PHILOSOPHY OF GURU NANAK IN THE EYES OF A SCIENTIST

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INTRODUCTION
Guru Nanak (1469-1539) laid the foundation of Sikhism (Sikhism) in South Asia. This period (1469-1539) is the same as that of the Period of Renaissance covering, spanning between the 14th and 17th centuries and marking the transition from the Middle Ages to Modernity in Europe. During this time, scientists were challenging the medieval teachings and authority of the Church in Europe, and Guru Nanak was busy challenging the ancient mythology and rituals in which the people of South Asia were shackled to for centuries. However, after five centuries, if we examine the effect of the teachings of Guru Nanak on humanit y in general and on the Sikhs in particular, it will not be difficult to come to the conclusion that what the Sikhs are doing today is exactly contrary to his philosophy. Sikhism founded by Guru Nanak has been interpolated, misinterpreted, and misrepresented stealthily through dialogue with his primary school teachers and later took long voyages to have intellectual discussions with heads of various religious centers and institutions.

Many writers say that Nanak is a social reformer, a revolutionary against rituals and superstitions, creator of syncretism (combing the philosophies of Hinduism and Islam); some consider him as afoi ber of Bhagat Movement while others consider him as a follower of Bhagat Kabir. Some devout Sikhs consider him as a Prophet or even the Image of God. Nevertheless, the next four Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak, have accepted Nanak as their Guru. [1]

It is also well established in the psyche of the Sikhs that bani was revealed (called Dhur ki Bani) to Nanak when he disappeared in Vein rivulet for three days. Chahal et al [1] and Karminder Singh [2] have refuted this episode about revelation to Nanak during three days. On the other hand, Cunningham ([3] note # 2, p 35) reported from a Persian manuscript, Siar ul Muta kharin, that “Nanak was carefully educated by Saiyid Hasan and he also studied the most approved writings of Muhammadans and learned all the earthly sciences from Khizar, i.e. the prophet Elias. This indicates that Nanak had a great vision right from the beginning and refused to accept various rituals and religious rules being practiced at his time. He started to discover the truth through dialogue with his primary school teachers and later took long voyages to have intellectual discussions with heads of various religious centers and institutes.

The term, “Philosophy”, is rarely used for explaining the bani of Guru Nanak. In fact, the term “philosophy” is derived from a combination of the Greek words ‘philos’ meaning love and ‘sophia’ meaning wisdom. Although it may be difficult to define...

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“philosophy”, there still are a few definitions available in different Dictionaries and Web sites, which are worth for deriving a fairly acceptable definition as follows:

The branch of knowledge or academic study devoted to the systematic examination of basic concepts such as truth, existence, reality, causality, and freedom.

Love of, or the search for, wisdom or knowledge.

Theory or logical analysis of the principles underlying conduct, thought, knowledge, and the nature of the universe: included in philosophy are ethics, aesthetics, logic, epistemology, metaphysics, etc. (Based on definitions of “philosophy” found in various Dictionaries and Web sites.)

Philosophy embodied in the bani of Guru Nanak has been studied mostly by theologians that too under the influence of Vedic and Vedanta philosophies and by a few scientists still believing that creation and every action and reaction in this Universe is done by God. Nevertheless, the critical study of the bani of Guru Nanak done by the author [4] clearly indicates that the philosophy embodied in his bani includes all the characteristics of “philosophy”, especially, Theory or logical analysis of the principles underlying conduct, thought, knowledge, and the nature of the universe: included in philosophy are ethics, aesthetics, logic, epistemology, metaphysics, etc. Philosophy of Nanak has been termed, NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY by Chahal. ([4]; Chapter 4)

On the other hand, in the eyes of a scientist, Devinder Singh Chahal, Nanak is the best “Natural Philosopher” among the Natural Philosophers of ancient time and that of the Period of Renaissance since his study about the Nature and the physical Universe is very much comparable with modern science. “Natural Philosophy” is defined as: The study of nature and the physical universe before the advent of modern science. [5] From the mid-19th century, it became increasingly unusual for scientists to contribute to both physics and chemistry as "natural philosophy". It was in the 19th century that the concept of "science" received its modern shape with new titles emerging such as "biology" and "biologist", "physics" and "physicist" among other technical fields. In general, chairs of Natural Philosophy established long ago at the oldest universities are nowadays occupied mainly by physics professors.

Isaac Newton’s book, Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica (1687) (“Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy”) reflects the then-current use of the words "natural philosophy", akin to "systematic study of nature". Even in the 19th century, a treatise by Lord Kelvin and Peter Guthrie Tait, which helped define much of modern physics, was titled Treatise on Natural Philosophy (1867). (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_philosophy)

Therefore, in this paper only study of Nature and the physical Universe embodied in the bani of Nanak will be discussed in details. For example, Concept of ONE GOD in ज्ञान, which has been considered as “Singularity” as well as “Nothingness” (ज्ञान - SUNN), Origin of Universe, Laws of Nature/Universe (वैदिक - hukm) and sabd (मन्त्र) will be discussed.

Note: Here sometime ‘Nanak’ has been used without any adjective since in this discussion it is not known which one is most suitable.

DISCUSSION

Some Thoughts of Guru Nanak

During his life time Guru Nanak observed that there will be rare enlighten-oriented persons who will deliberate his bani:

घरी विठान्तूँ कीरतचमारी

नेवेव बुधभूत बोली

फिस घरी भगु पुलध बी

Few, the bani of Guru Nanak do not have authentic authority. There are different kinds of bani: some are due to the kindness of the ‘Guru’, and the remaining are due to the kindness of the ‘Guru’.

Guru Arjun repeats the above principle of Guru Nanak as follows:

_detected his bani: _

The concept of ONE GOD in ज्ञान, which has been considered as “Singularity” as well as “Nothingness” (ज्ञान - SUNN), Origin of Universe, Laws of Nature/Universe (वैदिक - hukm) and sabd (मन्त्र) will be discussed. Note: Here sometime ‘Nanak’ has been used without any adjective since in this discussion it is not known which one is most suitable.

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नेवेव बुधभूत बोली

फिस घरी भगु पुलध बी
One abandons the right\textsuperscript{11} method but weaves\textsuperscript{12} the wrong pattern.  

**Nanak Says:**  
Although the both ways\textsuperscript{14} (right and wrong) are happening under the Laws of Nature\textsuperscript{15,16}.  
Only those who are introduced\textsuperscript{17} to the right path are liberated\textsuperscript{18}.  
AGGS, M 5, p 185.

**Western Philosophers**  
The Western philosophers also think the same way as Guru Nanak thought.

“The public will believe anything, so long as it is not founded on truth.”  
Edith Sitwell (1887 - 1964) - A British Poet  
“A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.”  
— Mark Twain

All truth passes through three stages.  
First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.  
Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 – 1860)

Moreover, the priestly class invented the crime called blasphemy to punish who spoke the truth:  
“This crime called blasphemy was invented by priests for the purpose of defending doctrines not able to take care of themselves.”  
Robert Green Ingersoll (1833-1899)  
“All great truths begin as blasphemies.” - George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

Many scientists have been punished under this crime, blasphemy, in the West. The same principle is being followed by the Hathedar of Akal Takht to punish many Sikh scholars, who tried to speak truth to preach Sikhism in its real perspective, by excommunicating them from Sikhism. Nevertheless, there is no indication in bani of Guru Nanak if anybody has any right to excommunicate any Sikh from Sikhism since Sikhism is inclusive. Even then many Sikh scholars feel that Draconian Sword is always hanging on their head. Some scholars have dared to refuse to accept the excommunication.

However, Guru Nanak emphasizes that finally TRUTH will prevail.

**How was Guru Nanak considered during his time?**  
Guru Nanak was declared demon when he started to preach his philosophy which was against the most of religious concepts. Guru Nanak himself admits it as follows:

\begin{quotation}

\texttt{ਬੇਲੇ ਬਾਪੇ ਹ੃ਣਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੋੜਾਂ})
\texttt{ਬੇਲੇ ਬਾਪੇ ਅਧਾਰੀ ਤਲਵਾ ਰੇਣਾਂ}}
\texttt{ਕੋੜ ਕੋਕੋ ਕੋਕੋ ਕੋਕੋ}
\texttt{ਸਿਚ ਸਿਚ ਸਿਚ ਸਿਚ}
\end{quotation}

\texttt{ਬਹੱਲੀ ਬਹੱਲੀ ਅਧਾਰੀ ਨਾਲਾਂ} || 11

Bh\texttt{ਾਹੀੜ ਦੀਆਣੀ} s\texttt{਼} h\texttt{ਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਉਰਾਨਾ।}
\texttt{ਹਾਹਾਰ ਵਿਨਾ ਜਾਨਾ।} || 11 || ra\texttt{ਾਹਾਰ}}
Crazy Nanak has gone insane to understand the King (the God).

I know of none other than Har(i) – the God.  
AGGS, M 1, p 991.

**Jainism**  
Jainism does not support belief in a creator deity (the God). According to Jain doctrine, the universe and its constituents soul, matter, space, time, and principles of motion have always existed. All the constituents and actions are governed by universal natural laws. It is not possible to create matter out of nothing and hence the sum total of matter in the universe remains the same (similar to law of conservation of mass). Jain text claims that the universe consists of Jiva (life force or souls) and Ajiva (lifeless objects). Similarly, the soul of each living being is unique and uncreated and has existed since beginningless time. [7]

**Judaism**  
In traditional Jewish thought, God is understood as the absolute one, indivisible, and incomparable being who is the ultimate cause of all existence. Traditional interpretations of Judaism generally emphasize that God is personal yet also transcendent, while some modern interpretations of Judaism emphasize that God is a force or ideal. Traditionally, Judaism holds that YHWH (Jehovah, is the name of the God of the Israelites), whose name was revealed to Moses. Moses gave them the Law of Moses at biblical Mount Sinai as described in the Torah. [7]

**Hinduism**  
The concept of the God spans from absolute monism to henotheism, monotheism and polytheism. In Vedic period monothestic god concept culminated in the semi abstract semi personified form of creative soul dwelling in all gods such as Vishvakarman, Pursha, and Prajapathy. Most Hindus worship one Being of ultimate oneness (Brahman)

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**CONCEPT OF GOD IN MAJOR RELIGIONS**  
The concept of God varies in different religions. For example,  

**Buddhism**  
Buddhists do not worship any god or the God. People outside of Buddhism often think that Buddhists worship the Buddha. However, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) never claimed to be divine, but rather he is viewed by Buddhists as having attained what they are also striving to attain, which is spiritual enlightenment and, with it, freedom from the continuous cycle of life and death. [6]
through infinite representations of gods and goddesses. [7] Most of Hindus consider the God as Om or Aum which represents Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Vishnu appears in form of various gods from time to time.

Islam
There is the one almighty God, named Allah, who is infinitely superior to and transcendent from humankind. Allah is the creator of the universe and the source of all good and all evil. Everything that happens is Allah's will. Though the Muslims honors several prophets, Muhammad is considered the last prophet and there will be no other prophet after Mohammad. [6]

Christianity
Christians believe in one eternal God who is creator of all that is. He is viewed as a loving God who offers everyone a personal relationship with himself now in this life. In his life on Earth, Jesus Christ did not identify himself as a prophet pointing to God or as a teacher of enlightenment. Rather, Jesus claimed to be God in human form. (Some believe him as son of God.) He performed miracles, forgave people of their sin and said that anyone who believed in him would have eternal life. They regard the Bible as God’s written message to humankind. [6]

Sikhism
The God in Sikhism is Vahiguru. However, Nanak describes God as Nirankar (from the Sanskrit Nirākāra, meaning "formless"), Akal (meaning "eternal") and Alakh (from the Sanskrit alakṣya, meaning "invisible" or "unobserved"). Sikhism’s principal scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, starts with the figure "੧" signifying the Unity of God. Nanak’s interpretation of God is that of a single, personal and transcendental creator with whom the devotee must develop a most intimate faith and relationship to achieve salvation. Sikhism advocates the belief in one God who is Omnipresent (sarav viapak)), whose qualities are infinite and who is without gender, a nature represented by the term Ik Oankar. [7]

WHAT IS THE GOD OF GURU NANAK IN THE EYES OF A SCIENTIST?
The God defined in general as above in Sikhism [7] is very much same as is accepted in the Sikh world. However, neither Guru Nanak nor any other Sikh Guru has used Vahiguru as the name of God in their bani, incorporated in the AGGS. Guru Nanak has not assigned any descriptive/specific name to the God since no name could be assigned to the God. However, he has used the names of God as is commonly used in Hinduism but mostly Har (Har/Hari). And he has used the ALLAH as is in Islam. The God in Sikh has been designed as a logo, ਐਕੰਕਾਰੁ, by Guru Nanak, which has been interpolated, misinterpreted and misrepresented as ਸੰਗਾਣੰਕਾਰੁ (Ek Oankaar) or ਸੰਗਾਣੰਕਾਰੁ (Ek Aumkaar) by many theologians. It was Bhai Gurdas, the most respected scholar in the Sikh world, who interpreted, misinterpreted and misrepresented ਬੇਵਾਕਾਰੁ in Pauri 15 of Vaar 3 as follows: [8]

ਦੇਖਾਿਲਆ ਬਹਾਿਲਆ ਬਹਾਿਲਆ ਬਹਾਿਲਆ
ਵਾਰ 66 66

By Bhai Gurdas according to Bhai Gurdas the 'Commencing Verse' has been declared open Oora (Ek Oankaar) in general by the Sikhs at large. Nevertheless, it becomes clear that Bhai Gurdas was the first scholar, who declared open Oora (Ek Oankaar) (Oankaar).

After Bhai Gurdas the Teeka, a classical exegesis of the AGGS in 'Braj Bhasha' by a team of scholars of Nirmala Sect came out during 1883. This Teeka is known as the 'Faridkoti Teeka' or "Faridkot Vala Teeka." For all future attempts on interpretation of the AGGS, it became an ideal Prototype Teeka [10]. In this Teeka the Oora in ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ has been equated with ਓਮਾਕਾਰੁ (Aum/Om), the Trinity of God, which is a compound word formed with A (Akaar), AU (Aukaar), and M (Makaar). It is mentioned in this Teeka that Bhai Gurdas has pronounced Open Oora (ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ) as ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ (Oankaar), which means Aum or Om and represents Trinity of God [11]. Nevertheless, Guru Nanak is against the concept of Trinity of God [12].

Thereafter, Prof Sahib Singh [13] (pp 44-46, Vol 1) also follows Faridkot Vala Teeka that Open Oora (ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ) in ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ is Aum/Om and further explains ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ as ਓ ਅਕਾਰ (extended end of Oora) and pronounces ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ as ਓ ਅਕਾਰ (Ek Omkaar) or ਓ੭ਾਕਾਰੁ (Ek Omkaar). Prof Sahib Singh [13] (p 630, Vol 3) in ‘Asa Di Vaar’ says that ‘Oankaar’ has been taken from the Sanskrit word, AUM/OM. This has been first used
in Mandukya Upanishad that mean which has happened, is present now, and will remain, is known as AU/M/OM. Later on, it is considered as the sum of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, Trinity of God. Consequently, all the Sikh theologians, scientists, scholars, writers and the Sikhs at large accepted ὤ (Oṃ) as Ὠ (Ek Oankaar).

A seminar on ‘Mool Mantra’ was held at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar in March 1973 to celebrate the 500th Birthday of Guru Nanak. The proceedings of the seminar were published in 1985 (after 12 years) under the title: Sikh Concept of the Divine [14]. The outcome of the seminar from the paper presented by Pritam Singh is summarized as follows [15]:

‘O’ (ॐ) (with open end extended) is believed to be the initial Gurmukhi character of the age-old mystic Indian term Om. It is pronounced as O, Om, Oankaar (Onkar), according to the predilection and cultural affiliation of the speaker. Swami Harnam Das quotes Tãitatirīyopanishad to corroborate his view, but claims Vedic sanction for assigning the phonetic value of ‘O’ to ὤ. Some readers, especially, those belonging to Udasi and Nirmla denominations, generally pronounce ‘O’ as ‘Om’: while most of the Sikhs pronounce it as Onkar. Normally, etymologists explain Onkar as the combination of Om + Kar or Aum + Kar (ॐ + ਕਰ ਲਗੇ ਹੰਥਾ + ਕਰ). The Shiromani Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar has interpolated ὤ (Oṃ) by replacing open Oora with OM as shown on the title page of Gurmat Gian, Monthly Magazine in Hindi published by SGPC, Amritsar.

Fig. 1: ὤ has been interpolated by replacing open Oora with OM as shown on the title page of Gurmat Gian, Monthly Magazine in Hindi published by SGPC, Amritsar.

Similarly, Dr Hardev Singh Virk reported on Gurmat Learning Zone # 153065 that in the new book “GURU NANAK DEV (Dispenser of Love and Light)” under publication, authored by Dr SS Bhatti of Chandigarh, Ik Oankar is explained as follows:

“At the outset, I would like to take up two moot issues concerning the Sikh Faith so that at least my point of view is clear to my readers: (1) Some scholars who follow the Sikh Faith have stubborn aversion for the sound of the sacred word “Omkar” and in unnecessary resistance insist that the new coinage “Oankaar” is original and has nothing to do with the centuries-old “Gur-Mantra”, and (2) at least there is one scholar of the same clan who has gone a step further to declare that “Ik Oancaar” (& ਓਅੰਕਾਰ), Guru Nanak Dev’s Timeless-Universal Guru-Mantra, is no more than a “Logo” used by the Prophet of Sikh. Regarding the first one I would like to draw your attention to the scientific corroboration that “OM” has recently received. NASA has reportedly recorded sounds from Sun’s atmosphere—and there was much excitement that it resembled the sound of “OM” that had been recognised centuries ago through meditation [not the materials and methods of Science] by the Indian Rishis…”

I listened to the Sound from Sun given in the following link of NASA: https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/2018/sounds-of-the-sun

I did not hear anything which sounds like OM as reported by Dr Virk while writing about Dr Bhatti’s book. No NASA scientist has said anything that it sounds OM. I wonder why do these two scientists lie and connect Nanakian Philosophy to Vedic and Vedanta philosophies.

I also wonder if the Sikh intelligentsia has not been able to understand the concept of God represented as a logo, ὤ, designed by Guru Nanak even at the time of his 550th Birthday, then when will they understand ὤ in its real perspective.
WHAT ACTUALLY IS ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ?

The God in the eyes of a scientist, Devinder Singh Chahal, is the same as described by Guru Nanak in the form of a logo, ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ, designed by Guru Nanak in his bani. The following description of God is based upon the previous study by Chahal ([16], Chapter III):

The ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ is the logo of Sikh, which appears at the top of Commencing Verse (&ਾਲ਼ਬਾਲ ਕੈਣਦਰ - arambaic voak) in the Kartarpuri Bir as shown in Fig. 2.

![Figure 2: Place of ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ in Kartarpuri Bir.](image)

However, in the printed volume of the AGGS ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ appears without any distinction instead made as a part of the whole Commencing World as shown in Fig. 3. Chahal has described this logo, ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ, many times for over 20 years, but nobody has tried to understand it. However, there are some who have already accepted ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ as ‘EK OH’ but miss the importance of the extended end ( ) of ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ (Open Oora) as ਬੈਂਟੁ (beant - Infinite). Chahal’s latest explanation of this logo, ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ, is given in detail in the e-book, JAP: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy, in Chapter III. [16] It is also briefly explained as ਨਿਰਗੁਣ (nirgun as ‘Nothingness’/ ‘Singularity’) and ਸਲੋਗੁਣ (sargun as Universe). [17, 18]:

The logo, ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ, has been dispersed for explanation as follows:


ds is interpreted as 1 + 1 +

‘1’ (Ek – One) represents Oneness (Singularity) – the ਵਿਰਗੁਣ (nirgun) state of the Eternal Entity (God).

![Figure 3: Place of ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ in Aad Guru Granth Sahib.](image)

\( \text{‘1’ (open oora) represents } \text{ੱਖੂ (Oh - That) for } 1 \text{ (One) since there is no descriptive/specific name for } 1 \text{ the } 1 \text{ (One).} \)

(Extended end of the open oora - ‘ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ’) represents infinity (ਵਿਰਗੁਣ - beant) for ੴ (That), i.e. for the 1 (One).

If it is so, then we can infer that the ‘1’ (Ek – One) in ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ, is That (ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ) - (Oh), where matter/Energy - space/time is in an infinitely small unit (Singularity), which looks like Nothingness, ਸੁੰਨੁ (Sunn), but sprang into the Universe after the Big Bang. The above analysis clearly indicates that the logo ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ designed by Guru Nanak, can be pronounced as ਵਿਰਗੁਣ (ਵਿਰਗੁਣ) (Ek Oh Beant)” in English. This is based on the following explanation by Guru Nanak:

1 (One) in ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ:

The one in ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ represents the ‘One and Only’ according to Guru Nanak:

\( \text{ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ } \text{ਸਰਬ ਮਹੀਵਰ } \text{ੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ } \text{ੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ} \)

Sahib merā eko hai. Ek hai bhāi eko hai. ||11|| rahāo. My Eternal Entity is One and Only2,3,4, 5

Hey brother! AGGS, M 1, p 350.

\( \text{ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ } \text{ਸਰਬ ਮਹੀਵਰ } \text{ੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ } \text{ੱਖੂ ਅੱਖੂ} \)

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Sahib merā eko hai. Ek hai bhāi eko hai. ||11|| rahāo. My Eternal Entity is One and Only2,3,4, 5

Hey brother! AGGS, M 1, p 350.

The above, description resembles the Singularity of today’s science where matter/Energy - space/time (everything) is in an infinitely small unit, which looks like Nothingness in science, ਸੁੰਨੁ (Sunn) and ਵਿਰਗੁਣ (nirgun) in the bani of Guru Nanak, but sprang into the Universe.
What Is Nothingness or Singularity?

To comprehend 1(One) used in ਇੰਦਰ, it is necessary to understand ‘Nothingness’ or ‘Singularity’. Their understanding would further strengthen our thesis that 1 is an original and unique logo designed by Guru Nanak to represent the Eternal Entity – commonly called God in English and with many other names in other religions.

Singularity

According to the standard theory [26], our Universe sprang into existence from “singularity” around 13.7 billion years ago. Singularities are zones which defy our current understanding of physics. They are thought to exist at the core of “black holes.” Black holes are areas of intense gravitational pressure. The pressure is thought to be so intense that finite matter is actually squished into infinite density (a mathematical concept which truly boggles the mind). These zones of infinite density are called "singularities." Our universe is thought to have begun as an infinitesimally small, infinitely hot, infinitely dense, something - a singularity.

Nothingness

Nothingness has been defined by Kaup [27] as follows: “Nothingness Theory defines nonexistence as being the absence of existence, the absence of nothingness, and the absence of absence. It is what is not being referred-to under any circumstances. Nonexistence by definition is that which cannot be referred-to, named, or defined. So referring to it in any way violates its strict definition. Nevertheless, this fundamental paradox is at the basis of Nothingness Theory and must be referred-to anyway. Despite it is not being absolute nonexistence exerts a detectable force. We have proven through simple logic that the universe has and always will exist. Therefore, the universe must have existed before the “Big Bang” and will exist forever. This also means that the state of nothingness from which the Universe burst into existence must have existed relative to absolute nonexistence given that absolute nonexistence is not achievable. So energy/matter and space/time can attain relative nonexistence by collapsing into infinite density, which is a uniform state of static equilibrium. Examples of this state of relative nonexistence can be seen throughout the universe in the form of “black holes”.” A black hole is the pinnacle of perfectly symmetrical uniformity of energy, matter, space, and time.

Therefore, ‘Nothingness’ does not mean ‘without anything’. However, it is in such a small volume that it appears to be ‘Nothingness’. According to the ‘Big Bang Theory’, the energy was in such a small volume that has been termed as ‘Nothingness’ by some and as ‘Singularity’ by others. The ‘Nothingness’ and ‘Singularity’ are termed as ਸਨਕਿਸਲ ਅਕਿਸਲ or ਸੁਨੰਕੀਸਲ or SUNDI and Ek (One), respectively by Guru Nanak. It is also termed as ‘iyot’ (highly condensed energy) by Guru Nanak.

Is 1 (Ek-One) in ਇੰਦਰ ‘Singularity’ in Gurbani?

Will it be out of place to call 1(One) placed before ਇੰਦਰ the ‘Singularity’, from which everything originated, the state of the Universe after Big Bang?

Still another question:
Is not this ‘One’ of Guru Nanak the ‘Singularity’ of scientists in which energy/matter - space/time has attained relative nonexistence by collapsing into infinite density, which is a uniform state of static equilibrium?

This equilibrium is represented by Guru Nanak in the form of a logo as follows:

ਇੰਦਰ = +

ਇੰਦਰ = Singularity + That + Infinite.
Could we now infer from the above dismantled ਧੀਰੇ that the 'One' ('Singularity' = energy/matter - space/time) is 'That' (Entity), which is 'Infinite' from which the whole Universe appeared after the Big Bang.

The "big bang" theory is equivalent to Guru Nanak's view in simple language of that time as follows:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ।
Kīṯā pasā▫o eko kavā▫o.

ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ।
Ŧis ṯe ho▫e lakẖ ḏarī▫ā▫o.

AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

It is literally translated my most of the writers as follows: [11]

You created the vast expanse of the Universe with One Word/Voice!
Hundreds of thousands of rivers began to flow.
AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

Using present day science and the methodology of Guru Nanak, remembering that he would express his philosophy allegorically, metaphorically and symbolically, then my interpretation
will be quite different from that of all other writers. My interpretation is as follows:

The Universe exploded from one source of energy (singularity) and started to expand, hereafter appeared many things.

Scientifically “Many things” of Guru Nanak can be explained as follows in Fig. 4:

- Up to $10^{-43}$ seconds nothing appeared.
- After $10^{35}$ seconds elementary particles started to appear.
- After 0.001 seconds protons, neutrons, electrons and neutrinos started to appear.
- After 3 minutes the first element, Hydrogen, started to appear.
- After 300,000 years other elements started to appear.
- After 1 billion years stars and galaxies started to appear.
- Our Solar system and Earth with other planets appeared after about 4.6 billion years.

It is evident from the above discussion that has been interpolated, misinterpreted and misrepresented right from the time of Bhai Gurudas and continued till the 550th Birth of Guru Nanak by the contemporary Sikh scientists, theologians and writers as Ek Oankaar or Ek Omkaar placing it deeply rooted in Vedic and Vedanta philosophies. Consequently, they confirm that Guru Nanak has no originality and uniqueness in his philosophy rather he was preaching Vedic and Vedanta philosophy.

However, in the eyes of this scientist, Devinder Singh Chahal, ' is original and unique logo to represent the Eternal Entity (God) in SIKH founded by Guru Nanak. The logo, ' represents the modern scientific concept that the ‘ ’ (Ek – One) in as ‘Singularity’ or as (Sunn) or (nirgun as ‘Nothingness’) which sprang into the Universe as (sargun) state. However, this nirgun state and sargun state are quite different than those are understood in Vedic and Vedanta philosophies.

It is time for the Sikh intelligentsia to decide which way to go.

**HUKM (ਹੁਕਮ) LAWS OF NATURE/UNIVERSE**

The word ‘HUKM’ ( - the basic word as spelled in Gurmukhi Lipi) has been used very extensively in the Gurbani, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). [20] ‘Hukm’ is an Arabic word [21], which means command, edict, allow/permission. According to Punjabi-English Dictionary [22], Bhai Kahn Singh [19], and Dr Gurbachan Singh [23] ‘Hukm’ means order, command, decree, judgment, decision, sanction, God’s Will, and Divine Law. And ‘Hukmi’ is also an Arabic word [21], which means the one who orders. In Punjabi [19, 22, 23] it also means the one in authority to issue ‘Hukm’ (order) and allows permission.

Beside this there is another word, (Rajay) very similar to ‘Hukm’.

According to Bhai Kahn Singh [19] and Dr Gurbachan Singh [23] it means: God, Will of God, One in authority to issue orders, satisfied, contented, furlough, and quilt.

Robert Nola [24] says that: “The idea that there are scientific laws might have originated along the lines of the model of God giving us moral rules. God, it is said, also gave nature its ‘natural laws’ to obey. But the model is not adequate since even though people can break moral and legal laws, it is not open to nature to break the laws of nature. There seems to be a kind of necessity to the laws of nature that prevents nature from breaking its own laws. The basic idea of a scientific laws of nature is that of a perfectly regular sequence of kinds of happenings that occur without exception. The observed natural world might itself appear to us to be highly irregular and even somewhat chaotic (think of the weather!). But it is commonly assumed in science that underneath all the appearance of irregularity there are some quite simple and quite general laws governing what happens.”

For example, Tsunami is a series of huge waves that happen after an undersea earthquake or volcano eruption. The water waves travel in all directions from the area of disturbance. The waves may travel in the open sea as fast as 450 miles per hour. They can be as high as 100 feet and can cause a lot of destruction on the shore. Tectonic earthquakes are a particular kind of earthquakes that are associated with the earth’s crustal deformation; when these earthquakes occur beneath the sea, the water above the deformed area is displaced from its equilibrium position. Tsunami is not caused because God is angry rather it is caused by earthquakes which happen due to normal movement of Tectonic plates, and by volcano eruptions, which happens because of pressure of lava from the center of the Earth entirely according to the Laws of Nature.

**WHAT IS ‘HUKM’ IN NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY?**

This word, (Hukm) starts appearing on the very first page of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [20] in the first stanza of JAP bani and it continues to appear again and again throughout the AGGS. It appears on the first page of the AGGS as follows:

```
ਹੁਕਮ ( ਹੁਕਮ) ਸਿਚਆਰਾ
ਰਜਾਈ ਇਕਵ ਸਿਚਆਰਾ
ਹੁਕਿਮ ਤਤਾ ਹੋਈਐ
ਕੱਟੀ ਸੁਕੀਜਾ ਹੁਕਮਇ ਫੌਲੀਆਂ
Kiv sachi-aarā ho-įnai
kiv kūrhai tūtāi pāl.
ਪੰਨਾ ਵਿਕਠੀ ਛਿਫਾ ਮੋਗਾਰ
ਰਾਜਾਈ ਵਿਚਾਰਾ ਹਿੱਤਾਂ
Hukam rajā-i chālna
Nānak likhī-ā nāl. | | | |
ਪਰਾਨਾਲ, ਨੂੰ ੧, ਖੇਤਰ ੧.
```

In the first two phrases questions have been posed by Guru Nanak:

1. How to become Truthful (ਸਤਿਕਾਰੁੰ) ? And
2. How to break the line (series) of
lies? (kiv kuray tutay pal)?

The answer to these questions has been given in the next phrase:

Hukam rajāi chālnā Nānak likhiā nāl. ||1||

The above phrases have been interpreted by Principal Teja Singh [25] as follows:

It is translated into English as follows:

"Then how can (we be) truthful and how can the wall of falsehood between us and God be broken? The method for this is only as follows: To walk on (follow) the Will of God. Hay Nanak! That order is written with us."

Almost the same interpretation is found in many other translations (Sodhi Meharbaan, Dr Mohan Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Pandit Kartar Singh Dakha, Bhai Gulshan Rai, Giani Harbans Singh, and Vinoba Bhave) as reported by Dr Joginder Singh [26]. The word sachiara has been translated by them including Dr Joginder Singh as ‘truthful’ and kiv kuray tutay pal (kiv kuray tutay pal) has been translated as ‘how to break the wall of falsehood between God and a person’.

If we look into this phrase carefully there is no mention of ‘wall’; there is no mention of ‘between a person and God’; and there is no mention that ‘the order is written with us or on us’.

However, Prof Sahib Singh [13] interpreted it differently by keeping in view the critical analysis of the first phrase of this stanza where mehi (sochay) has been interpreted as ‘cleansing of body’ to receive the order of God. Nevertheless, many scholars have interpreted ‘sochay’ as ‘thinking’ which does not connect to the reply to that question posed by Guru Nanak. Since ‘sochay’ means cleansing of body, Prof Sahib Singh interpreted the above phrase as follows:

It is translated into English as follows:

"(Then) how can one cleanse one’s body to receive the enlightenment of God? And how can (our inside veil) of lies/falsehood can be broken (removed). To follow Order according to the Will of God is the only procedure. Hay Nanak! (This procedure) has been written right from the beginning when the Universe was created.

The above interpretation of Prof Sahib Singh is quite different from that of Principal Teja Singh and others. Then what is the right interpretation? Most appropriate interpretation can be achieved only if we can interpret the following phrase of stanza # 1 correctly:

Sochāi soch na hovaije je sochī lākh vār.

The word (sochay) has been interpreted as ‘Thinking’ by many scholars [25-29]. One has to be very careful to interpret this word, ‘sochay’ because this word has its direct bearing on the word sachiara. If ‘sochay’ is taken as ‘thinking’ then sachiara has no connection with the first part of stanza # 1 whether ‘sachiara’ means ‘truthful’ or ‘purification of body/mind’. In this phrase ‘sochay’ has been taken as ‘purifying oneself or one’s mind’:

Sochāi soch na hovaije je sochī lākh vār.

One cannot purify oneself or one’s mind or attain peace of mind by physical cleansing of body or by performing various rituals even if one cleans the body for hundreds of thousands of times.

Linking the above theme, therefore, I have interpreted the last part of stanza # 1 as follows:

Kiv sachiārā hoivaije kiv kūrhai ātai pāl.

Hukam rajāi chālnā Nānak likhiā nāl. ||1||

Abhāsā, mātā 1, pāl 1.

Question:

How can one achieve purification of body and of mind1 (achieve peace of mind)? And how can one break through the line (series) of lies (the vicious circle)?

Nanak answers:

Purification and peace of mind can be achieved and vicious circle can be broken by understanding and following the Laws of Nature, ordained right in the beginning of Universe.

AGGS, Jap 1, p 1.

Note: Here ‘Hukm’ has been interpreted as ‘order’ and order is also a ‘law’. Law has also been defined as ‘Laws of Nature/Universe’.

In the first stanza of JAP bani Guru Nanak is talking about the purification of mind, which is full of illusions and delusions built up by a series (line - Ḍār) of lie after lie. Once one understands the Hukm (Laws of Nature/Universe) then one can find the way to break the vicious circle (of illusions and delusions) built on lie after lie. This is the method, which has been recommended by Guru Nanak to achieve purification of mind and to attain peace of mind.

Hukm as Laws of Nature/Universe

The word ‘hukm’ used in the first Stanza of JAP has further been explained as Laws
of Nature/Universe by Guru Nanak in the second stanza of JAP as follows:

1. *Hukmī* (Hukmi): has been interpreted as law by Gurbachan Singh [23] and it also means ‘who has the authority to issue order’. But here it means ‘Laws of Nature/Universe’.

2. In the second stanza of JAP Guru Nanak has confirmed that ‘Hukmī’ is the order/law (Laws of Nature/Universe). He further emphasizes that every action and reaction (process) or anything that is happening in this Universe and in all the living beings are governed under the Laws of Nature/Universe. Consequently, nothing can happen outside of these laws.

In this stanza of JAP Guru Nanak has explained what is generally interpreted as ‘in fear of God’ by the following prominent theologians:

**Note:**

- Prof Sahib Singh = in fear of Rabb…
- Faridkot Teeka = in Fear of Akal Purakh..
- Prof Sahib Singh = in fear of Rabb…
- Giani Harbans Singh = in fear of Akal Purakh…

If we keep in view the main theme of this verse and the previous verse then *Bhai vich* (Bhai vich) should be interpreted as the metaphor for ‘Laws of Nature/Universe’ as follows.

"Under the Laws of Nature/Universe, air always blows; hundreds of thousands of rivers flow; the energy performs different works; Earth moves; clouds move; and the so-called Dharm Raaj (birth and death) is under the laws; Sun and Moon (planets) are moving tens of millions of miles; Sid, Budh, Sur, Naath; the sky; the soldiers and strongest warriors; groups; appear and disappear.

Everybody and everything (the whole world) is under the Laws of Nature/Universe."

Nanak says:

The “One and Only” that (Eternal Entity) is without any form, is not under any law and exists forever.

AGGS, M 1, p 464.

In the following verse Guru Amardas summarizes the origin of Universe according to Nanakian Philosophy under the Laws of Nature/Universe as follows:

"In the above fact of Laws of Nature, Then one can get rid of egoism/egotism. AGGS, Jap 2, p 1."
The Universe came into existence according to the Laws of the Nature/Universe.

It creates and then watches Its Own power of creation.

It works by itself and makes the others to work under these laws, And It pervades in Its Own laws into existence (Laws of Nature/Universe).

AGGS, M 3, p 1043.

The most important message of Guru Nanak, to be noted in the above discussion, is that whatever is going on in this Universe is being done under these Laws of Nature/Universe.

Therefore, there is no chance of performance of any miracle by anybody on this Earth since what has to be done is to be under these laws. In this connection, I would like to bring to the notice of readers the realization of Robert Nola [24] as pointed out earlier: "...even though people can break moral and legal laws, it is not open to nature to break the laws of nature. There seems to be a kind of necessity to the laws of nature that prevents nature from breaking its own laws."

Carl Sagan has put it well: "... if by ‘God’ one means the set of physical laws that govern the Universe, then clearly there is such God. This God is emotionally unsatisfying... does not make much sense to pray the law of gravity."


It means even the Nature (the God) cannot break its laws. In this respect, Walter Isaacson [30] reported the views of Einstein that science could not accept a deity who could meddle at whim in the events of its creation. Einstein says: "The main source of the present-day conflict between the spheres of religion and of science lies in this concept of a personal God."

Isaacson [30] further reported that: "For some people, miracles serve as the evidence of God’s existence. For Einstein it was absence of miracle that reflected divine providence. The fact that the world was comprehensible, that it followed laws, was worthy of awe."

Einstein writes about scientists [30]: "Scientists aim to uncover the immutable laws that govern reality, and in doing so they must reject the notion that divine will, or for that matter human will, plays a role that would violate this cosmic causality."

I would ask readers to visualize the above discussion. Is it not that what Einstein (1879-1955) and other scientists are saying that has been said by Guru Nanak (1469-1539) about 410 years before Einstein? The irony is that it is difficult for some Sikh scientists and theologians, who are under heavy burden of Vedic and Vedanta philosophies and constrained by its parameters, to accept this fact that the nature cannot break its own laws to perform miracles for any god or deity or spiritual person. Any so-called miracle is the delusion of the mind, i.e. ignorance fostered by dust of accumulated falsehood, distorting reality.

Guru Nanak answers about his ‘guru’ as follows: "...even though people can break moral and legal laws, it is not open to nature to break the laws of nature. There seems to be a kind of necessity to the laws of nature that prevents nature from breaking its own laws."

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Who is your Guru?

ਵੇਦਾ ਸਭਦ ਖੁਦੇ ਮਿਤਰ ਦੇ ਰੀਤਾ ਹਿਰਾੜੀ || 7 ||

ਵੇਦਾ ਸਭਦ ਖੁਦੇ ਮਿਤਰ ਦੇ ਰੀਤਾ ਹਿਰਾੜੀ || 7 ||

Kavan mool kavan mat vel.

Terai kavan guruj jis kaa taa chela.

AGGS, M 1, p 943. [20]

What is the source of beginning and which type of philosophy is of this Age?

Who is that ‘guru’ of whom you are his disciple?

Guru Nanak answers about his ‘guru’ as follows:

ਪਵਨ ਅੰਭੰਕਰ ਮਿਤਰ ਸਰਟਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੀਤਾ || 8 ||

ਸਭਦ ਖੁਦੇ ਮਿਤਰ ਦੇ ਰੀਤਾ || 8 ||

Pavan arambh surat dun chela.

The air is the beginning of every life and this is the Age of Enlightenement through the True Guru.

Who is the true guru?

It is explained in the second sentence: The sabad is the guru (enlightener) and my keen conscience is its disciple.

Now the question is:

Which ‘Sabad’ is the ‘Guru’ of Nanak?
That ‘sabd’ has been described by Guru Nanak himself in stanza #38 of JAP bani as follows:

\[ \text{Nanak naḏrī naḏar nihāl.} \]

self-control should be the furnace, and patience of the goldsmith.

Wisdom should be the anvil, and knowledge should be the tools.

That’s why many sants/babas have appeared in Punjab who are brainwashing their followers to be dependent upon their advice rather than to use their own intellect to coin the sabd taught by Guru Nanak. Of course, some people may need a guru (teacher) to teach those qualities to coin the ‘sabd’ and to develop the four qualities discussed earlier to resolve their problems, and to cross the so-called dreadful sea of life.

During the discourse (Siddh Gost), the Siddhas continued questioning Guru Nanak:

What is your philosophy?

Kavan katha le raahu nirale.

Bolai Nanak sunhu tum bale.

Question 42 b:

What type of unique philosophy do you have?

Speak out, O child Nanak, we are ready to listen to you.

And

What is the sabd, which can help us cross the dreadful sea of life?

AGGS, M 1, p 1027.

Man was born into this world with four characteristics:

(Seeing, hearing, sensation and thinking/capability to analyse the data collected.)

In fact, all these characteristics of humans are based on Universal Energy.

If one forgets about these four characteristics, then that innocent (human) loses all his study/capability and also forgets to use the Laws of Nature/Universe for the betterment of one’s life.

In the above stanza, Guru Nanak explains how a ‘sabd’ (idea/philosophy) is coined (formulated) as the Amrit (elixir) or way of living, which will mould a person to be highly moral and progressive. Guru Amardas explained the Amrit (idea/philosophy) is already present in the body (mind), but one has to be awakened to that Amrit (in AGGS at page 644). However, Guru Nanak continues to explain further that body and mind have the four faculties: seeing, hearing, sensation, and thinking/capability to analyse the data collected. In spite of the above teachings of Guru Nanak, the Sikhs continue to follow Eastern philosophy that a personal human guru is necessary to guide a person to achieve a moral life, to meet God, and to achieve mukath (salvation).

That is why many sants/babas have appeared in Punjab who are brainwashing their followers to be dependent upon their advice rather than to use their own intellect to coin the sabd taught by Guru Nanak. Of course, some people may need a guru (teacher) to teach those qualities to coin the ‘sabd’ and to develop the four qualities discussed earlier to resolve their problems, and to cross the so-called dreadful sea of life.

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Speak out, O child Nanak, we are ready to listen to you.

And

What is the sabd, which can help us cross the dreadful sea of life?
Guru Nanak continues to explain that the ‘sabd’, as explained in Stanza # 38 of JAP bani, is the answer to various problems of life:

A person, who is not afraid ||

Guru Nanak further explains that the ‘sabd’ is the real ‘guru’ in life:

A person: without using intellect, is wandering all around to understand the Eternal Entity (God).

That person could not understand that the Eternal Entity is prevailing everywhere as if imbibed in everything.

A person, who is not afraid of anything, can understand the Eternal Entity (God) through the enlightening philosophy (sabd guru) 10.

AGGS, M 1, p 1034.

Many of the writers translate ‘sabd’ as ‘sabd’ and ‘guru’ as ‘guru’. But nobody tries to explain the meaning of ‘guru’ and of ‘sabd’ as explained above.

Guru Nanak further explains that the ‘sabd’ is the real ‘guru’ in life:

A person, who is not afraid, is wandering all around to understand the Eternal Entity 12 through this method and remains attached to the Eternal Entity.

AGGS, M 1, p 432.

Guru Nanak continues to advise the use of ‘sabd’ in life:

The word “hukm” for Guru Nanak is the Laws of Nature/Universe and no action and reaction happens in this Universe and living beings without the “hukm”. But many Sikh scientists and theologians still believe it as “Will of God”.

The right pronunciation of ਹੁਕਮ is “Ek Oh Beant” in Punjabi and “One and Only That Infinite”. Moreover, the Ek (One) in ਹੁਕਮ represents Singularity, Nothingness, Sunn and Nirgun state of the Eternal Entity (God). When it bursts into Universe is called sargun state of the Eternal Entity (God).

The concept of God is different in different religions but the God is Eternal Entity for Guru Nanak which is quite unique than the God of all other religions.

The logo, ਓਕਾਕਰ, which has been designed by Guru Nanak to represents the Eternal Entity (God) and as the logo of Sikh founded by him.

It has been interpolated, misinterpreted and misrepresented as Ek Oankaar. Oankaar in Upanishads represents Aum/ Om which represent God as Trinity. Guru Nanak is against the Trinity of God.

CONCLUSIONS

Philosophy of Guru Nanak as observed by a scientist is concluded as follows:

Guru Nanak observed that only rare, who are oriented toward enlightenment will deliberate bani in its real perspective.

He also observed that the people accept Khota (false) as Khara (true) and truth is not accepted easily.

The concept of God is different in different religions but the God is Eternal Entity for Guru Nanak which is quite unique than the God of all other religions.

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philosophy during the period of Renaissance.

This “sabd” is idea/philosophy which helps people to raise their morality and to cross the dreadful sea of life successfully.

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The author is grateful to Dr Kulbir Singh Thind for permitting me to reproduce gurbani in Gurmukhi Lipi and its transliteration in Roman alphabet from his web site: www.srigranth.org. Interpretation of gurbani is by the author in case the interpreter is different that his web site: www.srigranth.org.

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