

# ILLITERACY ABOUT RELIGIONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIKHISM\*

Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD  
Institute for Understanding Sikhism  
4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe, Laval, Quebec, Canada H7W 5L9  
Email: [sikhism@iuscanada.com](mailto:sikhism@iuscanada.com)

## ABSTRACT

*Illiteracy about religions is being recognized by some scholars and researchers now. The significant consequence of illiteracy about religions is that it fuels antagonism and hinders respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence and cooperative endeavors. This illiteracy is being exploited by some governments and religious leaders to create riots to win votes and also by palm-readers, fortune-tellers, numerologists, astrologers, etc for their livelihoods. In this paper reasons for illiteracy about religions with special reference to Sikhism have been discussed. A few topics have been discussed to portray uniqueness and originality of Nanakian Philosophy.*

## INTRODUCTION

Recently ‘*Illiteracy about Religions*’ has been recognized by some religious scholars of the world. In this connection I attended an International Symposium, *Why Religious Literacy is important in Today’s World*, for educators, scholars and policy makers [46]. The opinions of scholars of world fame on “Illiteracy about Religion” are as follows:

Dr Spancer Boudreau of McGill University, Montreal mentioned that teaching of religion is very controversial task since it is difficult to decide what is right and what is wrong in a particular religion since a teacher cannot be expert in all the religions.

Dr Robert Jackson, University of Warwick, UK mentioned that incidence of 9/11 is an awakening since there is an increase interest to know religions. However, he said that research on religion has also increased to develop understanding of other religions to increase the spirit of tolerance. He has also mentioned that books on religions are written by those who don’t know religions. He further mentioned that how the same religion is being taught differently in different countries.

I have also noticed that whereas the *hijab* is must in some Islamic countries but it is banned in Public Offices in another Islamic country, Turkey. Now somebody may pose a question:

**What is the truth about *Hijab* in Islam?**

On the other hand it appears to me that Sikhi (Sikhism) in the West can emerge in its real perspective if the Sikhs and Sikh scholars can keep themselves away from influence of Vedantic philosophy and that of the new immigrants, who are popularizing the *Sant Babas* and the agencies, which

are working against the basic principles of Nanakian Philosophy.

Dr Isabelle Saint-Martin, University Sorbonne, France reported that education of religion from 1882 to 1923 in French school was mandatory: *Duty before God*. First book on religion for schools was published in 1877 and it was modified in 1906: *Heaven – Dead*. And use of reason was incorporated in the book. France is a secular country and in 1905 Church was separated from the State. **She also mentioned that interpretation of religion in the contemporary world is too allusive.** She also quoted some figures that Catholics are in majority forming about 60%, Islam is 6% and other religions are in minority (Sikhism was not mentioned may be because of insignificant number of Sikhs), however, the population of people without any religion is 26%, next to Catholics.

I think the percentage of population without any religion is almost the same in British Columbia (BC), Canada as is in France. And such population is increasing in the other well-educated states or cities of the North America because of 9/11, a heinous act of cruelty on humanity in the name of religion. Although population of people without any religion is increasing still many religious groups claim that interest in religion is reviving. But I think it might be due to the after effect of 9/11 that people want to know why any religion would do such a horrendous destruction and killing. The other reason is that most of the people seek easy solution to their personal problems through religions as is promised by the mentors of religions, especially the *Sant Babas* in Sikhism.

The paper of Dr Diane Moore, Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University, USA was very enlightening. Her emphasis was that the illiteracy about religion is wide spread over the globe. The significant consequence is that it fuels antagonism and hinders respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence and cooperative endeavors.

**She also pointed out that teaching of religion is a very difficult task. There are no clear cut basic tenets since there is so much diversity in expressing these tenets by the so-called custodians of religions.**

S Avtar Singh Makkar, President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar has also realized the illiteracy about Sikhi (Sikhism) among the Sikhs although the scholars of other world religions are showing a great interest to know Sikhi [30]:

“ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਜਿਥੇ ਇਹ ਮਾਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੇ, ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਭਰ ਦੇ ਧਰਮ-ਖੇਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ, ਅਧਿਆਪਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲ ਖਿੱਚਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਬੜੀ ਗੰਭੀਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਣ ਹਿਤ ਸਰਗਰਮੀ ਵਿਖਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਉਥੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਅਤੇ ਖਤਰੇ ਦੀ ਘੰਟੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਇਸ ਅਨਮੋਲ ਵਿਰਾਸਤ ਤੋਂ ਅਨਜਾਣ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ।”

*(Whereas for all of us (the Sikhs) it is a matter of pride that Sikh Dharma (Religion) has received attention of scholars, students and religious preachers from the field of religions of the world and they are expressing their seriousness in activities to understand Sikh Dharam but for all of us (the Sikhs) it is an issue of worry and a warning of danger that a large number of families connected with Sikh Dharma are becoming unaware of this invaluable heritage.)*

Similarly, Dr Jodh Singh, Prof of Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Punjabi University, Patiala has discovered that the objective of many scholars is to amalgamate Sikhi into Hinduism [34]:

“ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸੰਸਕਾਰ ਜੁੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਖਾਸਤੋਰ ਤੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਹੁਤਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਧੁੰਧਲਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਨਵਾਂ ਧਰਮ ਮੰਨਣ ਤੋਂ ਇਨਕਾਰੀ ਹੋਣ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਵਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਨਵੇਂ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਰਲਗੱਡ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਰੰਭੀ ਹੈ ।”

*(Many of the scholars associated with ancient Indian philosophy, especially from among the Indian scholars, have begun to amalgamate the Sikh Dharma into Hinduism by fogging its unique identity and refusing to accept Sikh Dharma as a new Dharma by exploiting the use of ancient*

*names (of God) and (of sacred) places mentioned in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib.)*

However, it is not being realized by the custodians of the Sikhi that Sikhi is being portrayed as Vedantic philosophy or as a syncretism (amalgamation of Hinduism and Islam) [2, 19, 21, 24 & 36]. Such literature is making it difficult for the scholars of other religions to understand Sikhi in its real perspective [19].

### **What Is Religious Literacy?**

Before we go any further let's decide what we mean by religious illiteracy. According to Dr Moore a person who is religiously literate should have an understanding of [22]:

- the basic belief systems of world religions
- the diversity within each belief system
- how religion affects social events, culture, and politics
- the role religion has played in history

Besides, I would like to add that general knowledge about sciences is very important to study the principles of any religion.

I wonder how many the so-called custodians of religions have that type of understanding of their religions and of other religions. Nevertheless, many of them are very expert in religiosity and are always ready to punish those who do not obey their edict. Although in Sikhism there is no system of excommunication according to Nanakian Philosophy but it is still being practiced very rigorously.

It could be easily inferred from the above information that illiteracy about religions is worldwide. And it is a difficult task to teach religion since the custodians and scholars of religions are not sure what is right and what is not because of divided opinion among the scholars of the same religions.

The same situation about illiteracy is found in Sikhi (Sikhism) that it is being represented differently by different scholars. For example, many scholars are saying Sikhism is syncretism – a mixture of Hinduism and Islam and now Sikh and Hindu scholars are declaring that Sikhism is based on Vedanta and Guru Nanak had nothing new to offer to the humanity [2, 19, 21, 24 & 36]. Shan [28] has quoted many references in which Sikhism has been declared as syncretism or amalgamation of Islam and Hinduism. On the other hand Lewis [19] had observed that:

*“The widespread influence of the syncretism interpretation is partially attributable to the writings of certain Sikhs who advocate the idea in order to portray Sikhism as an inherently ecumenical religion. Another factor contributing to the pre-eminence of the idea in survey of world religions is the tendency of authors to over emphasize Sikhism’s syncretic character ‘due to the attractiveness of a syncretistic religion in a textbook on the great world religions’.”*

However, my study of the philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his Bani indicates that it is original and unique and is not based on Vedantic or Islamic philosophy, therefore, there cannot be any characteristic of syncretism in Sikhi founded by Guru Nanak [6-8].

Dr Moore wants people to know that *“religious illiteracy is often a contributing factor in fostering a climate whereby certain forms of bigotry and misrepresentation can emerge unchallenged and thus serve as one form of justification for violence and marginalization.”* [22]

Some governing powers of the world are exploiting the illiteracy about religions by initiating riots when needed and then controlling after attaining the objectives. Mandair [20]. While discussing *‘The Global Fiduciary: Mediating the Violence of Religion’* he describes how the fiduciary of Sikhism was exploited by governing power of India during 1980s:

*“Hence the state monopolizes violence in order to constantly secure the peace. More insidiously though, this schema helps the state to manipulate a knowledge about the fiduciary structure of religion and religious identity in order to manufacture violence and then switch it off at will.”*

After quoting the above statement of Dr Mandair I posed the following question to Dr Moore at the above Symposium held at Montreal:

Who is going to teach the religions to such governments?

Her answer was very simple that the people should know their religions in its real perspective so that they are not exploited by any government or religious leaders. So it is very important to understand religions in their real perspective to avoid exploitation by governments, religious leaders, palm-readers, fortune-tellers, numerologists, astrologers, etc.

Terry Sandbeck [27] thinks that religious illiteracy exists because there is a tendency today among

religious people to put more emphasis on religious piety than on religious knowledge. There are about 4,200 religions in the world so it is understandable that most people cannot have much knowledge about all of these religions. However, you would think that most people would be conversant with their own religion. This assumption would be mistaken. American religion tends to be Bible-based — a Gallup poll in 2002 discovered that 93% of Americans own a Bible.

But do they know what is in it?  
The answering is a resounding “No.”

The same situation is found in Sikhism. The majority of the Sikhs own Holy Scriptures, Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) at their homes but to treat it as an object for worship rather than to know the philosophy in it. Critical analysis of the following observation of **Dr Gopal Singh** [31] clearly indicates that due to improper understanding of the Guru’s Word, the Granth started to be worshipped more than read, uttered as a magical formula or a mantra for secular benefits:

*“The confusion of interpretation has occurred because the Sikhs themselves, for historical and other reasons, have never seriously attempted a scientific and cogent exposition of the doctrines of their faith, based on the Word of the GURU-GRANTH and related to the historical lives of the Gurus who uttered it. Without reference either to one or the other, casual attempts made at the interpretation of small portions of the Granth has resulted in such interpretations being incoherent, lop-sided, and therefore unreliable. During the present (now last) century, several attempts were made by the Sikhs to translate into Punjabi the Word of the Guru, but all such attempts ended in an all-too-literal translation, leaving the seeker as uninitiated to the Guru’s Word as he was before. And the word of the GURU-GRANTH became as involved and distant for an average reader as the Word of the Vedas, and it started to be worshipped more than read, uttered as magic formula or a Mantram for secular benefit than as a disciple of spiritual life for the achievement of ideals higher and beyond the world of sense and for the integrity of mind and soul in the world of the living.”*

Under the circumstances explained above by Dr Gopal Singh [31], now in almost all the Gurdwaras in the world, whether they are under the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar or any other organization, the AGGS is treated almost as an idol [29] although the idol worship is condemned in Nanakian Philosophy. The practice of

reciting of many *Akhand Paaths* of the AGGS under one roof or in many rooms has become an important feature of many Gurdwaras [5]. Deliberation on the *Sabd* (verse) is totally absent except that which is done by a few *parcharak* (preachers) without involving the *Sangat* (congregation) in the deliberation of the *Sabd*. But deliberation of *Sabd* by an expert is rarely allowed in Gurdwaras; however, dogmatic *parchar* by *Sant Babas* is most welcome in almost all the Gurdwaras of the world.

I think because of the above fact the publishers of “*The Cambridge Factfinder*”, has mentioned under the subheading of **Beliefs in Sikhism** as: “*Worship of the Adi Granth*” as one of the beliefs [9 - p 411]. The remarks of Sardar Saran Singh, Editor, *The Sikh Review*, Kolkata in the report by Dr Grewal [15] confirms that ‘Belief in Sikhism’ is worshipping of the Holy Granth (AGGS):

*“The extraordinary happenings concerning the holy volume of Guru Granth Sahib, worshiped by the people of Domegaon, district Ahmednagar, and recounted in this article were first narrated to us by the late Air Marshal Shiv Dev Singh, PVSM, who retired as Vice-Chief of India’s Air Staff and had commanded the Ahmednagar area, some 25 years ago. The miraculous phenomenon of the Godavari flood water receding as the people of Domegaon brought out the ancient hand-inscribed volume of Guru Granth Sahib for worship, without knowing its contents in Gurmukhi, has evidently been long a part of the folklore. This legend has now been personally verified by Col. D.S. Grewal who currently commands a Training Regiment Centre at Nasik, Maharashtra.”* (Ed. SR)

## DISCUSSION

### REASONS FOR ILLITERACY ABOUT SIKHI (SIKHISM)

When I looked deeply into Sikhism, as it is being preached, I found that it is being promoted as a mystical, esoteric, enigmatic, and ritualistic religion. While on the other hand, everybody, especially all the Sikhs, believe that Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) is the founder of a new and modern religion; however, it has never been represented as modern religion in any of the Sikh writings. In many writings even the Sikh scientists have failed to interpret Bani of Guru Nanak in its real perspective. Moreover, I come across various principles of Sikhism being preached in total contradiction to the philosophy of Guru Nanak. The main reason is that Sikh and non-Sikh

scholars have failed to go into the depth of the thought process to understand the philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his Bani.

Philosophy of Guru Nanak remained unexplored in its real perspective right from the time of demise of Guru Gobind Singh in 1708 till to the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century. In old Sikh literature (*Janam Sakhis* – biographies), Guru Nanak has been described only as a mystic man of God with all spiritual powers to perform miracles of various types, but never represented as a philosopher or scientist of the Period of Renaissance, who promulgated universally acceptable philosophy for the humanity of Current Science Age.

### Misrepresentation of Sikhism

Misrepresentation of Sikhism as a mystical, esoteric, enigmatic, and ritualistic religion is because of illiteracy about Nanakian Philosophy among Sikh and non-Sikh theologians, scholars, researchers and historians. It is due to the fact their main thrust remained to express the philosophy of Guru Nanak under the shadow of Vedanta. For example:

**Dr Taran Singh** [40], the then Head of Department of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, has reported that the Sikh and non-Sikh writers of 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries had accepted that Gurus’ philosophy is Vedic and is not different than that of Brahmanic or Hindu philosophy:

“ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਤੌਰ ’ਤੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਗੋਚਰ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਉਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਹਿਣ ਨੂੰ ਅਠ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਚੁੱਕੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੋਧਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਅੰਤਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਫਰਕ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰ-ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੇਤੰਨ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਜਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਜਿਥੋਂ ਤੀਕ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਪਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਭ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰ-ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਆਮ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਤੋਂ ਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। [40 – in Foreword].

Dr Taran Singh [40] further admitted that the research in universities could only establish that the truth in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) is not different than that of ancient India and strangely he calls it as a powerful achievement:

“ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਰ ਪੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਚੰਗੀਆਂ ਦੁਲਾਘਾਂ ਪੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਸੋਧ ਇਹੋ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਸੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸੱਚ ਦੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਤੋਂ  
ਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਬੜੀ ਪ੍ਰਬਲ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ। [40 – in  
Foreword].

From the above statements of Dr Taran Singh it becomes quite clear that Gurus' philosophy was not only accepted as Vedic by the early Sikh scholars of 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century but the contemporary religious scholars are also confirming it so. Let us look into some more examples:

**Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji**, President, Sahitya Akademi has belittled Nanakian Philosophy in the 'Foreword' to the book *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism* written by **Dr Trilochan Singh**, who is held in high esteem as a scholar, and the book was published by Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi [41]. This book was written on the eve of celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> Birthday (*Parkash Divas*) of Guru Nanak. It is ironic that Trilochan Singh failed to notice Chatterji's following statement belittling the Guru:

*"The people of the Punjab (and along with them those of the rest of India) became immediately conscious of the value of Guru Nanak's advent and his teachings after he began to preach to them; and Guru Nanak built up and organised during his life time a very important religious persuasion which was broad-based on the foundations of Vedantic Monotheistic Jnana and Puranic Bhakti. The faith preached by Guru Nanak was nothing new for India, it was basically the old monotheistic creed of the ancient Hindus as propounded in the Vedas and the Upanishads - the Vedanta with its insistence upon Jnana or Knowledge of the One Supreme Reality. And this monotheistic basis was fortified, so to say, to put the matter in a simple form by Bhakti or faith as inculcated in later Puranic Hinduism. The Sikh Panth was nothing but a reformed and simplified Sanatana Dharma of medieval times."*

The book, *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, is the part of the Indian Series of the Translations Collection of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [42]. It was published in accordance with an agreement between UNESCO and the Government of India, and for furthering mutual appreciation of the cultural values of East and West. This book was printed in 1973 just after the celebration of 500<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Guru Nanak. The sacred writings of the Sikhs have been translated by the prominent Sikh

theologians, scholars and historians like, Trilochan Singh, Jodh Singh, Kapur Singh, Bawa Harkrishan Singh and Khushwant Singh. **Dr S Radhakrishnan** undermined the philosophy of Guru Nanak in INTRODUCTION to that book as follows:

*"At a time when men were conscious of failure, Nanak appeared to renovate the spirit of religion and the humanity. He did not found a new faith or organize a new community. That was done by his successor, notably the fifth Guru. Nanak tried to build a nation of self-respecting men and women, devoted to God and their leaders, filled with sense of equality and brotherhood for all. The Gurus are the light-bearers to mankind. They are the messengers of the timeless. They do not claim to teach a new doctrine but only to renew the eternal wisdom. Nanak elaborated the views of Vaisnava saints."*

It is clearly apparent that Dr Radhakrishnan failed to comprehend Nanakian Philosophy and refused to accept that the Guru founded a new faith based on unique and universally acceptable philosophy. And he further undermined the philosophy of Guru Nanak by saying that Guru Nanak elaborated the views of Vaisnava saints whereas Guru Nanak has emphatically condemned the Vaisnava views in his Bani.

Most probably under the influence of INTRODUCTION given by Dr Radhakrishnan, **Arnold Toynbee** remarked about Guru Nanak in the UNESCO's book as follows [42]:

*"Perhaps Nanak himself would have modestly disclaimed the title of 'founder'. He might have preferred to say that he was merely bringing to light, and gathering, the cardinal religious truth and precepts that had been scattered, in explicit form or implicitly, through the religious legacies of a number of forerunners of his."*

Arnold Toynbee has gone a step further than Radhakrishnan by putting his words in the mouth of Guru Nanak to disclaim that he is not the founder of unique philosophy and he had explicated the philosophy of his forerunners.

Recently another Professor from Punjabi University, Patiala, **Dr Jodh Singh**, has not only reiterated the previous observations of Dr Taran Singh from the same university but has warned that serious efforts are going on to erase the uniqueness and originality of Sikhi (Sikhism) from religious literature. And to

bring back the Sikhs to their original status of the time before Guru Nanak to subdue them:

“ਅਜੋਕੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਪਰਤੱਖ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਉਤੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਦਬਾਅ ਪਾਏ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਪੈਰੋਕਾਰ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਪਛਾਣ ਭੁਲਕੇ ਉਥੇ ਜਾ ਖੜਨ ਜਿਥੋਂ ਇਹ ਚੱਲੇ ਸਨ । ਅਜਿਹੇ ਬਾਨਣੂ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਾਂ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਰੋਲ ਘਚੋਲਾ ਖੜਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿੜਕ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਮੁੜ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਗੁਲਾਮੀ ਦਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ । ਇਸ ਕਾਰਜ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਕੁਝ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਸਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਕਾਫੀ ਵਧ ਚੜ੍ਹਕੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮੇਤ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧਤ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣੀਕਤਾ ਉਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਚਿੰਨ੍ਹ ਲਾਏ ਹਨ ।”

*(In these days it is evident that a lot of pressure from within and without is being put on the followers (of Sikhi) so that after forgetting their independent identity to go back to the original status wherefrom they started. Such types of efforts to create confusion in their minds are going on so that they slip away from the principles of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and again they are forced to fall back to the slavery of old religious, social and political way of living. In this process some people in Sikh image living in India and abroad have also contributed a lot to question the accepted principles of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and literature related to the Gurmat.)*

Considering the various references discussed earlier it becomes rather obvious that Nanakian Philosophy has not only been misunderstood by the theologians, but, even the well educated Sikh scientist scholars have failed to comprehend and analyze Nanakian Philosophy in its originality. For example, the following phrase is usually quoted by Sikh scientist scholars to declare Gurbani as scientific:

“ਸਾਚੇ<sup>੧</sup> ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ<sup>੨</sup> ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ<sup>੩</sup> ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ<sup>੪</sup> ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ<sup>੫</sup> ਸਮੋਇ ॥

Dr Virk [44] interpreted the above phrase twice on page 96 & 118 in his book as follows:

*The Lord created air (gases) which combined to form water.*

*The water brought forth the creation with the Lord Himself as the spark of life in it.*

He portrays it as: “The Sikh scripture (SGGS) unfold the Genesis story in a most scientific manner.”

Dr Virk [44] is unaware of the fact that this is not the concept of Guru Nanak or revealed by God to Guru Nanak since it is an ancient philosophy known before

Guru Nanak. Moreover, this is ancient concept accepted in other religions and it is unscientific and illogical too. Because, water was formed by the combination of Oxygen and Hydrogen. And it took millions of year when Oxygen was formed after the first element Hydrogen was formed. When Earth was formed about 4.6 billion years ago the gases escaped from it to the atmosphere where from the gaseous water was condensed and fell down in the form of rain on the Earth. Therefore, water did not give rise to Earth or the so-called *Trebhavan* but otherwise the Earth released the gaseous water, which ultimately fell on the Earth.

Still more to it, Dr Virk conveniently avoided to translate the formation of *Trebhavan* from water in this phrase. Almost all other enterpretors translate ‘ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ’ as formation of ‘Three Worlds’ from water. This too is unscientific and illogical. Because the Earth was formed first then water was formed on the Earth as explained above. Moreover, from astronomy point of view there are no such things like ‘Three Worlds’ This is a myth found in ancient philosophy.

Therefore, these two phrases are not indicating any scientific vision in the AGGS or the that of Guru Nanak as has been presented by Dr Virk in his book. It is a wrong concept found in the ancient philosophy of other religions. Still more to it, Dr Virk has conveniently avoided to interpret the next phrase: ਨਿਰਮਲੁ<sup>੬</sup> ਮੈਲਾ<sup>੭</sup> ਨਾ ਥੀਐ ਸਬਦਿ<sup>੮</sup> ਰਤੇ<sup>੯</sup> ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥ from the above quote, which conveys the real concept of Guru Nanak.

Let us examine this phrase critically. Most of the time Sikh scientists or Sikh theologians who write about creation in Sikhism indiscriminately quote these phrases:

ਸਾਚੇ<sup>੧</sup> ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ<sup>੨</sup> ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ<sup>੩</sup> ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ<sup>੪</sup> ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ<sup>੫</sup> ਸਮੋਇ ॥  
ਨਿਰਮਲੁ<sup>੬</sup> ਮੈਲਾ<sup>੭</sup> ਨਾ ਥੀਐ ਸਬਦਿ<sup>੮</sup> ਰਤੇ<sup>੯</sup> ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥

AGGS, M 1, p 19.

The complete stanza is composed of three sentences but the third sentence, ਨਿਰਮਲੁ<sup>੬</sup> ਮੈਲਾ<sup>੭</sup> ਨਾ ਥੀਐ ਸਬਦਿ<sup>੮</sup> ਰਤੇ<sup>੯</sup> ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥, is usually ignored to be a part of the first two sentences by many writers. However, it is usually translated word by word by most of the Sikh scientist theologians and researchers as follows: “From the True Lord, preceded the air and from air became the water. From the water God created the three worlds and in

*every heart He infused His light. The Immaculate Lord becomes not impure, He, who is imbued with the Name, obtains honor.”*

This is the translation by Manmohan Singh, which is published by the SGPC, Amritsar [sriganth.org]. And this interpretation is copied as such or presented little differently by others. Moreover, this translation is based on the one of the oldest translation called *Faridkotwal Teeka* [sriganth.org]. I have noticed that *Faridkotwal Teeka* is the prototype translation, which is based on Vedantic philosophy and mythology. Thereafter, this translation has been followed by almost all translators with slight modifications; however, nobody has done any serious research to interpret Gurbani in its real perspective. And nobody has dared to give an alternative interpretation lest he/she is excommunicated from Sikhism.

In spite of the above facts I have tried to interpret it as close to the real theme as possible by keeping in mind the current scientific information and use of logic. First of all it is very important to look into the whole Sabd in which the real theme is that Guru Nanak is advising the Sikhs to understand the God and follow God's *Hukm* (Laws of Nature). By doing so he remains pure and does not fall into any delusion. The first two sentences, which are based on ancient philosophy, are translated as follows:  
*From God<sup>1</sup> the air<sup>2</sup> was formed, from air water<sup>3</sup> was formed, and from water three worlds<sup>4</sup> were formed and soul<sup>5</sup> was introduced in every living being.*

Here Guru Nanak is presenting the concept of creation as is accepted in other religions (Vedanta). It is scientifically wrong since water has not given rise to the so-called Three Worlds (*Trebhavan*). It does not represent Guru Nanak's concept of origin/evolution of the Universe since it is an ancient and wrong concept. At the end of this phrase Guru Nanak is advising how to become *nirmal* (pure – clearheaded). Therefore, Guru Nanak is presenting his concept in the third sentence (which is usually ignored or wrongly translated or interpreted). The possible correct interpretation has been done as follows:

*A clearheaded<sup>6</sup> will not be polluted<sup>7</sup> with wrong concepts (such as mentioned in the first two sentences) if he/she remains imbued<sup>8</sup> in wisdom<sup>8</sup> (found in the Sabd of Guru Nanak).*

Let us look into another example where Sikh and non Sikh theologians and scholars have failed to understand the Commencing Verse of the AGGS, which is commonly called as Mool Mantra:

**Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU)** was established at Amritsar, India on November 24, 1969 to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> Birthday (*Parkash Divas*) of Guru Nanak. It is both residential and an affiliating university. In conceiving the future course of the University, the objectives enshrined in the Act 1969 emphasize that the new university would make provision for imparting education and promoting research in the humanities, sciences, especially of applied nature and technology. ***Studies and research on the life and teachings of Guru Nanak***, in addition to working towards the promotion of Punjabi language and spreading education among educationally backward classes and communities were the other commitments.

The University Grants Commission's sponsored first Seminar on 'Mool Mantra' was organized by the Department of Guru Nanak Studies in March 1973. The proceedings of the Seminar were edited by Professor Pritam Singh, retired Professor and Head, Department of Guru Nanak Studies, GNDU, under the title, ***The Ultimate Reality – As Guru Nanak Saw It***. But it took 12 years to publish the proceedings under a new title, ***The Sikh Concept of the Divine***, in 1985 [37].

During this Seminar instead of looking into the originality and uniqueness of logo (ੴ) coined by Guru Nanak it has been confirmed by the stalwart Sikh and non-Sikh scholars that it is based on OM, the Trinity system of Vedantic philosophy, whereas, Guru Nanak is against the existence of God in Trinity [8].

In this Seminar **Parma Nand** [23] undermined the originality of philosophy of Guru Nanak by declaring that ੴ (*Oankaar*) is not a new word coined by Guru Nanak but he borrowed it from Upanishads because 'Oankaar' or 'Omkaar' has been used in various Upanishads. The only thing Guru Nanak did was to add numeral '1' to confirm the 'Oneness' of God, which is also found in the Upanishads.

Alas, when the contemporary Sikh scholars for unknown reasons have exhibited their failure in comprehending Nanakian Philosophy in its originality, it certainly seems like an insurmountable task to explain the quintessence of Guru Nanak's philosophy to the masses.

Now there are two major questions to be addressed:

1. **How could the illiteracy about Nanakian Philosophy be removed among the theologians, scholars, researchers and historians?**
2. **Is the philosophy of Guru Nanak Original and Unique?**

My study of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) clearly indicates that the Gurbani in the AGGS is original, unique, and logical when it is interpreted critically, scientifically and logically. Besides, it is also evident that though the philosophy was formulated during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries by Guru Nanak, it has universal acceptability and applicability even during the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the Current Science Age [4,6-8]. Some 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 [18]:

*“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.”*

Besides the earlier remarks of Arnold Toynbee, the world-renowned historian, it is worth mentioning about his following observations about the future of the religions and the Sikh scriptures [42]:

*“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.”*

Toynbee admits that “Mankind's religious future may be obscure;” I agree with him to a great extent since the population of non-believer in religion is increasing. I also agree with his second observation that “...the Sikh religion, and its scriptures the Adi

*Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world.”* His above observation inspired me for conducting research to explore if there is any uniqueness and originality in the philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his Bani, which could have special value to the rest of the world? The Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Laval, Québec, Canada has held some seminars and written some books during the last ten years to portray the originality and uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy [4, 6, 7]. Recent book on this issue, **NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY: Basics for Humanity**, is a stepping stone for further research. [8].

In continuation of the above mission I have applied the current scientific knowledge and logic in my all research articles and books as suggested by Albert Einstein to make the Gurbani ennobled and more profound:

*“After religious teachers accomplish the refining process indicated, they will surely recognize with joy that true religion has been ennobled and made more profound by scientific knowledge.”*

## **ORIGINALITY AND UNIQUENESS OF NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY**

I have picked up three topics (God, Origin of Universe, and Hukm – Laws of Nature) to prove the originality and uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy. I hope this will also eliminate the illiteracy about Nanakian Philosophy and Sikhism among the theologians, philosophers, scholars and researchers.

### **A. GOD**

It is difficult to define God since It (God) is accepted differently in different religions. Although it is widely accepted in almost all religion that there is one God but still every religion understands God differently than that of others. Not going into details of the concept of God in different religions I come to the concept of God by Guru Nanak. The concise and precise definition of God given by Guru Nanak is incorporated right in the beginning of the sacred book of the Sikhs, Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1]. In fact this is not exactly the definition of God but a description which makes the God of Guru Nanak different than that of others:

ੴ १

ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ  
ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ २  
ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ३ ॥

*The One and Only, Oh, the Infinite<sup>1</sup>;*

Exists;  
 Creator;  
 Without fear  
 (Not governed by any other – Not under any Law of Universe);  
 Without enmity;  
 Timeless (Without effect of time and space);  
 Neither takes birth nor dies;  
 (Never comes into any anthropomorphic form)  
 Created by Itself<sup>2</sup>;  
 Enlightener; and Bounteous<sup>3</sup>.

If one examine this definition critically it will not be difficult to be accepted by the whole humanity including the atheists.

ੴ : First of all let us discuss this logo (ੴ) coined by Guru Nanak.

The One (1) represents Oneness of God, which is represented as ‘Singularity’ by the scientist. ‘Singularity’ is explained later.

The open Oora (ੳ) represents ‘Oh’ in Punjabi according to Bhai Kahn Singh [35]. ‘Oh’ the Punjabi word means ‘That’ in English as found in Webster Dictionary [45].

The extended end of open Oora (ੳ) in ੴ represents infiniteness – the limit of which cannot be measured.

Therefore, ੴ has been interpreted as ‘The One and Only, That, the Infinite’. That means infinite amount of energy has been so strongly compacted into a single unit which is so small that it is not easily discerned and this state is called as ‘Singularity’ and is also called as ‘Nothingness’ by scientists (discussed later).

The irony is that Sikh scholars, who are under the influence of Vedantic philosophy, failed to interpret it scientifically and logically. First ੴ has been declared as ‘Ek Oankaar’ by Bhai Gurdas in Pauri # 49 of Vaar # 1 [33]. Then this ‘Ek Oankaar’ was declared as the representative of OM as in Vedanta in Faridkotewala Teeka [Sriganth.org]. Then Prof Sahib Singh [39] accepted ‘Ek Oankaar’ as OM. Thereafter, almost all the Sikh scholars followed Prof Sahib Singh and now ੴ is accepted ‘Ek Oankaar’, which represents OM in Vedanta. For more detailed information consult references # 8.

This encouraged Perma Nand [23] to declare that ‘Ek Oankaar’ is found in Upanishads and it represents OM, therefore, there is no originality in the philosophy of Guru Nanak. Had the Sikh scholars interpreted ੴ scientifically and logically as

explained above then nobody could have dared to say that there is no originality in Nanakian Philosophy.

**ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ (Nirvair):** There is another attribute of God assigned by Guru Nanak that God is *Nirvair* (without enmity). The Nobel Laureate, Elbert Einstein (1879-1955 CE), has expressed this attribute as: “*Subtle is the Lord but malicious He is not*” [25].

**ਅਜੂਨੀ (Ajooni):** Guru Nanak says God is *Ajooni* (God does not come into anthropomorphic form). Here again this attribute was also realized by Einstein that “*God does not come into anthropomorphic form*” [25].

When I presented this attribute, “*God does not come into anthropomorphic form*” of God assigned by Guru Nanak at Breakfast Conference of Universal Foundation at Montreal on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2010 a Hindu lady opposed and another participant wanted to know more about this attribute. In another International Conference, Interfaith Understanding and World Peace, held at the Punjabi University, Patiala on March 2-4 a Swami Dr Jan K Brzizinsky, Gaudiya Grantha Mandhira, Rishikesh said that God does come into anthropomorphic form at closing ceremony. Still another Swami at conference held at Nanded, Maharashtra, on September 25-28, 2008 raised a question that there is no originality in Nanakian Philosophy. Similarly, in Ibrahimic religions although God is One but still their God is different than that of Guru Nanak. It clearly proves that although many of the religions believe in One God but still the God of each religion is different than that of others. So it appears that God still remains a delusion [10].

### i) Kudrat (Nature) is God

In the following phrase, Guru Nanak says that it is not possible for him to comprehend ‘Kudrat’:

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਣ, ਕਹਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥

*What is Nature<sup>1</sup> and how to comprehend It?*

*I am not worth to be sacrificed<sup>2</sup> myself upon You (Nature) even once.*

AGGS, Jap 17, p 4.

Then in the following phrase Guru Nanak considers that *Kudrat* (Nature) is God:

ਕਹਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਹਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਤਉ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

*I want to say something<sup>1</sup> but cannot say.*

*Since You<sup>2</sup> are the Nature<sup>3</sup>, therefore, I cannot appraise<sup>4</sup> You.*  
AGGS, M 1, p 151 [1].

### ii) Kudrat as Nature and God Pervades in it

Here Guru Nanak has indicated that *Kudrat* is Nature and God pervades in it. Therefore, there is no difference between Nature and God:

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ<sup>੧</sup> ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਵਸਿਆ<sup>੨</sup> ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਵਖਤੁ<sup>੩</sup> ਵੀਚਾਰੇ<sup>੪</sup> ਸੁ ਬੰਦਾ<sup>੫</sup> ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਕੁਦਰਤਿ<sup>੬</sup> ਹੈ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇ ॥  
ਜਾ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਇ ਤ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥  
ਸਰੈ<sup>੭</sup> ਸਰੀਅਤਿ<sup>੮</sup> ਕਰਹਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥  
ਬਿਨੁ ਬੁਝੇ ਕੈਸੇ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਪਾਰੁ ॥  
ਸਿਦਕੁ<sup>੯</sup> ਕਰਿ ਸਿਜਦਾ<sup>੧੦</sup> ਮਨੁ<sup>੧੧</sup> ਕਰਿ ਮਖਸੂਦੁ<sup>੧੨</sup> ॥  
ਜਿਹ ਧਿਰਿ<sup>੧੩</sup> ਦੇਖਾ ਤਿਹ ਧਿਰਿ<sup>੧੪</sup> ਮਉਜੂਦੁ<sup>੧੫</sup> ॥੧॥  
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: ੧, ਪੰਨੇ ੮੩-੮੪.

*It (God) created the Nature<sup>1</sup> and then pervades<sup>2</sup> in it.*

*If one comprehends<sup>4</sup> the time<sup>3</sup> then one becomes bound<sup>5</sup> to it.*

*It is the Nature<sup>6</sup>, which cannot be appraised*  
*If someone can appraise It (Nature) even then One cannot describe it.*

*One tries to contemplate on Shariat<sup>7</sup> (Islamic Laws/Code of conduct).*

*However, cannot cross the sea of life without understanding It (Nature).*

*Your goal<sup>11</sup> (of life) should be contented<sup>8</sup> and to pray<sup>9</sup> for conquering the mind<sup>10</sup>.*

*Wherever<sup>12</sup> I see, You (Nature) are pervading<sup>14</sup> everywhere<sup>13</sup>.*

AGGS, M 1, p 83-84.

ਵਖਤੁ<sup>੩</sup> : Here 'Vakht' means 'Time': Indefinite, unlimited duration in which things are considered as happening in the past, present, or future; every moment there has ever been or ever will be.

a) the entire period of existence of the known universe; finite duration, as distinguished from infinity, b) the entire period of existence of the world or of humanity; earthly duration, as distinguished from eternity.

### iii) God Created by Itself and Pervades in Nature

According to Guru Nanak It (the God) was created by itself, It created its own characters, then It created the Nature. Finally, It (God) pervades in the Nature. The following verse explains some characteristics of It, creation of the Nature, the Laws of the Nature, and Its absolute power over all.

ਆਪੀਨੈ<sup>੧</sup> ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ<sup>੨</sup> ਆਪੀਨੈ<sup>੩</sup> ਰਚਿਓ ਨਾਉ<sup>੪</sup> ॥  
ਦੁਜੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ<sup>੫</sup> ਸਾਜੀਐ<sup>੬</sup> ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ<sup>੭</sup> ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ<sup>੮</sup> ॥  
ਦਾਤਾ<sup>੯</sup> ਕਰਤਾ<sup>੧੦</sup> ਆਪਿ ਤੂੰ ਤੁਸਿ ਦੇਵਹਿ<sup>੧੧</sup> ਕਰਹਿ ਪਸਾਉ<sup>੧੨</sup> ॥  
ਤੂੰ ਜਾਣੇਈ<sup>੧੩</sup> ਸਭਸੈ ਦੇ ਲੈਸਹਿ ਜਿੰਦੁ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ<sup>੧੪</sup> ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ ॥੧॥

*"It<sup>1</sup> (The God<sup>1</sup>) was created<sup>2</sup> by Itself<sup>3</sup>, and It created Its Laws of Nature<sup>4</sup>;*

*Secondly, after creating the Nature<sup>5</sup> (Universe), And by pervading<sup>7</sup> in the Nature, delights Itself<sup>8</sup>.*

*It<sup>9</sup> Itself is the Creator<sup>10</sup>, You create and then do<sup>11</sup> the expansion<sup>12</sup> (of the universe).*

*You know<sup>13</sup> everything; You give and take the body and life.*

*Pervading<sup>14</sup> in the Nature delights Itself."*

AGGS, M 1, p 463.

ਨਾਉ<sup>੪</sup> = It is usually interpreted as the "Name of God" but critical analysis of theme indicates that here ਨਾਉ<sup>੪</sup> means "Laws of Nature. In Punjabi Dictionary [16] it also means Dynamic creative principle, God, mystical word or formula to recite or meditate, but according to Bhai Kahn Singh [35] it means name, justice, boat, and to take bath/shower.

Bradley [3] summarized his observations about the views of scientists about God as follows:

"He clearly said that Einstein's "God" is not at all like the God that most people think of when they hear the word. Neither is the "God" of a famous cosmologist and mathematician, Stephen Hawking, whose talk of "The Mind of God" has given comfort to many religious believers, but when asked if he believes in God he replied:

**"Yes, If by God is meant the embodiment of the 'laws of the universe'."**

The seventeenth century philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, said [14]: **God is Nature.**

To Spinoza, Nature is the true expression of God. And each of us is part of it. Unfortunately it was not understood by the clergy and he was excommunicated from the Jewish community in Amsterdam and he was also condemned by Christians for being atheist [47].

**Spinoza also rejected the concept of God in anthropomorphic form.**

According to Green the 'Nature is everything' [14]. In Nature there is mass, energy, atoms, molecules, life, thought, people, societies, galaxies and perhaps even multiple universes as speculated.

When a question was posed to Albert Einstein, do you believe in God? His answer was:

***I believe in God of Spinoza.***

Had Einstein read Nanakian Philosophy about Nature as God he would have said:

**Yes I do believe in God of Guru Nanak.**

To another Question about religion Albert Einstein answered:

*“A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestation of the profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty – it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute the truly religious attitude; in this sense, and in this sense alone, I am deeply religious man.” [3]*

Now I would like to pose the following questions to the theologians and philosophers of the world:

- **Are the modern scientists and the philosophers not thinking about God on the same line as conceptualized by Guru Nanak during 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries?**
- **Is there any conflict about the concept of God of Guru Nanak with that of any scientist?**

Now the question to ponder upon is that how come the above attributes of God, assigned by Guru Nanak about 540 years ago, have been realized by scientists who were unaware of philosophy of Guru Nanak. I think this is because the truth is always discovered sooner or later by the discriminative intellectuals. This is the best proof about the universal acceptability of basics of Nanakian Philosophy. Does this mean: If God reveals truth to Prophets, Gurus, Bhagats and Sufis then God also reveals the truth to scientists and philosophers?

## **B. ORIGIN OF UNIVERSE**

I would like to quote the following statement of Carl Sagan before describing the origin of universe according to Nanakian philosophy:

**A religion, old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the universe as revealed by modern science, might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths. Sooner or later, such a religion will emerge.**

Carl Sagan, *Pale Blue Dot* (1995) [26]

Had Carl Sagan studied ‘Origin of Universe’ in Nanakian Philosophy then his above statement would have been different and might have said that Guru Nanak had laid the foundation of a such new religion,

Sikhi (Sikhism), since the origin of Universe in Nanakian Philosophy is comparable to that of Big Bang, the theory accepted by many scientists. Let us look into origin of Universe according Nanakian Philosophy.

### **i) Origin of Universe According to Nanakian Philosophy**

Guru Nanak has very clearly mentioned that Universe came into existence with one bang as follows:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ<sup>1</sup> ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ<sup>2</sup> ॥

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ<sup>3</sup> ॥ AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

This phrase has been interpreted very literally by many scholars. But if we keep in view the present day science and the Methodology [8] of Guru Nanak used by him to express his philosophy allegorically, metaphorically and symbolically then its interpretation would be quite different than that of others. Thus its interpretation is as follows [8]:

*The Universe exploded with one sound<sup>2</sup> (bang) and started to expand<sup>1</sup>, hereafter appeared many things<sup>3</sup>.*

AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

If we take ਪਸਾਉ (*Pasao*) means to expand. And ਕਵਾਉ (*Kavao*) means ‘sound’ not ‘word’ or ‘note’ since ਕਵਾਉ is from ਕਵਾ which means strength, force, Energy [35]. It is important to understand the word ‘Sound’ and ‘Bang’. ‘Sound’ means vibrations traveling through air, water, or some other medium, especially those within the range of frequencies that can be perceived by the human ear. ‘Bang’ means sudden loud noise. ‘Bang’ also means burst of energy or activity which could be without any sound or noise as happened at the time of Big Bang. Therefore in case of ‘Big Bang’ no sound was produced at that time it was just a burst of energy. In that case ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ<sup>1</sup> ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ<sup>2</sup> can be interpreted as:

*The Universe expanded from the burst of one source of energy.*

With the new meanings of ਕਵਾਉ (*Kavao*) the above phrase now is interpreted as follows:

*“The Universe expanded from the burst of one source of energy (Singularity), hereafter appeared many things<sup>3</sup>.*

The above interpretation is an improved version which was given in my previous work [8] and it is more comparable to Big Bang Theory.

The word, ਦਰੀਆਉ (*Daryao*) in the above phrase is usually literally interpreted as ‘rivers’ by many

scholars. Keeping in view the Methodology used by Guru Nanak to express his philosophy ‘ਦਰੀਆਉ’ has been used as a metaphor for ‘things’. What are those things? Scientifically what appeared after the ‘Big Bang’ was a large number of galaxies each composed of a large number of stars (Suns) and their planets? Therefore, the ‘ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ’ has been used to represent ‘many things’ because of limited vocabulary available at that time. However, one must understand that no water was formed immediately after the Big Bang. It took billions of years to form water on the Earth. Therefore, ‘ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ’ (rivers) is a metaphoric expression of ‘many things’ (that means starting from elementary particles to particles to nucleosynthesis to nuclear to atoms which give rise to many galaxies.

The concept of ‘ਦਰੀਆਉ’ (*Daryao*) in Nanakian Philosophy as ‘things’ has been strengthened and explained by Guru Arjan so that the metaphor, ‘ਦਰੀਆਉ’ (*Daryao*), may not literally be misunderstood as ‘Rivers’ as has been done by some scholars in the above phrase of Guru Nanak:

ਏਕੀ ਕਵਾਵੈ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਹੋਆ ॥

*With one<sup>1</sup> source of energy (sound<sup>2</sup> - bang) everything<sup>3</sup> originated<sup>4</sup>.*

AGGS, M 5, p 1003.

**Note:** ‘ਏਕ ਕਵਾਵੈ’ in the above phrase is same as ‘ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ’ in Guru Nanak’s previous phrase.

It means Guru Nanak’s concept of origin of Universe of 15<sup>th</sup> century is almost similar to that which has been theorized by scientists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as ‘Big Bang’.

Although Origin of Universe with one ‘word’ is available in other religious scriptures, but Guru Nanak has gone quite further in explaining the origin of Universe, by using a word ਕਵਾਉ, which is from ਕਵਾ - means strength, force, Energy [35]. It makes this finding about the Origin of Universe quite unique and different than all that is found in other religions.

## ii) Sunn (ਸੁੰਨ) – Is It Nothingness?

Many theologians consider *Sunn* equivalent to God. Dhaliwal [11] says that ‘*Sunn*’ is the state of equipoise where Absolute Entity exists in Primordial Trance along with the creation. There, the essence of Enlightenment and the Ultimate Reality are hidden and inscrutable in the realm of celestial peace and bliss. However, Virk [43] describes that: “*Sunya* (ਸੁੰਨ) is not equated with void or emptiness in Guru Granth Sahib. Rather, it represents the entire state of

equipoise where Absolute Lord exists in primordial trance called *Sunya Samadhi*.” He further states: “*Sunya* is compared to a primordial void where God exists in His full effulgence.” This statement of Dr Virk is contradictory. First he says that “*Sunya* (ਸੁੰਨ) is not equated with void or emptiness in Guru Granth Sahib.” Then he says that “God exists in His full effulgence in primordial void.” ‘Effulgence’ means quality of being bright and sending rays of light. If God exists in Effulgence then it cannot be called in void or in *Sunn* state as describe in the Bani of Guru Nanak.

Let us look into ‘Void’, ‘*Sunn*’ and ‘Nothingness’ from scientific point of view. Kaup [17] defines ‘Nothingness’ 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. But this fundamental paradox is at the basis of Nothingness Theory and must be referred-to anyway. Despite it’s 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 space/time – matter/energy 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**’.”

‘Nothingness’ does not mean ‘without anything’. In fact the thing is there but it is in a so small volume that it appears to be ‘Nothingness’. **This ‘Nothingness’ as described by Kaup [17] actually is the pinnacle of perfectly symmetrical uniformity of matter, space, energy and time.** 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.

From the above scientific information by Kaup it becomes very clear that **this ‘Nothingness’ was already termed as ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) by Guru Nanak during 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is also termed as ‘*Joyt*’**

(highly condensed energy) by Guru Nanak. The following discussion will further strengthen it.

### iii) ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) in Nanakian Philosophy

According to the Punjabi-English Dictionary [16], ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) means Nothingness, non-existence, emptiness, absolute silence, without thought and feeling. And ਸੁੰਨ ਮਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn masunn*) means dismal, desolate (solitary, lonely), deserted, uninhabited, eerie (causing a feeling of mystery). But I think that ਸੁੰਨ ਮਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn masunn*) is as the highest state of 'Nothingness'. According to Bhai Kahn Singh [35] ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) means empty, void, without consciousness.

Although the word ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) was known in the ancient philosophy, it was Guru Nanak who had explained ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) in its real perspective. For example, during the discourse between Guru Nanak and the Siddhas, the Siddhas posed a number of questions about ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) to Guru Nanak (for details consult Siddh Gost in AGGS pp 938-946). A few questions posed by the Siddhas to Guru Nanak about ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) are as follows:

ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਕਵਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਕਥੀਅਲੇ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਕਹਾ ਘਰ ਵਾਸੈ ॥

The Siddhas posed the question about ਆਦਿ (*Aad*) and ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*) to Guru Nanak as follows:

*What do you think<sup>2</sup> and say<sup>3</sup> about Aad<sup>1</sup> and where does the Sunn<sup>4</sup> exist<sup>5</sup>?*

AGGS, M 1, p 940.

Guru Nanak replied as follows:

ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਕਥੀਅਲੇ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਵਾਸੁ ਲੀਆ ॥

*One can think<sup>3</sup> and talk<sup>4</sup> only in term of wonders<sup>2</sup> about Aad<sup>1</sup> (the period before the beginning of time and space) that during this state of Aad<sup>1</sup> the Sunn<sup>5</sup> (Nothingness) was completely<sup>6</sup> dwelling<sup>7</sup> in Sunn (Nothingness).*

AGGS, M 1, p 940.

**Note:** ਸੁੰਨੁ (*Sunn*) here is referred to the state of Nothingness.

ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ (*Narantar*) means 'completely inside', 'without any difference' [35]. In both cases it means completely one thing without any difference.

### iv) Origin of ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*)

Now in the following verse Guru Nanak is talking about the origin of ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn*):

ਸੁੰਨੈ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਕਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਅਨਹਤੈ ਸੁੰਨੈ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਅਨਹਤੈ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਰਤੇ ਸੇ ਕੈਸੇ ॥

ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਜੈਸੇ ॥

ਓਇ ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਨੁ ਸਮਝਾਹਿ ॥੫੨॥

In the first four phrases Guru Nanak is saying that everyone talks about *Sunn*. But where did *Sunn* come from?

*Everyone speaks about the Nothingness<sup>1</sup>.*

*How did Infinite<sup>2</sup> Nothingness<sup>1</sup> originated<sup>3</sup>?*

*How<sup>5</sup> can one understand<sup>4</sup> the Infinite<sup>2</sup> Nothingness?*

Then Guru Nanak answers it as follows:

*From which that<sup>6</sup> (Nothingness) originated<sup>7</sup> it becomes like that (Nothingness) again.<sup>8-9</sup>*

Now in the last two phrases Guru Nanak is indicating that this Nothingness is God for him, Who does not take birth or dies as follows:

*That It (God) neither takes birth nor dies nor come into cycle of lives*

Finally, Guru Nanak advises that try to understand this God of Nanak:

*Oh Guru-oriented! Orientate your mind so that you can understand the above fact. 52.*

AGGS, M 1, p 943.

In the following phrase of the above verse:

ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਜੈਸੇ ॥

*From which that (Nothingness) originated it becomes like that (Nothingness) again.*

Guru Nanak is explaining that when Nothingness became the Universe after the Big Bang then it will go back to Nothingness. There is evidence that black hole is appearing in the center of our galaxy and possibly in other galaxies and these Black Holes will lead to the formation of Nothingness again.

### C. HUKM

The word 'HUKM' (ਹੁਕਮ = the basic word as spelled in *Gurmukhi Lipi*) has been used very extensively in the Gurbani, incorporated in the AGGS. 'Hukm' is an Arabic word [12], which means *command, edict, allow/permission*. According to Punjabi-English Dictionary [16], Bhai Kahn Singh [35], and Dr Gurcharan Singh [32] 'Hukm' means *order, command, decree, judgment, decision, sanction, God's Will, and Divine Law*. *Hukm* is usually interpreted as 'Will of God' by many Sikh theologians. However, critical examination of Bani of

Guru Nanak indicates that it also means ‘Law of Nature/Universe’.

### i) Hukm as Laws of Nature

From the first stanza of JAP it becomes very clear that *Hukm* has been used as Laws of Nature/Universe by Guru Nanak:

ਹੁਕਮੀ<sup>੧</sup> ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ<sup>੨</sup> ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਜੀਅ<sup>੩</sup> ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਡਿਆਈ<sup>੪</sup> ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਉਤਮੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ॥  
 ਇਕਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਇਕਿ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸਦਾ ਭਵਾਈਅਹਿ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੈ<sup>੫</sup> ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮੈ<sup>੬</sup> ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ<sup>੭</sup> ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ<sup>੮</sup> ਤ ਹਉਮੈ<sup>੯</sup> ਕਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥੨॥

*Everything is created<sup>2</sup> according to the Laws of Nature<sup>1</sup>, which cannot be said, how.*

*The life<sup>3</sup> is created according to these laws and one gets respects (one's inherited characters)<sup>4</sup> according to these laws.*

*According to one's inherited characteristics one becomes a good or evil person; and pains (problems) and pleasures are happening according to these laws. According to these laws one is free from troubles with one's good actions; and one is entrapped into the vicious circle with one's wrong actions.*

Nanak says:

*Everything is happening according to the Laws of Nature<sup>5</sup>,*

*Nothing is happening without the laws of Nature<sup>6</sup>.*

*If one can realize<sup>7</sup> the above fact of Laws of Nature<sup>5</sup>,*

*Then one can get rid of egoism<sup>8</sup>/egotism.*

AGGS, Jap 2, p 1.

1. ਹੁਕਮੀ (*Hukmi*): has been interpreted as law by Gurcharan Singh [32] and it also means ‘who has the authority to issue order’. But here it means ‘Laws of Nature’.

2. ਹੁਕਮੈ (*Hukmay*) also means ‘Laws of Nature’.

In this stanza of JAP Guru Nanak has confirmed that ‘*Hukm*’ is the order/law (Laws of Nature). 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. Consequently, nothing can happen without these laws. Therefore, ‘*Hukm*’ means ‘Laws of Nature’ (also called ‘Laws of Universe’).

### ii) Hukm (Law) as God

According to Nanakian Philosophy God Itself is *Hukm* (Law):

ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ<sup>੧</sup> ਹੁਕਮੁ<sup>੨</sup> ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ<sup>੩</sup> ਦੀਆ ਬੁਝਾਇ<sup>੪</sup> ਜੀਉ ॥੫॥

*The One, God<sup>1</sup>, is the Law (Laws of Nature)<sup>2</sup>, the True Guru<sup>3</sup> has given me this understanding<sup>4</sup>.*

AGGS, M 1, p 72.

Here Guru Nanak has equated the Laws of Nature as ‘God’ - ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ<sup>੧</sup> ਹੁਕਮੁ<sup>੨</sup> ਹੈ

Stephen Hawking also says that he believes in God: “*If by God is meant embodiment of the Laws of the Universe.*” [3].

### iii) God's Subject (ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬੰਦਾ)

Guru Amardas describes that a person who tries to understand and follows the Laws of Nature is called *Hukmi Banda* (God's subject):

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬੰਦਾ<sup>੧</sup> ਹੁਕਮੁ<sup>੨</sup> ਕਮਾਵੈ<sup>੩</sup> ਹੁਕਮੇ ਕਵਦਾ ਸਾਹਾ ਹੇ ॥

Guru Amardas says:

*The one who understands and abides<sup>3</sup> by the Laws of Nature<sup>2</sup> is the God's subject<sup>1</sup>.*

AGGS, M 3, p 1054.

As explained above a scientist can be considered as a ‘*Hukmi Banda*’ (God's subject), who discovers the Laws of Nature/Universe (Orderliness) and uses them for the welfare of humanity as quoted by Einstein:

***Scientists were rated as great heretics by the church, but they were truly religious men because of their faith in the orderliness of the universe.***

In another statement Einstein says about the universal orderliness and his belief in it as follows:

***If something is in me, which can be called religious, then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it.***

It appears from the above discussion on *Hukm* – The Laws of Nature/Universe - has been equated to God by Guru Nanak and scientists. Previously God has been equated to ਸੁੰਨ (*Sunn* – Nothingness) and ੴ as ‘One and Only Infinite’ to Singularity. And the man in general or the scientist who studies Laws of Nature/Universe and obeys these laws is called ‘*Hukmi Banda*’

### CONCLUSIONS

Illiteracy about religions has been recognized by the world fame religious scholars, e.g. Dr Robert Jackson, University of Warwick, UK, Dr Isabelle Saint-Martin, University Sorbonne, France, Dr Diane Moore, Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, USA and Dr Spancer Boudreau, McGill University, Canada.

Similarly, Dr Taran Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, India has reported that the earlier Sikh theologians have interpreted Gurbani and represented Sikhism under the shadow of Vedantic philosophy and he further emphasized that the contemporary Sikh theologians, scholars and researchers of the Indian universities have confirmed the work of earlier theologians that Sikhism is based on Vedantic philosophy.

Dr Jodh Singh also of the Punjabi University, Patiala has recently reported that Indian scholars are trying to amalgamate Sikh Dharama into Hinduism by fogging its unique identity.

S Avtar Singh Makkar, President Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar also admits that “... for all of us it is an issue of worry and warning of danger that a large number of families connected with Sikh Dharma are becoming unaware of this invaluable heritage.”

It is evident that originality and uniqueness of Sikhi has been so much misconstrued that it is difficult to say if Sikhi, being preached or taught today, is the same which was founded by Guru Nanak.

The critical analysis of philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his Bani about ‘God’, ‘Origin of Universe’ and ‘Hukm’ presented in this article indicates that it is original and unique from other religions and is very close to that of current scientific theories:

- The ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) of Guru Nanak is very similar to that of ‘Nothingness’ and/or ‘Singularity’ of scientists. Guru Nanak equates God to *Sunn*, ‘Nothingness’ as described by scientists; and God as ੴ (One and Only Infinite) to ‘Singularity’ as described by scientists.
- ਹੁਕਮ (Hukm) has been equated to Laws of Nature/Universe by Guru Nanak.
- Every action and reaction in this Universe and in every living being is going on according to these *Hukms*.
- Nobody can change these *Hukms*.
- God has been equated to *Hukm*.
- The man in general or the scientist who obeys *Hukm* – the Laws of Nature/Universe is called as ‘*Hukmi Banda*’ in Nanakian Philosophy.
- Finally, it can be concluded that Nanakian Philosophy is quite original and unique as is evident from discussion on three topics: God, Origin of Universe and *Hukm* – The Laws of Nature/Universe. And it is also clear that if God is

revealing truth to Prophets, Gurus, Bhagats and Sufis then God is also revealing truth to the scientists as the findings of Guru Nanak and those of scientists are very similar.

Now it can be easily concluded that to put Sikhi back on its original track the Sikh theologians, scholars and researchers must understand the basics of philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his Bani. This will become a stepping stone to construct an integrated and comprehensive philosophy of Sikhi (Sikhism).

## REFERENCES

1. AGGS = Aad Guru Granth Sahib. 1983. (Reprint) Publishers: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. [M = (Mahal) succession number of Sikh Gurus to the House of Guru Nanak, M is replaced with the name of Bhagat or Bhatt, p = Page number of the AGGS.
2. Bouquet, A. C. 1954. *Sacred Books of the World*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England.
3. Bradley, Ray. Year?. Philosophy of Science: Did Einstein believe in God? [http://www.eequalsmcsquared.auckland.ac.nz/sites/ecmc2/tl/philosophy/einstein\\_god.cfm](http://www.eequalsmcsquared.auckland.ac.nz/sites/ecmc2/tl/philosophy/einstein_god.cfm)
4. Chahal, D. S. 2000. Sikhism: Scientific and logical religion for the third Millennium and beyond. *Understanding Sikhism Res. J. 2 (2): 7-23 & 33.*
5. Chahal, D. S. 2001. Akhand Paath in Sikhism. *Understanding Sikhism, Res. J. 3 (1): 34-35.*
6. Chahal, D. S. (ed.). 2006. Mini-symposium: Uniqueness in Sikhism. *Understanding Sikhism Res. J. 8 (1).*
7. Chahal, D. S. (ed.). 2006. Mini-symposium: Uniqueness in Sikhism II. *Understanding Sikhism Res. J. 8 (2).*
8. Chahal, D. S. 2008. *Nanakian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity*. Institute for Understanding Sikhism, 4418 Marin-Plouffe, Laval, Quebec, Canada. H7W 5L9. Distributors: Singh Brothers, SCO 223-224, City Centre, Amritsar 143 001.
9. Crystal, David (Ed.) 1993. *The Cambridge Factfinder*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
10. Dawkins, Richard. 2006. *The God Delusion*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.
11. Dhaliwal, Avtar Singh. 2004. 2003. Su(n)n – Doctrine in Nanakian Philosophy. *Understanding Sikhism Res. J. 5 (2): 18-23.*
12. Ferozuddin, Maulvi. 2000. *Ferozul-Lughat Jadeed*. Educational Publishing House, Delhi.
13. Isaacson, Walter. 2007. Einstein and Faith (An excerpt from new biography). *Time. 169 (16): 32-36.*
14. Green, James Craig. Spinoza’s God, Individual Choice and Society. <http://www.waterwind.com/spinoza.html>
15. Grewal, Dilvinder Singh. 2010. Guru Granth as a Maharashtrian Deity - An Extraordinary Tale of

- Faith, March 11, 2010 by Dalvinder Singh Grewal.  
Source: [www.angelfire.com](http://www.angelfire.com)  
(<http://www.sikhnet.com/news/extraordinary-tale-faith>)
16. Joshi, S. S., Gill, Mukhtiar Singh (eds.) and Singh, Gurmukh (compiler). 1994. Punjabi - English Dictionary, Punjabi University, Patiala, India.
  17. Kaup, Corry. 1989-2004. General Nothingness Theory. Kaup Communications. (<http://www.nothingnesstheory.com/General%20Nothingness%20Theory4.htm>)
  18. Kumar, Rajanish. 1972. Preface. In: Hymns of Guru Nanak. (Translated by Manmohan Singh). Language Department, Punjab, Patiala.
  19. Lewis, James R. 2008 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Misinterpretation of Sikh Tradition in World Religions Textbooks. Pp 626-634. In: *Sikhism: Its Philosophy and History*. Institute of Sikh Studies, Gurdwara Sri Guru Sibgh Sabha, Kanthala, Indl Area Phase 2, Chandigarh, India 160 002.
  20. Mandair, Arvind. 2007. The Global Fiduciary: Mediating the Violence of Religion. In: *Religion and Violence in South Asia: Theory and Practice*. Hinnells, John R. and King Richard (eds.) Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London ND New York. p 211-225.
  21. McLeod, W. H. 1968. The Influence of Islam upon the thought of Guru Nanak. *History of Religions*. 7 (4):302-316.
  22. Moore, D. (2007). *Overcoming religious illiteracy: A cultural studies approach to the study of religion in secondary education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
  23. Nand, Parma. 1985. Ek - Oamkar. In: *Sikh Concept of Divine*. Pritam Singh, Editor. Pp 32-55. Guru Nanak Dev University Press, Amritsar.
  24. Noss, J. B. 1956. *Man's Religions*. New York, p 272.
  25. Pais, Ahrham. 1982. "Subtle is the Lord..." *The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
  26. Sagan, Carl. 1995. *Pale Blue Dot: a vision of the human future in space*. Headline Book Publishing Ltd. London.
  27. Sandbek, Terry. 2010. Religious Illiteracy. <http://theworryfreelife.blogspot.com/2010/02/religious-illiteracy.html>
  28. Shan, Harnam Singh. 2008 (Sec. Ed.). Sikhism: An Original, Distinct, Revealed and Complete Religion. Pp195-224. In: *Sikhism: Its Philosophy and History*. Institute of Sikh Studies, Gurdwara Sri Guru Sibgh Sabha, Kanthala, Indl Area Phase 2, Chandigarh, India 160 002.
  29. Sidhu, Sarjeet. 1999. Is there any place of ritualism and idolism in Sikhism? *Understanding Sikhism Res. J. 1* (2): 37-41 & 17.
  30. Singh, Avtar. 2008. *Mukh Band* (Forward). In: *Sikh Dharam Adavian* (in Punjabi). Sabar, Jasbir Singh (Ed.). Dharam Parchar Committee, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar.
  31. Singh, Gopal (Dr). 1987. Sri Guru Granth Sahib (English Version). Vols. 4. World Sikh Centre Inc. New Delhi, London, New York.
  32. Singh, (Dr) Gurcharan. 2000. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Kosh: Gurmukhi ton Gurmukhi* (Punjabi). Patiala. Prof Sahib Singh Gurmat Trust.
  33. Singh, Hazara, and Singh, Vir (Dr, Padam Bhushan, Bhai). 1984. Vaaran Bhai Gurdas Steek (Punjabi). Khalsa Samachar, Hall Bazar, Amritsar.
  34. Singh, Jodh. 2008. *Sikh Dharam nun samjana te samjaona samme di loor*. In: *Sikh Dharam Adhayian (mudli Jankari)*. Dharam Parchar Committee, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar.
  35. Singh, Kahn (Bhai). 1981. *Mahan Kosh* (Punjabi). Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, Patiala.
  36. Singh, Khushwant. 1963. *A History of the Sikhs*. Princeton, New York, p 17.
  37. Singh, Pritam. 1985. *Sikh Concept of the Divine*. Guru Nanak Dev University Press, Amritsar, India.
  38. Singh, (Prof) Puran. 1981. *Spirit of the Sikh*. Part II Volume Two. Punjabi University, Patiala.
  39. Singh, Sahib (Dr). 1972. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Darpan*. (in Punjabi). Vols 10. Raj Publishers (Reg.), Jalandhar.
  40. Singh, Taran. 1997. *Gurbani dian Viakhia Parnalian* (Punjabi). Punjabi University, Patiala.
  41. Singh, Trilochan. 1969. *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism*. Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi.
  42. Singh, Trilochan; Singh, Bhai Jodh; Singh, Kapur; Singh, Bawa Harkrishan; Singh, Kushwant. 1973. *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*. Samuel Weiser, Inc., New York.
  43. Virk, Hardev Singh. 2005. Glimpses of a scientific vision in Guru Granth Sahib. *Abstract of Sikh Studies*. 7 (4):23-30.
  44. Virk, Hardev Singh. 2008. *Scientific Vision in Sri Guru Granth Sahib and Interfaith Dialogue*. Singh Brothers, Amritsar.
  45. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. 1991. Thomas Allen & Son Ltd. Markham, Ontario.
  46. *Why Religious Literacy is important in Today's World - An International Symposium for Educators, Scholars and policy makers* was held at Moyse Hall, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada on October 2, 2009.
  47. Wikipedia. Baruch Spinoza. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baruch\\_Spinoza](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baruch_Spinoza)
- (\*Paper presented at National Seminar, **Global Concerns and the World Religions**, held at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar on March 25-26, 2010.)

Revised: 08.05.2010