

# CAUSES OF MISINTERPRETATION OF GURBANI AND MISREPRESENTATION OF SIKHISM AND THE SOLUTION

Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD  
Institute for Understanding Sikhism  
3979 Acadia, Laval, Quebec, Canada H7T 1G3

## ABSTRACT

*Sikhism is a scientific and logical religion of the world but it is being represented as a syncretic and ritualistic religion. It is so because of the misinterpretation of Gurbani and misrepresentation of Sikhism. A few such misinterpretations and misrepresentations have been discussed. The causes of misinterpretation of Gurbani are due to the fact that more attention is being paid towards ritualistic aspects of the Granth Guru rather than on the deliberation of the Sabd Guru. And misrepresentation of Sikhism is due to the fact that Sikhism is being constructed on information given in unauthentic writings of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries rather than on the authentic source of information, the Aad Guru Granth sahib. The solution to this problem lies in the scientific and logical interpretation of Gurbani without any influence of the ancient philosophy and critical analyses of unauthentic old writings to put the wrongs in right perspective. It can be done through regular publication of well-researched articles, books, and booklets presenting Gurbani and Sikhism in their real perspective and holding of seminars on one particular topic of the day and publication of their proceedings for wide distribution.*

## INTRODUCTION

**G**uru Nanak (1469-1539) laid the foundation of **Sikhi (Sikhism)** during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Period of Renaissance (between 14<sup>th</sup> century and 17<sup>th</sup> century) when the scientists were challenging some of the concepts of the church in Europe. During this period Guru Nanak was busy in challenging the ancient mythology and rituals in which the peoples of South Asia were shackled for centuries and were unable to express their free will in any aspect of their lives because their lives were controlled by their religious mentors. Guru Nanak promulgated a unique philosophy that is scientifically and logically very sound having universal acceptability. His philosophy is termed as **Nanakian Philosophy** (commonly called **Gurbani** in Punjabi). It was preached and enriched by the nine succeeding Gurus to the **House of Nanak** called **Nanakian School**. The follower of his philosophy is known as the '**Sikh**'. The word '**Sikhi**' (**Gurmat**) gave rise to the modern anglicized word '**Sikhism**' for the modern world.

Subsequently, Sikhism should have been disseminated scientifically and logically. Instead it has been represented as syncretic and ritualistic religion. It is so because many scholars have constructed Sikhism based on more than 80% of information from the old and unauthentic extraneous writings rather than on the primary and authenticated source, the **Nanakian Philosophy**, incorporated in the **Aad Guru Granth Sahib** (AGGS) [1]. However, a critical analysis of the Nanakian Philosophy indicates that it is most scientific and logical philosophy that can be accepted by the future generations of the Science Age during the third millennium and beyond, if it is taught scientifically and logically [4].

## CAUSES

Misinterpretation of Nanakian Philosophy and misrepresentation of Sikhism was started as early as during the Gurus' period. Misinterpretation of Nanakian Philosophy is going on either innocently due to its improper understanding in its originality and entirety because of the strong influence of ancient

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philosophy on the scholars, or intentionally to meet certain motives.

Misrepresentation of Sikhism is due to the fact that the literature that appeared during 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century is full of controversial, unauthentic, unscientific, and illogical information. The irony is that the modern scholars have taken such information as true without verifying their verity with the Nanakian Philosophy, science, and logic, the touchstones of truth. And they started to build Sikhism on such unauthentic information rather than on the Nanakian Philosophy incorporated in the AGGS that was authenticated by Guru Arjan and Guru Gobind Singh.

At present misinterpretations of Nanakian Philosophy as well as misrepresentations of Sikhism are still going on, rather on large scale, with calculated efforts to distort the originality and uniqueness of Nanakian Philosophy and Sikhism, subsequently, to club Sikhism as one of the many sects of Hinduism.

In the present article a few examples of misinterpretation of Gurbani and misrepresentation of Sikhism, that had given a chance to the anti-Sikh forces to denigrate Gurbani and Sikhism, have been discussed.

#### A. MISINTERPRETATION OF GURBANI (NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY)

I would like to present some typical examples of misinterpretation of Gurbani that is already eroding its originality and the uniqueness. In this article Gurbani and Nanakian Philosophy are interchangeable with each other.

##### 1. Undermining the Originality of Nanakian Philosophy

The first straightforward statement of Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji, President, Sahitya Akademi to belittle the Nanakian Philosophy is found in the "*Foreword*" to the book, *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism*, written by Dr Trilochan Singh and published by Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi [26]. It was written on the eve of celebration of the Fifth Centenary of Birthday of Guru Nanak. His denigrative statement is as follows:

*"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 Vedatic 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 irony is that the above statement was accepted by Dr Trilochan Singh and Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi. I have not come across any writing in which anybody has ever raised any objection to this statement so far. Most probably being encouraged by the tolerance of the above statement Dr Harjot Obroi [13] tried to present Sikhism as nothing but a Santana Dharama in his book, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*. Enough has already been written to refute his assertions in a book, *Invasion of Religious Boundaries* [9].

##### 2. Literal Translation under the Influence of Ancient Philosophy

Some scholars are so heavily burdened with ancient philosophy that it is difficult for them to understand the depth of the Nanakian Philosophy in its originality. For example,

iqQY slqo slqw mihmw mwih ] AGGS, Jap 37, P 8.

It has been literally translated by Dr Talib [27]. The word slqW (*sita*) has been translated as Sita, the wife of king Ram instead of '*sewn fully in the praise of the Almighty*'.

##### 3. Interpretation of Commencing Verse of the AGGS under the Influence of Ancient Philosophy

The Commencing Verse of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1] is commonly called as *Mool Mantra* by the Sikhs at large and by almost all the Sikh scholars. The irony is that no such title was assigned either by Guru Nanak when it was composed or by Guru Arjan at the time of compilation of the AGGS. The Commencing Verse of the AGGS has already been discussed scientifically and logically in details [3] where it has been proven that it is not a Mool Mantra but a precise and concise definition of Transcendent Entity (commonly called the Almighty or the God). In

the present paper a scientific and logical interpretation of the Commencing Verse of the AGGS achieved after extensive discussion is given as follows:

<

siq nmmu krqū prKū inrBau  
inrvhu Akūl mtriq Aj hl sBll  
gr pšwid ]

*The One and Only, Oh, the Infinite;  
Exists;  
Creator;  
Without fear  
(Not governed by any other entity or any Law of the  
Universe);  
Without enmity;  
Timeless (Without effect of time and space);  
Neither takes birth nor dies;  
Created by Itself;  
Enlightener; and Bounteous ."*

The above scientific and logical analysis of the Commencing Verse of the AGGS clearly indicates that it is not a mantra or Mool Mantra in any respect but a precise and concise definition of the **Transcendent (Abstruse / Abstract) Entity**. It is an original philosophical term not borrowed from any other philosophy or religious texts as propounded by Parma Nand [12]. Although the Almighty of Guru Nanak is Transcendent still It **exists (satt / sach)** hence the word '**Entity**' has been used. Again It is a unique Entity and there is no other like It, therefore, It is designated as '**1**' (One and Only). Since there is no descriptive/ specific name for the Almighty of Guru Nanak, therefore, It is addressed as '**It**' or "**That**" in this article to avoid representation of the Almighty with any specific gender (He or She).

In Punjabi a definition is called **Manglacharan**. *Manglacharan* according to Dr Sahib Singh [24] and Bhai Kahn Singh [20] is that phrase in which the poets often describe the one in which they have full confidence or faith. Therefore, if the Commencing Verse is to be identified for any purpose, it could be called **Manglacharan**, or it may be called simply the **Commencing Verse** of the AGGS. But definitely not as **Mool Mantra** because there is no place of any type of Mantra in the Nanakian Philosophy:

qtkū<sup>1</sup> mtkū<sup>2</sup> pūKū<sup>3</sup> n j xū rūmū<sup>4</sup> irdū<sup>5</sup> mū<sup>6</sup> mūinAū ]  
Aū<sup>7</sup> nū<sup>8</sup> iqsū<sup>9</sup> qy sū<sup>10</sup> gr sbdū<sup>10</sup> scū<sup>11</sup> jūinAū ]  
AGGS, M 1, P 766.

"I (Nanak) do not believe in magical formulae <sup>1</sup>, magical hymns <sup>2</sup>, (including diagrams of mystical characters - Yantra) and religious hypocrisies <sup>3</sup>,

because my mind <sup>6</sup> is imbibed <sup>5</sup> with the Almighty <sup>4</sup>. The collyrium <sup>7</sup> is the teachings of the Guru<sup>8</sup>, that made (me) capable to understand <sup>9</sup> the Almighty <sup>11</sup> through the teachings of the Guru <sup>10</sup>."

#### 4. Literal Translation Instead of Thematic Interpretation of Gurbani

Every scholar, who writes on Miri-Piri, quotes the following stanza of Guru Nanak. Many articles have been written on this topic in the past including an Editorial in the Abstracts of Sikh Studies [2]. This editorial is the most extensive work on this topic ever written in the Sikh literature. It has been observed that in almost every article, dealing with Miri-Piri, the following stanza of Guru Nanak has been interpreted very literally:

j auqau pūn Kū x kū cūwū ] isruDir ql l gl l mrl Aūwū ]  
iequmūrig pūDrljū ] isruDlj Ykūix n kljū ]  
AGGS, M 1, P 1412.

Interpretation given in the Editorial [2]:

"If you want to play the game of love, enter my lane with your head on your palm, and, once on this path, then waver not."

Similarly, other scholars {Dr Gopal Singh [17]; Manmohan Singh [23]; Dr Sahib Singh [24]; and Dr Gurcharan Singh Talib [27]} have given almost the same type of literal translation of the above stanza of Guru Nanak.

I feel that these scholars [2, 17, 23, 24, 27] have not done full justification in interpreting this stanza because it does not portray the main theme of Miri-Piri presented allegorically in this stanza. Before interpreting it, it is very important to understand allegorical system in the writings of Guru Nanak. Allegories are commonly used for teaching or explaining ideas, moral principles, etc. Guru Nanak used allegories (metaphors and similes) extensively in expressing various themes in his philosophy. The '**theme of righteousness**' has been explained allegorically in the above stanza. Let us understand the allegoric characteristics of the above stanza:

The word pūn (*praem*) in English is '**love**'. And 'love' means: *feeling of brotherhood and good will toward other people*. Here, therefore, 'love' is metaphor for **righteousness\***; Kū x (*khaelan*) is for 'participation or acceptance'; isru Dir ql l (*sir dhar tali*) is an allegoric expression for 'to be ready to sacrifice oneself'; gl l mrl (*gali meri*) for 'path of my philosophy of

righteousness'; *iequ m̄rig p̄ru Dr̄lj̄* (*itt marg paer dharizae*) for 'to follow this path (of righteousness)'; *isru dlj̄* (*sir deejae*) for 'to sacrifice oneself'; and *k̄ix n klj̄* (*kaan na kijae*) for 'don't back out'. Now it can be interpreted as follows [5]:

*"If you want to participate in righteousness\* then be ready to be sacrificed while treading on the path of my (Nanak's) philosophy of righteousness. Once you accept this path (of righteousness) then don't back out of this."*

{\***Righteousness:** uprightness, fairness, justness, rectitude; and also piety, saintliness, devoutness, devotion, reverence, religiousness, godliness, spirituality, zeal, worship. Therefore, participation in or treading on the path of righteousness is the Miri-Piri Concept of Guru Nanak [5]}

### 5. Over Thematic Interpretation Instead of Simple One

Nevertheless, there is another example of stanza of Guru Nanak, where simple interpretation is correct, however some scholars have given over thematic interpretation. For example,

*q̄l̄ swihb kl̄ b̄iq̄ ij̄ Āw̄k̄l̄ kh̄ū n̄w̄nk̄ ik̄Āw̄ dlj̄* ]  
*s̄ls̄ v̄Fȳ kir̄ b̄s̄x̄dlj̄ l̄iv̄x̄isr̄ s̄ȳ kr̄lj̄* ]  
*ik̄āūn̄ m̄rlj̄* <sup>1</sup> *j̄ IAV̄* <sup>2</sup> *n̄ dlj̄* ] *sh̄ū BieĀw̄ iv̄f̄ix̄* ]  
 AGGS, M 1, P 558.

In this stanza a bride, metaphor for the devotee, who wants to meet her husband, metaphor for the Almighty poses a question. Since it is straightforward question, therefore, a simple interpretation would be sufficient:

#### A Question:

*"What shall I give to a person who brings me the message of the Almighty.  
 Should I cut my head and offer him to seat on it and serve him without my head?"*

But Dr Gurbax Singh [18] interpreted the first two stanzas over thematically and incorrectly instead of simple explanation as follows:

*"A Sikh should show maximum respect and make highest sacrifice to serve the person, who speaks about the virtues of God."*

He says that the hymn does not ask a Sikh to literally chop off his head. It is a phrase to express complete submission and highest sacrifice.

#### An Answer:

In the last stanza Nanak, as the Guru, replies. The word *m̄rlj̄* is an allegorical expression for "to give up egoism". Because *m̄rlj̄* as "giving up of egoism" has been repeated in Gurbani many times in that sense. The word *j̄ IAV̄* is metaphor for mind. Therefore, the last stanza should be interpreted allegorically to explain the main theme of the verse as follows:

*"Why not give up egoism <sup>1</sup> and surrender your mind <sup>2</sup> to the Almighty, who appears to be of others."*

But this stanza has been literally translated by the following scholars that does not explain the theme of the verse:

Manmohan Singh: [23]:

*"Why do I not die and give up my life, since my spouse has chosen to be of another."*

Dr Gopal Singh [17]:

*"But, how shall I live, if the Lord be (still) a stranger unto me?"*

Dr Gurbachan Singh Talib [27]:

*"How may one not die; not immolate oneself, with the Lord staying aloof."*

Dr Gurbax Singh [18] ignored to interpret this stanza.

It appears that these scholars [17, 18, 23, 27] have completely ignored the methodology of Guru Nanak in which he puts question first and then answers with his philosophy, logic or with allegoric explanations.

If we read carefully the whole verse it clearly indicates that it revolves around a bride (devotee) who is seeking to get back her husband, the Almighty, who appears to be of others. In the first two stanzas the bride, Nanak, as a devotee, poses a question how to please a person who brings a message from her husband, the Almighty. In the last stanza Nanak as Guru replies her question to give up the egoism and surrender the mind to the Almighty to win the favor of the Almighty. Thus, interpretation of the above stanza that could be very close to its original theme, is explained as above by the author.

## B. MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS IN THE HISTORY OF SIKHISM

### 1. Khalsa And Khalis

In Sikh literature 'Khalsa' and 'Khalis' are used as interchangeable words meaning the Sikh, who has partaken the *Khandae ki Pahul (Khandae da Amrit)* of Guru Gobind Singh. According to Ganda Singh [14]

and Bhai Kahn Singh [21], '*Khalsa*' is an Arabic word meaning a land or property belonging to the king. A critical study of *Sri Gur Sobha* indicates that the word '*Khalsa*' has been used for all the Sikhs who had direct contact with Guru Gobind Singh and have nothing to do with the *Masands*. *Masands* were appointed by previous Sikh Gurus to preach Sikhism and collect donations to be pooled at central place of the then Sikh Guru to the **House of Nanak** for the welfare of the Sikhs. Since the *Masands* had become corrupt, therefore, the Sikhs were ordered by Guru Gobind Singh to have direct link to the Guru and should break all their connections with the corrupt *Masands*. According to the above order of Guru Gobind Singh, all the Sikhs, who were detached from *Masands*, were declared as the *Khalsa* (property) of Guru Gobind Singh.

The word '*Khalsa*' has also been used in the same sense (property of the Guru) in some *Hukmnamae* (edicts) issued by Guru Gobind Singh. This fact is also evident from his *Hukmnama* # 46, 49, 61, 63, 64, and 65, in which Guru Gobind Singh has addressed all the Sikhs as "**Sangat is my Khalsa**" [16]. Although most of these *Hukmnamae* are fake according to Mehboob [11], they do give some information about the meaning of '*Khalsa*' (belonging to Guru Gobind Singh).

Now let us examine critically the information about *Khalsa* and *Khalis* given in *Sri Gur Sobha* written by Sainapat [14].

#### **Khalsa** [Ref. 14, p78-87]

ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥  
ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ੧੦ ॥ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥

ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ 120 ]

ਅੰਗ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥

ਜਗਦੀਸ਼ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ 131 ]

ਮਹਾਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥  
ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥  
ਜੀਵਿ ਹਜ਼ੂਰਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ॥ [ 141 ]

ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ 148 ]

ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ 148 ]

There was no information about date of and method of performance of *Amrit* ceremony for establishment of *Punj Pyarae*, declaration of '*Singh*' as last name, 5 *Kakars* to be worn, and 5 *Banis* to be recited by the *Amritdhari* Sikhs or *Khalsa* throughout the book.

Instead the phrase #118 indicates that on a *mela* after passing of the month Chet, on Baisakhi day, without mentioning the year, Satguru (Guru Gobind Singh) collected a thought. The next phrase #120 indicates that Guru Gobind Singh desired to please the *Sangat* (congregation), he created *Khalsa* to remove all the difficulties (*sakal janjal*). Moreover, it also indicates as if the '*Singh*' in place of '*Rai*' as the last name of Guru Gobind Rai was already there before the time of creating the *Khalsa*, because he has used '*Singh*' with Guru Gobind Rai throughout his book. However, there is no indication in this book that when this suffix was attached to the Guru's name.

The phrase #130 again emphasizes that *Khalsa* was created to kill the *durjan* (foes) and to eliminate the difficulties. Who are these *durjan*? The phrase #131 shows that the *durjan* may be the *Masands* because by eliminating them the world was cleansed. In these phrases it is again repeated that Satguru, Guru Gobind Singh, collected a thought to eliminate the *Masands*.

The phrase # 141 is an edict (to *Khalsa*) to keep all the donations and tithe (*dswand*) at home and reject the *Masands*. These donations belong to the Satguru to be presented to him in person when visiting (the Satguru).

In phrase # 148 it is explained that the *Khalsa* was created according to the order of the Creator after eliminating the *Masand*.

#### **Khandae ki Pahl**

Now the following phrase #149 indicates that the *Khalsa* was created after bestowing *Khadae ki Pahl*. Then there was nobody but *Khalsa* everywhere on all sides (10 sides):

ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ 149 ]

In addition to that, the following phrase # 150 emphasizes that with *Khandae ki Pahl*, the *Khalsa* was made as powerful as a '*Singh*' (a Punjabi word meaning a lion):

ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਕ੍ਰਿਸਤਮੁ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ ॥ [ ... 150 ]

In the following phrase # 162, it is explained again that *Khalsa* is that who breaks away all the connections with the Masands. That *Khalsa* shines like sun and moon everywhere (on 4 sides):

Bey Kūl sū sīe CīV mstū hī ]  
j l pōjt Bey chū Er sū j o cū hī ] 162 ]

The word “pūihl ” according to Bhai Kahn Singh [20] means “ pūx cVīak vūl w DrmmūR nūl iqAur Klqū j l ”. “pūx” in English means “temper” = To make stronger and more resilient through hardship. It means Guru Gobind Singh performed *Khandae Ki Pahl* to make the Khalsa more hard and resilient to enable him to bear hardship he is going to face. *However, I am surprised that scholar like Bhai Kahn Singh is using the word Dharam Mantar to prepare water (Jal) for using in Khandae Ki Pahl whereas Nanakian Philosophy is against the use of any mantra.*

**From the above discussion it is clear that Guru Gobind Singh made the Khalsa as strong as lion (Singh) with *Khandae Ki Pahl*. He also detached the Khalsa from the Masand and attached themselves directly to himself. He also issued an edict that all the Sikhs (now Khalsa) should bring their donations and tithe (*daswand*) directly to him.**

**Khalis** [Ref. 14, p170]

A day before the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Singhs asked him about the form he was adopting (or the person whom he was nominating to succeed him). In reply he said that:

qūh smygr bh snūXo [ ^ūl s Apnyrū bquXo ]  
^ūl s hl sohmm kūmū ]  
bKS klau ^ūl s kojūmū [ 41 [ 806 ]

*"At that time the Guru said:  
The **Khalis** (the pure) is my own image. Only **Khalis** is valuable to me.  
To that **Khalis** he had granted his robe, his physical self."*

^ūl s myrū rū hī hū Kūl s kypūis ]  
Auid Ama hl hq hī ^ūl s mī prgūis [42] 807 ]  
*"The **Khalis** is my own image and I am always with the **Khalis**.  
Right from the beginning and till the end I will live in the **Khalis**."*

**Who is Khalis?**

According to Sainapat Guru Gobind Singh has very

clearly defined the Khalis as follows:  
^ūl s ^ūis khūV sēl jū kī hr dū Brm n hēl ]  
Brm Bk qy rhī n Aūr sū ^ūl s siqgrū h mūw [ ...808 ]  
*"**Khalis** (the Pure) is particularly called so whose mind is free from all types of superstitions.  
The one, who is free from superstitions and religious garb, is **Khalis** (the pure), my true guru (**Satguru**)."*

A phrase (pūn jūq j gū Gt mī qb qūh n Kūl s jūwū) from 33<sup>rd</sup> Swayiae of Guru Gobind Singh also indicates that where the Complete Jyot (the Almighty) is realized in the body of the Khalsa then that Khalsa becomes Khalis [21].

**Bhagat Kabir** has used a word Kūl Sū ( plural of Khalis) meaning ‘pure’ in his following verse:  
kū kbūr Bey Kūl sū pū Bgiq ij h jūwū ]  
AGGS, Kabir, P 654.  
*"Kabir says that those who have comprehended the love for contemplation become pure (Khalisae)."*

The above discussion on *Khalsa* and *Khalis* clearly indicates that both the words are quite different in their meanings, i. e. *Khalsa* = belonging to Guru Gobind Singh and *Khalis* = pure. **Although the whole Sangat is the Khalsa (property) of the Guru Gobind Singh, however, he bestowed his self onto the Khalis (pure), who is free from superstitions and religious garbs.**

**Misrepresentation of Facts**

It is unfortunate that scholar like Ganda Singh got entrapped himself into the misrepresentation of the word **Khalis** written by Sainapat in the phrase # 807 (^ūl s myrū rū hī hū ^ūl s kypūis [ Auid Ama hl hq hī ^ūl s mī prgūis] as **Khalsa** reported in the misconstrued phrase by the author (Santokh Singh?) of *Sarb Loh*:  
Kūl sū myrū rū hī Kūis ]  
Kūl symūh halū krū invūis ]

Hence forthwith the word “*Khalis*” became “*Khalsa*” for all the other works written after 1711CE and also the above phrase (Kūl sū myrū rū hī Kūis [ Kūl symūh halū krū invūis ]) became more popular and the original phrase written by Sainapat has been lost in the modern literature.

The irony is that Ganda Singh and Bhai Kahn Singh have defined the word ‘*Khalsa*’ as the property of the king (Guru Gobind Singh) even then they failed to distinguish the word ‘*Khalis*’ (pure) used by Sainapat, Kabir and Guru Gobind Singh as indicated above.

Thus, they declared 'Khalsa' meaning the 'Pure' also. But the fact is that every Sikh was declared as *Khalsa* (property) of Guru Gobind Singh and he made the *Khalsa* as powerful as lion (Singh) to eliminate the foes and difficulties (phrases # 120 & 130). However he bestowed his self onto the *Khalis*, who were free from superstitions and religious garbs and that *Khalis* was his Satguru ( phrase #807 & 808).

From the above discussion it appears that a lot of such minor misconstructions might have been done in the old Sikh literature and that remained un-noticed by the Sikh scholars while constructing Sikhism.

### Camouflaging the Information

Ganda Singh [14, p18] admitted that there is no mention of the year and method of performing of *Khadae Ki Pahl* to five Sikhs and acceptance of *Pahl* from the Five Initiated Khalsa in the book of Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*. In spite of the above fact Ganda Singh, while reviewing the book, has constructed the following statement by taking the aid of information given by Bhai Gu rdas – *Duja* (Second), from the book, *Sarb Loh* and other sources and camouflaged the information of the author to justify that Guruship was bestowed onto the Khalsa on the Baisakhi of 1699 and to refute the assertion of McLeod [14, pp51- 52]:

ਜਦ ਸੰਨ 1756 ਭਕਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਸੰਤੀ (1699 CE) ਨਿਗਰਾਨੀ ਵਿੱਚ  
 ਇੱਕ ਜੀ ਨਿਯੰਤਰਣ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਕੀ ਕੀ ਇੱਕ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ  
 ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਕੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿਪਾਤਿਰਾ ਦੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਗ੍ਰਿਥ  
 ਤਕ ਕੀ ਅਨੰਤ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿਪਾਤਿਰਾ ਕੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਰੀਤਿਪਾਤਿਰਾ  
 ਫਿਰ ਕੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ  
 ਕੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ  
 ਹਸਲ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਰੀਤਿਪਾਤਿਰਾ ਕੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ  
 ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਕੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ  
 ਜੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ  
 ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਕੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸੀ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਯੋਗ

*“When on Baisakhi of 1699 Guru Gobind Singh initiated the Sikhs and got himself initiated by kneeling before the five Pyaras and took the image of Khalsa and accepted the rehit at that time he understood the Amrit blessing Khalsa as Guru. And physical existence of Guru in person was transferred to the Khalsa so that there is no doubt in the mind of anybody and no one get any chance to deceive anybody about this fact.”*

Dr Harnam Singh Shan (personal communication) has defended this omission by saying that: *“He (Sainapat) seems to have been taken it for granted that that unique and memorable event and the details associated*

*with it were already known to his readers. Hence he does not seem to have considered it necessary or useful to describe the same.”* (From his article, “Creation of Khalsa as Described in ‘Guru Kian Sakhian’ written by Sarup Singh Kaushish.”). Dr Shan’s response does not seem to be very logical.

From the above discussion it appears that even the modern scholars of high status, like Ganda Singh and Dr Shan can camouflage the information given in the book being reviewed by them. But such action of Sikh scholars cannot bring the truth out.

**However, a big question arises. Should we accept the information given by Sainapat, a close associate of Guru Gobind Singh, in *Sri Gur Sobha*, that was written in the praise of Guru Gobind Singh, as true or false?**

## 2. MISREPRESENTATION OF SUCCESSION OF GURUSHIP ONTO THE GRANTH

The controversy on the declaration of Granth as Guru was started by McLeod [10]. Prof Madanjit Kaur wrote a detailed article entitled, *“The Guruship and Succession of Guru Granth.”* [7]. She stated that this article was written to refute the following statement of McLeod [10]: *“..tradition which conferred his (Guru Gobind Singh's) personal authority upon the sacred scripture and the corporate Panth may perhaps be a retrospective interpretation, a tradition which owes its origin not to an actual pronouncement of the Guru but to an insistent need for maintaining the Panth's cohesion during the later period.”*

Recently Grewal [6] had also pointed out the contention of McLeod [10] as follows: *“He (Justice Gurdev Singh) thinks it is unfair on McLeod to suggest that Granth Sahib was installed as Guru to serve as a cohesive force for the leaderless community after the execution of Banda Bahadur and not because of injunction of Guru Gobind Singh.”*

In the above both contentions it appears that McLeod [10] refused to accept that Granth was declared as Guru by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708 CE. He believes that it was a later addition after the execution of Banda Bahadur the Granth was declared as Guru as a cohesive force for the leaderless community.

In response to the above contention of McLeod [10], Justice Gurdev Singh, Harbans Singh and Ganda Singh {Cited from [6]} and Madanjit Kaur [7] and Ganda Singh [15] have proven historically that it was Guru Gobind Singh, who bestowed Gurship to the Granth in

1708 CE at the time of his demise. Nevertheless, when I examined the information (data) given in *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* [28], *Sri Guru Sobha* [14], *Rahitnamae* [16], and the information presented by Madanjit Kaur [7] and Ganda Singh [15], a new picture appears about the succession of Guruship onto the Granth. It is explained as follows:

### i) Sabd/Bani as Guru

Ganda Singh [14, p52] quoted the following phrase of Sainapat to show that Guruship was bestowed onto the Sabd/Bani:

siqgrlhmwrw Apr Aprw Sbd ibcwrw Aj r j rll [ ihrdy Dr iDAwnl acrl bnl pd inrbwnl Apr prll ] 43 ] 808 ]

From this phrase he had interpreted only a portion, Apr Aprw Sbd ibcwrw, as follows:

"Guruship was bestowed onto the Sabd, Eternal and limitless." [From Ref # 7 & 15]

A critical analysis of this phrase shows that Ganda Singh [Ref. 15, p52] has not interpreted the above phrase properly. If we look into the previous part of the above phrase 808, { ^w s ^ws khivl sel j w ky ihrdy Brm n hel [ Brm BK qy rhy inAwrw so ^w s siqgrl hmwrw [...808], the 'Khalis' was declared as the 'Satguru', then the meanings of second part, (siqgrl hmwrw Apr Aprw Sbd ibcwrw Aj r j rll), would be different than that of Ganda Singh:

This phrase can be broken down as follows for explanation:

siqgrl hmwrw Apr Aprw: *The Satguru (Khalis, the pure one as discussed above) is above all limits, who contemplates on the Sabd, Sbd ibcwrw, and who can bear the unbearable difficulties, Aj r j rll*

Thus, these are the characteristics of the 'Khalis' (Satguru) as explained in the first part of phrase # 808.

The next phrase, (hrdy Dr iDAwnl acrl bnl pd inrbwnl Apr prll), also explains the characteristics of the Khalis:

*{Khalis (Satguru) is that} who imbibes the Bani in the mind and recites the Bani with full concentration, subsequently, he attains the status that cannot be described.*

Although Ganda Singh failed to interpret phrase # 808 properly, still one can easily infer from it that Guru Gobind Singh did mention that: **It is the Sabd (Bani) that is to be contemplated by the Khalis (the pure,**

**the Satguru).**

Ganda Singh also mentioned that Bhai Nand Lal tells us in his *Rahitnama* {written in *Magar Sudi 9 Samat* 1752 (1695 CE) about 13 years before the demise of Guru Gobind Singh} that the Guru told him:

inrgx srgx gr-Sbd hl qih smjwie [ nlll w , rihqnrwll [ 14, p53]:

"Made him (Nand Lal) to understand that the Transcendent and Immanent Guru is the Sabd."

If information given in his *Rehitnama* is true then it means Guru Gobind Singh had declared Sabd as Guru about 13 years before his demise, not at the time of his demise in 1708 CE as is generally accepted by almost all the Sikh scholars.

What is Sabd/Bani? It has been explained later in Section C.

If we keep the above information, given in phrase # 808 and the *Rehitnama* of Bhai Nand Lal, then Ganda Singh's following observation is noteworthy:

"mnkl srlr nwsvvn hl [ smll pw ky ais ny Awm mnkl srlrwl vlg Av-S hl ibns jwx hl [ pr bwxl ny il Kq ivc Aw gel bwxl ny kdl nS nhl hxx [ ies l el grudw mnkl srlr Asl grwnhll hl [ Asl l guraas dl bwxl hl [ grldy srlrk qr qy j laldy hx vj y Bl grll bwxl rnhll hl apdS krdw Aqy is-KA idllw sl [" [14, p52].

"Human body is perishable. During the course of time the Guru's body like the common human body will be perished. But (his) Bani, when comes into written form, will never perish. Therefore, the human body of the Guru cannot be a real (Eternal) Guru. The real (Eternal) Guru is his Bani. Guru (Gobind Singh), even in his bodily form as Guru, was teaching and preaching from the Guru Bani (Bani of the Gurus in the AGGS)."

### Importance of Guru Nanak's Philosophy

There is a very important information available in *Gur Bilas Patshahi 6* (anonymous) that *Sikhi* (Sikhism or Guru Nanak's Philosophy) was taught from the Sabd of Guru Nanak, incorporated in the AGGS, by Guru Hargobind. And Guru Har Rai was also advised by Guru Hargobind to do so:

j oisKXw gr nwnk krl [ sodnl sKisDw Gnyrl [ rhl j w inis j wgn klj Y [ mj n nwm ivKll mnu dlj Y ] Sllq sll Dir Awp Cpivl [ siqnrw miK mltw Al wvo [ ey ibid isKXw del Apr [ gr hir rwie hley sB Dir ] (AiDAwie 21, plhw 796) [28, p99]

(Note: During those days "*Satnam*" was the mantra



instead of "**Waheguru**" (very common in these days) as is clear from the above stanzas.)

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

griskn kl sɣi krixo [ ek tk gr nink Drixo [

(Aidawie 21, p11w 796) [28, p99]

"Serve the Sikhs of the Guru. Accept the guidance only of Guru Nanak."

Ganda Singh has accepted that information given in *Sri Gur Sobha* the Sikh Gurus were teaching from the Gurbani:

grl dy srlrk qir qy j laby hɔ vj y Bl grl bixl rwhll hl  
apds krdw Aqy is-KA idllw sl [ [14, p52].

"Guru (Gobind Singh) even in his Body as Guru was teaching and preaching from the Guru Bani (Bani of the Guru in the AGGS)."

From the information recorded in the literature written a few years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, it becomes very clear that it was the Sabd of the Guru Nanak that was declared as a Guru. It is also clear that all the Gurus of Nanakian school were teaching and preaching from the Sabd of Guru Nanak (Nanakian Philosophy).

This was the first historical aspect of Sabd as Guru. The final test to prove that Sabd of Guru Nanak is Guru is discussed later under Section C.

## ii) Sabd Guru Changed to Granth Guru

In spite of the above information available in *Sri Gur Sobha* and *Gur Bilas Patshahi* 6 that Sabd was the Guru, Madanjit Kaur [7] and Ganda Singh [15] have accepted the following statement of **Bhai Prahlaad Singh**, another associate of Guru Gobind Singh, as true without testing its authenticity with the Nanakian Philosophy:

Akwil prK kybcn isal pljt cl xop

sB isKn kɔbcn hl grl mni Ahug [ 30 [ (Rehit Nama Bhai Prahlaad Singh.)

"With the order of the Eternal Lord has been established the Panth. All the Sikhs are hereby commanded to obey the **Granth as the Guru**." {cited from [7, 15]}.

## iii) Ritualism Introduced

**Koer Singh**, the author of *Gurbilas Patshahi* 10 (written in AD 1751 CE) tells in explicit terms that Guru Gobind Singh discontinued the line of personal Guruship and did not appoint anyone to succeed him as Guru. The author records that the Guru addressed his

Sikhs before his demise and instructed them that there would be no successor to him, the Sarbat Sangat and the Khalsa should deem Sri Guru Granth Sahib as Supreme. **Koer Singh further states that with five paise and a coconut in his hand the Guru paid homage to the Holy Granth and declared its succession as the Guru** {Cited from [7, 15]}.

Another work, which we may refer to here, is *Bansavalinama* of **Kesar Singh Chibbar** (completed in AD 1770 CE). Kesar Singh's ancestors had been in the service of Guru Gobind Singh as *dewans*. He claims to have seen and consulted in his early days a *behi* (account book) of the House of the Guru. The tenth chapter of *Bansavalinama* deals with the life of Guru Gobind Singh. In stanzas 678-683, the author mentions the death of the Guru and his last commandment in reply to the question of the Sikhs: **The Granth is the guru, you hold the garment (seek the protection) of the Timeless God** {Cited from [7, 15]}.

Further, the account of the death of Guru Gobind Singh as given in *Mahima Prakash* by **Sraup Das Bhalla** may be accepted as historical and objective. This account was completed in 1801 CE. According to *Mahima Prakash*, before his death, Guru Gobind Singh called his Sikhs to his presence and said, "**Our ten forms have come to an end. Now recognize the Guru Granth Sahib in my place. He who wishes to talk to me should read the Granth Sahib. I have entrusted you to the lap of the Almighty**" {Cited from [7, 15]}.

The above data indicate that after 1711 CE, as soon as the **Sabd Guru was changed to Granth Guru** then ritualism crept in. **Koer Singh** confirmed the change from Sabd Guru to Granth Guru and ritualized the transferring of Guruship to the Granth by introducing a ceremony of offerings of five *paise* and a coconut and paying a homage to the Granth from 1751 CE onward. Thereafter, Kesar Singh Chibbar and Sraup Das Bhalla and other writers also started to write Granth Guru instead of Sabd Guru and ritualization of ceremony of bestowing Guruship onto the Granth.

## iv) Granth Guru to Visible Body of the Guru

According to **Munshi Sant Singh's** *Bayan-i-Khandan-i-Nishan-i-Bedian* (account of the Bedi family of the Una), when Guru Gobind Singh was about to die at Nander in the Deccan {*Katik Sudi* 5, 1765 *Bikrami* (1708CE)}, all the Singhs and disciples asked him as to who would be the future Guru. The Guru replied; '**Guru Khalsa, Khalsa Guru**'. Then the Guru, **with five praise and a coconut in his hand, bowed before the Guru Granth Sahib** and said, '**Ye all**

community should recognize the **Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru** after me and obey the commandments contained therein.' And then he uttered the following couplet:

**"Recognize the Guru Granth as the Visible Body of the Guru."** {Cited from [7, 15]}.

#### v) Granth Guru To Darshan Guru

**Sohan Lal Suri** tells us in *Umdat-u-Tawarikh* that during the last moments of Guru Gobind Singh's life a disciple of his asked him as to whom he had appointed as Guru after him. Thereupon, the Guru replied that, the Guru is Granthji. There is no difference between the Granth and the Guru. From the *darshan* (seeing/glancing) of Granth Ji one shall have the happy *darshan* of the Guru Sahib {Cited from [8]}. ( I think the above information is based on following stanza from *Gur Bilas Patshahi 6* [28, p84]:  
 ਗੁਰੂਦਰਸਿ ਜਿ ਹ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਸੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ  
 ਚਿਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਚਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿ ਮਨੁ ਮਨੀਐ ]

The latest discovery of Giani Garja Singh (1907-1977) from *Bhatt Vahi Talauda Parganah Jind*, reported by Harbans Singh [19], also confirms the misconstrued information found in the old writings. Guru Gobind Singh asked Bhai Daya Singh on Wednesday, *Shukla chaouth* of the month of Katik, 1765 BK (October 6, 1708) to fetch the Sri Granth Sahib. The Guru placed before it five paise and a coconut and bowed his head before it. He said to the Sangat,; *"It is my commandment: Own Sri Granthji in my place. He who so acknowledges it will obtain his reward. The Guru will rescue him. Know this as the truth."*

It is very strange that in this information the Granth has been declared as Guru in place of Guru Gobind Singh (*"It is my commandment: Own Sri Granthji in my place."*)

**The above data {item # 2 - (i) to (v)} clearly indicate that it were the later writings after Sri Gur Sobha and Gur Bilas Patshahi 6 in which the Sabd Guru has successively been changed to Granth Guru to Visible Body of the Guru to Darshan Guru.**

#### C. AUTHENTICITY OF SABD AS GURU FROM THE NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY

I am always skeptical about the information given in old literature (sources other than the Nanakian Philosophy incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib) because these are either wrong or contrary to the Nanakian Philosophy as I have discussed earlier. Let us now revert to Nanakian Philosophy, the touchstone of truth to find out the suitable rebuttal to

the contention of McLeod [10] about the time and reasons for bestowing Guruship to the Granth. And also a rebuttal to the information given in the literature published after 1711 CE, where Sabd Guru was changed to Granth Guru to Visible body of the Guru to Darshan Guru.

**Sikhi (Sikhism) is the Guru's philosophy:**  
 isKI isIKAw gir vlcwR ] AGGS, M 1, P 465.

*"Sikhi (Sikhism) is the advice/principles of Guru's philosophy."*

Now a question arises **who is the 'Guru'** in the above stanza? Guru Nanak has made it clear in the following stanza that the Sabd is the Guru:  
 sbdu gurUsriq Din cJ ] AGGS, M 1, P943.

*"Sabd is Guru, consciousness and intention toward it make one its disciple (Sikh)."*

Now there is another question **what is a Sabd?** The words Sabd and Bani are interchangeable in Gurbani. The word revealed through the Guru is a Sabd or Bani. Therefore, Bani is Gurus, Guru is Bani, and only Guru Says Bani:

vihu vihu bixl inrkwr h'iqsu j yfAvru n kael ]  
 AGGS, M 3, P 515.

*"Wondrous is the Bani of the Formless and is worth laudation as nothing equals it."*

bixl<sup>1</sup> gir<sup>2</sup> gr<sup>3</sup>h' bixl ivic bixl Alimq<sup>4</sup> s<sup>5</sup>ry ]  
 Gur<sup>3</sup> bixl kh'sy<sup>4</sup> k<sup>5</sup> j n<sup>6</sup> m<sup>7</sup> ]  
 prqi<sup>7</sup> gr<sup>1</sup>insq<sup>2</sup> ] 5 ] AGGS, M 4, P 982.

{2 & 3 gr, gir, gr<sup>1</sup> and gir means gr<sup>1</sup> according to Bhai Kahn Singh's Mahan Kosh [20]}

#### **Who is the Guru here?**

*Bani (Sabd)<sup>1</sup> is Guru<sup>2</sup> and Guru is the Bani and it contains all the elixirs of life."*

#### **What is the Bani?**

*"Guru<sup>3</sup> says Bani and the servant (Sikh)<sup>4,5</sup> accepts<sup>6</sup> and practices<sup>6</sup> it. Obviously<sup>7</sup>, this is the Guru who helps to get salvation<sup>8</sup>."*

#### **Who is the Guru that says Bani?**

j nu nankub<sup>1</sup> ygk bixl gr bixl hir n<sup>2</sup> smieAw ]  
 AGGS, M 4, P 494.

*"Nanak\* person (jann) speaks the wise words (Gunn Bani), that is Gur Bani (Guru's words) in which the Almighty is imbibed."*

Bniq nankukry vlcwR ]  
 sicl bixl isau Dry ipAwru ]  
 q<sup>1</sup> ko p<sup>2</sup> v<sup>3</sup> m<sup>4</sup> d<sup>5</sup>Awru ]  
 j pu qp<sup>6</sup> s<sup>7</sup> Bu ieh<sup>8</sup> sbdu h<sup>9</sup> s<sup>10</sup>ru ]

AGGS, M 1, P 661.

Nanak says:

*"When one contemplate with love on the true Bani (word).*

*Then one gets to the door (path) of salvation.*

*The philosophy in the Sabd (Bani/word) is equivalent to so-called jap (repetition) and tap (austerities)."*

(\* Nanak, in the above two stanzas, is with *Kaka* having *Onkar* means Nanak himself as a person not as a pen name for himself or for any other successor to the House of Nanak.)

**(Gur) Bani is of Perfect/Complete Guru, the Nanak:**

gr pŕykl bixl ] pwrbhm min Bixl ]

nink\* dhis vKixl ] inrml AkQ khixl ]

AGGS, M 5, P 629.

*"The Bani of the Perfect Guru is pleasing to the mind of the Transcendent Almighty.*

*Nanak, the servant of the Almighty, utters the bani that is immaculate but not easy to explain."*

(\* Here again Nanak is Nanak himself, although *Kaka* is without *Onkar*. It indicates that one has to be very careful to interpret Nanak as a person himself or Nanak as a pen name for other Gurus for proper interpretation of Bani.)

phŕgr kl sŕcl bixl ]

sK mn Alŕr shij smixl ]

AGGS, M 3, P 663.

*" Through the true words (Sachi Bani) of the perfect Guru one gets easily all the comforts (peace) of mind."*

gr pŕykl bixl j ip Andukrhŕinŕ pŕxl ]

AGGS, M 5, P 616.

*"Contemplate on the Bani of the complete Guru and attain the bliss everyday."*

vŕhu vŕhu pŕygr kl bixl ]

phŕgr qyapjl sŕc smixl ] rhŕau ]

AGGS, M 3, P 754.

*"Wondrous is the words (Bani) of the perfect Guru, That was revealed by the perfect Guru, and that helps to realize the Almighty (Naam)."*

### Nanak is the Guru

Who is the Guru, Perfect Guru, and Satguru mentioned in the above stanzas? The following stanza of Guru Arjan clearly proves that Nanak is the Guru, Perfect Guru, and Satguru:

sB qyvfŕ siqgrŕninkŕ ij in kl rŕkl mŕl ]

AGGS, M 5, P 750

*"Satguru Nanak is greatest of all, who protected my*

*honor."*

In this stanza Nanak person has been declared as the Sat Guru.

gruninkŕ ij n sixAŕ pjKAŕ

syiPir grBŕis n pirAŕ ry ]

AGGS, M 5, P 612.

*"Those who have heard and analyzed the philosophy of Guru Nanak do not fall into ignorance and superstitions."*

(\* Here *Kaka* in Nanak is with *Onkar*, it means Nanak himself not as a pen name of other Gurus who succeeded to the House of Nanak. The 'womb' is a metaphor of ignorance and superstitions.)

Nanak person (*jann*) has been addressed as Guru and as the image of the Almighty in Swayaiae (laudation) *Sri Mukh Baak Mahla 5* on page 1386 in the AGGS. In these Swayaiae Guru has first lauded the Almighty and then lauded Nanak as the Guru, the image of the Almighty. For example,

ihr gruninku ij n prisXau is j nm mrn dh Qy rihE ]  
5]

ihr gruninku ij nŕprisXE pŕnlŕsB kl kŕE aDŕŕŕ ]6]

ihr gruninku ij nŕprisXE qy bhŕV iPir j in n Aŕel ]  
7]

ihr gruninku ij nŕprisXE qyieq aŕq sdŕ mkqy ]8]

In the above Swayaiae Guru Arjan has addressed Nanak as Guru, the image of the Almighty, with very similar theme as recorded in the above stanza of his Bani given on page 612 of AGGS. Therefore, from the above Bani and Swayaiae of Guru Arjan it is crystal clear that Nanak is the Guru, Perfect Guru, Complete Guru, and Satguru, and is the image of the Almighty. Dr Sahib Singh [26] has also given a detailed discussion where he has proved that Nanak is the Guru.

The above discussion of Gurbani clearly proves beyond any doubt that Sabd of Guru Nanak is the Guru right from the beginning. All the Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak, strengthened the philosophy of Guru Nanak with their Bani and taught and preached the philosophy of Guru Nanak (Nanakian Philosophy).

### Granth As Guru

Since the Sabd is the Guru, therefore, the Granth, in which the Sabd of Gurus was incorporated, was equated as Guru (Enlightener) by Guru Arjan some time before its compilation in 1604 CE as is indicated in his following stanza:

pQl prmŕ\* kŕ Qŕnu ] sŕD sŕlg gŕvih gŕ gŕbŕl pŕn  
bŕm igAŕnu ] rhŕau ] AGGS, M 5, P 1226.

*"The Granth is equivalent to the Enlightener\*." (From*

which) the noble people discuss (sing) the attributes of the Almighty and deliberate on the wisdom (philosophy) of the Almighty in the congregation."

\*According to Bhai Kahn Singh [20] "Parmesar means *Parm* + *Ishwar*. *Parm* means great and *Ishwar* has many meanings: Shive, Swami, God, and also a particular teacher (Guru) of Jogis who teaches the philosophy of Gorakh. In Jap # 5 Guru has also been equated to *Ishwar*, *Gorkh*, *Brahma*, *Parbati*. Therefore, it is very clear that the word *Parmesar* used here is equivalent to the *Guru* (Enlightener).

*It means, the day in 1604 CE the Granth was compiled it was given the status of Guru because of the fact that Sabd is Guru as described above, which has been incorporated into the Granth. Since then preaching of Nanakian philosophy was carried on from this Granth by Guru Arjan himself and by all other Gurus who succeeded to the House of Nanak. Therefore, the Granth is Guru because of the fact that the Sabd Guru is incorporated in it.*

The irony is that since the Sabd Guru was changed to Granth Guru to Visible Body of the Guru to Darshan Guru, the Sikhs started to pay more and more ritualistic aspects to the Granth Guru than on the deliberation on the philosophy given in the Sabd Guru. It happened so due to the fact that a very few Sikhs understood the philosophy given in the above verses. This was predicted by Guru Nanak which is as true now as it was then:

ਬਿਅੰਕਿ ਇਕੰ ਅੰਕਿ ਬਿਅੰਕਿ ਜਿ ਕੋ ਗੁਰਮੁਕਿ ਹੀਏ ] ਏਹ ਬਿਅੰਕਿ ਮਹੰ  
ਪੁਰੰਕਿ ਕੀ ਇੰਜਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਵਸੰ ਹੀਏ ] AGGS, M 1, P 935

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

*This Bani (Word) is of the pre-eminent preceptor, that is to be imbibed in one's own mind (only through its deliberation)."*

The above verse clearly indicates that Guru Nanak predicted that there would be a very few Sikhs, who will deliberate on the Bani/Sabd. Because of this fact (not deliberating seriously on Sabd) today there are many Sikhs, who sternly believe that Granth was declared Guru only by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708 CE at the time of his demise. Whereas, Nanakian Philosophy, and some information from *Sri Gur Soba* [14, p52] and *Gur Bilas Pathshahi 6* [30, P-99] indicate that Sabd was the Guru right from the beginning (1469 CE) and *Pothi* containing the Sabd was declared Guru in 1604 CE by Guru Arjan himself. And, thereafter, the succeeding Sikh Gurus were teaching and preaching from the Sabd Guru incorporated in the Granth. *Finally it was the last*

*Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, who just reiterated at the time of his demise that Sabd is Guru for the Sikhs. Therefore, it is wrong to say that Guruship was bestowed onto the Granth by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708 CE at the time of his demise.*

Recently the Supreme Court of India has declared the Aad Guru Granth Sahib as a '**juristic person**' on March 29, 2000. Fortunately, it has also been mentioned clearly in the declaration that Aad Guru Granth Sahib cannot be equated with the idols as in Hinduism. It was also declared that Hinduism and Sikhism are two different and distinct religions [21].

### Refutation

- The above discussion clearly refutes the contention of McLeod [10] that Guruship was bestowed onto the Granth and Khalsa after the execution of Banda Bahadur as a cohesive force for the leaderless community.
- It also refutes the contention of Madanjit Kaur [7], Ganda Singh [15], and of other scholars, who tried to prove that it was only Guru Gobind Singh, who bestowed Guruship onto the Granth at the time of his demise.

### CONCLUSIONS

It becomes crystal clear from the above discussion that misinterpretation of the Gurbani (Nanakian Philosophy) and misrepresentation of Sikhism has been done intentionally by some scholars, like Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterje (A - 1) and Parma Nand (A - 3) to meet some malicious objectives or it occurred unintentionally by many Sikh scholars due to incomplete understanding of the Nanakian Philosophy, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. It is happening so because the Sikhs scholars are under the heavy influence of ancient philosophy and they have taken the information given in the early Sikh literature as true without testing on Gurbani, science and logic – the touchstones of truth. Moreover, the Sikh scholars and the Sikhs at large also have fallen into more and more ritualistic aspects in treating the Granth as the Guru instead of Sabd as Guru. Consequently less and less attention is being paid to understand the Sabd (Nanakian Philosophy) enshrined in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib.

It took about 239 years for Guru Nanak to take the Sikhs out of the ritualism and ancient philosophy. It is a pity that the both (ritualism and ancient philosophy) are being amalgamated into Sikhism and

*Continued on page 39*

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misinterpretation of Gurbani is still going on rather on a large scale in these days by the unscrupulous Sikh or non Sikh scholars, consequently, the originality and uniqueness of Gurbani and Sikhism is continuously being eroded. Ultimately Sikhism will become a mythic and ritualistic religion like others if no steps are taken to put a stop on the misinterpretation of Gurbani and misrepresentation of Sikhism.

**THE SOLUTION**

1. Interpretation of Nanakian Philosophy, enshrined in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib, scientifically and logically in its real perspective without any influence of ancient philosophy and mythology as has been demonstrated in recent publications [3-5].
2. Critical analyses of the old literature published during 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries is needed by testing all the information given there with Nanakian Philosophy, science, and logic - the touchstones of truth. In this respect King has rightly said that [10]: "*The fire of critical method can burn away whatever is gross in a religious tradition, and enable the believers to retrieve the pure metal.*"
3. Representation of Sikhism on Nanakian Philosophy incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. And the information given in the extraneous unauthentic old writings should be used only after testing their verity and validity on the Nanakian Philosophy, science and logic.
4. Publication of well-researched articles supported with pertinent and authentic references that can stand the test of Nanakian Philosophy, science and logic.
5. In addition to Research Journal, holding of seminars on one particular topic of importance of the day, where all the scholars discuss that very topic extensively and conclusions are drawn. Proceedings of such seminars should be published for wider publicity.

The Institute for Understanding Sikhism is dedicated to carry on the above objectives seriously. The Institute appeals to all the Sikhs and Gurdwaras for financial support to carry out the above cause successfully for the benefit to the humanity of this planet, the earth.

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