

INTRA-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE ON SIKHISM TO DISCUSS ORIGINALITY AND UNIQUENESS OF PHILOSOPHY OF GURU NANAK

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

ABSTRACT

Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy and challenged the existing concepts about God, heaven/hell, reincarnation/transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia. But as the time passed some theologians started to misrepresent his philosophy under the influence of Vedanta and Islam. Consequently, some scholars started to declare Sikhism as a combination of Vedanta and Islam. Papers are invited for Intra-religious Dialogue to discuss the issues raised by such misrepresentations of original and unique philosophy of Guru Nanak.

INTRODUCTION

Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy during the Period of Renaissance (14th-16th century) when scientists were challenging some religious concepts in Europe. During this period Guru Nanak was challenging the existing concepts about God, heaven/hell, reincarnation/transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia. During the period of 18th and 19th centuries some theologians started to misrepresent the philosophy of Guru Nanak under the influence of Vedanta and Islam. Such misrepresentations are still going on [16 & 25].

I have participated in some 'Inter-religious Dialogue Conferences' where scholars of various religions present the views of their religions so that their religions are understood properly by others. I have noticed that Sikhism is presented differently by different Sikh scholars; consequently, the scholars of other religions carry home the mixed message. The result of such different views about Sikhism has led some scholars to believe that Sikhism is "Syncretism" (combination of Vedanta and Islam). So much so some have challenged the originality and uniqueness of philosophy of Guru Nanak.

To establish unison comprehension of Guru Nanak's 'Original and Unique Philosophy', this paper discusses: Causes of misrepresentation of Sikhism as Syncretism and Challenge to Originality and Uniqueness of Sikhism.

Finally a proposal has been prepared to hold a series of *Intra-religious Dialogues on Sikhism* to settle this confusion about the originality and uniqueness of philosophy of Guru Nanak among the scholars of Sikhism.

BACKGROUND

Bouquet [3] writes that "Sikhism is the fruit of hybridization between Islam and Hinduism." McLeod [8] says that it is the usual interpretation of the religion of Guru Nanak and his successors, and among Western writers it would appear to be universal assumption. Accordingly he quoted Noss [10] that: "Sikhism is properly regarded as a blend of Hindu beliefs and Islam, 'an outstanding example of conscious religious syncretism' a noble attempt to fuse in a single system elements drawn from two separate and largely disparate religions." McLeod further quotes Khushwant Singh [18] as another metaphor which evidently expresses same interpretation: "Sikhism was born out of wedlock between Hinduism and Islam." Grewal [6] has reported that Guru Nanak's religion has been regarded as mixture of Hinduism and Islam and also has some influence of Sufism and Yogis by some writers (Aziz Ahamed, Chhajju Singh Bawa, Gurmit Singh, Loehlin, C. H., Sher Singh, Tara Chand, and Trilochan Singh.)

Now the recent trend is that originality and uniqueness of philosophy of Guru Nanak is being challenged by some writers. This has happened due to misrepresentation of Sikhism.

CAUSES OF MISREPRESENTATION OF SIKHISM

The main cause of misrepresentation of Sikhism has been summed up by **Prof Puran Singh** as follows [23]:

"It is to be regretted that Sikh and Hindu scholars are interpreting Guru Nanak in the futile terms of the colour he used, the brush he took; are analyzing the skin and flesh of his words and dissecting texts to find the Guru's meaning to be the same as of the Vedas and Upanishad! This indicates enslavement to the power of Brahmanical tradition. Dead words are used

to interpret the fire of the Master's soul! The results are always grotesque and clumsy translations which have no meaning at all."

Some specific causes are as follows:

i) Status of Bhagat Bani

I sometimes wonder that the observations of McLeod [8] about placing Guru Nanak in 'Sant Tradition' might be based on the writings of some Sikh scholars, especially, Sahib Singh [24] who has emphatically proved that Bani of the Bhagats of 'Sant Tradition' is exactly in the conformity with the Bani of Guru Nanak. It has further been confirmed by Harbans Singh [14], Nirbhai Singh [20], Shashi Bala [2] and many others. Consequently, such writings lead to a conclusion that Guru Nanak was following the philosophy of Bhagats.

In Sikhism it is very difficult to go against the established concept of the stalwart Sikh theologians to put Sikhism on its real perspective. Same situation is found about the Bhagat Bani that as soon as anybody dares to write against the above established concept about the Bhagat Bani that researcher is met with severe criticism or sometimes is excommunicated. Therefore, it has become difficult for new researchers to go against the established concept in Sikhism. However, Pashaura Singh [21, p- 7-8.] took a courageous step to point out his views about Bhagat Bani as follows:

"...In the light of these observations it may be stated that the selections from the Bhagat Bani were not made exclusively on the bases of identity with the teachings of the Gurus. There is difference as well as identity. It is important to note that the Gurus were deeply concerned about cultivating a particular Sikh view of true teachings, practice and community by way of commenting on and editing the received tradition of the Bhagat Bani."

Pashaura Singh [21, p-186] further strengthened his above research, *"It should be emphasized that the disagreement with the Bhagats on essential points are very important in the process of Sikh self-definition. This is a fact that has been ignored in the traditional view that holds that the selection of the Bhagat Bani was made exclusively on the basis of ideological identity with the teachings of the gurus."*, by quoting the views of Nirharanjan Ray [12], which are as follows:

"[The] Sikh Gurus took consciously a series of steps directed towards marking themselves and their followers out as a community with an identity of their own, clearly distinct from both Hindus and Muslims. They are critical of both these communities, on more counts than one, and the Gurus from Guru Nanak downwards never felt tired of repeating this fact of their lives, times without number, by pointing out where they differed."

ii) Influence of Vedanta in Universities

Taran Singh [25], the then Head, Department of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, admits that the Sikh and non-Sikh writers belonging to various *Viakhia Parnalian* (Schools of Interpretations) of 18th and 19th centuries had accepted that Gurus' philosophy is based on Vedantic 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 ਚੁਕੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੇਧਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਅੰਤਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਫਰਕ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੇਤੰਨ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਯਤਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਜਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਜਿਥੋਂ ਤੀਕ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧ ਕੋਈ ਪਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਭ ਪਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰ-ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਆਮ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਫਿਲਾਸਫੀ ਤੋਂ ਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। [Taran Singh – in Foreword].

Taran Singh further says that it appears that universities have taken good steps, although their research could only establish that the truth in the AGGS is not different than the truth of ancient India but this is a powerful achievement:

"ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਯਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਰ ਪੱਖ ਵਿਚ ਚੰਗੀਆਂ ਦੁਲਾਘਾਂ ਪੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਸੋਧ ਇਹੋ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦਾ ਸੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸੱਚ ਦੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਤੋਂ ਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਬੜੀ ਪ੍ਰਬਲ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ। [Taran Singh – in Foreword].

From the above statements of Taran Singh it becomes quite clear that Gurus' philosophy was not only accepted as Vedantic philosophy by the early Sikh scholars of 18th and 19th centuries but the university's professors also accepted it so.

However, he also says that:

"ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਾਰਗ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਧਨਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਚੇਤੰਨ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੀ, ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ੈਵ ਮਾਰਗਾਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ-ਮਾਰਗ ਦੀ ਭਿੰਨਤਾ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।"

(That these schools were more conscious about the 'Gurmat Marg' or 'Sidhant' and these schools have confirmed the dissimilarity between Brahmani, Hindu and Shaiv Margs and Gurmat-Marg.)

It is not clear from this statement what are that 'Brahmani, Hindu and Shaiv Margs', which are different than that of Vedanta.

Besides, Joginder Singh [16] has also reported that right from the very beginning the old schools of Sikhism (*Sampradaya*) were interpreting Gurbani and representing Sikhism on Vedantic philosophy.

From the above discussion it is evident that Sikh theologians and writers are responsible to put Sikhism into the fold of *Sant* Tradition and Vedanta.

CAUSES OF CHALLENGE TO ORIGINALITY AND UNIQUENESS OF PHILOSOPHY OF GURU NANAK

The way Sikhism has been represented by Sikh theologians and scholars that it has reached at such a state that now originality and uniqueness of philosophy of Guru Nanak is being challenged:

i) Originality of ੴ Challenged

My critical study of the 'Commencing Verse', commonly called Mool Mantra, of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1] indicates that ੴ is generally pronounced by many Sikh theologians and scholars as ੲੁ ੳਅੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oankaar*) or ੲੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ekankaar*). And now it is also being pronounced as ੲੁ ੳਅੰਮ ਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oam Kaar*). The survey of the available literature indicates that the early Sikh scholars under the heavy influence of Vedantic philosophy have coined this pronunciation because writing of 'Om' or 'Oam' or 'Oankaar' or 'Oamkaar' before every writings was very common in the ancient literature. Therefore, they have equated 'Open Oora' in ੴ as 'Om' or 'Oam' which is known as 'Oankaar' or 'Omkaar' or 'Oamkaar' in various Upanishads.

Giani Harbans Singh [13] says that it is not known who first started to pronounce ੴ as ੲੁ ੳਅੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oankaar*) or ੲੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ekankaar*). However, it is very clear that Bhai Gurdas [28] might be the first Sikh scholar who has pronounced ੴ as ੲੁ ੳਅੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oankaar*) as is evident from his *Pauri* 15 of *Vaar* 3:

ਏਕਾ^੧ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ^੨ ਲਿਖ^੩ ਦਿਖਾਲਿਆ^੪ ॥
 ਰੂੜਾ^੫ ੳਅੰਕਾਰ^੬ ਪਾਸ^੭ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ^੮ ॥

In this *Pauri* Bhai Gurdas has declared 'ਏਕਾ' (one) as 'ਏਕੰਕਾਰ' (*Ekankaar*) and 'ਰੂੜਾ' as 'ੳਅੰਕਾਰ' (*Oankaar*). It indicates that ੴ should be pronounced as 'Ekankaar Oankaar' according to the above explanation.

Thereafter, it were the Nirmalas, the authors of *Faridkote Wala Teeka* [5] who pronounced ੴ as *Ek Oamkaar*. Then Prof Sahib Singh [24] followed *Faridkote Wala Teeka* that *Oora* in ੴ is 'Om' (Oam) and further explained ੴ as ਇਕ + ਓ or ਓਅੰ or ਓ (Oam or Om) + ਕਾਰ (extended end of *Oora*) and pronounced ੴ as 'ਏਕੁ ੳਅੰਕਾਰੁ' (*Ek Oankaar*). Bhai Kahn Singh [17] also explained ੴ very similar to that described by Prof Sahib Singh. Consequently, other theologians and scholars jumped into the bandwagon of scholars of Vedantic philosophy and accepted the open 'Oora' as 'Oam' or 'Om' and

extended end as 'kaar' and started to pronounce ੴ as ੲੁ ੳਅੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oankaar*) or ੲੰਕਾਰੁ (*Ekankaar*) or ੲੁ ੳਅੰਮਕਾਰੁ (*Ek Oamkaar*).

It is clear from the above discussion that the stalwart Sikh theologians have encouraged Parma Nand to declare the following statement openly right at Guru Nanak Dev University in a seminar on 'Mool Mantra' held on November 1969 to commemorate the 500th Birthday (Parkash Divas) of Guru Nanak[22]:

"ੴ 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." [9].

Some theologians tried to justify that although the 'Open Oora' in ੴ represents *Oam* (*Om*), the Trinity, but adding numeral 1 (One) Guru Nanak has made it One God. This so-called originality of Guru Nanak was also challenged by Parma Nand [9] that it is also found in Upanishad that the Trinity originated from One God.

ii) Originality of Nanakian Philosophy as a Whole Challenged

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 Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee [26]. This book was written on the eve of celebration of the 500th 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 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 [27]:

“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.”

iii) Uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy Challenged Verbally

I was wonder stuck when Swami Sarvpriyanand of Ramakrishna Mission posed a challenging question during the Question-Answer time of Plenary Session 10: **World Challenges**, (Moderated by the author of this article) of Interfaith Conference and Celebration of *Gurta Gaddi Divas* held on September 25-28, 2008 at Nanded, Maharashtra, India.

His challenging question was:

Quote a single example of uniqueness of Sikhism which is not based on Vedanta?

However, before responding to his question I inquired from Swami Sarvpriyanand if Krishna has said in *Bhagavad Geeta* something like this:

“I will come to this Earth in human form again and again whenever there is decline in righteousness.”

His answer was: Yes.

Now I have looked into some sources and found the exact wording of the following two quotes from *Bhagavad Geeta*, which convey the same theme I required confirmation from Mr Sarvpriyanand:

“yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srjamy aham.”

English Translation:

“Whenever there is a decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and a rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself in every age”

- Srimad Bhagavad Geeta (4:7)

And

“paritranaaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam dharmam-samsthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge.”

English Translation:

“For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of dharma, I am born in every age.”

Bhagavad Geeta, Verse 8.

Then I quoted that God is ‘ਆਜੁਨੀ’ (Ajuni) as described by Guru Nanak in the ‘Commencing Verse’

(commonly called *Mool Mantra*) of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). This word, ‘ਆਜੁਨੀ’ (Ajuni), is generally translated/interpreted in a simple language that ‘*God does not take birth and does not die*’. However, by using my knowledge about God as described by Guru Nanak and further explained by the other Sikh Gurus and my knowledge about life, death and soul I interpret ‘ਆਜੁਨੀ’ (Ajuni) as:

‘God does not come into anthropomorphic form’ as is explained by Einstein [11]. It means that God does not assume human form to come to this Earth to resolve the troubled world. My above explanation is based on the following Gurbani phrases [4]:

Guru Nanak has explained ਆਜੁਨੀ (Ajuni) as follows:

ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰਣਿ ਨਹੀ ਧੰਧਾ ਧੈਰੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ੫-੯੩੧.

(God) is free from birth¹ and death² and is not involved in worldly affairs^{3,4}.

AGGS, M 1, p 931.

This characteristic of ‘not coming into anthropomorphic form’ of God founded by Guru Nanak has been further strengthened by Guru Arjan in the following phrases:

ਤੂੰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਜੋਨਿ ਨਾ ਅਵਹੀ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ੫-੧੦੯੫.

You¹, the Infinite² and Greatest³ of all and do not come in life-death cycle⁴.

AGGS, M 5, p 1095.

ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰਣੁ ਤੇ ਰਹਤੁ ਨਾਰਾਇਣੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ੫-੧੧੩੬.

The God¹ is free³ from birth¹ and death².

AGGS, M 5, p 1136.

Note: This phrase particularly refers to Krishna.

In continuation of the above phrase Guru Arjan further strengthens the basic principle of Nanakian Philosophy, ‘*God does not come into anthropomorphic form*’, in very strong words as follows:

ਸੋ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੋਨੀ ॥੩॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ੫-੧੧੩੬.

That¹ mouth² be burnt³, which⁴ says⁵ that God⁶ comes in anthropomorphic form⁷ (takes birth in human body). 3.

AGGS, M 5, p 1136.

I must make it clear here that I have no attention to criticize any religious belief of others, however, I have tried to portray that the philosophy of Guru Nanak is original and unique and is not based on any other philosophy.

ORIGINALITY AND UNIQUENESS OF PHILOSOPHY OF GURU NANAK

First of all I would like to discuss what Arnold Toynbee thinks about the Adi Granth (Aad Guru Granth Sahib) [27]:

“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. 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.”* Here we are concerned about this part. What is that *“something”*? I am sure that it is originality and uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy embodied in the Bani of Guru Nanak, which has been further elaborated and strengthened by the Sikh Gurus who succeeded to the ‘House of Nanak’ in their Bani which has been incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib along with that of Guru Nanak [4].

CALL FOR PAPERS

Should not the scrupulous Sikh theologians and researchers get together to portray systematically the originality and uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy? Consequently, it would lead us to formulate concise and comprehensive philosophy of Sikhism so that every Sikh can talk about Sikhism in its real perspective to remove the confusion of Sikhism as syncretism or based on Vedanta. The author has done some basic work on this issue in his book, *NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY: Basics for Humanity* [4]. This could be a steppingstone to achieve our goal.

Since there is a provision to hold **Intra-religious Dialogues** in the forthcoming Conference of Council of Parliament of World Religions I strongly believe that there is a dire need to hold **Intra-religious Dialogue on Sikhism** with various Sikh theologians and researchers, experts in various fields to have some common basic principles on which most of the scholars could agree.

Before we discuss the issue of *Intra-religious Dialogue on Sikhism* it is very import to discuss what is so-called ‘Sikh Religion’ or ‘Sikhism’? In my opinion the so-called ‘Sikh Religion’ or ‘Sikhism’, in fact, is **‘Sikhi’**. Therefore, the first hurdle to be crossed is to define SIKHI. Once ‘Sikhi’ is defined, which has been anglicized as ‘Sikhism’ by adding suffix, -ism, the other important topics to be discussed one by one to portray the originality and the

uniqueness of philosophy of Guru Nanak are as follows:

1. Concept of God
2. Origin of Universe
3. Heaven and Hell
4. Mantra System
5. Idolatry
6. Casteism
7. Gurbani and Science
8. Gurbani and Bhagat Bani
9. And many other topics will come up during the discussion of the above topics.

Keeping in view the sensitivity because of different opinions about **Sikhism** among the Sikh theologians and the researchers the suggested **Intra-religious Dialogue on Sikhism** will be just the foundation of series of such conferences to be followed.

The first Intra-religious Dialogue on Sikhism is being arranged as one of the various sections of the Conference being held by the Council of Parliament of World Religions at Melbourne, Australia on December 3-9, 2009. Please visit the following site for complete information on the above conference:

<http://www.parliamentofreligions.org>

The interested scholars are requested to contact Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD, President, Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Email: sikhism@iuscanada.com as soon as possible before January 31, 2009.

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