INTRODUCTION
It is important to understand the terms Sikh and Sikhi before we discuss other Basic Principles of Sikhi. Since I started to define a ‘Sikh’ in 1992, I have not come across any concise and precise definition of a Sikh from any Sikh institute, Sikh clergy, or Sikh authority so far. [1-3]

Therefore, Basic Principles of Sikhi, a project to define and/or describe Sikh terms and the Basic Principle of Sikhi, has been initiated by a group of Sikh experts in various fields, such as Sikh History, Sikh Philosophy, various Sciences, Theology, etc. A couple of decades ago, a new definition of a Sikh was constructed in haste under the pretence of meeting the requirement of the forthcoming election of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar. A Sikh defined in haste will have many implications that will affect the whole Sikh nation—especially those Sikhs living in the foreign countries.

CONSTRUCTING A DEFINITION
Before defining any word, one must understand the meanings of ‘term’ and ‘definition’.

Term:
1. A word or expression that has a precise meaning in some uses or is peculiar to a science, art, profession, or subject.
2. Any word or phrase used in a definite or precise sense.
3. [pl.] words that express ideas in a specified form.

Define:
1. To determine or identify the essential qualities or meanings of something.
2. To make distinct, clear, or detailed in outline.
3. To make a definition.

Definition:
1. A statement expressing the essential nature of something.

Therefore, the word ‘SIKH’ is a term which should be defined according to the explanation given for a ‘term’, ‘define’, and ‘definition’ as above. The definitions of a SIKH given so far in various literary sources on Sikhism do not meet these criteria.

DEFINITIONS ALREADY ACCEPTED
Let us now discuss some definitions of a Sikh already accepted by the Sikh clergy and Sikh authorities and the deficiencies and redundancies therein:

   (Part I, Chapter 1, Section 1)
   (9) Sikh - "Sikh" means a person who professes the Sikh religion or, in the case of a deceased person, who professed the Sikh religion or was known to be Sikh during his lifetime.

If any question arises as to whether any living person is or is not a Sikh, he shall be deemed respectively to be or not to be a Sikh if he makes or refuses to make the following declaration to the [State]^1 government:

^1 Sikh: "I solemnly affirm that I am a Sikh, that I believe in the
In the definition of "Believes in Guru Granth Sahib" and "Sikh religion" and precision. For example, The above definitions lack consistency. Comments

Inserted by Punjab Act No. 1 of 1959

Substituted for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order 1950.

In 1944 section 2(b).

Inserted by Punjab Act No. 1 of 1959 section 3 (4).

Inserted by Punjab Act No XI of 1944, section 2 (b).

Comments

The above definitions lack consistency and precision. For example, "Sikh religion" has not been defined/explained. It raises a question. What is the Sikh religion?

"Believes in Guru Granth Sahib" means idol worship. It should have been "follows the philosophy of the Sikh Gurus incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib."

In the definition of "Amritdhari", the word "person" is used for whom that has taken khande da Amrit. There is no mention whether that "person" is a Sikh or non-Sikh.

"Sahjdhari Sikh" has been defined as a person who only performs ceremonies according to Sikh rites and can recite the Mool Manter. This means he does not have to follow the Gurus' philosophy incorporated into the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. Recitation of the Mool Manter only means believing in the mantra-system that is contrary to the Guru's philosophy. In fact, there is no indication of or definition of a Sahjdhari Sikh in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. However, the word "sehj", meaning "tranquillity" and "slowly", has been used extensively. Gurbani advises all (Sikhs) to attain this stage of "sehj" by understanding and practicing the teachings imparted in the Gurbani.

The word "Patit" used in clauses 10-A (iii) and in 11 to indicate that Sahjdhari is a person who was never Keshadhari and thus cannot be called as patit. This implies that children born in the Sikh families, who were never Keshadharis, cannot be called Patit. Any Sikh who trims his beard or keshas has been declared to be Patit. This means he has no right to be a Sikh, whereas a Sahjdhari, who is clean-shaven, has every right to be a Sikh.

The terms "Amritdhari Sikh" and "Patit" were added in 1944. "Sahjdhari" is the latest addition, i.e. in 1959.

The above discussion indicates that there are three types of Sikhs in the present Gurdwara Act: Sikh, Amritdhari Sikh, Sahjdhari Sikh, and Patit. This division of Sikhs violates the basic principle of Sikhi: equality.


One who is the follower of Sri Guru Nanak Dev.

One who adopts the Sikh religion of Satguru Nanak Dev.

One who considers Sri Guru Granth Sahib as his religious Granth and ten Satgurus as same body and spirit.

A Sahjdhari is (p 137):

A branch of the Sikhs whose members do not adopt khande da Amrit, kachh and kirpan, but do not believe in any religion except that of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

And an Amritdhari is (p 78):

That Singh who had adopted Amrit.

Comments:

Here Bhai Kahn Singh also accepts three types of Sikhs. Here again, all the three definitions lack consistency and precision:

It is to be noted that Bhai Kahn Singh [5] used the word 'Singh' instead of a 'person' to define an Amritdhari. Who is a Singh? Then, he used the word 'Kharaghadi' in the 'Amritsanskar' description (p 77). According to him, a 'Kharaghadi' is one who keeps a sword, i.e., Kirpandhari (p 370). In other words, an Amritdhari is also called 'Kharaghadi' and 'Kirpandhari'.

Contradictory statements:

"Sikh" is one who adopts the Sikh religion of Satguru Nanak Dev.

"Sahjdhari" is one who does not believe in any religion except that of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The above two statements indicate that there are two kinds of religions: one of Satguru Nanak Dev for a Sikh.
and the other of Sri Guru Granth Sahib for a Sahajdhari.

3. A Sikh in Rehit Maryada, Published by the SGPC in 1945 [6]
"Believes in advice of ten Guru Sahibans (from Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib), Sri Guru Granth Sahib and bani and advice of Guru Gobind Singh. Does not accept any other religion, is a Sikh."

Comments:

'Believes in one Almighty' does not make this definition distinctive from others because Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others also believe in one Almighty. Thus, this is not a specific characteristic of a Sikh according to the rules of defining a term.

'Believes in Ten Guru Sahibans' is not correct according to the Gurbani, because in Gurbani it says believe in the Sabd not in Gurus.

'Believes in advice of ten Guru Sahibans' is also not correct, because only the advice of Guru Nanak and the other five Gurus was declared authentic by Guru Arjun and Guru Gobind Singh. Only their bani have been incorporated in the AGGS.

The word 'nischaa' that means 'belief' or 'faith' is usually interpreted by many Amritdharis as 'obligatory' to be a Sikh. The word 'belief' or 'faith' cannot be interpreted as 'obligatory' or 'imperative' under any circumstances. It may be necessary to add here that 'belief' and 'faith' are often used interchangeably but 'belief' may or may not imply certitude in the believer whereas 'faith' always does even when there is no evidence or proof. Consequently, the 'faith' becomes 'blind faith'. Nevertheless, Guru Nanak rejects 'blind faith' and advises to research, analyse, and evaluate before accepting any statement or philosophy.

A Sikh in the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (DSGPC) Act 1971 [7]

"A Sikh means a person who professes the Sikh religion, believes and follows the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus only and keeps unshorn hair and have no other religion."

If any question arises as to whether any living person is or is not a Sikh, he shall be deemed respectively to be or not to be a Sikh if he makes or refuses to make in the manner prescribed by rules the following declaration: "I solemnly affirm that I am a Keshadhari Sikh, that I believe in and follow the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus only, and that I have no other religion.

"Amritdari Sikh" means and includes every Sikh who has taken Khande ka Amrit or Khanda Pahul, prepared and administered according to the tenets of Sikh religion and rites at the hands of five Pyaras or "beloved ones".

Inconsistency: Is "Sikh religion" different than that of "believing and following the teaching of Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus only"? One of these two phrases is redundant.

Under these circumstances, the Institute for Understanding Sikhism suggests that since many Sikh scholars and theologians claim Sikhism as a universal religion, then it is necessary that the definition of a Sikh should have universal adaptability/acceptability and be based on the Gurbani, incorporated into the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. The Aad Guru Granth Sahib is accepted as the only authentic and original source of Gurbani that has been reiterated as the only "GURU" of the Sikh by Guru Gobind Singh.

Granth as Guru

Since the Sabd is the Guru, the Granth, in which the Sabd of Gurus was incorporated, was equated to Guru (Enlightener) by Guru Arjun sometime before the compilation of Granth in 1604 CE as indicated in his following stanza:

**In Jap # 5 Guru has also been equated to Ishwar.**

AGGS, M 5, p 1226. [8]
"The Granth (Gurbani) is equivalent to the Enlightener*. (From which) the noble people discuss (sing) the attributes of the Almighty and deliberate on the wisdom (philosophy) of the Almighty in the congregation."

*According to Bhai Kahn Singh [5] "Parm means Par + Ishwar. Parm means great and Ishwar has many meanings: Shiv, Swami, God, and also a particular teacher (Guru) of Jogis who teaches the philosophy of Gorak. In Jap # 5 Guru has also been equated to Ishwar, Gorkh, Brahma, Parbati. Therefore, it is very clear that
the word Parmesar used here is equivalent to the Guru (Enlightener).

This means, on the day in 1604 the Granth was compiled, it was given the status of Guru because of the fact that Sabd is Guru as described above, and incorporated into the Granth. Since then, the preaching of Gurbani was carried on from this Granth by Guru Arjun himself and by all other Gurus who succeeded the House of Nanak. Therefore, since 1604, the Granth is Guru because of the fact that the Sabd Guru is incorporated in it. Guru Gobind Singh reiterated this fact in 1708 when he declared that there would be no Guru in person and the lineage of Guru in person in Sikhism permanently.

Therefore, the definition of a Sikh should be constructed keeping in view the teachings of the Gurus (Gurbani) that has been incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib, the only Guru for the Sikhs as explained above.

However, keeping in mind the rules to define a term as explained above in my previous writings[1-3] and many recently held group discussions, the Institute for Understanding Sikhism constructed the following definition of a Sikh about 28 years ago:

Suggested Definition of a Sikh

A person, who follows Sikh (Gurmata/Sikhism) that is based on Gurbani, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjun, and Guru Gobind Singh, the Fifth and Tenth Guru in succession to the House of Nanak (Mahta), respectively, is a Sikh.

Consequently, that person is solely a follower of Sikhism and does not practice any other religion simultaneously.

Note:

On Vaisakhi of 1699, Guru Gobind Singh initiated (baptized) some Sikhs and prescribed 5Ks - Kesh (turban to cover them), Kanga (comb), Kachha (shorts), Kirpan (small dagger), and Kara (steel bracelet) for them and to follow the code of conduct now published by the SGPC [6]. They are called as Amritdharis. This is based on the information found in old literature that was not written by any Sikh Guru. Now there are many Sikhs, who wear only a few Ks.

My previous study about defining a Sikh indicates that there are many different types of categories of Sikhs (e.g. Sikhs, Amritdharis, Sisdihari Sikhs, and Patit Sikhs) as found in the accepted sources of Sikh literature. Besides those, there are Namdhari Sikhs, Nilankari Sikhs, and followers of some Sants or their Muths.

I first defined a Sikh in 1992, about 28 years ago. This definition has also appeared in different periodicals.[2, 3] Now let us go through definitions of a Sikh and SIKHI on the internets:

Sikhism (/ˈsɪkɪzəm/; Punjabi: ਸਿੰਘੀ), or Sikh (Sikhi, pronounced [ˈsɪkʰiː], from Sikh, meaning a "disciple", "seeker," or "learner"), is a monotheistic religion that originated in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent around the end of the 15th century. It is one of the youngest of the major world religions and the world's fifth largest organized religion, as well as being the world's ninth-largest overall religion. [9]

Sikhs (/siːk/ or /sɪk/; Punjabi: ਸਿੰਘ, [sɪkʰ]) are people associated with Sikhism, a monotheistic religion that originated in the 15th century, in the Punjab region in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, based on the revelation of Guru Nanak. The term Sikh has its origin in the words शिष्य (śiṣya), meaning a disciple or a student. A Sikh, according to Article I of the Sikh Rehat Maryada (the Sikh code of conduct), is "any human being who faithfully believes in One Immortal Being; ten Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh; Guru Granth Sahib; the teachings of the ten Gurus and the baptism bequeathed by the tenth Guru". [10]

On the other hand, according to Sikhiwiki: Sikhism (Sikhi, ਸਿੰਘੀ in Punjabi), amongst the youngest of the major word religions, originated and primarily developed in the 15th - 17th century sub-continental India (South Asia). The word Sikh derives from the word Sikh, which itself is based on the Sanskrit root "śiṣya" (शिष्यः), meaning a "disciple" or "learner". [11]

Since my first publication of "Definition of a Sikh" appeared about 28 years ago, I continued to seek the perfect definition of a SIKH and SIKHI. Recently, I discovered perfect definitions of a SIKH and SIKHI in the bani of Guru Nanak as follows: [12-14]

Who is a Sikh (SIKH)?

Guru Nanak describes a ‘Sikh’ as follows:

"ਪਿਪੂਰਕ ਲੀਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਵਿਧਤਿਵਾਦ ਭਾਵ ਭਾਵਤੁਂ
ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨਤਾ ਜੀਵਤਤ ਪਿਪੂਰਕ ਕਰਿੰਗੇਤਾ" ||

Amrit nīr gī-ān man majan aṭhsāth tīrath sang gahe. The one who bathes in the life-giving water of wisdom gets the benefit of bathing at sixty-eight sacred places.

Gur upās man mān kī ṣeṭh kī ṣe ṣe ṣe 11

The above enlightening philosophy/teachings are like gems.
jewels\textsuperscript{12} and the one who can research/discover\textsuperscript{15} that fact, is a Sikh\textsuperscript{14} and also practises\textsuperscript{13} it.

AGGS, M 1, p 1328.

The word, ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) has been used as the plural of ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) by Guru Ramdas:

ਵ੍ਰਿਖਤੁ ਹੋ ਹਥੁ ਮੰਗਵਾਤੁ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੁ ਦੇ ਮੁਗੀਆ ਮਿਗੀਆ ਬੰਚੇ॥

Updēs jē Ḍīṭਾ savgūrū so suṇੀਆ ਸਕਿਠੀ ਕਿਨੀ।

ਅਗਗਸ, ਭੋ: 4, ਪੰਥੁ 314.

The Sikhs\textsuperscript{5} listened\textsuperscript{4} to the teachings/philosophy\textsuperscript{1} imparted\textsuperscript{2} by the True Guru\textsuperscript{3}.

AGGS, M 4, p 314.

Note: Here the ਮੰਗਵਾਤੁ (True Guru) is Nanak.

The word ‘Sikh’ also has other meanings, explained as follows:

ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) as “teachings/philosophy”:

ਮੂਡੀ ਬਚੀ ਉਪਾਰੂ ਨਾਵਰਚੀ ਭਾਰੁੱਗੀ ਤੇ ਟਿੱਕੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਜੀ ਮੱਗੀ ਮੂਡੀ॥

Mat vich raṭan javhār mānik je ik gur ki sikh sunī.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਨਥੁ # 6 , ਪੰਠੁ 2.

By listening\textsuperscript{8} (accepting and practicing) to even one\textsuperscript{6} of the basic principles of the enlightening\textsuperscript{5} philosophy\textsuperscript{7}, one’s mind\textsuperscript{1} becomes filled with gems\textsuperscript{8}, jewels\textsuperscript{3}, and rubies\textsuperscript{4} (wisdom).

AGGS, Jap # 6, p 2.

ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) as “advice/philosophy”:

ਮੂਡੀ ਮੂਡੀ ਮੱਗੀ ਮੱਗੀ।॥

Sun sun sikh hamārī.

ਮੂਡੀ ਮੂਡੀ ਮੱਗੀ ਮੱਗੀ ਮੱਗੀ ਮੱਗੀ।॥ਦੱਸ਼ਾ॥

Sukariṯ kita rahi mere jīare bahur na avāi vārī. ||1|| rahāo.

ਜਵਿਦਾਸ, ਭੋ: 1, ਪੰਠੁ 154.

Guru Nanak says:

Oh my\textsuperscript{5} Mind\textsuperscript{4}! Listen\textsuperscript{3} to my\textsuperscript{3} advice/philosophy\textsuperscript{2}, do good deeds\textsuperscript{1} now (in this life) since there is no life\textsuperscript{8} again\textsuperscript{7} to do so.

AGGS, M 1, 154.

The above discussion indicates that when ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) is spelled with onkarh on khakhā (ਅਕਾਖ), it means the one who researches/discovers the enlightening philosophy and practices it. On the other hand, when ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) is spelled with khakhā (ਅਕਾਖ) as mukta, without onkarh, it means teachings/advice/philosophy.

But that Sikh Became Ritualistic

According to Guru Nanak, a ਮਿਗੀ (Sikhī) is one who researches/disCOVERS the “enlightening philosophy” as discussed earlier. Now that same Sikh has been assigned a number of duties and rituals to be performed by Guru Ramdas:

The Sikhs must repeat Naam himself and make others do so:

ਸਿੋ ਵਧਾਖਾਖ ਲੇਵੇ ਮੈਂ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ ਦੁਆਰਮਿਗੀ ਗੁਰਵੇਰ ਹੋ ਹਧਾਖਾਖ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ॥

ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਝਾਲਾਲ ਮਾਦੀ ਸੂਰਮੀ ਸਿਧਿ ਗੁਰਵੀਲ ਗੁਰਵੀਲ ਹੋ ਹਧਾਖਾਖ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ॥

ਨਲਾਲ ਸਰੱਧ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੀ ਦੁਆਰੀ ਦੁਆਰਮਿਗੀ ਦੋ ਦੋ ਸਵੇ ਬੱਲਦਾ ਲਹਮ ਲਹਮ ਲਹਮ॥ਦੋ॥

Jan Nānak dūḥar mangai tir gursikẖ ki jo āp jāpī avrah nām jāpīvai. ||2||

ਜਵਿਦਾਸ, ਭੋ: 4, ਪੰਠੁ 306.

Guru Ramdas says:

The Eternal Entity (God) bestows Its teachings and will be kind only when the Sikh of the Guru repeats Naam himself and inspires others to do so. Consequently, Nanak\textsuperscript{*} will beg for

the dust of the feet of that Sikh. Arggs, M 4, p 306.

*Nanak here is a pen name for Guru Ramdas but not as Nanak himself although kaka in ਬਗਵ੃ਟ (Nanak) is with onkarh.

Guru Ramdas also assigned a number of more rituals\textsuperscript{*} to be performed by the Sikhs:

ਰੁਖ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ ਵਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਲੀ ਭਾਦਰ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ॥

ਰੁਖ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾਪੀ ਭਾਦਰੀ ਜਿਸਲਾਟਾ ਬੰਚੇ

ਅਭੁਦੀਆ ਬੰਚੇ॥

ਹੋਵੇ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ ਬੰਚੇ॥

ਦੋਰਾਜ ਦੋਰਾਜ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ॥

ਪ੍ਰਵਾਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਲਾ ਬੰਚੇ॥

ਸ਼ਿਕਲੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਲਾਵਾਲਾ ਬੰਚੇ॥

ਨੀ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ ਮੱਗਵਾਤੀ ਭਹਨ ਬਾਬੂ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਭੋ: 4, ਪੰਥੁ 305.

Gur saṯgūr kā jo sikh akẖāe se bhalke uthh har nām dẖi-āvai. Udam kare bhalke parbhāṭī isnān kare amrit śar nāvai.

Updēs ārut har har jap jāpī sabẖ kilvīẖ pāp dẖokẖ lēẖ jāvai. Fir charajī ḍivas gurbāṅī ḍavai bahḏi-āvai uṯẖḏi-āvai har nām dẖi-āvai.

Jo sās gīrās dẖi-āvai merā har har so gursikẖ ārut man bẖāvai.

Manmohan Singh (SGPC) translates this as follows [15]:

He who calls himself a Sikh of the Great True Guru should rise early and meditate on God’s Name.

He should make efforts early in the morning, take a bath, and have ablution in the tank of nectar.

By repeating the Lord God’s Name under the Guru’s instruction, all his sins, misdeeds, and accustions are wiped off.
Afterwards, at sunrise he sings 
gurbani, and whilst sitting or standing,
he meditates on God’s Name.
The Guru’s disciple, who with every 
breath and morsel contemplates over 
my Lord God, becomes pleasing to the 
Guru’s mind.
AGGS, M 4, p 305.

Notes:
I have intentionally quoted the 
translation of S Manmohan Singh lest 
the readers considers my 
interpretation is biased to influence 
my above interpretation of a SIKH. However, the meanings of some 
words are given as follow:
ਪਹਡਾ ਜੋਨੇ: According to Bhai Kahn Singh it means: ਪਹਡਾ ਜੋਨੇ ਦੀਲੀ ਦੀਲੀ ਸੂਚੀ 
ਪਹਡਾ ਜੋਨੇ ਦੀਲੀ ਸੂਚੀ. “ਪਹਡਾ ਜੋਨੇ ਦੀਲੀ ਦੀਲੀ ਸੂਚੀ ਦੀਲੀ ਚੰਗੀ ਚੰਗੀ ਜਰੂਰਤੀ ਜਰੂਰਤੀ”. (ਭਗਵੀ. 8. ਰੁਠ ਜ਼ਿਰੁ 11)। (2) ਵੇਸ਼ ਟਲੀ: : Next day.
ਪਹਡਾ ਜੋਨੇ: ਮਹੇਦੀ: Early Morning.
ਪਹਡਾ ਦੀਲੀਸ਼: Beginning of the day.

The translation of Manmohan Singh, 
of SGPC, shows how a number of 
routines were assigned by Guru 
Ramdas. However, Dr. Karminder 
Singh Dhillion has reported how 
incorrect the literal translation of 
Manmohan Singh is (personal 
communication):
The first verse says “rise early and 
meditate on God’s name” The second 
verse says “take bath and have 
ablation” It should be take a bath 
first! The literal translation “ablation 
in the tank of nectar” is problematic 
because this “tank of nectar” was not 
built by Guru Ramdas at the time of 
composing this sabd. So obviously 
the words “bhalkey”, “uth” 
“parbhattee”, “ishnan”, “amritsar”, 
etc. need to be interpreted in the 
metaphoric sense in relation to one’s 
spiritual life and not physical life. 

Even by ignoring the interpretation 
of the above stanza, it clearly 
indicates that some rituals* have 
been assigned by Guru Ramdas to be 
performed by a Sikh. However, some 
reviewers expressed their opinion 
that there are no rituals in those 
sabds of Guru Ramdas.
*Ritual: a religious or solemn 
ceremony consisting of a series of 
actions performed according to a 
prescribed order.

SIKHI
My study of the bani of Guru Nanak, 
incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth 
Sahib (AGGS) [8], clearly indicates 
that the philosophy embodied in his 
bani includes the characteristics of 
originality and uniqueness. [13] The 
irony is that very little work has been 
done by Sikh and non-Sikh scholars, 
Sikh philosophers or Sikh scientists 
to portray the philosophy embodied 
in the bani of Guru Nanak in its real 
perspective. Instead, they remain 
busy interpreting Sikhi founded by 
Guru Nanak into an institutionalized 
religion, Sikhisms, like others, under 
the influence of Vedas and Vedanta 
philosophies and with their own set 
of beliefs. Nevertheless, Guru Nanak 
has defined ‘Sikhi’ in one phrase, 
which has been interpreted by 
Chahal and Chahal, et al [12-14] as 
follows:
ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ਸਿਕਾਈ ੳ
Sikhi sikhi-ā gur vichār.
Sikhi1 is the teachings2 which are 
based on the enlightening3 
philosophy4.
AGGS, M 1, p 465.
Notes:
ਸਿਕਾਈ (Sikhi): This word is 
understood as a verb to “learn” by 
my many theologians thus they go 
far away from the real theme of 
defining of “Sikhi as a noun.

The core themes of Enlightenment 
explained by Sullivan are as follows:
[17]
Reason: Enlightenment thinkers 
typically denounced supernatural
IS GURU NANAK A PIONEER OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT?

YES.
It becomes evident from the critical study of the definitions of a SIKH and SIKHI that Guru Nanak’s emphasis was on “enlightenment”. Many of Guru Nanak’s phrases lead us to see that he is a Pioneer of the Age of Enlightenment. For example:

The Siddhas questioned: Who is your Guru?

Guru Nanak replied about his ‘guru’ as follows:

Who is the True Guru?
It is explained in the second sentence:

Who is the ‘Sabd’ that is the ‘Guru’ of Nanak?
That ‘sabd’ is described by Guru Nanak himself in stanza #38 of JAP Bani as follows:

Kavan mul kavan mat vela.
Ter kavan guru jis ka tu chela.

\[\text{Note:} \quad \text{Bhai Kahn Singh:} \quad \text{M. Guru Gobind.}} \]

Guru Nanak, M 1, p 943. [8]

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

During the time of discourse with the Siddhas, the most learned persons of that time, Guru Nanak emphasized the advent of “enlightenment”: The Siddhas questioned: Who is your Guru?

The body (mind), full of love and wisdom and knowledge as matter to make it super hot.

The Eternal Entity (God) is happy for the Eternal Entity (God) should be the bellows for the Eternal Entity (God) should be the anvil for the Eternal Entity (God) should be the tools for the Eternal Entity (God) should be the furnace, and patience of the goldsmith.

Skepticism. This covers skepticism of religious dogma, the institutionalized church, government authority, and even skepticism of the nature of reality. Catholics monarchs who had been placed in positions of power by the Will of God and were not subject to Earthly powers. But with the Age of Enlightenment, this idea began to lose its credibility. It was same in Indian theology that Kings were considered as God. This concept has also vanished with education in India. The skeptics typically rejected 'blind faith.' They want 'proof.'
Stanza 38 of JAP Bani clearly indicates that the word ‘sabd’ means the ‘idea’ or ‘philosophy’ which enlightens a person to discover the right path of life. Therefore, ‘sabd’ is interpreted as ‘enlightening idea/philosophy’. The ‘sabd’ is constructed by the use of self-control, patience, knowledge and wisdom without involving any deity.

Guru Nanak further explains that humans inherit four characteristics: seeing, hearing, sensation, and thinking/capability to analyse the data collected. I interpret the following stanza keeping in view the involvement of various sciences - Biology, Neurosciences, Physiology, Physics and Chemistry:

**Chaar Padarath as:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Padarath</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gyan Padarath</td>
<td>(Treasure of Spiritual Knowledge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mukt Padarath</td>
<td>(Treasure of Salvation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Naam Padarath</td>
<td>(Treasure of Divine Wisdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Janam Padarath</td>
<td>(Treasure of Spiritual Birth)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These Padaraths are based upon Vedas and Vedanta philosophies. In stanza #38 above, Guru Nanak explains how a Sabd (idea/philosophy) is constructed (formulated) as Amrit (life-giving elixir) – the way of living, which will mould a person to be highly moral and progressive. In spite of the above teachings of Guru Nanak, Sikhs continue to follow Eastern philosophy. That is, that a personal human Guru is necessary to guide a person to achieve a moral life, to meet God, and to achieve mukati (salvation). That is why many Sants/Babas have appeared in Punjab and are brain-washing their followers to be dependent upon their advice rather than to use their own intellect to construct the Sabd taught by Guru Nanak. Of course, some people may need a Guru (teacher) to teach the qualities required to construct that ‘sabd’. Nevertheless, Guru Nanak continues to explain further that the body and brain have the four faculties (seeing, hearing, sensation, thinking/capability to analyse the data collected) needed to resolve problems and cross the so-called “dreadful sea of life”.

During the discourse (Siddh Gost) the Siddhas continued to pose other questions to Guru Nanak:

**What is your philosophy?**

What is your philosophy?

Kavan kathā le rahhu nirāle. Bolai Nānak sunhu tum bāle. 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 to cross the dreadful sea of life?

Es kathā kā de▫e bīcbhā. Bhajival sabd langhāvanḥār. | Question 42c: Could you, please, deliberate on your unique philosophy?

What is the Sabd (your idea/philosophy) which could help us to cross the dreadful sea of life?

**Guru Nanak answers as follows:**

Sūtra sabād bhav sāgar ċaṁīai Nānak nām vakẖāne.

**AGGS, M 1, p 1027**.
and remains attached\(^3\) to the Eternal Entity.

AGGS, M 1, p 432.

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

\[\text{‘abhù vahi phatì ḍīnù sabhā vahi mān ābā vinhā vishā ḍiū ḍhiū kar sabdh kī kī ḍarītī bōhī āb niṭ ḍēh pāṇī.} \]

Many of the interpreters 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:

\[\text{If a dedicated devotee\(^2\) remains devoted\(^6\) to the concept of enlightening\(^5\) sabd\(^4\) and considers\(^10\) bad\(^9\) and good days equally\(^9\) as a part of life, that person understands that Eternal Entity\(^12\) through this method\(^11\)} \]

While there are many in Europe who contributed towards the Period of Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment. On the other hand, Guru Nanak is the only one in South Asia who contributed towards Natural Philosophy, the Period of Renaissance and also the Age of Enlightenment.

**Fig. 1. Isaac Newton (1643-1727)**

portrait by Godfrey Kneller-1689

Let us not forget that Gautama Buddha got enlightenment before Guru Nanak.

**Figure 2. Gautama Buddha**

(483-400 BCE)
the Gautama Buddha or simply the Buddha) who lived about 1,952 years before Guru Nanak. The story of the Buddha's enlightenment is not told exactly the way it happened. He consulted one yoga teacher and then another one, mastering what they taught him. Thereafter, with five companions, for five or six years, he engaged in rigorous asceticism and fasted until his ribs stuck out. Yet enlightenment seemed no closer. After a reputed 49 days of meditation, he had given up his quest, and they abandoned him. At the age of 35, he realized the path to awakening was a "Middle Way" between the extremes of the self-denial and luxury life. [20, 21].

He does not mention anything else except the "Middle Way" between two extremes. He also does not mention the existence of God, gods or goddesses; however, he maintains all other rituals and superstitions of ancient philosophies. His Enlightenment is not even close to that achieved by Guru Nanak and that being considered in Europe.

Therefore, Guru Nanak is the only person in South Asia who talks about Natural Philosophy, the Period of Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment as accepted in Europe.

CONCLUSIONS

The article deals with the definition of a Sikh and Sikhi as the first step to discover the "Basics of Sikhi" from the bani of Guru Nanak.

There is no concise and precise definition of a Sikh nor of Sikhi as the terms should be.

I tried to define a Sikh in 1992 about 28 years ago and am still working to discover the perfect definition of a Sikh as well as Sikhi.

Finally, I discovered the perfect definitions of a Sikh and Sikhi from the bani of Guru Nanak as follows:

**WHO IS A СИКХ (SIKH)?**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ਹਕੇ ਕੰਠ ਹਾਨੀ ਹੁੰਦੇਵੇਰ} & \quad \text{ਹਿਰਦੀ ਸਮੂਹੀ} \\
\text{ਏਕ ਬੋਧ ਹੋਏ} & \quad \text{ਗਿਤਕੁਆ ਹੋਏ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Amrit nir gian man majan atsath tirath sang gahe.
The one who bathes in the life-giving water of wisdom gets the benefit of bathing at sixty-eight sacred places.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦਾਨ ਤਹਹਚੁਲ ਭਾਵ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਟਾ ਦੇ ਏਕੀ ਹੋਏ} \\
\text{ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦਾਨ ਤਹਹਚੁਲ ਭਾਵ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਟਾ ਦੇ ਏਕੀ ਹੋਏ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Gur upde savah mnan sev kh sj khoj lahai. ||1||

**WHAT IS СИКХИ (SIKHI)?**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ਮੀਟਾ ਹੋਏ ਤੇ ਮੀਟਾ ਹੋਏ} & \quad \text{ਮੀਟਾ ਹੋਏ ਤੇ ਮੀਟਾ ਹੋਏ} \\
\text{ਕਹੀ ਸਿਖੀ ਗੁਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ} & \quad \text{ਕਹੀ ਸਿਖੀ ਗੁਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Sikh sih khaa gur vicha.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ਗੁਰਮੁਖ਼ ਸਿਖੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ} & \quad \text{ਗੁਰਮੁਖ਼ ਸਿਖੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ} \\
\text{ਹਾਲ ਸੰਸਕੱਤ ਸੌਰ ਨੀਰੁ ਬਨਾਹੁਤੀ} & \quad \text{ਹਾਲ ਸੰਸਕੱਤ ਸੌਰ ਨੀਰੁ ਬਨਾਹੁਤੀ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

AGGS, M 1, p 1328.

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8. AGGS (1983) Aad Guru Granth Sahib (Amritsar, Punjab, India, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee). (M = Mahla, i.e., succession number of the Sikh Gurus to the House of Nanak, M is replaced with the name of Bhagat/ Bhatt for their Bani, p = Page of the AGGS).