WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE Of SIKHISM?

ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT
Sikh theologians, linguists, researchers and writers accept that the verses (bani) found in the holy scripture of Sikhism contain many languages: Sanskrit, Sehskrit, Prakrit, Persian, and Apabrahmsa, which includes Sant Bhasha, Braj, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati, Bengali, Bihari, etc. This paper will discover the accurate name of the language used by Sufis, Bhagats, Guru Nanak and Sikh Gurus, whose bani were included in the holy scripture now called "Aad Guru Granth Sahib"

INTRODUCTION

Sikh theologians are not unanimous on the title of their holy scripture. It was titled "*Pothi*" by Guru Arjan at the time of its compilation in 1604. Prof Sahib Singh calls it "Aad Granth" but in English it is spelled as "Adi Granth" [1]. In 1708 after the addition of the verses (bani) of Guru Teg Bahadur it was declared as the "Guru Granth". Later on the Sikhs started to call it "Guru Granth Sahib", "Sri Guru Granth Sahib'"[2], and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar, titled the granth printed by them as "Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji". However, the Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Canada, uses the title, "Aad Guru Granth Sahib" which is very similar to that of the SGPC except that *Sri* has been eliminated, being a redundant prefix before Guru and also eliminating *Ji* as suffix after *Sahib*. [3] This title, Aad Guru Granth Sahib, abbreviated as AGGS, is used in all of their books and articles.

This paper was prepared for the World Punjabi Sammelan to be held at Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Engineering College Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab on February 5-6, 2016 by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. It was postponed second time and was announced to be held on June 26-27, 2016. It was again postponed third time to be held positively on September 25-26, 2016 at Anadpur Sahib. Originally this conference was to be held on October 23-24, 2015. Keeping in view the uncertainty this paper is being reproduced in the Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal *for the readers interested to know about the origin of Punjabi language and its use in the* Aad Guru Granth Sahib.

It is the same situation regarding the language of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). The Sikh theologians and researchers are not sure about the right name of the language used by the Sufis, bhagats and Sikh Gurus to write their bani (verses) during 12th to 17th centuries.

The general concept about the languages used in the AGGS is as follows:

•Mansukhani [4] reported on the SGPC Webpage that the languages used in the AGGS are: Punjabi, Hindi, Sanskrit, Braj, and Persian.

•The New World Encyclopedia [5] reports that the Holy Book contains many languages including Braj, Old Punjabi, Khariboli, Sanskrit and Persian.

•The Encyclopedia Britannica says that the language of the AGGS is mostly Punjabi or Hindi, interspersed with Marathi, Persian, and Arabic words [6].

•Another Website records Punjabi, Sindhi, Sanskrit, Marathi, Gujrati and Hindi. It also says that Apabrahmsa was used by Bhagat Jai Dev [7].

•Harkirit Singh [8] accepted that Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujrati, Marathi, Hindi, Bihari, Orya, Bengali, Assami, etc. had originated from Apabrahmsa around 1000 BCE.

•Harinder Singh, et al [9] of Sikh Research Institute, USA, reported many languages of the AGGS: Sant Bhasha, Punjabi, Braj, Sanskrit, Farsi (Persian) and Lahimdi (mixture of Pothohari, Multani, and Jhangi). They said that the bani of Sheikh Farid was a sort of Lahimdi with strong influence

of Multani and Punjabi; and Sehskriti is the mixture of Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit along with Punjabi and Hindi.

•Prof Sahib Singh has not discussed much about the languages used in the AGGS but his grammar of the bani is mostly based on Sanskrit [10].

•Principal Satbir Singh Padam [11] had placed the origin of the Punjabi language at a time somewhere between the two languages, Shourshani and Peshachi. (p 86)

THE ORIGIN OF THE PUNJABI LANGUAGE AND ITS EXPANSION IN INDIA

Almost all Sikh theologians believe that Punjabi is one of the languages of Apabrahmsa, the denigrated vernacular language, originated from Prakrit which originated from Sanskrit. Before discussing the languages of the AGGS it is important to know the languages spoken by the people of Punjab and rest of India before the 5th century CE when the land of five rivers was named as the Punjab and the language spoken by these people was called Punjabi.

Chahal [12] in his earlier paper, *The Origin of the Punjabi Language*, has discussed that originally the Vedas were written in the spoken language, developed in the Punjab, by the earlier Aryans migrants around from 4,000 to 1,000 BCE. They came from Central Asia while staying in Persia (Iran) on their way to, and before settling in, the Punjab. A language developed in that area is a mixture of Indo-European languages, Greek, Latin, Persian and Dravidian - the local language of Mohenjo-Daro and Sindh civilization. The original name of that language, developed by the Indo-Aryans settled in the land of five rivers, Punjab, is lost in antiquity. This was the same language in which the first Veda, Rig, was written.

Around 400 BCE, Panini, a grammarian from Shalatula near Attock, now in Pakistan, synthesized a new language from the language which was spoken by the Indo-Aryans settled in the Punjab.[13] After giving it a grammatical form under 3,995 rules he named it 'Sanskrit'. The language spoken by the people of the Punjab was termed 'Prakrit', a vernacular language without grammar. Although the Vedas were written in this so-called Prakrit, Sanskrit protagonists started to call that language 'Vedic Sanskrit' or 'Old Sanskrit' and the language which was put into a definite grammar rules was named 'Classical Sanskrit'. On the other hand, the language spoken by the people, 'Prakrit', was further down-graded by modern scholars by naming it 'Apabrahmsa', the corrupt or non-standardized language. The irony is that the Sanskrit protagonists completely kept the linguists of India and Europe in the dark about the real name of the language developed in the Punjab after the arrival of Indo-Aryans. In spite of such propaganda, Sanskrit could never have become the spoken language of the people of the Punjab and rest of India. Around 500 BCE Mahavira put Jainism on a strong footing. The sacred granths of Jainism are called 'Agamas' (canons), which are based on the discourse of the *Tirthankara*. The discourse delivered in a *Samavasarana* (divine preaching hall) is called *Shrut Jnana* and comprises eleven *angas* and fourteen *purvas.* The discourse is recorded by *Ganadharas* (chief disciples), and is composed of twelve *angas* (departments). The earliest versions of Jain Agamas known were written in a language

named Ardhamagadhi Prakrit language. If the language of the sacred granths of Jainism is one of the forms of Prakrit, Ardhamagadhi Prakrit language, that means Prakrit was developed in the Punjab and had spread up to central and eastern India around 500 BCE by the followers of Jainism.[14]

In Theravada Buddhism, Pali is its main liturgical language [15]. Nevertheless, Pali is the same language which is the so-called Prakrit – the spoken language of the Punjab. During the period of Ashoka the Great, Pali (Prakrit/Proto-Punjabi) spread towards south-western and eastern India. In Thailand, Pali is written using the Thai alphabet, resulting in a Thai pronunciation of the Pali language.

Mahayana Buddhism makes little use of its original language, Sanskrit. In some Japanese rituals, Chinese texts are read out or recited with the Japanese pronunciations of their constituent characters, resulting in something unintelligible in both languages. In Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan language is used, but mantras are in Sanskrit.

It worth noting the change of Pali (Prakrit) in different countries. The same thing happened to Proto-Punjabi (Prakrit) in the Punjab and the rest of India; it changed to different languages.

On the other hand, Sikh theologians have failed to recognize the real name of the language or languages in which the bani of Sufis, bhagats and Sikh Gurus was written.

THE LANGUAGE USED BY SUFIS, BHAGATS, GURU NANAK AND SIKH GURUS

Let us examine some bani (it is used both in singular and plural form) of Muslim Sufis, bhagats, Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus, to find the language used by them in their writings.

The language used by the Muslim Sufi Sheikh Farid of the 12th century from Punjab and Kabir (Muslim or Hindu?) of the14th century from Varanasi (Banaras), Uttar Pradesh is very similarly to that Punjabi language spoken in the Punjab currently.

Sheikh Farid (1175-1265 CE) from Punjab

Sufi Sheikh Farid's father came from Persia and settled in the Pakpattan, Punjab and at that time Punjabi was well established as spoken language of the Punjab. Therefore, Sufi Sheikh Farid adopted the Punjabi language to spread his message to the people of the area. For example,

ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰ ਅਪਾਰ ਅਗਮ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਤੂ ॥

Parvaḏagār apār agam beᵈanṯ tū.

ਜਿਨਾ ਪਛਾਤਾ ਸਚੁ ਚੁੰਮਾ ਪੈਰ ਮੁੰ ॥੩॥

Jinā pacẖẖāṯā sacẖ cẖummā pair mū'n. ||3||

AGGS, Farid, p 488.
You! That Entity (God) are Sustainer and Cherisher;
You are infinite, unfathomable and endless
I kiss the feet and faces of those, who have recognized the Ever-Existing – That Entity.
ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰ *(parvdagar)* is Persian word but all other words are from current Punjabi.

Kabir (1398-1495) from Varanasi (Banaras), Uttar Pradesh

ਐਸਾ ਤੈਂ ਜਗੁ ਭਰਮਿ ਲਾਇਆ ॥

Aisā ṯai'n jag bẖaram lāᵈiᵈā.

ਕੈਸੇ ਬੂਝੈ ਜਬ ਮੋਹਿਆ ਹੈ ਮਾਇਆ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

Kaise būjẖai jab mohiᵈā hai māᵈiᵈā. ||1|| rahāᵈo.
AGGS, Kabir, p 92.
You (that Entity) have misled the world, so deeply in doubt.
How could people understand You, That Entity (God),
When they are entranced by Maya (illusion)?

ਜਾਂ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਾ ਲਾਗੈ ਭਾਉ ॥

Jā'n ṯis bẖāvai ṯā lāgai bẖāᵈo.

ਭਰਮੁ ਭੁਲਾਵਾ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਜਾਇ ॥

Bẖaram bẖulāvā vicẖahu jāᵈe.

ਉਪਜੈ ਸਹਜੁ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਤਿ ਜਾਗੈ ॥

Upjai sahj giᵈān maṯ jāgai.

ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੈ ॥੩॥

Gur parsāḏ anṯar liv lāgai. ||3||
AGGS, Kabir, p 92.
As it pleases that Entity (God), so people embrace the love for that Entity (God),
(Then) doubt and delusion are dispelled from within.
Intuitive peace and poise well up within, and the intellect is awakened.
By the Guru's Grace, the inner being is touched by that Entity's Love.
||3||

The language of these phrases of Sufi (Bhagat) Kabir are very similar to that of current Punjabi. Although he was living at Banaras, center of Hinduism/Brahmanism, but he preferred to write his bani in Punjabi so that it could be easily understood by the common people living in and around Banaras. It indicates that Punjabi was well established around Holy Ganges in Uttar Pradesh.

Bhagat Ravi Das (1450-1520) also from Varanasi (Banaras), Uttar Pradesh

ਕਿਆ ਤੂ ਸੋਇਆ ਜਾਗੁ ਇਆਨਾ ॥

Kiᵈā ṯū soᵈiᵈā jāg iᵈānā.

ਤੈ ਜੀਵਨੁ ਜਗਿ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਨਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Ŧai jīvan jag sacẖ kar jānā. ||1|| rahāᵈo.
AGGS, Bhagat Ravi Das, p 794.
Why are you asleep? Wake up, you innocent being!
Don't believe that life in the world is forever. ||1||Pause||
Here again, the language used by Bhagat Ravidas is similar to that of current Panjabi. His followers are in the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

Dhanna (1415-?) Rajasthan

ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸੁ ਗੁਰਹਿ ਧਨ ਦੀਆ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਮਾਨੁ ਮਨ ਏਕ ਮਏ ॥

Giᵈān parves gurėh ḏẖan ḏīᵈā ḏẖiᵈān mān man ek maᵈe.

ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਮਾਨੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਨੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਭਏ ॥੩॥

Parem bẖagaṯ mānī sukẖ jāniᵈā ṯaripaṯ agẖāne mukaṯ bẖaᵈe. ||3||
AGGS, Dhanna, p 487.
The Guru has given the wealth of enlightening wisdom;
Practicing meditation, the mind becomes one with that Entity (God).
Embracing devotional love for that Entity (God),
I have come to know peace; and have become satisfied and satiated,
I have been liberated. ||3||
This shows that Dhanna was preaching his message in Punjabi in Rajasthan

Jai Dev (around 1142-1180) from West Bengal (or Orissa)

He had written the Gita Govinda. It describes the relationship between Krishna and the *gopis* (female cow herders) of *Vrindavana* (a name of a forest), and in particular one *gopi* named Radha. His two verses have been included in the AGGS:

ਮਨ ਆਦਿ ਗੁਣ ਆਦਿ ਵਖਾਣਿਆ ॥

Man ād guṇ ād vakhāṇiᵖā.

ਤੇਰੀ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸੰਮਾਨਿਆ ॥੧॥

ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Ŧerī ḍubiḍẖā ḍarisat sammāniᵖā. ||1|| rahāᵖo.
O mind, by understanding the Ever-Existing Entity (God), the deluded mind gets balanced.
AGGS, Jai Dev, p 1106.

This phrase is very close to current Punjabi. Now this indicates that Punjabi was understood by the people as far as East of India in Bengal and Orissa during 12th century almost at the same time when Sufi Sheikh Farid was writing his bani in Punjabi in the Punjab.

Trilochan (1267-1335) from Maharashtra

ਅੰਤਿ ਕਾਲਿ ਜੋ ਲਛਮੀ ਸਿਮਰੈ ਐਸੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਮਹਿ ਜੇ ਮਰੈ ॥

Anŧ kāl jo lachẖmī simrai aisī chẖinŧā mėh je marai.

ਸਰਪ ਜੋਨਿ ਵਲਿ ਵਲਿ ਅਉਤਰੈ ॥੧॥

Sarap jon val val aᵖuṯarai. ||1||
At the very last moment, one who thinks of wealth;
And dies in such thoughts,
Shall be reincarnated over and over again, in the form of serpents.
AGGS, Trilochan, p 526.

Here, Bhagat Trilochan was preaching his message in Punjabi in Maharashtra.

Namdev (1270-1350) from Maharashtra

ਸਭੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਹੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਬਿਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਈ ॥

Sabẖ gobinḏ hai sabẖ gobinḏ hai gobinḏ bin nahī koᵖī.

ਸੂਤੁ ਏਕੁ ਮਣਿ ਸਤ ਸਹੰਸ ਜੈਸੇ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Sūŧ ek maṇ saṯ saha'ns jaise oŧ poŧ parabẖ soᵖī. ||1|| rahāᵖo.
Everything is that Entity (God) and there is nothing other than that Entity.
As one thread can hold hundreds and thousands of beads, so is everything in this universe held in order.
AGGS, Namdev, p 485.

ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਬੇਦੁ ਬਖਾਨੈ ॥

Panḏiŧ hoᵖe kai beḏ bakẖānai.

ਮੂਰਖੁ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਰਾਮਹਿ ਜਾਨੈ ॥੨॥੧॥

Mūrakẖ nāmḏeᵖo rāmėh jānai. ||2||1|| 718
Being well-educated (Pandat – religious scholar) recites Vedas.
But foolish Namdev knows only that Entity (Ram – God).
AGGS, Namdev, p 718.

It is evident from the bani of Sufi Sheikh Farid, Kabir, Ravi Das, Dhanna, Jai Dev, Trilochan and Namdev that Punjabi was spoken and well understood by the people of the Punjab and a major part of India up to Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Bihar around 1000 CE to 16th century CE, the time of Bhagat Ravidas (1420-1540), who was the contemporary of Guru Nanak (1469-1539). Thereafter, Guru Nanak and the Sikh Gurus continued to use the spoken language of the Punjab, Punjabi.

This Punjabi was named Prakrit by Panini, the same Prakrit in Jainism was called Ardhamagadhi Prakrit and in Buddhism it was called Pali. However, by time of 500 CE, the same Prakrit was called Punjabi by the Persians. This is the same Prakrit (Proto-Punjabi) which was used in the sacred granths of Jainism and Buddhism and thereafter by Sufis, bhagats and the Sikh Gurus. For example,

Nanak (1469-1539) Punjab

ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ ॥

Ākẖā jīvā visrai mar jāᵖo.

ਆਖਣਿ ਅਉਖਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥

Ākẖaṇ aᵖukẖā sāchẖā nāᵖo.
Describing (knowing/understanding) that Entity (God), I live (enlightened with wisdom);
Forgetting It, I die (fall in illusion).
(But) It is very difficult to describe (Know/understand) the True Name of that Entity (God).
AGGS, M 1, p 9.

Guru Angad

ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ[1] ਜਿਨ[2] ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ[3] ॥੧॥

Ŧin kaᵖo kiᵖā upḏesīᵖai jin gur Nānak ḏeᵖo. ||1||
What teachings can be imparted[1] to those[2] who have the Guru Nanak as their enlightened teacher[3]?
AGGS, M 2, p 150

Guru Amar Das

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ੍ਹ ਕਉ ਸਤਿ[1] ਗੁਰੁ[2] ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤਿਨ੍ਹ ਕਾ ਲੇਖਾ[3] ਨਿਬੜਿਆ[4] ॥

Nānak jiň kaᵖo saṯgur miliᵖā ṯiň kā lekẖā nibṛiᵖā. ||

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 3, ਪੰਨਾ 435.

Those, to whom Nanak, the true[1] Guru[2], has imparted his philosophy; their deeds[3] have been accounted[4] for."
AGGS, M 3, p 435.

Guru Arjan

ਜੋ ਪਾਥਰ ਕਉ ਕਹਤੇ ਦੇਵ ॥

Jo pāthar ka˹o kahṯe ḏev.

ਤਾ ਕੀ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੇਵ ॥

Ŧā kī birthā hovai sev.
Those who call a stone their god, their service to that god is a waste.

ਜੋ ਪਾਥਰ ਕੀ ਪਾਂਈ ਪਾਇ ॥

Jo pāthar kī pā˹nī pā˹e.

ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਘਾਲ ਅਜਾਂਈ ਜਾਇ ॥੧॥

Ŧis kī ghāl ajā˹nī jā˹e. ||1||
In the same way, for those who fall at the feet of a stone god, this act is also of no use.
AGGS, M 5, p 1160.

Is there Sanskrit in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib?

The scholars, who believe that there are many languages in the AGGS, also believe that the following slokas of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan are in Sanskrit. It is a pity that they have failed to recognize that these slokas have been called Sehskriti slokas by Guru Arjan but not as Sanskrit slokas. Had these slokas been in Sanskrit, Guru Arjan might have named them accordingly. Let us examine if the following slokas are in Sanskrit or in some other language:

ਸਲੋਕ ਸਹਸਕ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਮਹਲ 1॥

Slok Sehskriti Mahla 1

ਪੜ੍ਹਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਸੰਧਿਆ ਬਾਦੰ ॥

Paṙĥ pusṯak sandhi˹ā bāḏa˹n.

ਸਿਲ ਪੂਜਸਿ ਬਗੁਲ ਸਮਾਧੰ ॥

Sil pūjas bagul samādha˹n.

ਮੁਖਿ ਝੂਠ ਬਿਭੂਖਨ ਸਾਰੰ ॥

Mukh jhūṯh bibhūkhan sāra˹n.
AGGS, M 1, p 1353.
The Pundit studies the scriptures, says his prayers and argues too.
He worships stone and sits in a trance like a crane.

(Pretending to meditate but his intention is to catch a fish).
He tells lies and covers up his falsehood with golden ornamented (sophisticate) wordings.

ਸਲੋਕ ਸਹਸਕ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਮਹਲ 5॥

Slok Sehskriti Mahla 5

ਕਤੰਚ ਮਾਤਾ ਕਤੰਚ ਪਿਤਾ ਕਤੰਚ ਬਨਿਤਾ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਸੁਤਹ ॥

Kaṯanch māṯā kaṯanch piṯā kaṯanch baniṯā binoḏ suṯah.

ਕਤੰਚ ਭ੍ਰਾਤ ਮੀਤ ਹਿਤ ਬੰਧਵ ਕਤੰਚ ਮੋਹ ਕੁਟੰਬ੍ਯਤੇ ॥

Kaṯanch bharāṯ mīṯ hiṯ bandhav kaṯanch moh kutamb˹yaṯe.

ਕਤੰਚ ਚਪਲ ਮੋਹਨੀ ਰੂਪੰ ਪੇਖੰਤੇ ਤਿਆਗੰ ਕਰੋਤਿ ॥

Kaṯanch chapal mohnī rūpa˹n pekhanṯe ṯi˹āga˹n karoṯ.

ਰਹੰਤ ਸੰਗ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਸਿਮਰਣ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਬਧੰਯੰ ਅਚੁਤ ਤਨਹ ॥੧॥

Rahanṯ sang bhagvān simraṇ Nānak labdha˹ya˹n achuṯ ṯanah. ||1||

After death, association with mother, father, wife, son, brothers, friends, other companions and relatives is finished.
Similarly, the charming pleasures of wealth is also lost.
But only one's good deeds and virtues remain after death.
AGGS, M 5, p 1353.

Let us examine another phrase of Bhagat Jai Dev (around 1142-1180?):

ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇਤਿ ਜਪਿ ਨਰ ਸਕਲ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਦੰ ॥

Gobinḏ gobinḏeṯ jap nar sakal siḏh paḏa˹n.

ਜੈਦੇਵ ਆਇਓ ਤਸ ਸਫੁਟੰ ਭਵ ਭੂਤ ਸਰਬ ਗਤੰ ॥੫॥੧॥

Jaiḏev ā˹i˹o ṯas safuta˹n bhav bhūṯ sarb gaṯa˹n. ||5||1||
AGGS, Jai Dev, p 526.
Repeat the name of that Entity (Gobind – the God of the Earth). He is the source of all the miraculous and spiritual powers of the Siddhas.
Jai Dev has openly come to that Entity through Whom (that Entity) all got salvation in the past and will get in the present and the future.

Gatha Language

Harinder Singh, et al.[9] have reported the following phrase of Guru Arjan as belonging to the Gatha language. In fact, this phrase is also very similar to the Sehskriti phrases of Jai Dev, Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan discussed earlier:

ਗਾਥਾ[1] ਗੁੜ ਅਪਾਰੰ ਸਮਝਣੰ ਬਿਰਲਾ ਜਨਹ ॥

Gāthā gūṛ apāra˹n samjhaṇa˹n birlā janah.

ਸੰਸਾਰ ਕਾਮ ਤਜਣੰ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਰਮਣੰ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਮਹ ॥੧੦॥

Sansār kām ṯajṇa˹n Nānak gobinḏ ramṇa˹n sāḏh sangmah. ||10||
This anecdote[1] is profound and infinite, however, rare are those who can understand
They forsake sexual desire and worldly love but praise that Entity (God) in the congregation of noble people.
AGGS, M 5, p 1360.
Here ਗਾਥਾ (gatha) means anecdote, story or Prakrit but not a new language other than Sehskrit or Sanskrit.

Dr Sahib Singh [16] says that the language of these slokas is Prakrit. According to him, Sehskriti is pre-

Sanskrit, i.e. a Prakrit form. On the other hand, Giani Harbans Singh [17] says that Sehskriti is a mixture of Hindi and Sanskrit. If, according to Dr Sahib Singh, the language of the Sehskriti slokas is Prakrit, the name assigned by Panini to the language that was spoken by the people of Punjab during the early time of settlement of the Indo Aryans, then the Sehskriti slokas are in Proto-Punjabi (old Punjabi), not in Sanskrit. However, a careful examination of the language of these stanzas clearly indicates that it resembles very much the Punjabi language of Guru Nanak and that of the hagats as discussed previously. Although very close to the Punjabi language, an exception is that a suffix *bindi*, sounding *'ing',* has been added at the end of certain Punjabi words, e, g. ਬਾਦ → ਬਾਦੰ, ਸਮਾਧ →

ਸ਼ਮਾਧੰM, ਸਾਰ → ਸਾਰੰM, ਕਤ → ਕਤੰM, ਸੰਖ → ਸੰਖੰ, ਚਕੂ → ਚਕੂੰ, ਸਿਆਮ →

ਸਿਆਮੰ, etc. The same system of the addition of bindi is evident in the bani of Bhagat Jaidev (1142-1180 CE?) of Bengal. From this examination it also becomes very clear that Sanskrit was synthesized from Punjabi by adding a sufix, '-ing' at the end of the basic Punjabi words in the early deveolpment of Sanskrit and later it was made more complicated by modifying the spellings of the basic Punajbi words, also evident in some words in these Sehskriti slokas.

A critical analysis of the language of the above verses of the bhagats of the Punjab and from places far away from the Punjab, clearly indicates that the language is very similar to that of Guru Nanak.. Moreover, the language of Guru Nanak and that of the bhagats is also very similar to the current Punjabi language spoken by the peoples of the Punjab, i. e. India

Punjab and Pakistan Punjab.

The most important point to be noticed is that Sufi Sheikh Farid (1175-1265), being a Persian, started to write his bani in Punjabi about 300 years before Guru Nanak (1469-1539). This fact supports the theory that the people of the Punjab were already well-versed in the Punjabi language before the arrival of the the family of Sufi Sheikh Farid around 1000 CE. It also means it was the same Punjabi language which was used by the bhagats of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and as far East as Bengal (Bangla Desh) and Bihar . Additionally, the people of almost all of North-Western, South-Western and Eastern India were understanding, speaking and using Punjabi much before the12[th] and up to the beginning of the 17th century. By and by, Punjabi disappeared from India except for in the Punjab of 1947. Now Punjabi is disappearing in Delhi, Haryana, Himachal and Rajasthan.

Persian Phrase of Guru Nanak

ਯਕ ਅਰਜ ਗੁਫਤਮ ਪੇਸਿ ਤੋ ਦਰ ਗੋਸ ਕੁਨ ਕਰਤਾਰ ॥

Yak araj guf̱tam pes ̱to ḏar gos kun kaṟtār.

ਹਕਾ ਕਬੀਰ ਕਰੀਮ ਤੂ ਬੇਐਬ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰ ॥੧॥

Hakā Kabīr karīm ̱tū be▫aib parvar̲ḏagār. ||1||
O! The great Creator, please listen to my views about You (that Entity). That You are True, Great, Merciful and without any taint providence
AGGS, M 1, p 721.
This is a perfect example of the Persian language used by Guru Nanak.

SCRIPTS OF PUNJABI
Before the arrival of Islam in the Punjab, and also before Guru Nanak, Punjabi was written in various scripts. The oldest scripts used most were either Takri or Landhae or Sharda; thereafter, the Perso-Arabic scripts dominated in the Punjab because of the language of the rulers. Now, even the Roman script is becoming common to transliterate Gurbani. On the other hand, some scholars say that Brahmi script is the oldest one, which gave rise to other scripts. However, the Gurmukhi script resemble very much that of Takri rather Devnagari or any other script.

One can easily find out that how close is the script of Gurmukhi used by Guru Nanak with that of Takri even the *matras* are also the same. The other point to be noted is that the modification of Takri letters was done by Guru Nanak. There is also possibility that further modification might have been done by Guru Angad as is general understood by the Sikhs and as is being promoted by some Sikh scholars. It is crystal clear from the above research that Guru Nanak modified Takri script to write his verses (bani). This research also rejects the concept of some scholars who think that Guru Nanak did not write his bani. It is beyond any imagination that Guru Nanak, the founder of great philosophy, would not put his bani in writing.

CONCLUSIONS
Around 400 BCE Panini, a grammarian, synthesized a new language from the spoken language of the Punjabi people developed during the settlement of Indo-Aryans from 4,000 to 1,000 BCE. The new language after adding about 3,995 grammar rules, was named "Sanskrit"

and the spoken language of Punjab people was termed as "Prakrit" (not adorned with any grammar rules).

While Sanskrit remained the language of the elite, the Prakrit continued to develop on its own. When the so-called Prakrit was used to write the sacred granths of Jainism and Buddhism, it was named Ardhamagadhi Prakrit and Pali, respectively. At that time, this Prakrit was a common language in major parts of India except the southern India where languages other than Prakrit were developing.

Since this Prakrit was developed in the Punjab after the arrival of Indo-Aryans therefore, it should be named Proto-Punjabi, according to Chahal [12]. So this Proto-Punjabi continued to improve and a name, "Punjabi", was assigned by the Persians around 400 CE.

Punjabi was used by the Muslim Sufi, Sheikh Farid in the Punjab and by the Bhagat, Jai Dev in Bengal and Bihar during the12[th] century CE to write their bani, predating Guru Nanak by about 300 years.

Thereafter, the bhagats of the Bhagati movement and Guru Nanak and the Sikhs Gurus, started to write their bani in the same language, Punjabi.

Bhasha Vibag of the Punjab has shown the resemblance of many Punjabi words with those of Prakrit and Pali rather than Sanskrit [18]. That means the Prakrit should be renamed Proto-Punjabi as suggested by Chahal [12].

There is no doubt that Punjabi has different dialects, like, Lahndhi, Sindhi, Multani, Jhangi, Pothohari etc.; that does not mean these are different languages. However, other dialects like Gujrati, Bengali, and Bihari became more unlike Punjabi in due course of their development. One must understand that even current Punjabi is quite different than the Punjabi of Guru Nanak's time.

In fact the language of the Holy Scripture (Aad Guru Granth Sahib) is basically the Punjabi language, having the different dialects and vocabulary of many other languages.

Punjabi uses two different scripts, Perso-Arabic and Gurmukhi. Perso-Arabic is used by Muslims of Pakistan, whereas Gurmukhi is used by the Sikhs of India. The Perso-Arabic script is now referred to as Shahmukhi. Shahmukhi which means "from the mouth of the kings" and Gurmukhi means "from the mouth of the Gurus".

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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