearly that such doubts and allegations are unfounded and the use of the term 'Nanakian Philosophy' is logical and justified.

INTRODUCTION

Sikhi (Sikhism), a scientific and logical religion was founded by Guru Nanak at a time when the modern nations and ideas resulting from the fields of science, technology, economics, psychology, etc. were not developed. However, the philosophy of Guru Nanak, on which Sikhism is based, is found to be true in the light of modern science and is applicable even during the Science Age (Space Age/Information Age) of 21st century [2,4].

Notwithstanding that, the misinterpretation of Guru Nanak's teachings (philosophy) started right during the time of the Sikh Gurus and is still going on. It is not only the non-Sikh scholars but many Sikh scholars are doing so either ignorantly or innocently or on purpose to meet certain objectives. After the death of the last Guru, Gobind Singh, the preaching and teaching of Sikhi (Sikhism) came under the control of Udasis and Mahants (Sikh clergy) due to historical circumstances. Udasis and Mahants were ignorant of the philosophy of Sikhism, but were strongly influenced by the ancient Indian philosophy and *Bipreets* (ਬਿਪਰੀਤ - Customs contrary to the Nanakian Philosophy). Therefore, they were misinterpreting Gurbani and representing Sikhism as another branch of Hinduism [5]. Unfortunately, most of the Sikh scholars followed the Sikh clergy blindly and played a major role in the distortion of Sikhism. In this respect Guru Nanak's remarks that very few people will try to comprehend the Gurbani in its real perspective are worth noting:

ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਰਲੁ ਉ ਬੀਚਾਰਸੀ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਮਹਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

AGGS, M 1, P 935 [1]

"Only rare Guru-oriented (gurmukh) will deliberate/contemplate on the Bani (word).

*This is the Bani (word) of the pre-eminent preceptor,
Is to be imbibed in one's own mind."*

Even during the modern age many scholars are still interpreting Gurbani and representing Sikhism under the influence of ancient philosophy and *Bipreets*. Consequently, the Sikh literature on the interpretation of Gurbani remains fully saturated with ancient mythology and *Bipreets* [5].

Outside forces have also been working hard to subvert Sikhism. For example, during the last quarter of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, the *Arya Samaj* and other Hindu organizations started a campaign to merge Sikhism into Hinduism. It was mainly due to the efforts of *Singh Sabha* movement that Sikhism survived this attack. However, this victory turned out to be short lived as the leadership of *Singh Sabha* fell into the trap of *Arya Samajists* and Hindu *Mahan Sabha*. Soon its membership was dominant with those who were under the strong influence of *Arya Samaj*. They started to put every type of hurdles in the work of the dedicated scholars like Prof Gurmukh Singh and Ditt Singh in dissemination of Gurbani and Sikhism in their real perspective:

Prof Gurmukh Singh was excommunicated in 1887 CE by Maan Singh, the Manager of Golden Temple Complex, Amritsar due to the pressure put by the opposition members (*Arya Samajists*), especially, Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Raja Bikram Singh, and Avtar Singh Vahiria of the *Singh Sabha*. The opposition members were also trying to keep ancient philosophy

and Bipreets in Sikhism and to continue Guru-ship in living persons. Baba Khem Singh Bedi of this group was acclaimed as the 13th Guru due to his lineage with Guru Nanak by his associates and followers. Similarly, the press of Giani Ditt Singh, an excellent orator, writer, and a colleague of Prof Gurmukh Singh, was put out of business because of litigation by the opposing group (Arya Samajists) in Singh Sabha [Inferred from the data given in ref. # 7].

About a century ago, it was Karam Singh, a famous Sikh historian, who had the intellect and courage to analyze the *Janam Sakhi* (biography) of Guru Nanak written by Bhai Bala. He proved in his book, *Katik kae Vaisakh* [10], that the stories recorded in it cannot pass the test of Gurbani, science, and logic, the touchstones of truth. Bhai Bala has portrayed Guru Nanak as a great Hindu but lower in spirituality than Bhagat Kabir and Hundal. His book was removed from the sale list by the Khalsa Diwan most probably by Giani Gian Singh soon after its publication [inferred from the letter of Giani Gian Singh published in the new edition. Ref. # 10].

From the above discussion it becomes crystal clear that ancient philosophy has been imprinted so strongly in the minds of people that now it is very difficult for them to deviate from the established wrong traditions and concepts when a new logical and scientific concept is presented to them. For example,

1. The electrification of Darbar Sahib Complex, Amritsar was resisted by the Sikh clergy by tooth and nail. They insisted that they would continue to burn earthen lamps with *desi ghee* (purified butter) as traditionally used since a long. Many of them were ready to sacrifice their lives to protect and continue this tradition. After a great convincing electrification was allowed. It is ironic that now no place at Darbar Sahib is left without an electric bulb on Diwali and other festivals.
2. There was a great hue and cry from many Sikh theologians against the idea of *padshed* (separation of verse into individual words) of the Bani in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). Now look at the ease with which many Sikhs can recite Bani from the AGGS. The irony is that still there are a few, who are objecting this action.
3. Now let us look into the recent happening. A New Nanakshahi Calendar, developed by Pal Singh Purewal of Edmonton, Canada, was approved by the SGPC for its implementation from 1999 onward. A large number of calendars were published and the SAD-BJP Government announced the Punjab Government holidays according to this calendar. But some *Sants* and *Biprins* (ਬਿਪਰਿਨ - Persons, who

work against Nanakian Philosophy) in collaboration with Bhai Sahib Ranjit Singh, Jathedar of Akal Takht, rejected the use of calendar, leaving the Sikhs still dependent on Bikrami Calendar, a complicated system to work out the dates for Gurpurbs of their Gurus.

4. Many more such examples can be quoted to demonstrate that some of the Sikh clergy, some theologians, some Sikh scholars, and some lay Sikhs have always been resisting the elimination of the traditions of ancient philosophy and *Bipreets* from which Guru Nanak had liberated them since the 15th century.

It is true that many people will readily accept any wrong concept without verifying the facts even during the Science Age. A similar observation has been made in the Gurbani about human behaviour. In general people easily accept false statement to be true, do wrong things, and follow the path that is crooked:

ਬੁਠੁ ਬਾਤ ਸਾ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਤੀ ॥
ਸਤਿ ਹੋਵਨੁ ਮਨਿ ਲਗੈ ਨ ਰਾਤੀ ॥
ਬਾਵੈ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਟੇਢਾ ਚਲਨਾ ॥
ਸੀਧਾ ਛੋਡਿ ਅਪੁਨਾ ਬੁਨਨਾ ॥
ਦੁਹਾ ਸਿਰਿਆ ਕਾ ਖਸਮੁ ਪੁਛੁ ਸੋਈ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਮੇਲੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਮੁਕਤਾ ਹੋਈ ॥ ੪॥

AGGS, M 5, P 185.

"One takes it to be true what is false,

What is truth is not imbibed in one's mind.

One (usually) takes the forbidden and crooked path.

One abandons the right method but weaves the wrong pattern.

Nanak Says:

Although the both ways (right and wrong) are

happening under the Laws of Nature (Divine Law)

Only those who are introduced to the right path are liberated."

Due to the inherent weakness of humanity explained above, the Sikhs at large take all information, given in the ancient writings of Sikh theologians and historians, as true. Moreover, discontented and depressed people in general are more inclined to believe in mythical works coated with various allurements. And there was no dearth of such people then and even now. The wrong information given in such writings has been imprinted as true permanently in the minds of some people. If any tradition, belief, or code, given in such writings, are challenged by some researchers then many devout Sikhs, *Sants*, *Babas*, *Raagis*, traditional preachers, Sikh theologians, and the Sikh authorities - the so-called custodians of Sikhism, declare such action as a blasphemy of *Gurbani* and Sikhism. This problem was pointed out long time ago by Bhai Kahn Singh [9].

My study of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1] clearly indicates that the Gurbani in the AGGS is scientific and logical and it should be represented scientifically and logically. Besides, it is also evident that though the philosophy was formulated during the 15th century, it has universal acceptability and applicability even during the 21st century of the Science Age [2, 4]. Non-Sikh scholars have also expressed similar views about Guru Nanak's philosophy. For example:

The statement by Rajanish Kumar, Director of Language Department, Punjab about the universality of Guru Nanak's message is noteworthy [6]:

"Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, has unflinching faith in the divineness (or divinity) of man. For the emancipation of mankind, he undertook hazardous and difficult journeys from place to place and covered most of East and Southeast. His aim was to rekindle the dormant divine potentialities in man all over the universe. During his long sojourns he met people of different faiths and creeds and left an indelible impression on them all. This is a testimony to the universality of the message of the Great Guru."

A world-renowned historian, Arnold Toynbee, made the following remarks in 1973 about the future of the religions and the Sikh scriptures [12]:

"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 scriptures the Adi Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world."

Thus, in the 'Science Age', it is the duty and obligation of Sikh scholars to disseminate Gurbani and Sikhism in its true perspective to the Sikh masses and rest of the humanity. Therefore, it is necessary to coin new definitions and terms and to introduce new systems of the Science Age to explain the Philosophy of Guru Nanak and Sikhism to the world. In this respect, the INSTITUTE FOR UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM has worked hard to meet its obligations. It has standardized the title for the Sikh Holy Scriptures, devised a new system of referencing Bani from the Sikh Holy Scriptures, formulated the definition a Sikh, and coined a new term, Nanakian Philosophy.

NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY

Since it was Guru Nanak who promulgated a new philosophy, so a new term, '*Nanakian Philosophy*', which to my knowledge has never been used before, was

coined a few years ago. I find this term to be precise, and specific for the readers of the Science Age.

Nanakian Philosophy is defined as:

"A philosophy promulgated by Guru Nanak that was taught and enriched by other nine Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak."

The philosophy promulgated by Guru Nanak was practised, disseminated, and was also enriched by the Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the **House of Nanak**. Guru Arjan in 1604 CE enshrined the Nanakian Philosophy in a Holy Granth (called variously as *Pothi*, *Aad Bir* or *Kartarpuri Bir*). Later on in 1705 CE Guru Gobind Singh added the composition (Bani) of Guru Teg Bahadur and reiterated its authenticity. Then the Holy Granth was called *Damdami Bir*. Now its title has been standardized by the Institute for Understanding Sikhism as '*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*' (AGGS) [3, also see detailed article on this topic in the current issue]. All the Sikh Gurus used '*Nanak*' as their pen name in their Bani. The Bani of each Sikh Guru in the AGGS is identified by their succession number to the 'House of Nanak'. The succession number is represented as **Mahla 1** for Guru Nanak, **Mahla 2** for Guru Angad, **Mahla 3** for Guru Amardas, **Mahla 4** for Guru Ramdas, **Mahla 5** for Guru Arjan, and so on. **Mahla** (ਮਹਿਲਾ) is abbreviated as **M (H: in Punjabi in the AGGS)**.

Bases for Coining the term 'Nanakian Philosophy'

The term, Nanakian Philosophy, has been conceived on the basis of the following information available from the AGGS and Sikh literature:

1. **Swayaiae of Guru Arjan** explains that Nanak is the Guru and his philosophy (Sabd) is a lamp of wisdom (enlightener) for the whole humanity (AGGS, M 5, P 1385-1387):

ਬਲਿਓ ਚਰਾਗੁ ਅੰਧਾਰ ਮਹਿ ਸਭ ਕਲਿ ਉਧਰੀ ਇਕ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਮ ॥

ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਸਗਲ ਹਰਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥

AGGS, M 5, P1387.

"Nanak person, the Guru, an image of the Almighty, has appeared as a light to dispel darkness (ignorance) with wisdom (Dharam) of Almighty (Naam) for the whole world."

2. **Sattay Doom** has described Guru Nanak symbolically as the Controller (*Naath*) of the world, who laid the foundation of a very high level of philosophy, which he compared to the flow of the Ganges in the opposite direction. This symbolic expression clearly demonstrates and emphasizes the uniqueness of this philosophy different from all the

other religions and challenges many already established religious concepts:

ਹੋਰਿਓ ਗੰਗ ਵਹਾਈਐ ਦੁਨਿਆਈ ਆਬੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਓਨੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਈਸਰਿ ਜਗ ਨਾਥਿ ਉਚਹਦੀ ਵੈਣੁ ਵਿਰਿਕਿਓਨੁ ॥

AGGS, Sattay Doom, P 967.

“The people of the world say that Nanak, the Controller (Naath) of the world has promulgated a philosophy of highest level that has changed the normal course of Ganges.”*

(* That means his philosophy has challenged many religious concepts.)

3. Bani ↔ Guru:

Guru Ramdas says that Bani is Guru and Guru is Bani.

And it is the Guru who says Bani:

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ ॥

AGGS, M 4, P 982.

“Bani (Sabd) is Guru and Guru is the Bani and it contains all types of elixirs of life.”

Who says the Bani?

The following verses indicate that Guru says the Bani: ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥ ੫ ॥

AGGS, M 4, P 982.

“Guru says Bani and the servant (devotee) (Sikh) accepts and practices it.

The devotee is sure that the Guru helps to get salvation.”

(Salvation: Liberation from ignorance, illusion, danger, or difficulty.)

Guru Ramdas says that it is Nanak who says Bani:

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਗੁਣ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥

AGGS, M 4, P 494.

“Nanak person (jann) speaks the wise words (gunn bani), through Guru's words (Gurbani) one realizes the Almighty.”

Guru Arjan explains here that the Almighty gave treasure of devotion to Nanak:

ਭਗਤਿ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਗੁਰਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਸਉਪੇ ਫਿਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਲਇਆ ॥੪॥੩॥੧੪॥

AGGS, M 5, P 612.

“When the Guru (Almighty) gave the treasure of devotion (wisdom) to Nanak (for distribution) then the Almighty never asked any account of this treasure from Nanak.”

4. Who is the Guru?

Since the Guru says Bani then who is the Guru here?

The following verses explain clearly that Nanak is the Guru who is behind the whole philosophy of Sikhism:

i) **Guru Angad** accepted Nanak as Guru:

ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ ॥੧॥

AGGS, M 2, P 150.

“What teachings can be imparted to those who have the Divine Guru Nanak as their Guru?”

ii) **Guru Arjan** explains that with the grace of the Almighty Nanak realized the Almighty and those who hear and see him (imbibe his Bani), do not fall into the womb of ignorance and superstitions:

ਭਇਓ ਅਨੁਗੁਹੁ¹ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ² ਸੰਤਨ³ ਕੈ ਹਰਿ⁴ ਨਾਮ⁵ ਹੈ ਮੀਠਾ ॥

ਜਨ⁶ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਗੁਰਿ⁷ ਕਿਰਪਾ⁸ ਧਾਰੀ ਸਭੁ ਅਕੁਲ⁹ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ¹⁰ ਡੀਠਾ¹¹ ॥

AGGS, M 5, P 612.

“On whom is kindness¹ and grace² of the Almighty³, That one obtains the sweet Entity⁵ of the Almighty⁴.”

(Similarly) The Almighty⁷ was gracious⁸ onto Nanak, the person⁶,

Then, Nanak realized¹¹ the Casteless⁹ and Immaculate¹⁰ Almighty in everybody.”

And

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਨ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਪੇਖਿਆ

ਸੇ ਫਿਰਿ ਗਰਭਾਸਿ ਨ ਪਰਿਆ ਰੇ ॥

AGGS, M 5, P 612.

“Those who have heard of and seen/met (accepted the philosophy of) Guru Nanak, do not fall into womb (of ignorance and superstitions again).”

The above verses clearly indicate that Nanak, who realized the Eternal Bani, is the Guru.

iii) **Bhai Kahn Singh [9]** defines Bani as follows:

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਾ-ਨਸ਼ੀਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਖ ਤੋਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਹੋਈ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ‘ਗੁਰੁਬਾਣੀ’ ਸੰਗਯਾ ਹੈ।

“The Bani (word), which has been revealed through the mouth of Satguru Nanak and the successor Satgurus under the guidance of the Akal (the Almighty), is called Gurbani.”

But according to Bhai Gurdas, Bani revealed by any spiritually wise men is also called Gurbani. However, Bhai Kahn Singh insists that the word ‘Gurbani’ is especially used for the ‘Bani’ of our Satgurus [a note in Ref. # 9].

iv) **Bhai Kahn Singh [9]** follows Guru Arjan’s above verse (4-ii) and emphasized that Nanak was established as the Guru of the Humanity as is indicated in his definition of Guru:

“ਅਗਯਾਨ ਵਿਨਾਸਕ, ਸਤੋਯ ਤੇ ਹਿਤ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਟਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਉਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੂਢੀ ਸ਼ਕਤਿ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਮਾਤ੍ਰ ਦੇ ਉਧਾਰ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜਗਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਥਾਪੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ।”

“Guru is the name for the truth that dispels ignorance, but this word (Guru) has a special power in Guru Nanak who has been established as the Guru for the Humanity by the Almighty.”

v) **Gurbilas Patshahi 6:**

Although there is a lot of misinformation about Sikhism, even then there is some very important information available in *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* (anonymous) that Guru Hargobind imbibed the teaching of Guru Nanak, which gives lots of spiritual pleasure/bliss. He also asked to Guru Har Rai to do so [13]:

ਜੇ ਸਿਖਯਾ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇਰੀ । ਸੋ ਦੀਨੀ ਸੁਖਸਿੰਧੁ ਘਨੇਰੀ ।...
ਏ ਬਿਧਿ ਸਿਖਯਾ ਦਈ ਅਪਾਰ । ਗੁਰ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ਹੀਏ ਸਭ ਧਾਰ ।
(ਅਧਿਆਇ ੨੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੬) [13, P-99]

"That teaching, which was imparted by Guru Nanak, gives lots of spiritual pleasure/bliss. Guru Har Rai was asked to imbibe it in his heart since the teaching was given by the Infinite."

Then at the time of his demise Guru Hargobind again advised the Sikhs to serve the Sikhs and accept the guidance of Guru Nanak:

ਗੁਰਸਿਖਨ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰੀਯੋ ।
ਏਕ ਟੇਕ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਧਰੀਯੋ । (ਅਧਿਆਇ ੨੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੬)
[13, P-99]

"Serve the Sikhs of the Guru (Nanak). Accept the guidance of Guru Nanak."

CONCLUSIONS

The above discussion clearly leads us to conclude that **Nanak is the Guru**, who realized the Bani. Guru Angad, and Guru Arjan have emphasized this point very clearly in their above verses from the AGGS. The information available in the *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* indicates that Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai accepted Nanak as their Guru. Bhai Kahn Singh, the great Sikh scholar, accepted Nanak as the Guru for the Humanity [9]. It means that Nanak is the Guru and the other nine Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak, enriched and preached his *Bani* (philosophy).

Therefore, keeping in view all the facts discussed above '**Nanakian Philosophy**' is the right term to honor Guru Nanak on whose philosophy Sikhism is based. In other words '**Nanakian Philosophy**' is a connate term in English for '**Gurbani**' as described above by Bhai Kahn Singh [9].

'Nanakian Philosophy' is very precise and specific term that gives due recognition to Guru Nanak for promulgating a unique and original philosophy for the humanity.

Those who consider the term, Nanakian Philosophy, has disrespectful and blasphemous are debasing Guru Nanak as the founder of a unique and original philosophy and of a universal religion for the humanity.

CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE USE OF TERM, NANKIAN PHILOSOPHY

I have been using the term, Nanakian Philosophy, for the last many years. Although many scholars have accepted this term in the context of dissemination of Gurbani and Sikhism to the humanity of the Science Age, some conservative Sikh theologians and Sikh scholars have refused to accept this term and declared it as disrespectful and blasphemous to Guru Nanak. On the other hand it is widely accepted by almost all the Sikh theologians and Sikh scholars that the Gurbani and Sikhism are scientific and logical, but are not ready to use precise, specific, scientific, and logical terms in their writings, and preaching of Gurbani and Sikhism.

On some conferences, Internet discussions and personal communications I found that those who oppose this term are of the view that 'Nanakian' is a term like used by the scientists for the scientists, 'Newtonian' or for other philosophers and they are not ready to accept Guru Nanak as a scientist, or a philosopher as if referencing of Guru Nanak as a scientist or philosopher is blasphemous. However, the critics have never objected the terms, like socialist, reformer, revolutionist, etc. for Guru Nanak.

I have noticed that most of the time the critics will criticize anything they come across that goes against their own concept of Gurbani and Sikhism without looking into the various facts available on the topic. They believe that there is nothing beyond their own formulated concepts about Gurbani and Sikhism.

Let us look into the encyclopedia, *Mahan Kosh*, of Bhai Kahn Singh [8], which is considered to be the best source of information on Gurbani and Sikhism. It contains an entry of a term, *Nanakiana*. There is another term, *Nankana*, in it also, against which it is written 'See *Nanakiana*' indicating that the right term in Punjabi is '*Nanakiana*'. Bhai Kahn Singh [8] has explained in details about the term *Nanakiana* and nothing about *Nankana* except that 'See *Nanakiana*'. In this entry he says that *Nanakiana* is used to places related to Guru Nanak. The word, *Nanakiana*, has been used to designate the birthplace of Guru Nanak as '*Nanakiana*', which is also called as '*Nanakiana Sahib*'. The railway station was also named as *Nanakiana*. Bhai Kahn Singh has given pictures and map of the *Nanakiana Sahib* in his encyclopedia. There is another Gurdwara related to Guru Nanak also known as *Nanakiana* near village Mangval about 4 km from Sangrur. There is still another Gurdwara related to Guru Nanak in Montgomery in Pakistan also named as *Nanakiana*.

It is worth pondering upon the fact that the

Encyclopedia of Bhai Kahn Singh enters the birthplace of Guru Nanak as *Nanakiana Sahib* but the majority of the Sikhs call it *Nankana Sahib*. But when we look into the entry of *Nankana*, it says, see *Nanakiana*. We do not find any information in the encyclopedia that when the people started to call it *Nankana* and why. It confirms the fact of Guru Arjan pointed earlier that people accept that which is wrong or false easily and do not try to find the truth.

Now let us think that Bhai Kahn Singh has entered this term, *Nanakiana*, for the places related to Guru Nanak and it has been there for the last three quarters of a century. It means this term was very common with the people of Punjab for about 3-4 centuries before the compilation of this encyclopedia. If the adjective, *Nanakiana*, can be used for places related to Guru Nanak then why cannot 'Nanakian' be used for his philosophy?

I would like to quote another example, Dr Pargat Singh and Palbinder Singh [11] have used another very similar term, *Nanakonianism*, for *Gurmat*. They have also used another similar term as '*Nanakonian mission*' and '*Nanakonian thought*' in 1999 in his article published in the *Sikh Review*, Calcutta, which is widely read journal in the world. The authors of this article claimed that this term, '*Nanakonianism*' was coined by Dr Dharam Anant Singh in his historic work, '*Plato and the True Enlightener of Soul*', in 1912, i.e. about a century ago.

From the above discussion it becomes crystal clear that the term, '*Nanakiana*' has been used by people for the last 4-5 centuries since the time of Guru Nanak and about a century another similar terms, *Nanakonian mission*, *Nanakonian thought*, and *Nankonianism* have been in use. Then how come my use of the term, *Nanakian*, for the philosophy of Guru Nanak becomes disrespectful and blasphemous now?

It proves that either the critics are in the habit of criticizing others' works without looking into the facts or they are doing it under the influence of *Biprins* to undermine the role of Guru Nanak for the promulgation of original and unique philosophy for the welfare of the humanity. I may also add here that the anglicized term, 'Nanakian', is more precise, specific, scientific, and logical than that of '*Nanakonian*'.

I have been using this term, *Nanakian Philosophy*, for the last many years for representing philosophy of Guru Nanak in my writings for dissemination of *Gurbani* and *Sikhism* to the humanity of the Science

Age and will continue to do so in the future. It is also a standardized term to be used in all the articles published in the UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM – The Research Journal for maintaining consistency and specificity in representation of *Gurbani* and *Sikhism* in their real perspective in the academic field during the Science Age.

Moreover, Let us also note that how closely the Punjabi word, 'Nanakiana' is related to its anglicized form, 'Nanakian'. Does it not indicate direct and close association of Punjabi with the roots of the Indo-European languages? Should not we be proud to use this term?

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