

SAINT SOLDIER

(Guru Gobind Singh's Concept of an Ideal Man)

S.S. Kapoor



Hemkunt

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(Guru Gobind Singh's Concept of an Ideal Man)

by

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*To my father (late) Sardar Kulwant Singh and
my mother (late) Sardarni Lakhinder Kaur*

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INTRODUCTION

'Man' made of five elements – earth, water, air ether and fire, marching towards an unknown destination on a never-ending and winding road, dark and partly illuminated, which continues to widen up narrow down and level at various times towards the every-mysterious future, is God's greatest and noblest piece of creation. Man's religion and philosophy with its past casting a luminous shadow upon its path and its present forecasting a nebulous future raise doubts about the purpose, ideal and destination of the mysterious road.

The philosophers, and religious teachers of the world have said a lot about the 'ideal' and 'Idealism' of 'Man'; and it is difficult to point out clearly and precisely where one of their thought ends and another begins. The seed which appears ultimately in the fruit of a plant is also the herald of a new life.

The present study and research pertains itself to that particular aspect of the subject as is found conceived, propounded and presented by Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Master of the Sikhs and the Founder of the Khalsa Brotherhood. The approach made is both rational and theological, and the beliefs and practices of other faiths also have been examined in the said context.

Hence in the first two chapters some basic ideas of the philosophers, prophets and religious teachers of the world regarding the concept of Khalsa, the 'Ideal Man' and their contribution to its development have been discussed. The choice of philosophers, prophets and teachers has, of course, been subjective, but the author has tried to put forward as many of their diversified views as possible in order to attempt a comparative study and present his theme in a proper perspective. Relevant quotations from the Sikh scriptures, *Guru Granth Sahib* and *Dasam Granth Sahib*, have been cited in support thereof. The third chapter deals with the development

of Sikh thought regarding the concept of the 'Ideal Man' from the times of Guru Nanak to Guru Tegh Bahadur, the first nine Gurus of the Sikhs. Wherever possible primary sources have been used to support and resolve the basic issues raised therein. The fourth chapter discusses Guru Gobind Singh's concept of the 'Ideal Man' and his contribution towards the thought regarding the idealism of mankind. It also explains, at length, the purpose and need of the creation of the Khalsa Brotherhood as well as the role and duties of its constituents in the context of the situation then prevailing. An attempt has been made to analyse and examine all fundamental issues with the support of primary evidence. The last chapter deals with the history of the Khalsa and discusses its relevance to the present as well as to the future.

Thus the basic theme of this research work is an attempt on a critical study and analysis of the concept of an ideal man: the man who can qualify to be one with God, and the man who presents the worldly image of God. Quite so often, we try to limit what God can do in our lives because we do not know Him as He really is, Sikh thought unveils, inter alia, this basic aspect of God. The present study seeks to derive from the Sikh thought, those socio-ethical value-patterns which are essential in the building up of a practical model of an ideal man. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, has set in his hymns the basic pattern of those socio-ethical values which an ideal man of his conception must possess. His basic statement, i.e. *Mul Mantra*, with which *Guru Granth Sahib* opens and which invariably tops the beginning of the *ragas* included therein, illustrates the basic socio-ethical values of the idealism of man. Guru Nanak laid special emphasis on universal brother-hood based on love, truth and equality, and indicated enlightenment, wisdom and virtue as the core qualities of an ideal man. The ideal man, according to Guru Angad, is a zealous educationalist and a man who is healthy in body and sound in mind. Guru Amardas' idealism lies; besides all that, in the special emphasis he laid upon the service of God and mankind. Guru Ram Das emphasised the virtues of humility and simplicity, Guru Arjan advocated meditation and company of the saints; and Guru

Hargobind laid emphasis on congregational prayers and need of self-defence. Guru Har Rai preached self-discipline and love for God, man and Nature; Guru Harkrishan emphasised selfless help of the needy and the afflicted; Guru Tegh Bahadur exemplified the idea of *Jiwanmukt* and sacrifice for others as some of the fundamental qualities of an ideal man, over and above those already stated. To this list of socio-ethical value-patterns, Guru Gobind Singh added the qualities of bravery, fearlessness, courage, strong will and relentless struggle for freedom. The combination of all these value-patterns is Guru Gobind Singh's *Khalsa*, his ideal man, is the protagonist of 'Love', 'Truth', 'Justice', 'Sacrifice' and 'Freedom'.

I owe a great deal to my secretary Mrs. Poonam Kapoor, without whose initiative and support this edition would not have been published.

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CHAPTER – 1

CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL MAN ACCORDING TO EMINENT THINKERS AND PHILOSOPHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF SIKH THOUGHT

Ever since the dawn of civilisation, thinkers, philosophers and religious teachers have offered ideas regarding man and his destiny – the questions relating to the aims of life, the meaning of death and man's ultimate goal. Although they have not been able to fathom the mystery of life, they have expressed some ideas and assumptions in connection with the purpose of human life and the ideal man, who according to most of them, deserves to be emulated.

SOCRATES (470–399 B.C.) is not only the first to initiate this basic concept, but is also the most honoured philosopher in European history. From his philosophical teachings, two important ideas emerged. The first pertained to his doctrine of virtue and the second to his concept of logic. Socrates was unsuccessful in putting forth his ideas of good and evil, and the qualities which an ideal man should possess (ie, knowledge, friendliness, courage, temperance and justice)¹ into practice.

According to him, the first duty of man is to know himself.² A similar idea appears in Sikh thought, for example,

- (i) He who realizes his *self*, identifies himself with the Supreme self.³
- (ii) By realizing one's self, one stands attuned to the Formless one.⁴

Socrates realised the truth and the definiteness of the laws of Nature; and he spent his life in searching and understanding the same.⁵

In the words of Dr. Wild,⁶ according to Socrates, 'the chief obligation of every man is first to tend his own soul, and then, so far as is possible, to help others in tending theirs'. We find a similar thought expressed in the hymns of the Sikh Gurus,⁷ e.g.:

1. Radhakrishnan (Ed.) *History of Philosophy: Eastern and Western*, II, p.49

2. *Ibid.*, p.46

3. Guru Nanak, Asa, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.421

4. *Ibid.*, Asa, p.415

5. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p.47

6. Radhakrishnan, *The Concept of Man*, p.62

7. Guru Nanak, *Guru Granth Sahib*, *op.cit.*, p.26

- (i) If we want to get a seat in the Court of God, we should dedicate ourselves to the *service of the people* in this world.
- (ii) We shall be rewarded according to the service we render.⁸

For Socrates, if man is the *microcosm*, then society is the *macrocosm*.⁹ According to him, virtue is rational. Man has different aspects, and a rational ordering of each part constitutes a virtue. Unlike many other philosophers, Socrates believed in the existence of God and said that his inner warning voice was something *numinous* and divine. The Sikh Scripture contains ideas similar to the above. For instance,

- (i) The inner self is His Temple.¹⁰
- (ii) With the conquest of my *inner self*
I have conquered the whole world.¹¹
- (iii) The *inner self* is so powerful
That it leaves no door for escape.¹²
- (iv) Just as there is fragrance in the flower,
And reflection in the mirror,
Similarly, God lives within;
Search Him in *your self* (heart).¹³

Socrates analysed man as a compound of soul and body. An aspect of the soul is the rational which controls other aspects.¹⁴ Rational life is the highest life and constitutes the highest good. Through reason man becomes a world citizen and *immortal*. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

“... It is only one thing (the spiritual life) that really matters. All else is egoistical pursuit for nothing.”¹⁵

Socrates emphasized that virtue was knowledge and knowledge was virtue, and that only the good could have an ideal and not the evil.¹⁶ In Sikh literature there is no corresponding theory about this analysis of Socrates. Mere ‘goodness’ is not enough. Beyond good deeds, is the “Nam Simaran” which truly wins liberation.

ARISTOTLE (384–322 B.C.) affirms that amongst all the creation of the Divine, man alone has the use of reason. The good in man comes to him from within.¹⁷ Just as action in the world proceeds from God, so movement in the soul comes from the Divine in us. In fact, we possess not only reasoned knowledge but a governing principle, necessarily superior, which brings knowledge and discursive reason into play.¹⁸

8. Ibid., p.468

9. A. D. Lindsay, *Introduction to the 'Republic'*, p.XXXVII

10. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.6

11. Guru Arjan, Gauri, p.176

12. Guru Amardas, Siri, p.27

13. Guru Tegh Bahadur, Dhanasri, p.684

14. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.351

15. Guru Nanak, Asa, p.467

16. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.358

17. D. J. Allan, *The Philosophy of Aristotle*, p.65

18. Book VII, 1245b, 10-19

Aristotle's philosophy of man is a philosophy of form, not of a subsisting separate form but of one which is intimately linked to matter.¹⁹ Aristotle believed that education should be rooted in the nature of man. According to Sikh thought,

- (i) "An uneducated man wastes his valuable life and cuts at his own roots."²⁰
- (ii) As with the appearance of the sun, the moon disappears, so with the attainment of education, ignorance is dispelled.²¹

Aristotle's concept of an ideal man is centred on 'high-minded man'.²² He describes high mindedness as "the crowning grace, as it were, of the virtues, it makes them greater and cannot exist without them."²³ He further adds that the ideal man should be perfectly good, that he should have moral virtues, wisdom, prudence and should not be money- and power-orientated.²⁴

According to the Sikh Scripture,

- (i) An educated man..... who indulges in *greed, avarice and pride* is a fool²⁵
- (ii) Man degrades himself from the human order because of his ego.²⁶

PLATO (427-347 B.C.) examines the nature of an ideal man in the light of the theory of forms. In this context, he mentions quickness of understanding and learning, retentiveness of what is learnt, courage, self-control and firmness of purpose as the essential qualities of an ideal man.²⁷

According to the views of Sikh Gurus,

- (i) The mystery of Nature is revealed not only through reading but also through *understanding*.²⁹
- (ii) he is *courageous* and bravest of the brave, who has *overcome his inner ego*.....²⁹
- (iii) Victory over *self* is victory over the world³⁰

According to Plato's philosophy, 'man is considered first of all as a soul, a soul that is clearly distinct from the body and is the most valuable possession; it is spiritual, uncompounded and deiform, it cannot wear itself out nor be destroyed by evil; a self-moving principle, it pre-exists the body; in the state of purity, it has contemplated the subsistent ideas; it will keep on existing after its separation from the body, which is death, in a state of immortality.'³¹

19. C. Summers, *The Philosophy of Man*, p.108

20. Guru Arjan, *Gauri*, p.192

21. Guru Nanak, *Suhi*, p.791

22. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p.71

23. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Translated by F. H. Peters), p.115

24. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p.71

25. Guru Nanak, *Majh*, p.140

26. *Ibid.*, *Asa*, p.466

27. G. C. Field, *The Philosophy of Plato*, p.53

28. Guru Nanak, *Majh*, p.148

29. Guru Amardas, *Sloaks*, p.1415

30. Guru Nanak, *Jap Ji*, p.6

31. C. Summers, *op. cit.* pp.95-96

Plato believed that Salvation or *Mukti* could be achieved through true knowledge³² and purification.³³ A similar view is found expressed in *Guru Granth Sahib*.

- (i) "Truth is realised through purity of the heart....."³⁴
- (ii) "..... Let not lust, anger, pride, greed, obstinacy or attachment approach your mind, then you shall see the *reality of your soul*....."³⁵
- (iii) '..... Why deceive people by growing long, matted locks of hair on your head and by growing long nails on your fingers, and by rubbing ashes on your face these are not the act of purity..... purity lies in Love and God and is not realised without love'.³⁶

ST. AUGUSTINE (354 A.D.–430 A.D.), referring to an ideal man, asserts that if there is to be an effective prayer, the clamour of the senses must cease and urges of the body must stop.³⁷ He says:³⁸ "What shall I do to find my God? My God who made all the things (earth, sky, stars, sun, moon, darkness.....) that I see with my eyes, is not to be sought out by these eyes..... I seek my God in every body earthly and heavenly, and find Him not; I seek His substance in my soul, and find it is not there; still longing to understand and discern the invisible things of God by the things that are made, I have poured out my soul above myself, and now there remains nothing for one to touch, by my God."

According to St. Augustine, the human soul is not a part of God;³⁹ although God has made it yet it has certain essence of its own.⁴⁰ A soul is defined as a special substance, endowed with reason, adapted to rule the body.⁴¹ The above views, however run contrary to the Sikh philosophy. According to the Dasam Granth,

"From one fire, millions of sparks of fire arise and in course of rising remain separate, yet they again merge in the same fire... Human beings (men) having sprung from Him, will blend again in Him."⁴²

According to *Guru Granth Sahib*,

"Everyone is blessed with a *soul* and the *soul is God Himself* who pervades in everything and everywhere."⁴³

St. Augustine sees a nobility in the human body.⁴⁴

He asserts that an ideal man should achieve and possess purity

32. Ibid., pp.95-96

33. Ibid., pp.95-96

34. Guru Nanak, Asa, p.472

35. Guru Gobind Singh, Ramkali, *Dasam Granth*, p.709

36. Ibid., Swayyas 18

37. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy*, p.116

38. Joseph Rickoby, *Readings of St. Augustine in the Psalms*, pp.49-50

39. C. Summers, op. cit., p.127

40. Ibid., p.127

41. Ibid., p.127

42. Guru Gobind Singh, *Akal Ustat*, verse 17-(87)

43. Guru Nanak, Malhar, p.1273

44. C. Summers, op. cit., p.132-133

at all times.⁴⁵ He should be a fearless and stable person.⁴⁶

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "One should be *stable* and *contented*, speak the Truth, and practise charity."⁴⁷
- (ii) "God has blessed man with many things, yet he is *unstablised* and *discontented*, He is blind and there is no end to his desires."⁴⁸

IMMANUEL KANT (1724-1804) sought to recognise the contribution of all the faculties of the human mind.⁴⁹ In his attempt to maintain morality in its relevant sphere, Kant displayed a broad humanism guaranteed by a world government organised in the interest of the whole of humanity. Kant in his teachings repudiated idealism and held to his belief in things-in-themselves.⁵⁰

Kant affirms that man is not an all-inclusive end to himself.⁵¹ He must treat himself the way he expects others to treat him. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

"Engrossed in eating, drinking, laughing and sleeping, man forgets that ultimately he has to die and depart. Forgetting also the Master, he only wastes his life. Accursed is such a life; and the worst of it is that it is not going to last.

Dwell, therefore, on the Name of God, so that you can go back to your real home with due grace and dignity."⁵²

For Kant morality has its own autonomy and various aspects like reason, emotion, instinct, sentiments which constitute ethical experience. Kant places the right above the good.⁵³ According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "That alone is good which pleases God."⁵⁴
- (ii) "He who sings His praises and does *right* actions will merge in Him".
- (iii) "They alone have found the 'Right Way', who earn through toil and share their earnings with others."⁵⁶

Kant asserted that when the emotions and feelings are channelled along ways pointed out by ethics, a man can be both ethical and happy.⁵⁷ According to Guru Granth Sahib, "What *happiness* can there be for one, without following ethical ways?"⁵⁸ Thus we see

45. Ibid., p.133

46. Ibid., p.133

47. Guru Arjan, Siri., p.73

48. Guru Ramdas, Gauri., p.234

49. Rashakrishnan, *History of Philosophy*, p.261

50. Ibid., p.263

51. Radhakrishnan, *The Concept of Man*, p.110

52. Guru Nanak, Malhar, p.1254

52. Guru Nanak, Malhar, p.1254

53. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.324

54. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji. p.4

55. Guru Amardas, Gauri. p.230

56. Guru Nanak, Malhar, p.1254

57. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., p.324

58. Guru Nanak, Siri, p.56

that there is a difference between Sikh thought and Kant regarding the very concept of man and his morality.

J. G. FITCHTE (1762-1814) states that perceptive intuition and immediate consciousness are the basic elements of the idealism in a human being.⁵⁹ Guru Granth Sahib says,

- (i) "As is the nature of one's consciousness, so is the way of one's living."⁶⁰
- (ii) "A man without perceptive intuition wastes his valuable life And cuts at his own roots."⁶¹

Fichte asserted that,

"the principle of self-consciousness shines by its own light. That is, it cannot and need not be proved, but all proof presupposes it... we know it by perceptive intuition... which is invariably the product of a constructive act ..."⁶²

Fichte advocated that we know ourselves as real solely because we have a sense of duty.⁶³ We believe in our self-existence, because our self-consciousness is bound with a moral demand.⁶⁴ According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "Those are pure, who know *what they are*"⁶⁵
- (ii) "He is a fool, Who does not *know his self*."⁶⁶
- (iii) "By recognising himself and by abiding therein, Man rids himself of selfishness and desire."⁶⁷

Fichte has also referred to productive imagination and said the whole world is imaginary and illusory. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "The canopy of illusion is spread over the whole world."⁶⁸
- (ii) "As is the *dream of the night*, So is this world."⁶⁹

In Sikhism, world is both illusory (transient) and real (arena of conflict between good and evil), and created by God who is real.

G. W. F. HEGEL (1770-1831) takes morality and idealism in a subjective sense. In the moral sphere we cannot overstep the division between ideal and actual and we are consequently doomed to an endless process in trying to make actual what is only ideal. Hegel considers the objective ethical order higher than the sphere of subjective morality.⁷⁰

59. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.363

60. Guru Nanak, Siri, p.24

61. Guru Arjan, Gauri, p.192

62. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.264

63. Ibid., p.266

64. Ibid., p.266

65. Guru Amardas, Vadhans, p.560

66. Ibid., Gujri, p.491

67. Guru Nanak, Siri, p.57

68. Guru Nanak, Prabhati, p.1342

69. Guru Arjan, Bilawal, p.804

70. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.267

Hegel believed that the true forms of consciousness are always together in the life of man, but with varying predominance; they can never be separated except by abstraction for purposes of study.⁷¹

Hegel's theory of the objective spirit comprehends some aspects of the concepts of an ideal man. He mentions realisation of freedom,⁷⁴ loyalty and obedience to the state⁷⁵ as the basic qualities of an ideal man.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "Those who keep *fake books*,
and earn wealth by *dishonest means*;
And those who love falsehood,
Shall be burnt in the fire of hell."⁷⁶
- (ii) "*Son*, why do you quarrel with your *Father*?
It is a sin to quarrel with him
Who begot you and brought you up."⁷⁷

The Tenth Master prayed frequently as under:

"O God grant me this boon
that I may never be deterred
from doing *good deeds* (deeds good for
my country and fellow beings)."⁷⁸

According to Sikhism, performance of duties to the family and state are not enough. Man's goal (ideal) is much higher.

G. SCHELLING (1775–1854) philosophical ideas grew through several phases. One of those phases was that nature is a process with gifted intelligence and moving towards self-consciousness. Ego is the basis of idealism in human beings, in the sense that all things in nature exhibit intelligence in their structure.⁷⁹

Man is a product of nature and there is no dualism between nature and spirit. According to Schelling, nature is visible spirit and spirit is invisible nature.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "God Himself is invisible, but He is ever visible through Nature."⁸⁰
- (ii) "Man neither dies nor lives (it is not in man's control) neither swims nor drowns of himself; for He who has created the Universe controls all Himself."⁸¹
- (iii) "Man comes through God's Will, quits as *He Wills* and merges too as is *His Will*"⁸²

71. Ibid., *The Concept of Man*, p.35

72. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy* p.278

73. Ibid., p.278

74. Ibid., p.279

75. Ibid., p.279

76. Guru Amardas, *Majh*, p.128

77. Guru Ramdas, *Sarang*, p.1200

78. Guru Gobind Singh, *Chandi Charitar*, v.231

79. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, pp.266-267

80. Guru Nanak, *Maru*, p.1042

81. Ibid., *Gauri*, p.151

82. Ibid., *Ramkali*, p.940

Schelling presents a monistic and dynamic view of nature and makes a wide use of the principle of development, trying to show how nature, through its various forms and grades moves towards self-consciousness, its highest form.⁸³

He advocates that "for an ideal man, self-consciousness is the highest form of quality", but contends that "in itself self-consciousness is a mere form and that it is the rational content which gives value to self-consciousness."⁸⁴

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "He who has controlled the mind and has chosen the *rational way*, has conquered the whole world."⁸⁵
- (ii) "He alone finds the *rational way* who abiding amid the impurities of the world, remains detached and spotless."⁸⁶
- (iii) "One cannot find the rational way without the grace and guidance of the True Guru."⁸⁷

In Sikhism, not self-consciousness (which may lead to *Haumai* – the ego) but self-realisation is important.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER (1788–1860) referring to idealism stressed "Will Factor" and states:

"Will is the thing – in itself, the inner content, the essence of the world... Life, therefore, is assurance to the will to live; and so long as we are filled with the will to live, we need have no fear for our existence, even in the presence of death."⁸⁸

Schopenhauer's philosophy of man centres around the difference between will and reason. In his words,

The will, which considered purely in itself, is without knowledge, and is merely a blind incessant impulse, as we see it appear in unorganised and vegetable nature and their laws, and also in the vegetative part of our own life, reserves through the addition of the world as idea, which is developed in subjection to it, the knowledge of its own willing and of what it is that it wills. And this is nothing else than the world as idea, life, precisely as it exists. Therefore, we called the phenomenal world the mirror of the will, its objectivity. And since what He wills is always life; just because life is nothing but mere pleonasm if, instead of simply saying 'the will', we say 'the will to live'... Will is the thing in itself, the inner content, the essence of the world. Life is the visible world, the phenomenon, is only the mirror of the will. Therefore, life accompanies the will as inseparably as the shadow accompanies the body; and if His Will exists, the world exists. Life is, therefore, assured to His Will; and so long as we believe

83. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., p.267

84. Ibid., p.267

85. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.6

86. Ibid., Suhi p.730

87. Guru Nanak, Asa, p.470

88. Haldane and Kemp (Translation), *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol 1, Bk. 4, Sec. 54

in His Will, we need have no fear for our existence, even in the presence of death.”⁸⁹

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “The Universe comes into being by *God’s Will*.”
- (ii) “The *Will* of the One alone pervades all the worlds, as all creation is born of Him.”⁹⁰
- (iii) “... by following His *Will*, one shall meet Him”.⁹²

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881) has examined the concept of the hero under various headings,⁹³ such as: Divinity,⁹⁴ Prophet,⁹⁵ Poet,⁹⁶ Priest,⁹⁷ Man of Letters⁹⁸ and King.⁹⁹ He said that men were created, as a fact, not equals: there was no democracy in the realm of the intellect; men had widely differing holds upon their environments, through complex instrumentality of hand and head and heart.¹⁰⁰

The ideal of inequality of man has not been properly analysed by Carlyle. According to the Sikh thought, there is no doubt that men created are not equals, but that is the result of their past deeds. But once born in any form, they receive equal love, justice and care from God.

According to Dasam Granth,

“Who can be called bad, who good, when we see the same God within all. The Master has revealed this truth to us?”¹⁰¹

According to Carlyle, ideal man has the power of higher order,¹⁰² he performs virtuous deeds,¹⁰³ lives as a virtuous man,¹⁰⁴ and he leads in strong toils those who do not willingly work;¹⁰⁵ he charms with his piping an obedient train,¹⁰⁶ he lives in the inward sphere of things, in the True Divine, and Eternal, which exists always, unseen to most,¹⁰⁷ and his life is a piece of the everlasting heart of Nature herself.¹⁰⁸

Guru Granth Sahib affirms:

- (i) “If our friends are blessed with virtues, let us share the same with them and abandon thereby our own vices.”¹⁰⁹

89. Ibid., Secion 54

90. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.2

91. Guru Nanak, Gauri, p.223

92. Guru Angad, Majh, p.139

93. A MacMeehan (Ed), *Carlyle on Hero, Hero Worship & the Heroic in the History* p.284

94. Odin: *Paganism and Scandinavian mythology*

95. Prophet Mohammed (Islam)

96. Dante, Shakespeare

97. Luther, Knox

98. Johnson, Rousseau

99. Cromwell, Napoleon

100. Lehman B. H., *Carlyle’s Theory of the Hero*, p.5

101. Guru Gobind Singh, *Akal Ustat* v 16-17

102. Lehman, op. cit., p.17

103. Ibid., p.19

104. Ibid., p.19

105. Ibid., p.22

106. Ibid., p.22

107. Ibid., pp.41-42

108. Lehman, op. cit., p.42

109. Guru Nanak, Suhi, p.766

- (ii) "As soon as one sheds one's vice, virtue comes to replace it."¹¹⁰
- (iii) "When virtues are accumulated and vices disappear, with the Guru's help one merges in the Holy Word."¹¹¹

THOMAS HILL GREEN (1836-1882) states that the subject-object relation is the most generic element in the definition of the knowledge-universe, and once the confusion between the subject-object relation with the inter-objective relation is cleared, the term 'thought' can no more stand for the subjective process of mind.¹¹² Green has also advocated that the world we know cannot begin and end with the birth and death of individual man.¹¹³ Green's philosophy of idealism states that "... even the subject-object relation is not ultimate, but is unconditioned conscious principle." He goes on to say,

"To think is to condition and to condition is to think. Every object that we can think must, therefore, be related to some other object by which it is conditioned; that is, every object of thought is ideal or self-transcendental, and the categories are but the different ways of determining or conditioning the object of knowledge which constitute nature."¹¹⁴

According to Green, knowledge and awareness of consciousness are two basic features of an ideal man.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "Those are pure,
who know *what they are*."¹¹⁵
- (ii) "O Slave, devoid of any virtue
Realise your *intrinsic value*."¹¹⁶
- (iii) "Mad is he,
who Knows not his *real worth* (self)."¹¹⁷

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE (1844-1900), the German philosopher, attacked the existing ideas of morality, art and religion. In his contribution to the ideals of the superman, he admits that "Humanity must always act so as to bring men of genius into the world – this is its task, it has no other."¹¹⁸ For this reason he calls man only a temporary halting ground; the destination of evolution is Superman.¹¹⁹ He refers to the two types of morality – "noble" or master, and "slave". Fellow-feeling or sympathy, for example, is in

110. Guru Nanak, Tukhari, p.1111
 111. Guru Amardas, p.361
 112. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.303
 113. Ibid., p.303
 114. Ibid., pp.303-304
 115. Guru Amardas, Vadhas., p.560
 116. Guru Nanak, Majh, p.109
 117. Bhagat Kabir, Bilawal, p.856
 118. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.294
 119. Ibid., op. cit., p.294

his view a virtue of slave-morality only. Master-morality has no need of it. To quote Nietzsche,

“Which is injurious to me is injurious in itself; ... He honours whatever he recognises in himself; such morality is self-glorification ... noble man also helps the unfortunate, but – or scarcely – out of pity, but rather from an impulse generated by the superabundance of power – such a type of man is even proud of not being made for sympathy; the hero of the saga, *therefore adds warningly*: He who has not a hard heart when young, will never have one.”¹²⁰

The Sikh view is quite different. Guru Gobind Singh prayed as under,

“O Lord, when the time comes I should die fighting heroically on the field of battle (*to save others from injustice and tyranny*).¹²¹

Again, Guru Gobind Singh says about himself,

“Seize and hurl down evil-doers (*to save and help the unfortunate*)

For this very purpose I have taken birth.”¹²²

And according to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “We lose the merit of *sympathy and service* through the smallness of our minds.”¹²³
- (ii) “If we want to get a seat in the Court of God we should dedicate ourselves to the *service of people* in this world.”¹²⁴

In his philosophy of man, Nietzsche is in places very confusing and indeed, meaningless. In some places he wants to do away with the distinction between the true and the false, as he wants to do away with the distinction between good and evil.¹²⁵ “No intelligent talk is possible, unless we believe that there is such a thing as truth and that there is such a thing as good.”¹²⁶ Nietzsche believed that the will to power is the only truth and the Superman the only good.¹²⁷

Sikh thought does not agree with Nietzsche’s above definition of Truth and goodness. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “*Truth* is realised through the purity of heart.”¹²⁸
- (ii) “*Truth* is revealed when one meets the True One and becoming truthful one merges in the Truthful.”¹²⁹
- (iii) “That alone is *good* which pleases God.”¹³⁰
- (iv) “*Truth* is the remedy of all ills, because it removes all sin.”¹³¹

120. Ibid., op.cit., pp.294-295

121. Guru Gobind Singh, *Chandi Charitar*, verse 231

122. Ibid. *Bachitar Nanak*, verses 42 and 43

123. Guru Nanak, *Asa*, p.468

124. Ibid., *Siri* p.26

125. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.295

126. Radhakrishnan, *The New Romantic Movement on Contemporary Philosophy* pp.35-36

127. Ibid., *History of Philosophy*, p.295

128. Guru Nanak, *Asa* p.472

129. Ibid., *Siri*, p.18

130. Ibid., *Jap Ji*, p.4

131. Ibid., *Asa Di Var* p.468

In the *Asa Ki Var* (one of the compositions of Guru Nanak), Guru Nanak mentions the tests of truth and contrasts them with falsehood. He says,

“We know the Truth when the heart is true, and we cleanse our body of falsehood and make it pure. We know the Truth when we love the Truth ... we know the Truth when our soul has the knowledge of the divine path. Cultivating the body we sow the seed of Truth. We know the Truth when we desire true instruction and are compassionate to life and know the meaning of charity. We know the Truth if we bathe in the pool of the soul and as is the Lord’s will so we abide by it.”¹³²

FRANCIS BRADLEY (1846-1924) while discussing idealism, stressed that reality as a basic element of ideal man must not only be theoretically harmonious but must be harmonious altogether.¹³³

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “By seeking God outside one is ruined; *for Reality* is in the home itself. The self-willed, however, miss it through egoism; but the *righteous* embrace reality with their arms.”¹³⁴
- (ii) “Abandon vices, practice virtues; and thus realize the *reality of life*.”¹³⁵
- (iii) “He who understands and realizes his self, comes to know the *Reality*.”¹³⁶
- (iv) “By conquering the self, one conquers the world.”¹³⁷

According to Bradley, the ultimate Reality is to be found in the sphere of *rational* experience,¹³⁸ which means self or consciousness or knowledge.¹³⁹

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “He who realises his self, realises God.”¹⁴⁰
- (ii) “All living beings are endowed with the same *consciousness*. There is no one without it.”¹⁴¹

Sikh thought is different. The Ultimate Reality is beyond rational experience. It is a state of bliss (*Anand/Sahaj*) which is not a rational or self-conscious experience but mystic, intuitive realisation.

JOSIAH ROYCE (1855-1916) while discussing the ideal man, stresses that mysticism is far away from reality. According to him, it is moral insight which promotes human solidarity and harmonizes the conflicting individual will into the unity of the Universal will.

132. Ibid.

133. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy*, pp.299-316

134. Guru Nanak, Siri, P.63

135. Ibid., Asa, p.418

136. Ibid., Gauri, p.224

137. Guru Nanak, Gauri, p.224

138. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., p.303

139. Ibid., p.308

140. Guru Nanak, Gauri, p.224

141. Ibid., Siri, p.24

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "We are possessed by the love of gold and silver, woman and scents, horses and dwellings, sweets and meats. We are so much given over to such *lusts of immorality* that there is hardly any room left in our hearts for the name of God!"¹⁴²
- (ii) "As borax melts gold, so do *lust* and wrath consume the body."¹⁴³

Royce advocated a theory of Synthetic Idealism. He repudiated the empirical, intuitive and transcendental conceptions of the human self. According to him,¹⁴⁴

"The meaning, purpose of life-span of every finite self is fragmentary and is only a partial expression of the Divine will or plan. Every self is different from every other. All these selves combine in the unity of the Absolute self, without losing their individuality, freedom and moral responsibility."¹⁴⁵

J. M. E. METTAGGART (1866-1925) established the superiority of love over knowledge and volition as a basic quality of an ideal man.

According to Dasam Granth,
"All listen, I tell the whole truth,
Those who *love God truly*, become one with Him".¹⁴⁶
And according to Guru Granth Sahib,

"Man without love is an empty shell which crumbles down and is reduced to dust."¹⁴⁷

P. CROCE (1886-1952) maintained that egoism and altruism are logically connected and that economics and ethics are inseparable. Idealism of man must be analysed through both economic and ethical factors.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "Worldly wealth is false capital,
One may lose it in a moment."¹⁴⁸
- (ii) "Of what use is *wealth*
Amassed by wrongful means?"¹⁴⁹
- (iii) "Blessed is that hut wherein are sung the *glories of the Lord*;
The pace which makes people forget the master is of no use."¹⁵⁰

Sikhism rejects the superiority of the economically better-placed over the weak ones. In Sikhism there is only one code of ethics to govern the rich and the poor.

142. Guru Nanak, Siri, p.15

143. Ibid., Ramkali, p.932

144. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.329

145. Ibid., op. cit., p.322

146. Guru Gobind Singh, *Tav prasad Swayyas*, p.14

147. Guru Nanak, Siri, p.62

148. Guru Amardas, Gujri, p.491

149. Guru Arjan, Jaitsiri, p.700

150. Ibid., Bihagara, p.546

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "The eyes of God look up all alike, like the wind that blows alike for the commoner and the king."¹⁵¹
- (ii) "A true yogi (an ideal man) is one who looks upon all creation alike."¹⁵²

According to Sikh thought, it is no sin to be wealthy and to own and enjoy the comforts and luxuries of life. The main goal, however, is that man must remain detached mentally from his surroundings. This kind of householder is called *Grastha-udasi* by Guru Arjan. He says,

"... I am detached while living with my family."¹⁵³

The detachment from the surroundings through the control of the five physical senses and the mind is known as *Raj Yoga*. It involves – "the renunciation of *maya* which includes wealth, greed, intellectual pride, attachment to relatives, beauty, youth and material things. Living without desire in the midst of desires, a person meditates on the Holy Name and thus attunes his individual soul to the Universal Soul."¹⁵⁴

Just as a teacher teaches his pupils, a lawyer works for his client and a doctor and a nurse look after a patient, but are not attached to them, in the same way man has to look after his family members and not become mentally or emotionally involved in their problems, to the extent of forgetting God and the real object of life.¹⁵⁵

BERTRAND RUSSELL (1872–1970) while discussing man's place and role in the Universe says:

"It has been customary to demand of a philosopher that he should show that the world is good in certain respects. I cannot admit any duty of this sort. One might as well demand of an accountant that he should show a satisfactory balance-sheet. It is just as bad to be fraudulently optimistic in philosophy as in money-matters. If the world is good by all means, let us know it; but if not, let us know that. In any case, the question of the goodness or badness of the world is one for science rather than for philosophy. We shall call the world good if it has certain characteristics that we desire..."¹⁵⁶

To be good, one is to follow certain rules of conduct. Ethics, according to Russell,¹⁵⁷ are expected to provide a basis from which such rules can be deduced. Russell has mentioned, though in his own critical and literary style, essential characteristics of a man which determine virtue in all situations; for example, obedience

151. Guru Arjan, Gauri Sukhmani p.272

152. Guru Nanak, Suhi, p.730

153. Guru Arjan, p.1227

154. G. S. Mansukhani, *The Sikh Review*, November, 1977, p.31

155. Ibid.

156. Bertrand Russels: *Man's Place in the Universe*, p.309

157. Ibid., p.234

to authority – whether that of the gods, the government, or customer¹⁵⁸ – acts to make people happy and intelligent,¹⁵⁹ acts so as to produce harmonious rather than discordant desires.¹⁶⁰ Russell says, “the good life is one inspired by love (sincerity/selfless feelings) and guided by Knowledge.”¹⁶¹ It is not for man to judge God’s creation and the world. He is to play his role as a *Gurmukh* (as far as possible). Sikhism concurs broadly with the view of Russell; there is one thing different, with regard to obedience to authority. This duty is limited to reasonable laws and not the will of the state or the dictator – whatever that may be. Man has his conscience to guide him. He has no duty to obey unjust and arbitrary commands of the establishment. This would make him just a slave.

G. GENTILE (1875-1944) mentions that,

“self-consciousness is the only reality which is in unity with two apparently distinguishable phases, in which the same mind throws itself completely appearing as subject and object.”¹⁶²

He distinguishes between concrete and abstract thought and between empirical and transcendental ego. According to him, practice of religion and individual liberty and democratic ideas are the basic qualities of an ideal man.¹⁶³

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “He who grasps the truth, realises that there is but *one religion* of all mankind, as God is one and has ever been the same.”¹⁶⁴
- (ii) “Religion consists not in mere talk. He who looks on all alike and considers all as equal is acclaimed as truly religious.”¹⁶⁵
- (iii) “Call no one high, none seems to be low: for God, the only potter has fashioned all alike and His light alone pervades all creation.”¹⁶⁶

ALDOUS HUXLEY (1894-1963) calls an ideal man a perfect man. According to him, no two men inherit the same temperament and physical constitution; and their lives are passed in material, moral and intellectual environments that are profoundly dissimilar. Nevertheless, in so far as they are saints, in so far as they possess the unitive knowledge that makes them perfect, they are all astonishingly alike. A perfect man is uniformly selfless, neither double-minded nor half-hearted, intelligent, profoundly simple, devoid of covetousness and devoid of lust for power and fame.¹⁶⁷

158. Ibid., p.235

159. Ibid., p.238

160. Bertrand Russell. *Man's Place in the Universe*, p.242

161. Ibid., p.243

162. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.322

163. Ibid., p.323

164. Guru Nanak, Basant, p.1188

165. Ibid., Suhi p.730

166. Ibid., Siri p.62

167. Aldous Huxley, *Perennial Philosophy*, p.55

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) "They alone who praise God early in the morning, meditate on Him wholeheartedly and grapple with themselves at the right time are the *perfect kings*."¹⁶⁸
- (ii) "He who dies (kills his ego) in the Word (NAM), does not die again. Without dying such a death, none can *attain perfection*."¹⁶⁹
- (iii) "Absorbed in covetousness and hatred, you have forgotten that death is the end. Even now no harm will be done to you, if you sing the glory of the Lord."¹⁷⁰
- (iv) "Unhappy is he,
Who lives under the *influence of greed, luxury, anger and pride*."¹⁷¹
- (v) "*Lust and anger* infect the body,
But when I met the *saints*
I overcame both."¹⁷²
- (vi) "The body is full of evil ambitions,
Covetousness and lust for power and fame;
The company of *godly* men washes them away."¹⁷³

RAMAKRISHNA (1836–1886) classifies ideal man in five categories:¹⁷⁴

- (i) the *Svapna-Siddhas*, or those who attain perfection by means of dream inspiration;
- (ii) the *Mantra-Siddhas*, or those who attain perfection by means of a Mantra or sacred 'Name' of God;
- (iii) the *Hathat-Siddhas*, or those who attain perfection suddenly;
- (iv) the *Kṛipa-Siddha*, or those who attain perfection through the grace of God;
- (v) the *Nitya-Siddhas*, or those who are ever perfect.

On attaining perfection, an ideal man is able to destroy his passions and desires and to feel God in his own self.¹⁷⁵ He becomes a non-attached person.¹⁷⁶ To an ideal man every one appears equal, there is no distinction between high and low, caste and status.¹⁷⁷ An ideal man sometimes remains like an inanimate object, being struck dumb by seeing God within and without.¹⁷⁸ He works for the good of others. He is brave and courageous.¹⁷⁹

In the Sikh Scriptures there is no such division of ideal man as propounded by Ramakrishna in his thought. But the qualities of

168. Guru Nanak, Majh, p.145

169. Ibid., Gauri, p.153

170. Guru Tegh Bahador, Tilang, p.727

171. Guru Amardas, Gujri., p.491

172. Guru Ramdas, Gauri, p.172

173. Ibid., Gauri, p.171

174. 'Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna' p.291

175. Ibid., p.293

176. Ibid., p.294

177. Ibid., p.298

178. Ibid., p.300

179. Ibid., p.300

ideal man as seen by Ramakrishna also appear in Sikh Scriptures. According to Sikh Gurus,

- (i) Without subduing your passions,
Say, how will you be able to realise the Lord?¹⁸⁰
- (ii) All snares of attachment are black
and they blacken our whole body.¹⁸¹
- (iii) Call everyone high, none seems to be
low: for, God, the only potter, has
fashioned all alike, and His light alone
pervades all creation.¹⁸²
- (iv) Only the brave person dies a worthy death,
For, he is accepted by the Lord after his death.¹⁸³
- (v) If we want to get a seat in the court of
God, we should dedicate ourselves to the
service of the people in this world.¹⁸⁴

SWAMI VIVEKANAND (1836-1902) describes the characteristics of an ideal man as purity, thirst for knowledge and perseverance.¹⁸⁵ The ideal man would know the secret of the Scriptures,¹⁸⁶ be sinless¹⁸⁷ and work for humanity without any selfish motive.¹⁸⁸ To Swami Vivekanand, all ideal men represent God Himself in the form of man.¹⁸⁹ Such men, according to him, are much higher, for they transmit spirituality and purity.¹⁹⁰

The Sikh view also stresses the characteristics of an ideal man as suggested by Swami Vivekanand. According to Sikh Gurus,

- (i) Truth is realised through purity of the heart.¹⁹¹
- (ii) There can be no purity without purifying one's inner self.¹⁹²
- (iii) As with the appearance of the sun, the moon disappears, so
with the attainment of knowledge, ignorance is dispelled.¹⁹³
- (iv) The ignorant man wastes his valuable life
and cuts at his own roots.¹⁹⁴
- (v) Everyone is engrossed in his own gain,
None sacrifices himself for the sake of others,
Nanak, do not contact company with such men,
who think only of their own gains.¹⁹⁵

180. Guru Angad, Gauri, p.152

181. Guru Nanak, Dhanasri, p.662

182. Guru Nanak, Sri, p.62

183. Ibid., Vadhans., p.557

184. Ibid., Sri, p.26

185. *The complete works of Swami Vivekanand*, p.22

186. Ibid., p.23

187. Ibid., p.24

188. Ibid., p.27

189. Ibid., p.27

190. Guru Nanak, Asa p.472

191. Ibid., Ramkali p.903

192. Ibid., Suhi, p.791

193. Guru Arjan, Gauri, p.189

194. Guru Arjan, Gauri, p.192

195. Ibid., Asa, p.415

- (vi) Sins are stones carrying which we cannot swim across the ocean of existence.¹⁹⁶
- (vii) Perceiving the self, a man becomes one with the Formless One.¹⁹⁷

One of the basic differences between the Sikh thought and Swami Vivekanand is that Swami recommends ideal man to worship God as man (Avtarhood),¹⁹⁸ while the Sikh Gurus recommend the worship of only one Almighty God. Worship of Gurus and teachers is strictly prohibited in the Sikh religion.

DR. MOHAMMED IQBAL (1876-1938) enumerates three stages in the growth of an ideal man.¹⁹⁹ The first is the realisation of one's own self through oneself; the second is to see oneself in the light of other selves and the third is the realisation of God's personality and to see one's self in this light. To go through these stages, Iqbal suggests that an ideal man must have self-control;²⁰⁰ he must observe fasts, he must give to charity and he must go on pilgrimage. According to Dr. Iqbal, prayer is like a dagger which kills sins and worries; fasts breach the citadel of sensuality; charity fills the heart with righteousness and pilgrimage increases the instinct of devotion.²⁰¹ He maintains that a man reaches this stage of perfection only through love.²⁰² An ideal man rejects the idea of resignation and contentment.

Dr. Iqbal's concept of an ideal man is derived from the basic teachings of Islam. The characteristics of an ideal man, as suggested by him, are the ones suggested by Prophet Mohammed for a true Muslim.²⁰³ Dr. Iqbal's thought has some common points with the Sikh teaching, as has been discussed before. One of the points which Sikh thought rejects is the relevance of pilgrimage for the attainment of the Truth. According to Sikh Gurus,

- (i) The world is smeared with the dirt of ego and duality;
If one goes to wash it at the holy places,
the impurity goes not.²⁰⁴
- (ii) I shall not go for *Haj* to Mecca,
nor worship at the Hindu places,
I shall serve only Him where I am.²⁰⁵

Another of Dr. Iqbal's points which Sikh thought rejects is the observance of fasts. According to the Sikh belief,

196. Guru Nanak, Maru, p.990

197. Guru Nanak, Asa, p.415

198. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekanand* p.29

199. Bashir Ahmed Dar, *A Study in Iqbal's Philosophy*, p.182

200. *Ibid.*, p.166

201. *Ibid.*

202. *Ibid.*, p.174

203. See pages 58-59

204. Guru Amardas, Sri, p.32

205. Guru Arjan, Bhairo, p.1136

- (i) Who has full love and confidence in God,
Who puts no faith even by mistake in fasting,
or worshipping cemeteries, places of cremation,
..... He is recognised as a pure member of the Khalsa.²⁰⁶

DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN (1888-1975) calls an ideal man a *svarat*,²⁰⁷ a sovereign over himself. His life is vital and not mechanical. The moral sense is not external to him but is rooted in the depth of his soul.²⁰⁸ He is free from dogmatism and breathes the spirit of tolerance. He welcomes all who worship God. He is a member of an all-comprehending Church of Spirit, including all who have any religion whatsoever, all who believe that there is a right worth fighting for and a wrong worth fighting against.²⁰⁹ An ideal man believes in an individualistic religion and pleads for freedom and spontaneity. He may pray to God by reciting any name and by worshipping any image.²¹⁰ An ideal man also has unshakable faith in the supremacy of spirit, invincible optimism, ethical universalism and religious toleration.²¹¹

In Dr. Radhakrishnan's description of an ideal man, one can find almost all the characteristics as suggested by the Sikh Gurus. According to Sikh thought,

- (i) He who is the sovereign over himself, comes to know the Reality.²¹²
- (ii) Having gained a body this time,
A rare opportunity you have got;
This is your opportunity to meet the Lord
your other pursuits will be of no avail at the end.²¹³
- (iii) All rituals, dogmas and ceremonies are the chains of the mind.²¹⁴
- (iv) He to whom the ways of tolerance are revealed shall be blessed.²¹⁵
- (v) He who grasps the truth, realises that there is but one religion of all mankind; as God is one and has ever been the same.²¹⁶

One of the points at which Sikh thought differs from Dr. Radhakrishnan's is the worship of images. Sikhism forbids the worship of images.

A Sikh must worship one Almighty God and must not draw or make His images and worship them.

- (i) "The ignorant fools worship stones, not realizing that stones which themselves sink cannot ferry others across."²¹⁷
- (ii) "I am opposed to the crooked Hill-men because they are idolaters and I am an idol breaker."²¹⁸

206. Guru Gobind Singh, *Sawayya*

207. Radhakrishnan: *An Idealist View of Life*, p.118

208. *Ibid.*

209. *Ibid.*

210. *Ibid.*

211. *Ibid.*, p.126

212. Guru Nanak, *Gauri*, p.224

213. Guru Arjan, *Asa*, p.372

214. Guru Nanak, *Sorath*, p.635

215. Guru Nanak, *Majh*, p.142

216. *Ibid.*, *Basant*, p.1188

217. *Ibid.*, *Bihagra*, p.556

218. Guru Gobind Singh, *Zafarnama*, verse no.95

CHAPTER II

CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL MAN ACCORDING TO EMINENT RELIGIOUS TEACHERS AND PROPHETS IN THE CONTEXT OF SIKH THOUGHT

EGYPTIANS are said to be the most ancient, the first nation.¹ Their oldest written thoughts are embodied in *Memphite Sesame*.² It contains a long list of the qualities of an ideal man. The basic idea is that as God actively thought of man, an ideal man in turn should actively think of God. An ideal man should maintain in turn fellowship with God through prayer.³

A similar idea is also advocated in the Dasam Granth,
“Know all deeds to be useless,
Believe all religions to be of no avail,
Without the PRAYER of the One Name of God,
Believe all practices and acts to be useless and superstitious.⁴
And according to Guru Granth Sahib,
“The head that never bows in PRAYER before the Master,
Is worth chopping off.”⁵

It is believed that *Memphite Sesame* was written by priests from Heliopolis in the middle of the fourth century B.C.⁶ It begins with an invocation to the god Ptah, the local god of Memphis.⁷ Ptah is proclaimed the Creator over all things. His creative organs are heart and tongue, the respective seats of intelligence and expression.⁸ An ideal man, therefore is the embodiment of realised intelligence.⁹

According to the Dasam Granth,
“..... Know that it is through mere ignorance,
And *lack of intelligence*,
That you run after deeds of non-religious and other shows;
Collect the wealth of WISDOM and CONTEMPLATION,
And discard egoism;
In this way pain and sin shall not touch you.....”¹⁰

1. E. W. F. Tomlin, *The Eastern Philosophers*, p.36

2. Ibid., p.36

3. Ibid., p.43

4. Guru Gobind Singh, *Akal Ustat*, verse 50

5. Guru Angad, *Siri*, p.89

6. E. W. F. Tomlin, *op cit.*, p.36

7. Ibid., p.38

8. Ibid., p.40

9. Ibid., p.40

10. Guru Gobind Singh, *Shabad, Ramkali, Dasam Granth*, p.710

According to *Memphite Sesame*, the world came into being and is continually sustained in the being by the active operation of Intelligence,¹¹ which is the breath of god Ptah.¹²

HAMMURABI, King of Babylon, was the recipient of the gift of the oldest legal code from the Babylonian deity Shmash.¹³ The concluding section of the code dealing with idealism states: "I am the guardian governor.... In my bosom I carried the people of the land of Sumer and Akkad..... In my wisdom I restrained them that the strong might not oppress the weak, and that they should give justice to the orphan and the widow..... let any oppressed man who has a cause, come before my image as King of Righteousness..... let him read the inscription of my monument..... and may my monument enlighten him as to his cause, and may he understand his case."¹⁴

The idea of the protection of the weak and suppression of the oppressor runs throughout the Dasam Granth; Guru Gobind Singh states:

"I have come into the world.....
..... To protect the weak,
And to extirpate all evil doers."¹⁵

Hammurabi's legal code, the most enlightened and liberal code that the world has known, was formulated nearly four thousand years ago;¹⁶ a careful and detailed study of the code expected from a good citizen. For example, the code lays great emphasis on sense of justice, help to others, good and honest thinking, and right and honest deeds.¹⁷

According to Guru Granth Sahib,
"He alone has found the right way,
Who eats what he earns through **TOIL AND HONESTY**,
And shares his earnings with others."¹⁸

According to the Dasam Granth, Guru Gobind Singh's prayer is,
"O Lord, grant me this boon,
That I may never refrain from doing *good deeds*."¹⁹

ABRAHAM, father of three great religions of the world, all his life was engaged in preaching the idealism of man.²⁰ According to him the basic quality of an ideal man was 'Divine connection.'²¹ In relation to this thought, Guru Gobind Singh says,

11. E. W. F. Tomlin, op. cit., p.40

12. Ibid., p.43

13. R. Harper, *Code of Hammurabi*, p.10

14. C. H. W. John, *The Oldest Code of Law*, p.12

15. Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*, verse 43

16. E. W. Tomlin, op. cit., p.90

17. Ibid., p.92

18. Guru Nanak, *Sarang*, p.1245

19. Guru Gobind Singh, *Chandi Charitar*, verse 231

20. Woolley, *Abraham*, p.183

21. E. W. F. Tomlin, op.cit., p.115

“Put faith in no created thing except the Creator,
Own HIM as your God, who is Primal, Birthless, Invincible and
Immortal.²²

Abraham came from Ur, in Chaldea, and obeyed a divine call to leave his home and proceed to the land of Canaan.²³ He was promised that his descendants would become a great nation²⁴ and play a unique role in the history of the human race. Abraham was seventy-five years old when he received God’s first Command.²⁵ When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God appeared to him again and said, ‘I will make my covenant between me and you and will multiply you exceedingly.’²⁶ ‘Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.’²⁷ The family of Abraham eventually settled in neighbouring Egypt, where in course of centuries, their number multiplied. One of his descendants, Moses, became conscious of the slavery of his fellow Israelites; and when God’s voice recalled him and bade him lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, he obeyed.²⁸ Later, the Lord revealed Himself to Moses at Sinai as the Lawgiver and entered into a covenant with Israel.²⁹ All these revelations are recorded in ‘*Torah*’, the holy book of the Jews. The main text of the *Torah* is provided by ‘Ten Words’, or ‘Ten Commandments’,³⁰ which constitute the basic qualities of a Hebrew Ideal man. The commandments dictate what an ideal man must or must not do. The Commandments are:

“I am the Lord, your God, you shall have no other gods before me; “You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God;

“You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain;

“Remember the sabbath day. Six days you shall labour, and seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord; in it you shall not do any work;

“You shall honour your father and mother;

“You shall not kill;

“You shall not commit adultery;

“You shall not steal;

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour;

22. Guru Gobind Singh, Shabad Kalyan, *Dasam Granth*, p.710

23. Genesis 12

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.17

27. Ibid.

28. Exodus: 3, 4

29. Ibid., 19, 20

30. Ibid., 20

“You shall not covet your neighbour’s house, your neighbour’s wife or anything that is your neighbour’s”³¹

Other parts of the *Torah* deal with the sacredness and moral purposes of human life, the equality of all without distinction, including the foreigner and the slave before the law, personal holiness, and justice and righteousness in social relations.

In the twelfth century A.D., Moses Maimonides worked out thirteen articles to produce a formula against which Jewish doctrines and principles could be measured. These articles are listed to this day in the authorised prayer of most Jewish congregations. It lays down, inter alia, thirteen fundamental beliefs of an ideal man who has faith in Jewish religion.

The beliefs are:

1. Belief in the existence of a Creator and Providence.
2. Belief in His unity.
3. Belief in His incorporality.
4. Belief in His eternity.
5. Belief that to Him alone is worship due.
6. Belief in the words of the Prophets.
7. Belief that Moses was the greatest of all prophets.
8. Belief in the revelation of the Lord to Moses at Sinai.
9. Belief in the immutability of the revealed law.
10. Belief that God is Omniscient.
11. Belief in retribution in this world and the hereafter.
12. Belief in the coming of the Messiah.
13. Belief in the resurrection of the dead.³²

The idea of Godhead and certain beliefs and commandments also run in the Dasam Granth and Guru Granth Sahib. The points which are not advocated by the Sikh scriptures and the points in which the Sikh thought differs from the Jewish beliefs are discussed below:

(I) for I the Lord, your God, am a jealous God’

In the whole Sikh thought there is no such reference as to make God as a jealous God. The Sikh view of Godhead has been described in both Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth. In the Dasam Granth, Guru Gobind Singh has elaborated all the aspects of the Sikh conception of God.

(i) God is creative:

“Just as out of one fire million of sparks emanate,

.....

Just as out of a duststorm countless dust particles are cast off.

.....

Just as out of the vast sea rise a myriad of waves

So out of the infinite universal Being emanate the living and insensate nature.³³

31. Ibid.

32. Norman Anderson (Ed.), *The World's Religions*, pp.56-57

33. Guru Gobind Singh, *Akal Ustat*, verse 87

(ii) God is Immanent:

.....

At all times and in every place, in all forms and appearances,
I feel You O Beloved, to be ever the same. ”34a

(iii) God is Infinite, Eternal and Absolute:

“He has no colour, no form no profile,

.....

He is beyond Time.....

.....

He is beyond births and deaths..... ”34b

(iv) God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient:

“In the sea is God, in the desert God;

In the heart is God, in the forest God;

On the mountain is God; in the cavern, God;

On the earth is God: in the sky, God:

”35

.....

(v) God is Saviour:

“God is the saviour of the poor and humble,

The saints He glorifies, the perverse He destroys.

He is the sustainer of the birds, the animals.....

He sees our ever-mounting faults, sins and he tires not of
forgiving them....

He ultimately destroys all the evil forces..... 36

(vi) “He is source of Beauty.....

His is all Truth.....

His speech is unstruck music..... ”37

(II) ‘You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.....’

The Sikh philosophy does not recognise this Commandment.

The belief is that the name of God can be taken any time.

There is no such thing as – ‘..... in vain’, in the Sikh belief.

According to the Dasam Granth,

“He who takes His name day and night...

Is true and pure Khalsa. ”38

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

(i) “Day and night for ever,

Remember the Name of God... ”39

(ii) “Contemplate the Lord, standing and sitting,

Either awake or asleep... ”40

(III) “You shall not do any labour on sabbath...”

The Sikh religion, unlike other religions, does not recognise a day
of the week as a special day. The Christians recognise ‘Sunday’, the
Muslims prescribe ‘Friday’, the Hindus earmark ‘Tuesday’ and the

34. a & b Ibid., verses 103-113

35. Ibid., verses 246

36. Ibid., verses 243-246

37. Ibid., verses 247, 259

38. Guru Gobind Singh, 33 Swayyas, 1

39. Guru Arjan, Gauri, p.498

40. Ibid., Asa 379

Jews recognise 'Saturday' as their weekly holy day. The Sikh religion rejects such a belief of a special day and also denounces all the rituals and practices prescribed for such days by other religions.

According to Guru Granth Sahib, all days of the week are special and important. They are meant to show the division of time and it is foolish to call some days of the week holy and others unholy.

According to Guru Amardas,

"On Sunday remember God...

On Monday attune to the Truth and see God permeating all...

On Tuesday meditate on Him, who knows all, who has created all...

On Wednesday hail the victory of the Lord...

On Thursday praise Him who has created all the gods and goddesses.

On Friday worship that Embodiment of Love, Truth and Continence...

On Saturday praise the Almighty who is mentioned in all the holy books...

The fifteen lunar days and the seven solar days,

And twelve months and six seasons come again and again,

Like the ever-changing day and night is the world in flux,

And comes and goes, as is the Will of the Creator-Lord....."⁴¹

Thus for a Sikh all days, seasons and months are the same. No particular days are more holy than the others.

(IV) 'Belief in the resurrection of the dead.....'

The idea of the resurrection of the dead is very strong in the Jewish and Muslim beliefs. The Sikhs, however, do not recognise this concept. According to the Sikh thought, a man is tried in the court of God according to his deeds. The judgement then determines the next birth or form for the individual soul. The good actions along with meditation can earn God's Grace which can then lead a man to salvation or *mukti*. In the Sikh belief there are no geographical places or boundaries called heaven and hell.⁴² The concept is used to illustrate the results of good and bad deeds and the good and bad stages in the present and future life. When a man, who by good deeds, love, meditation and prayer has purified himself and earned God's Grace, dies, he goes directly to God's abode and is released from the pangs of metem-psychosis. Those who fail to earn His Grace and are involved in bad deeds go through a cycle of many thousands of lives till they earn back a human birth.

ZORASTER, the prophet of the Parsees lived about 6,000 years B.C.⁴³ He assigned righteousness, adherence to *Ahura Mazda* (the

41. Guru Amardas, Bilawal, p.841. See also Kabir, Gauri, p.344

42. G. S. Mansukhani, *Introduction to Sikhism*, p.37

43. E. W. F. Tomlin, op. cit., p.133; This date is, however, debateable. There is a belief that he lived between 628 B.C. and 551 B.C. See G. Parrinder, *A Dictionary of Non-Christian Religions*, p.316

name given to God by the Parsees), help to God in His struggle against evil and cooperation with God as the basic qualities of an Ideal man.⁴⁴

The history of the Parsees states that Zoraster when young wandered in desert places seeking to speak to God. He was led into the presence of God by *Vohu Mana* (Good Mind). *Ahura Mazda* asked Zoraster to spread His mission in the world, to preach to the people to lead a good life and to tell the world to worship *Ahura Mazda* alone. Zoraster did believe in *Angra Mainyu* (The Spirit of Evil) as well and gave it equal status with *Ahura Mazda*.⁴⁵ He also believed that ultimately *Ahura Mazda* would triumph over *Angra Mainyu*.

The above view of equality of spirit of Evil with God is contrary to the Sikh belief. According to Sikh thought, everything including the Evil is created by God. Evil, here, does not mean Satan as in Christian and other beliefs, but anything which is not good and which is against the code of morality.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

“There are five evils the body has to conquer,
Lust, Anger, Greed, Attachment and Pride.”⁴⁶

In the Sikh belief, evil plays an integral part in the growth of the human mind. The ‘Good’ can be evaluated and ascertained only when it is in clash with the ‘Evil’. Man must learn to control evil. This is the main purpose of the world drama as staged by God. The spiritual progress is possible through noble actions, *Nam Simran* (meditation), self-control, humility and good deeds. The Sikh belief explains in detail how these qualities can be cultivated and evil eradicated from one’s mind.

CONFUCIUS, the prophet of the Chinese, lived about 551–471 B.C. He taught that in order to be an ideal man one must be a hard-working, conscientious and disciplined person. One must also be honest, reliable and trustworthy.⁴⁷ In his philosophy of human values, he set up a new standard of human relations and tried to improve the condition of life.⁴⁸ He believed that he was called by ‘Heaven’ to bring about the reform of society.⁴⁹ His teachings are preserved in a question-answer form in the *Analects*. Other books associated with his name are: the *Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Works of Mencius*. His expression for an ideal man was a ‘Princely Man.’ He believed in the importance of virtue, propriety and rituals.⁵⁰ He claimed that virtue was the foundation of happiness,⁵¹ and that a man could be virtuous only if he made up his mind to it.⁵² His basic philosophy was to make this world better than

44. E. G. Parrinder, *A Book of World Religions*, p.115

45. B. W. Sherrat and D. J. Hawkins, *Gods and Men*, p.175

46. Guru Amardas, Sorath, p.600

47. B. W. Sherrat and D. J. Hawkins, op. cit., p.204

48. C. S. Summer, *The Philosophy of Man*, p.50

49. E. G. Parrinder, op. cit., p.80

50. Norman Anderson, op. cit., p.221 51. Ibid., p.222 52. Ibid., p.222

the next.⁵³ He emphasised that man could become 'princely' by practising Kindness, Sincerity, Graciousness, Loyalty and Self-Denial.⁵⁴

Confucius was a moralist and a great teacher. He always stressed that the people should respect and look after their parents.⁵⁵

Two main points of Confucius's teachings which directly conflict with the Sikh thought are: Firstly, his belief in the rituals; and secondly, his indifference towards the next world. In the Sikh literature, an ideal man is strictly forbidden to involve himself in any kind of rituals.

"Why do you perform hypocrisies and useless rituals.....

Get it firmly rooted in your heart that merely by wearing a specific robe,

Or other outwardly symbols,

Lord is not attained."⁵⁶

Unlike Confucius, Sikh Gurus believed in *the existence of life after death.*⁵⁷ An ideal man, according to the Sikh Gurus, must not try to make only this life comfortable but should also endeavour to improve the next life. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

(i) "Hereafter one has to cross the Sea of Fire with its poisonous flames,

And there no one, save for one's soul, keeps company with one.

The Sea of Fire blazes its waves leaping high,

And the egocentric is cast into it and he is roasted therein.⁵⁸

(ii) "Save yourself both here and hereafter,

By remembering the Lord's Name in your heart."⁵⁹

(iii) "He whose protector is the Guru-God,

he is questioned not hereafter."⁶⁰

According to the Sikh thought, after death, the soul carried with itself the imprint of a man's mental and moral fabric, one's whole past in the form of his character. On the basis of these impressions one's future and the quality of the next life is determined. Thus a man becomes an architect of his own destiny.⁶¹ So long as he is conscious of his Divine connections and the spiritual origin and lives in God's presence, there is no cycle of births and death for him.⁶³

The very moment he forgets about his Divinity and he goes farther away from Truth, Virtue and *Nam*, the greater he involves himself in the cycle of births and deaths, joys and sorrows, and comforts and

53. Ibid., p.222

54. Ibid., p.221

55. E. G. Parrinder, op. cit., p80

56. *Dasam Granth*, p.713

57. Ibid., 19

58. Guru Nanak, Maru, p.1009

59. Guru Arjan, Gauri Sukhmani, p.293

60. Ibid., Siri, Ashtpadies, p.71

61. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Nanak the Apostle of Love*, p.66

63. Guru Nanak, Ramkali, p.941, Gauri, p.228 Dhanasri p.662, 663 Bhairo, p.1127

pangs. With the quality of his deeds he undergoes either a moral evolution or a moral devolution.⁶⁴ Sikhism rejects the Hindu doctrine of *Karma* which condemns a man to the cycle of life and death indefinitely. Anyone can overcome the *Karmic* forces by attaining God's Grace,⁶⁵ through noble deeds,⁶⁶ selfless service,⁶⁷ love for God and humanity,⁶⁸ meditation on God's name⁶⁹ and purified life.⁷⁰

LAO TZU lived about 604 B.C.–444 B.C. and is another respected and revered Chinese Prophet, though some writers claim that his life and teachings are not history but myth.⁷¹

Tzu, in his teachings, has given us a very realistic prescription for becoming an ideal man. His belief is that by cultivating an attitude of mind which involves perfect harmony and stillness one becomes a better receptacle for receiving *Tao*, the basic power of the Universe. To reach a state of an ideal man where one is ready to receive *Tao*, one must purge oneself of all desires, customs and impurities of thought and actions.

The ideal man is the Perfect man.⁷³ Perfection is attained through the constant ascending evolution of the soul (*Yang*), called *Shen*. Thus the true condition, i.e. a condition of holiness, of an ideal man is realised.⁷⁴

Tzu's teachings are preserved in his book, called *Way*, which is the greatest of all the Chinese books on religious and moral philosophy and is very widely read and revered.⁷⁵

The *Book of the Way* says that men should live according to nature,⁷⁶ in non-violence,⁷⁷ and no weapons should be used even for defence.⁷⁸ The ideal man should always be humble⁷⁹ and should work without expecting any reward.⁸⁰ Tzu in this book says,

“He who by *Tao* proposes to help a ruler of men,
Will oppose all conquest by force of arms;
For such things are meant to rebound.....”⁸¹

The teaching of Tzu, which runs in direct contradiction to the Sikh theory of an ideal man, is clear on the prohibition of the use of arms even for defence. The whole purpose of the creation of the

64. Gurmukh Nihal Singh, *Guru Nanak His Life, Time and Teachings*, p.101

65. Guru Nanak, *Siri*, p.730

66. *Ibid.*, *Asa* pp.354, 468

67. *Ibid.*, *Asa*, pp.354, 468, *Siri*, p.26

68. *Ibid.*, *Siri*, pp.60, 62

69. *Ibid.*, *Suhi*, p.730; *Dhanasri* p.661

70. *Ibid.*, *Dhanasri*, p.586; *Ramkali* p.938

71. E. G. Parrinder, *op. cit.*, p.82

72. C. S. Summers, *op. cit.*, p.50

73. C. S. Summers, *op. cit.*, p.50

74. *Ibid.*, p.50

75. E. G. Parrinder, *op. cit.*, p.82

76. *Ibid.*, p.127

77. *Ibid.*, p.127

78. *Ibid.*, p.127

79. *Ibid.*, p.127

80. *Ibid.*, p.127

81. E. G. Parrinder, *op. cit.* (Trans) *Way* 30

Khalsa was to make lions out of feeble and weak people and to teach them the usefulness of arms in cases of injustice and tyranny. The people of Northern India, who had been run over by hordes of Muslim invaders, and who were molested and looted many a time before the appearance of Guru Gobind Singh on the worldly stage with his Divine Mission, became overnight an army of fearless Saint-Soldiers and have been in Indian history as the bravest and most courageous martyrs of their times.

Explaining his own mission, the Tenth Master said,

- (i) "I have taken birth.....
To seize and hurl down evil-doers....."⁸²
- (ii) "..... When all other means are exhausted,
It is fair to use the Sword."⁸³

But it must not be forgotten that the Guru recommended the use of arms only for defence and only as a last resort when all the peaceful means and negotiations had failed.⁸⁴

THE SHINTO SCRIPTURES date back to 1,000 B.C. and indicate the belief in and worship of the Japanese gods and the culture associated with them.⁸⁵ They are divided into two main branches: *Jinja* (Shrine) and *Kyoha* (Sect).⁸⁶

The Shintos believe in organised priesthood and an elaborate ritual. They mention a number of gods – public, village and family gods. The religion of the Shinto is a religion of gratitude and love.⁸⁷ The old Shinto stressed that man, in order to achieve perfection, must love Nature and show respect for the powers behind it. The modern Shinto has added social work and prayer as the qualities of an ideal man.⁸⁸ To illustrate the faith of the Shinto, one of the sacred Japanese song reads:

"The True Way is one and the same,
In every country and throughout heaven and earth"⁸⁹

The Sikh thought conflicts with that of the Shinto in many ways. Firstly, the Sikh thought rejects any organised priesthood⁹⁰ whereas the Shinto faith recognises it. Sikhism does not recognise the vow of celibacy. There are no nuns or monks in Sikhism. In the Sikh temples and at the Sikh ceremonies any Baptised Sikh can perform the priest' duties and, unlike many other religions, women, in Sikhism, can also perform the duties of a priest.⁹¹

Secondly, Sikhism is not only monotheist but also a monist religion. It believes in only One God. There is no place of any gods

82. Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak Chaupai*, 41-46

83. *Ibid.* *Zafarnama*, vs 32, 42, 43

84. *Ibid.*

85. G. Parrinder, *A Dictionary of Non-Christian Religions* p.255

86. *Ibid.*, p.255

87. G. Parrinder, *Asian Religions*, p.119

88. G. Parrinder, *A Book of World Religions*, p.132

89. Motoori, *Precious Comb-box* 6, quoted by G. Parrinder, *op. cit.*, p.132

90. G. S. Mansukhani, *Introduction to Sikhism*, p.83

91. *Ibid.*, p.83

and goddesses in Sikhism, whereas the Shinto recommends the worship of a number of gods and goddesses. According to the Dasam Granth,

“The Lord is the *Only* and Absolute One.....”⁹²

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

“God is Absolute, all Powerful and whatever He alone wills comes to pass.....”⁹³

Thirdly, as has been mentioned before,⁹⁴ Sikhism does not believe in any rituals.

On the other points of Love for the Nature and the Power behind it, social work and prayer, the Sikh view is similar to that of the Shinto.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

(i) “O man! let your love for God be like that of the fish for the water,

The more the water, the more she revels and feels peace of mind and body,

But without the water, she cannot live even for a moment.”⁹⁵

(ii) “..... We should dedicate ourselves to the service of the people in this world.”⁹⁶

(iii) “it is prayer..... that succeeds with God.”⁹⁷

PRE-VEDIC BELIEFS date back to 2,000 B.C.⁹⁸ They emphasise the doctrine of *Karma*, meaning that while a man in the present may be the product of his own past, he is essentially the sole architect of his own future. Man’s idealism is sustained by love and justice to his fellowmen and God.⁹⁹ Yoga and contemplation are essential for union with God.¹⁰⁰

The Sikh thought also believes in the *Karma* theory but with a modification that the man can improve his own future in a limited way. On this point, Sikhism also lays a great deal of stress on *Hukam* (God’s Will). According to Guru Granth Sahib,

(i) “All are subject to God’s Command,
Nothing is outside His sway.”¹⁰¹

(ii) “God’s Command directs the path”¹⁰²

The theories of *Karma*, *Hukam* and the Free Will of Man are very complex. According to the Sikh thought, *the Karma* of a man refer to *Kirt Karma*, in other words, the accumulated deeds of the past which determine the next live. As a man who graduates from a university with good honours has a chance to get a good career in

92. Guru Gobind Singh, *Akal Ustat*, v.1

93. Guru Nanak, Wadhans, p.579

94. See page 25

95. Guru Nanak, Wadhans p.557

96. Ibid., Siri, p.26

97. Ibid., Asa, p.474

98. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy*, p.38

99. Ibid., p.38

100. Ibid.

101. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.1

102. Ibid, p.2

the future, his hard labour and studious work are his *Kirt Karma*. A good job and a brilliant career are his future (representing next life in the Karma theory). Now, suppose that man becomes a university lecturer. To perform his duties, he would be given a time-table by his Head of Department. This time-table the lecturer cannot change. The time of his reporting and leaving the university is prescribed in the time table. This can only be changed or amended by the head of Department. This time-table is thus a Command-Directive (representing *Hukam* in the Karma theory) of the Head of Department which only the head can change. Within the given time-table, the lecturer has the Free Will to chose his own way of assigning the home-work. If the lecturer works hard, with honesty, loyalty and enthusiasm, if he prepares his lessons and gives his best to the students; and if his class-results are good, then he will have a chance to get the favour of the Head of Department (the Grace of God in the theory of *Karma*) and get promoted and ultimately retire as the Head of Department (being one with God in the Karma theory). Thus the best and honest use of the Free Will within the given time-table, i.e. *Hukam*, on which the lecturer has no control, will become the lecturer's *Kirt Karma* and will determine his future (next life in the Karma theory).

The same principle applies to one's life. The good or bad *Karma* of today, determine the quality of one's life in the future. A rich or poor man, a deaf or dumb man is the result of his *Kirt Karma*. What a man is now is the result of his past deeds; and what he will be, will depend what he does in the present. Within these constraints, one must earnestly try to become an ideal man; and if successful he will be freed from the cycle of life and death for good, and become merged in God, the Head of the world.

Thus, according to the Sikh thought, 'We' are the 'Effects', and 'We' are the 'Causes.' We are responsible for what we suffer and each one of us is the maker and designer of his own destiny.

THE VEDIC BELIEFS date back to 1200 B.C.¹⁰³ In the *Vedas* the concept of *rta* invested the moral code with sublimity and inviolability, and its working with inevitability and justice, anticipating thus the doctrine of *Karma*. According to the moral code¹⁰⁴ of the *Vedas*, an ideal man must possess honesty, rectitude and fellow-feeling. He must give in charity, be truthful, be salutary and agreeable in speech, be non-violent, have reverential faith, lead the life of a recluse and practise austerity. The ideal man must not commit sins, viz., swearing, falsehood, imprecation, back-biting, dishonesty, gambling, egoistic enjoyment, theft, adultery, injury to life and sorcery.

103. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp.45-46

104. Ibid., pp.45-46

The Vedas are believed to be a few of the earliest holy texts that we possess. The Vedas are four in number – *Atharva*, *Rig*, *Sama* and *Yajur*. Each Veda consists of three parts, known as *Mantras*, the creation of the poets; *Brahmans*, the work of the priests; and *Upanashids*, the meditations of the philosophers.

The fundamental differences of Vedic idealism and Sikh idealism are the following:

Firstly, while the ethical idealism of the Vedas recommends the life of a recluse,¹⁰⁶ the Sikh idealism very strongly supports the life of a householder. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

“..... Such is the distinctive greatness of the supreme Guru
That through His Grace and Guidance,
One can attain salvation,
Even while surrounded by one’s wife and children.....”¹⁰⁷

Secondly, the Vedas believe in a number of gods and goddesses,¹⁰⁸ whereas as discussed before, Sikhism is a monist faith and believes in no one else except One Supreme Reality, who is the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of the Universe.

Finally, unlike the Vedas and other Indian and foreign traditions and beliefs, Sikhism considers human life as the supreme gift of the Almighty. The man, according to the Sikh thought, is a microcosm.

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

- (i) “What is there in the Universe,
Is also found in the human body.”¹⁰⁹
- (ii) Such is the Divine Play of the Creator,
That He has reflected the whole Cosmos in the human
body.”¹¹⁰
- (iii) “In the human body we find,
The wealth of all the world.”¹¹¹

UPNASHID – In one of the Upanashids which also dates back to 1200 B.C.,¹¹² *Brhadaranyaka* enumerates the main functions of the mind, i.e. the desire, resolve, doubt, faith, steadfastness, lack of faith, shame, intellect and fear. The *Vijananamaya* and *Anandamaya* represent the moral and the supra-moral levels of experience. In describing the different parts of the *Vijananamaya*, the Upanashid says, “Faith is its head, righteousness the right side; truth the left side; contemplation the body; might the lower part, the foundation.”¹¹³

105. Ibid., pp.45-46

106. K. M. Sen, *Hinduism*, p.23. See also Rabindernath Tagore, *Religion of Man*, p.198

107. Guru Nanak, *Dhanasri*, p.661

108. Chapter 2, p.21; *Rig Veda* says: “... the gods are later than the world’s production ...” (10.129) “... He knows the gods who dwell above.”

109. Guru Nanak, *Maru Sohila*, pp.1020

110. Ibid., pp.117, 72

111. Ibid., *Suhi*, p.754

112. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit* p.56

113. *Taittiriya Upanashid*, 11-4

The *Upanashids* explore the depths of the inner world.¹¹⁴ They reject to identify the 'self' (inner world) with the bodily self,¹¹⁵ the empirical self¹¹⁶ and the transcendental self¹¹⁷ They connect it with only the absolute self¹¹⁸ The inner immortal self and the great cosmic power are one and the same.¹¹⁹ The Supreme Power through which all things have been brought into being is one with the inmost self in each man's heart.¹²⁰

In the *Upanashids* the concept of the ideal man has been mixed up with the concept of the Universal Reality,¹²¹ which is too difficult to comprehend, for it has nothing specifically human, since it is the substratum of both world and man.¹²²

According to the *Upanashids* you can only contemplate Reality alone; it is a personal experience. It rejects the idea of corporate worship.

Sikhism does not recognise the Universal Reality to be human and it encourages corporate worship. The idea of *Sangat* (religious congregation) is, rather, one of the corner-stones of the Sikh religion. Commenting on the form of God, Guru Gobind Singh said,

"God has no form or feature,
God has no caste or lineage;

None can describe His appearance, colour, mark or garb."¹²⁴
According to Guru Granth Sahib,

"Come dear holy men;

Let us speak of the Gospel of the Ineffable God."¹²⁵

The corporate worship, in Sikhism, gathered momentum in the times of Guru Arjan and reached its peak in the times of Guru Hargobind.¹²⁶ Guru Hargobind also introduced the custom of choirs moving nightly round the Golden Temple and, with the blare of trumpets and flare of torches, singing hymns in stirring tunes.¹²⁷

RAMAYANA was composed about 400 B.C. It presents, inter alia, a practical philosophy underlying ethics and religion. According to its thought, the ends which motivate human activities and which every normal human being should strive to attain (*Purusartha*) are three in number and hence collectively called *Tri-Varga*. These are *Dharma* (Spiritual merit), *Artha* (Wealth or material well-being) and *Kama* (Gratification of desire or pleasure).¹²⁸

114. *Koṭha Upanashid*, 11-4, The Self-existent pierced the openings of the senses so that they turn towards, not inwards into himself; some wise man, however, with his eyes closed and wishing for immortality, saw the self behind."

115. *Chandogya Upanashid*, VIII 3-12

116. *Ibid.*, 3-12 117. *Ibid.*, 3-12

118. *Ibid.*, 3-12 119. *Ibid.*, 3-12

120. *Ibid.*, III, 14 Jean Filliozat

121. *Anthropology of Religions*, p.109

122. C. Summers, *op. cit.*, p.44

124. Guru Gobind Singh, *Jap*, Chhape Chhand, verse no. 1

125. Guru Amardas, *Ramkali*, p.918

126. Mohsin Fani, *Debistan-i-Mazahib*, p.239

127. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p.40

128. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p.48

The Sikh thought accepts the attainment of *Dharma* and *Artha*, but regarding *Kama* it has its own theory which differs from the philosophy of *Ramanaya*. Sikhism accepts sex as a fact of life; but rejects lust, promiscuity and permissiveness. According to Guru Granth Sahib.

“Ideal men become desireless and reject lust,
Thus they attain to Supreme Bliss,
In household, they remain unattached,
And in life they show affection for the Lord,
Sorrow and Separation cling not to them,
And they remain happy in the Lord’s Will.”¹³¹

According to Bhai Gurdas Bhalla, a contemporary of Guru Arjan and the scribe of Guru Granth Sahib,

“An ideal man must regard all other women, except his own wife, as daughters and sisters.”^{131a}

In the Sikh philosophy, sex in family life is permitted. It is regarded as a part of the social order and worldly commitment. A happy family life is considered a great achievement and a divine boon.

BHAGAVAD GITA dates back to 200 B.C. It emphasises the doctrine of four *Gunas* as determinants of individual character: (a) *The Sattva* (Goodness) meaning purity, *The Rajas* (Activity) meaning passion and the *Tamas* (Darkness) meaning laziness or negativity.¹³² “These three qualities are manifested in our daily motivation and determine the differences in eating, types of sacrifice and altruistic action. For example, fresh and natural food is an example of *Sattva*: fried and spicy food which generally creates passion is a case of *Rajas*; whereas fermented, decomposed and preserved food is a mode of *Tamas*,”¹³³ (b) *The Dharma*, spiritual merit or the path of Truth, (c) *Artha*, wealth or material advantage and (d) *Kama*, gratification of desire or pleasure.¹³⁴ The main emphasis is, however, on *Dharma* which as a goal of ideal man’s endeavour represents the principle of righteousness.¹³⁵

The *Gita* also lays stress on the path of duty,¹³⁶ the necessity of action including righteous war even with the kith and kin,¹³⁷ and the path of *Bhakti* (Devotion)¹³⁸ as the qualities of an ideal man.

The idealism of *Bhagavad Gita* and that of the Sikh Scriptures contain common points in spite of some differences. The *Bhagavad Gita* says,

“Whenever there is decay of righteousness,
And there is exaltation of unrighteousness,

131. Guru Amardas p.1249 131a, Bhalla, Bhai Gurdas, *Varan*

132. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp.79-106

133. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Ramdas*, pp.123, 134 143

134. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp.79-106

135. Ibid. pp.79-106

136. *Bhagavad Gita*, Translation by Juan Mascaro, 2 (1, 2, 31, 32)

137. Ibid., 2 (33); 3 (8)

138. Ibid., 3 (3); 5 (2)

Then I myself come forth;
For the protection of the good,
For the destruction of the evil-doers.
For the sake of firmly establishing righteousness,
I am born from age to age.”¹³⁹

The Dasam Granth says,

“I am the slave of the Supreme Being,
And have come to behold the spectacle of the world.

.....
To seize and hurl down evil-doers.....

.....
To spread the faith, to protect the saints,
And to extirpate all tyrants and despots.”¹⁴⁰

The message of the above two quotations is the same. The divine mission of Lord Krishna and Guru Gobind Singh, as described in the quotes, is also the same. But there is one striking difference. Where as the *Bhagavad Gita* recommends ‘Avtarvad’, the incarnation of God in the human form, the *Dasam Granth* and the *Guru Granth Sahib* reject it. In the Sikh holy scriptures, it is the messengers or prophets who are sent with a divine message or mission. God himself is Unborn.¹⁴¹

According to the Dasam Granth, .

“Put faith in no created thing.....
Have faith only in God, who is Primal, Birthless.....”¹⁴³

According to Guru Granth Sahib,
“God is beyond birth and death.....”¹⁴⁴

Another common point in the *Gita* and the Sikh scriptures is the war of righteousness. The *Gita* says,

“In the war of righteousness,
In death the glory is in heaven,
In the victory the glory is on earth.”¹⁴⁵

The *Dasam Granth* says,

“In the war of righteousness,
The brave fight and when they die,
They go to celestial regions.”¹⁴⁶

Again, the *Gita* says,

“Think of your duty and do not waver,
There is no greater good for a warrior,
Than to fight in a righteous war.”¹⁴⁷

139. *Bhagvad Gita*, op. cit., 4 (7, 8)

140. Guru Gobin Singh, *Bachitar Natak*, verses 32, 42, 43

141. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.1

143. Ibid., Kalyan, *Shabad Hazare*, 5

144. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.1

145. *Bhagavad Gita*, op. cit., 2 (37)

146. Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*, III, verse 17

147. *Bhagvad Gita* op. cit., 2 (37)

The *Dasam Granth* says,
“O Lord, grant me this boon,
That I may never refrain from doing righteous deeds,

.....

And when the time comes,
I should die fighting for a righteous cause.”¹⁴⁸

The Sikh thought also rejects the emphasis of the *Gita* on the caste-system¹⁴⁹ and asceticism.¹⁵⁰

MANU'S code which was originally written in 1,800 B.C. was revised in 200 B.C. This code has a great deal of influence on the Hindu laws. It is thought to be an ancient compilation, after the *Vedas* but before the *Upnashids*.¹⁵¹ Manu has mentioned ten qualities of an ideal man.

These are: Contentment, Forgiveness, Self-Control, Purity, Restraint of the senses, Wisdom, Knowledge, Truthfulness, Control over anger and Abstention from misappropriation of another's property.¹⁵²

The Sikh thought agrees with almost all the qualities recommended by Manu for an ideal man. But it rejects the caste-system which was idealised as an essential feature by Manu in his code. Manu recommended four castes (*Varnas*) and assigned a duty to each class. The *Brahmins* were to dedicate themselves to the intellectual and spiritual pursuits, the *Ksatriyas* were to take up soldiering and protection of the community, the *Vaisyas* were to apply themselves to agriculture, industry and trade, and the *Sudras* were to undertake the service of the first three *Varnas*.¹⁵³ This kind of stratification of society is rejected by the Gurus,

- (i) “The pride of caste and the glory of status are futile,
For each one of us shelters under One and the same God.”¹⁵⁴
- (ii) “What power has caste? It is good deed that is tested.
Whosoever tastes poison will die, no matter what his caste is.”¹⁵⁵

MAHAVIR, the prophet of the Jains, lived about 599 B.C.–527 B.C. According to him, the universe is peopled by countless souls. Salvation comes by freeing the soul from the matter. Life is judged by deeds. An ideal man must not kill any one and must also refuse to engage in occupations which would involve taking life, such as butchery, hunting or even farming.¹⁵⁶ The motive which leads a

148. Guru Gobind Singh – *Chandi Charitar I*, verse 232

149. *Bhagvad Gita*, op. cit., 2 (31, 32)

150. *Ibid.*, 5 (1)

151. G. Parrinder, *A Dictionary of Non-Christian Religions*, p.176

152. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p.117

153. *Ibid.*, p.109

154. Guru Nanak, *Siri*, p.83

155. *Ibid.*, Asa, p.349

156. E. G. Parrinder, *A Book of World Religions*, p.115

man to strive for release (*Moksa*) is the avoidance of pain; for *Moksa* is the state of the soul in pure happiness.¹⁵⁷

The Sikh thought differs from Mahavir's doctrine on a number of points. Firstly, Mahavir denies the existence of a Supreme Being, though not of gods;¹⁵⁸ but Sikhism's whole structure is based on One Reality. According to the Dasam Granth,

"God is the Source of all light
God is the Supreme Lord of all."¹⁵⁹

Secondly, Jainism teaches ascetic methods to destroy old *Karma* and ward off new *Karma*.¹⁶⁰ But Sikhism rejects the idea of ascetism and recommends family life. As has been mentioned before, according to the Sikh doctrine a householder who leads pious life, performs noble deeds and meditates on the Holy Name, qualifies for God's Grace which then destroys his old (bad) deeds and secures union with God. Commenting on the importance of meditation and rejection of Jain and Hindu practices, Guru Gobind Singh said,

"He who repeats, night and day, the Name of God,

.....

He who recognises only One God,
He who does not put any faith in pilgrimages, alms,
ahimsa (non-violence), Hindu penances and austerities,
He is the pure member of the Khalsa."¹⁶¹

Finally, Jainism believes in total *ahimsa* (non-violence) which implies that one must not harm or kill any living creature.¹⁶² But in Sikhism, though non-violence is one of its doctrines, the use of force is recommended in certain cases, as for example, a righteous war, the restoration of justice and the uprooting of tyranny. Like Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, and Prophet Mohammed, Guru Gobind Singh, too, was a warrior who fought numerous battles against Hindu and Muslim rulers; but his object was only to save the good, to annihilate the evil and to destroy the tyrant. In this letter which he wrote to Aurangzeb, he affirmed,

"When all other possible remedies fail,
It is but lawful to resort to the sword."¹⁶³

According to Guru Granth Sahib,

"Men, out of ignorance, quarrel over non-vegetarian food,
Not bothering to know, what is flesh and what is not-flesh,
Which food is sinful and which is....."¹⁶⁴

But according to Mahavir,

"..... He who grasps at even a litter,
Whether living or lifeless, or consents to another doing so,

157. S. N. Das Gupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, p.40

158. G. Parrinder, *Asian Religions*, p.42

159. Guru Gobind Singh, *Jap*, verse 119

160. Radhakrishnan, op. cit. p.117. See also G. Parrinder, op. cit. p.42

161. Guru Gobind Singh, *Zafarnama*, verse 22

162. G. Parrinder, op. cit., p.42

163. Guru Gobind Singh, *Zafarnama*, verse 22

164. Guru Nanak, *Malhar*, p.1289

Will never be freed from sorrow,
If a man kills living things, or slays by the hand of another,
or consents to another slaying,
His sins go on increasing.”¹⁶⁵

BUDDHA lived from about 563 B.C. to 483 B.C. He preached that an ideal man must follow the eightfold path which includes the following: Right views, Right resolve, Right speech, Right conduct, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness and Right concentration. Buddha also emphasised that one must not destroy life, one must not steal, one must not be unchaste, one must not lie and one must not deceive. He stressed that an ideal man must abstain from intoxicants, eat moderately, avoid dancing and drama, refrain from the use of perfume or ornaments, reject a comfortable bed and refuse to wear gold or silver.¹⁶⁶ The Buddhist philosophy of man is entirely dominated by the concept of continuous flow of change;¹⁶⁷ when we understand truth, we can practise the means of liberation and perform those actions which are in accordance with *Dharma* and we should neither particularize, nor cling to objects of desire.¹⁶⁸

The highest goal of Buddhism is *Nirvana* (Salvation). Like Jainism, Buddhism also does not believe in God as the Supreme Reality. To a Buddhist *Nirvana* means Freedom, Purity, Peace, Immortal state and Everlasting Bliss.

Thus the Sikh thought differs from the basic Buddhist doctrine. In Sikhism the highest goal is the merger in God, the Time-less Reality. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

“*Nirvana* from bondage is affected by the will of God,
None else has any say in it.”¹⁶⁹

Again, unlike Buddhism, Sikhism accepts the facts of life and allows the enjoyment of all the comforts and luxuries of life, provided a man does not feel in any way attached or enslaved to them. This means that though an ideal man can possess and enjoy the worldly treasures, he should not have any longing or attachment for them and he should not grieve if he loses any of them. According to Guru Granth Sahib, man must

“Live detached amidst attachment,
Like the lotus in the water.”¹⁷⁰

Lastly, Sikhism also rejects the idea of renunciation and bondage of family relationship which is approved by the Buddhist system of asceticism. A Sikh, as has been mentioned before, must not be a recluse. He should fulfill all his household duties, social commitments and physical and spiritual needs. According to Guru Granth Sahib,

165. *Book of Sermon* 1:1

166. Sherrat and Hawkins, op. cit., p.152

167. C. S. Summers, op. cit., p.46

168. S. N. Dasgupta, op. cit., p.40

169. Guru Nanak, *Jap Ji*, p.5

170. Ibid., Malar, p.1281

“One can achieve *Nirvan*,
While eating, dressing decently, laughing, playing, sporting,
And in the midst of other worldly tangles.”^{170A}

JESUS CHRIST lived from 4 B.C. to 29 A.D. His gospel, as embodied in Matthew’s Gospel in the *Bible*, enumerates the following qualities of an ideal man:

- (i) The poor in spirit –
‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!’
- (ii) Those who grieve –
‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.’
- (iii) The meek –
‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,’
- (iv) The lovers of righteousness –
‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.’
- (v) The merciful –
‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.’
- (vi) The pure of heart –
‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’
- (vii) The peacemaker –
‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.’
- (viii) The martyr for righteousness’s sake –
‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’s sake.’
- (ix) The sufferers for the sake of truth –
‘Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you,
And utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.’¹⁷¹

The teachings of Jesus Christ and the Sikh Gurus have more similarities than differences. Both the Christian and the Sikh thought believe in One Universal God, a God of Love and Grace. The Sikh theory of oneness of God is mentioned frequently in Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth. The very first line of Guru Granth Sahib reads as below in translation:

“God is One,
Eternal Reality,
Creator and Sustainer,
Without fear,
without enmity,
Immortal and unchanging,
Free from birth and death,
Self-existing,

170A. *Ibid.*, p.661

171. Matthew, 5-3:11

Known by His Grace,"¹⁷²

In Christianity, the idea is expressed as below:

"What is God?

God is a Spirit,

Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable in His Being,

Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness and Truth."¹⁷³

Again, both religions believe in Salvation by the Grace of God. In Sikhism the words used for Grace are *Prasad*, *Nadar*, *Kirpa*, *Mehar*. In Guru Granth Sahib, these words are used over 626 times,¹⁷⁴ whereas in the New Testament the word Grace is used over 169 times.¹⁷⁵ In both the scriptures the two words mean the same. In the Sikh doctrine, the Grace can be mediated through a Guru, where the word Guru means either God or prophet or religious guide or chosen teachers like the ten Nanaks. In Christianity, regarding Grace, John's gospel says,

"Grace was made flesh and dwelt among us."¹⁷⁶

Again, St. Luke says,

"Do not be afraid Mary,

For you have found Grace with God,"¹⁷⁷

However, the main points of differences between the two faiths, which are the theories of *Karma* and the life-after-death, have been discussed earlier. The Christian interpretation of the two theories is:¹⁷⁸ "Life in Christ is life eternal. The resurrection of Jesus is God's sign that He will consummate His work of creation and reconciliation beyond death and bring to fulfilment the new life begun in Christ. Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ – such as a heavenly city, a father's house, a new heaven and earth, a marriage feast and an unending day – culminate in the image of the Kingdom. The Kingdom represents triumph of God over all that resists His Will and disrupts His Creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in men and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgement and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the Church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope the Church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever. Amen."

172. Guru Nanak, Jap Ji, p.1

173. Westminster Confession of Faith, *Shorter Catechism*, Question 4

174. D. H. Loehlin, 'Guru Manak's Religion with special reference to Christianity,' (article) in *Guru Nanak His Life, Time and Teachings*, p.148

175. *Ibid.*, p.148

176. John 1:14

177. Luke 1:31

178. The Confession of 1967, General Assembly Minutes, pp.735, 740

According to St. Paul,

“We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ.”¹⁷⁹ Here the apostle deemed not making a claim for Jesus which he had not made Himself, but referring to God.¹⁸⁰ Like Judaism and Islam, Christianity also believes in a ‘Day of Judgement.’¹⁸¹ The law of the deeds is that past error need not be a doom; that we may take pardon for granted; forgive ourselves and start anew.¹⁸² God’s justice is an outcome and expression of His love. God creates the very desire for forgiveness by bringing home to men what sin means to Him and to themselves as a sin against love; and this forgiveness with the judgement on which it rested, needed the sacrifice of Jesus to reach men fully.¹⁸³ According to the *New Testament*, Jesus did not condone sin or tell people they could take forgiveness for granted. He knew what sin was doing to the men and women he loved. He saw more clearly than we can see with our sin-blunted sight what sin means in misery and degradation of the soul, in alienation from fellowship with God. For, forgiveness is to remission nor penalty; it is restoration of fellowship.¹⁸⁴

PROPHET MOHAMMED lived from 570 A.D. to 632 A.D. He laid down five basic principles of Islam. Firstly, prayer five times a day. The main theme of the prayer is: “God is great. I testify that there is no God but Allah. I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God.”¹⁸⁵ secondly, fasting during the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the lunar year. According to the Law of Islam, no food or drink must pass the lips between sunrise and sunset. However, it is not a total fast, because eating can be done at night. Thirdly, almsgiving as a duty of all Muslims. According to the Islamic thought, one-fortieth of the income should be given to the poor. Fourthly, Pilgrimage to Mecca as a duty at least once in a lifetime of a Muslim. Lastly, it is the duty of every Muslim to spread the faith in Allah and his Apostle. Prophet Mohammed’s ideas regarding the ideal man are simple. His main doctrine is that man is by necessity part of the group and thus the highest good of the individual consists in the cultivation and exercise of the virtue which is the basis of social good, justice in speech and conduct, justice in appearance and dress, justice in behaviour i.e. politeness, justice in economy, justice in liberty, justice in discipline and justice in human fellowship.¹⁸⁶

Sikhism has a great deal in common with Islam as well. Both religions believe in the Oneness of God, the equality of men, an

179. 11 Cor. 5.10 – Rom, 2.16, 14.10

180. Hugh Martin, *The Claims of Christ* p.93

181. *Ibid* , p.93

182. *Ibid.*, p.93

183. Moffat, the *Theology of the Gospel*, p.126

184. Hugh Martin op. cit. p92

185. ‘Allaha hu Akbar. La ilaha illa ’illahu. Mohammed rasulu ’illah.

186. Radhakrishnan, op. cit. p.505

active community life, corporate worship, charity, meditation on the name of God and social obligations. The Qoran says,

- (i) "It is not righteousness that you turn your face towards the East and West,
But righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah,
And the last day, and the angels and the Book, and the prophets,
And give away wealth out of love for Him, to the near of kin and orphans and the needy and the wayfarers and the beggars and for captives,
And keep up prayer and give alms....."187
- (ii) "Serve God, and do not associate anything with Him,
Show to parents kindness, also to relatives, orphans, and the poor,
To the persons under protection whether a relative or not,
....."188

Similar ideas are also advocated by the Sikh Gurus and have been discussed at length before

However, the important points on which the two faiths differ are the theories of *Karma* and life-after-death. Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam also believes that the last day would be a day of judgement. This day and hour is known only to God, and the *Qoran* has mentioned twenty-five signs of its approach.¹⁸⁹ According to Islam, on that day all men will be raised, the record-books kept by the angels will be opened; and God will sit on the throne of Justice and will pass judgement on each man according to his deeds. Those with good record will be admitted to paradise. Others will be sent to hell. A true Muslim will go to paradise, whereas infidels will fall into the fire of hell.¹⁹⁰ The Sikh theory of *Karma* which is completely different from Islamic theory has already been discussed before on pages 44-45.

187. Sura 2.172

188. Sura 4:40

189. Sura75

190. Sura 3:30; 6:22; 74; 14,5:35; 7:52; 21:103; 22.1; 25:22, 40; 49; 51; 78; 8;

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL MAN IN SIKHISM UP TO THE NINTH GURU

Sikhism is a monistic and proselytising religion. Its history begins with Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and continues for about two hundred and forty years through a line of nine successors.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, when the first wave of Muslim immigration into India had worn itself out leaving the country in political disruption, social disorder and moral decadence, there arose in Punjab a prophet-reformer in Guru Nanak who called upon the people to work towards re-establishing an ideal world of Truth, Purity, Love, Justice and Fearlessness.¹

Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, was born on the threshold of a momentous period in India² and Europe. In the course of his life-time, he witnessed the dominance and decline of the Lodi Sultanate and its final extinction by Babar in 1526 A.D. Babar writes in his memories that ever since he came to Kabul, it had been his intention to march on *Hindustan* (India) but a variety of reasons had hitherto prevented him from carrying out his plan.³ However, in 1519 A.D. came Babar's first attack on Bhira, the border town of *Hindustan*. In his third expedition, in 1520, he went as far as *Gujranwala*; his objective seemed to have been Lahore.⁴ In his fifth expedition, in 1525-1526, he finally got the sovereignty of *Hindustan* and declared himself emperor of India.

According to *Purantan Janam Sakhi* and a number of Sikh historians, Guru Nanak was living with Bhai Lalo near *Sayyidpur* when Babar committed a bloody massacre there.⁵ Babar says in his memories, 'the inhabitants of Saiyyadpur, who resisted, were put to the sword, their wives and children were carried into captivity, and all their property plundered.'⁶ According to Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, 'what would Guru Nanak not have done, had he been in the position of Guru Gobind Singh? He could then only utter a cry and wish that the cows should become lions, but what would he not have

1. S. S. Kohli, Ethics of Guru Nanak, *The Spokesman Weekly*, June 5, 1978

2. W. M. Mcleod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, p.3

3. Beveridge, *Memoirs of Babur (Translation) II*, p.377

4. I. B. Bannerji, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, I. p.36

5. *Purantan Janam Sakhi*, 35 I.B. Bannerji, op. cit., p.36 Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A short History of the Sikhs*, p.13

6. Leyden and Erskine, *Memoirs of Babur (Translation)*, II p.149

done, if he had a nation at his back? Alas he had no nation at his back. He and his successors had yet to create it. Still he did not sit down in impotent rage and utter idle jeremiads. He did as much as was possible to do in the circumstances.⁷

In Europe it was an age of renaissance, adventure and religious reformation. In England, in 1510, Colet established St. Paul's Grammar School; in 1516 Erasmus started the Corpus Christi College at Oxford; in 1492 Christopher Columbus discovered America and called it India. In May 1498 Vasco de Gama, a Portuguese navigator, found the sea-route to India. In 1519 Ferdinand Magellan, another Portuguese navigator, sailed to make the first voyage round the world. In 1517, in Germany, Martin Luther began the reformation movement in Christianity. In 1534 the Society of Jesus came into existence. Soon a wave of inquiry and exploration into the religious environment swept over Europe and other parts of the world.

To comprehend the mission of Guru Nanak, in the context of his theory of an ideal man, the basic tenets of his philosophy must first be understood.⁸

Firstly, the essence of his doctrine was belief in the One True God, and the shaping of every man's conduct is such a way as to realise that God.⁸ The Guru said,

- (i) "There is none except Him, the One Lord, to go to (for refuge and sustenance)"⁹
- (ii) "The One God pervades everywhere and He alone dwells in every soul."¹⁰
- (iii) "There is but one God. His name is Eternal Truth."¹¹

Secondly, Guru Nanak believed in religion as realisation: *anubhav*:¹² Those who adopt this view reject ritualistic practices and orthodox definitions. Guru Nanak preached against the hollowness of conventional beliefs and mechanical rites and urged his followers to go back to the very spring-head of a personal and living faith.¹⁴

The Guru said,

- (i) "He who grasps the truth, realizes that there is but one religion of all mankind, as God is one and has ever been the same."¹⁴
- (ii) "Religion consists not in mere talk. He who looks on all alike and considers all as equals, is acclaimed as truly religious."¹⁶

7. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.13

8. In total, the Guru composed 974 hymns including pauris and sloaks, see - S. S. Kohli, *A Critical Study of Adi Granth*, p.5

9. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Asa, p.475

10. Ibid., Asa p.433

11. Ibid, Mul Mantar, p.1

12. *Guru Nanak, His Life, Time & Teachings*, Edited by Gurmukh Nihal Singh p.1

14. J. N. Sarkar, op. cit., p.345

15. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Basant, p.1188

16. Ibid., Suhi, p.730

- (iii) "Religion consists not in abiding at the tombs or crematoriums, nor in going into pseudo trance. It neither consists in roaming in the world, nor in bathing at the places of pilgrimage. The way to true religion is found by dwelling in God and remaining detached in the midst of wordly attachments."¹⁷

Thirdly, the Guru believed that the whole creation functioned under God's direct command. Describing the theory of creation, the Guru said,

- (i) "There was darkness for countless years,
There was neither earth nor sky. It was His Will,
There was neither day nor night, neither Sun nor Moon,
He was in abstract meditation."¹⁸
- (ii) "When it was His Will, he created the world,
The wide Universe was suspended without any mechanism."¹⁹

Fourthly, Guru Nanak believed that man could attain salvation here in this world by performing good actions, by living a truthful life and by meditating on God with love and devotion. The Guru said,²⁰

- (i) "Salvation comes by living the Truth"²⁰
- (ii) "Good actions procure better type of life, Salvation comes through His Grace."²¹
- (iii) "There can be no salvation without dwelling upon the Name of God."²²

Fifthly, Guru Nanak believed in the necessity and importance of the guidance of a true teacher who could escort human beings towards the path of God. The communication between man and God occurred through the counselling of the Guru. Guru Nanak said,

- (i) "The Guru is the ladder, the boat, the raft by means of which one attains God."²³
- (ii) "without the Guru, the love of God does not spring (in our heart) and the dirt of ego is not washed away."²⁴

In Sikhism the qualities of an ideal man have been enumerated by all the ten Gurus. The first nine Gurus have most frequently used the word "Gurmukh" for an ideal man, whereas the tenth Guru has used the word "Khalsa." Other words used to describe an ideal man in Guru Granth Sahib are, Brahm-giani, Jiwan-Mukt, Sadh, Sant, Sachiar, Sewak and Soorbir etc.

All the Gurus, in their hymns and teachings, have critically examined the different aspects of the concept of an ideal man. Though

17. Ibid., p.730

18. Ibid., Maru

19. Ibid. See - S. S. Kohli, 'The theory of Creation as propounded in the Adi Granth,' *The Missionary*, January-March pp.70-82

20. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Majh, p.141

21. Ibid., Jap Ji, p.2

22. Ibid., Dhanarsi, p.663

23. Ibid., Siri, p.17

24. Ibid., p.60

basically, they all have given the same attributes of an ideal man, e.g. love of God, selfless service to God and humanity, humility, noble action, compassion, practice of righteousness, justice and control of the five vices and so forth, each one has laid special emphasis on certain aspects more than the rest.

Guru Nanak has put maximum emphasis on universal brotherhood and love of God and humanity as the core qualities of an ideal man. He said,

- (i) "Let Universal Brotherhood be the highest aspiration of your religious order."²⁵
- (ii) "Man without love is an empty shell which crumbles down and is reduced to dust."²⁶
- (iii) "The pride of caste and the glory of status are futile, for each of us shelters under One and the same God."²⁷
- (iv) "They who love God love everybody."²⁸
- (v) "Call everyone high, none seems to be low; for God, the only Potter, has fashioned all alike, and His light alone pervades all creation."²⁹

The ideal man of Guru Nanak is multi-dimensional. Firstly, he is a house-hold who totally rejects the division of *Varnas* (castes) and *ashrams* (stages of life) enjoined by Hindu Shastras.³⁰ Guru Nanak recommends to an ideal man, the following five stages of noble life:—

a) *Dharam Khand* (The Plane of Righteousness):

The world is a place for the practice of holy living. In this world there are numerous creatures of different shapes, colours, sizes and characters. They all are called by different names and they all will be judged by their actions in the court of God. This world is the abode of righteousness and a pilgrim's place of moral and spiritual effort, where everyone must endeavour to develop spirituality and humanity.³²

The Guru said,

"He made Nights, Days, Seasons,
He made Air, Water, Fire, The Nether Regions;
Amidst these He established the earth, the residence of
Diversified living Creatures
With numerous names
All of these are judged by their deeds
In His Court of Justice, as He is the Judge
Amongst elected Jury
And His presence

25. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Jap Ji, p.6

26. *Ibid.*, Siri p.62

27. *Ibid.*, Siri, p.62

28. *Ibid.*, Wadahans, p.83

29. *Ibid.*, Siri, p.557

30. S. S. Kohli, 'Ethics of Guru Nanak,' *The Spokesman Weekly*, June 5, 1978

31. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Jap Ji pp.7-8

32. Kala Sing Bedi, 'Jap Ji Vich Aaya Punj Khanda Da Raahs,' *Gurmat Prakash*, March 1979

Bad and Good deeds will be sorted out
O Nanak this is what will happen.”³³

b) *Gyan Khand* (Plane of Divine Knowledge):

Ignorance of righteousness and truth degrades life. Wisdom attained through inner illumination alone can set a man on the right path of salvation.

The Guru said,

“There is law in every realm of Justice. There is reason in every realm of knowledge.”³⁴

Guru Nanak believed that when the inner consciousness of an ideal man is illuminated with knowledge, he can see many more worlds beyond this world, many more creatures beyond the creatures of this world; and then he cries out – ‘God is great and great is His Glory.’ He is the only Designer and has designed so many things that it is impossible for a human pen to describe them all. Thus the ideal man attains the real wisdom, and rising above religions and other organisations starts propagating the bits of truth amongst his fellow men.

c) *Sarum Khand* (Plane of Spiritual Effort):

The march towards the sphere of Truth is a continuous spiritual activity which leads to happiness, bliss, beauty and joy. The highly spiritual discipline recasts and reshapes the character of an ideal man and he develops the wisdom of angels and prophets.

The Guru said,

“In the realm of Spiritual Effort, beauty is triumphant
And results in incomparable state of mind

It is hard to comment on these

If one does, one repents

There is the realm of inner perception, understanding mind and knowledge

Where live sages, seers and perfect beings.”³⁵

Guru Nanak believed that the man who was honest and loyal would be saved from all sorts of corruption and his inner consciousness would shine with beauty and glory, and such a man would be anointed as an ideal man.³⁶

d) *Karam Khand* (Plane of Grace):

In this sphere, man is impregnated with love, devotion and blessing of God, to seek His Grace. He obliterates his will in the Will of God; and starts living in the everlasting union with God.

Thus when a man doing good deeds, meditating on the Holy Name, helping and assisting his fellow-brothers marches towards a spiritual destination. God showers His Grace on him and he

33. Satbir Singh, *Jap Te Ohde Pakh*, pp.57-62

34. Trilochan Singh, *Guru Nanak's religion. A comprehensive study of religions*, in *Guru Nanak His Life, Time and Teachings*, pp.111-122

35. K. S. Bedi, op. cit., p.66

36. Ibid. 37. Ibid.

becomes blended in Him. He in this realm, develops the power to control his mind and actions and becomes invincible, brave and a great saint and soldier.³⁷

The Guru said,

“In the realm of Grace, spiritual power³⁸ is supreme,

Nothing else prevails;

Where in the mind lives His name

There live holy men;

They rejoice in His Company.”³⁹

Guru Nanak believed that the description of His creation by an ordinary man is too difficult. The universe is so vast and diversified, that no vocabulary can provide sufficient alphabet to convey it. It has spheres after spheres and galaxies. The creation is a complex phenomenon. To understand this complex universe, a man has to reach the plane of Grace, entering which he rises above the level of an ordinary creature and becomes an ideal man.⁴⁰

e) *Sach Khand* (Plane of Truth):

This is the final realm which a man is to enter to become an ideal man.⁴¹ In this stage the light of Truth smashes all chimera and myth. Perfection is achieved in unison with God.

The Guru said that this life of a human being is one of the greatest gifts of God to mankind. One must not waste it in extreme luxuries, acts of immorality, corruption, hypocrisy, delusiveness, falsehood and illusion. Rather one must rise above all these misconceptions and sophistry and control one's mind and actions and should strive to enter the realm of Truth, to be one with God and be an example to other men.

The Guru said,

“In the realm of Truth, He Lives

From where He watches His creation with Grace

Blesses some with happiness.”⁴²

Guru Nanak believed that in this sphere dwells the Eternal equipoise, where his light and unstruck music can be experienced in its pure, absolute and perfect form (*Turiya Avastha*).

The Guru said,

- (i) “The.....state of *Bliss* (*Turiya Avastha*) is known only through the Guru (Teacher) Who reveals the Lord unto us.”⁴³

38. The word 'Jor' in this *pauri* has been interpreted in many different ways. Gopal Singh in his English translation of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, vol. 1, p.11, has translated it as 'Power', Messrs. Trilochan Singh, Jodh Singh, Kapur Singh, Harkrishen Singh and Khushwant Singh have also translated it as 'Power' (see *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, p.50). Teja Singh, however, has translated it as 'Effort' (see *Guru Granth Sahib*, Gopal Singh, p.11, f.n.3)

39. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Jap Ji, p.8

40. K. S. Bedi, op. cit., p.66-67

41. Trilochan Singh, 'Guru Nanak's religion; a comprehensive study of religions', op. cit., p.112

42. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Jap Ji, p8

43. *Ibid.*, Gauri, p.154

(ii) “..... And through the Guru (God)
I have attained the highest State (*Turiya Avastha*)
And sought refuge in the companionship of the Saints.”⁴⁴

Describing Guru Nanak's new Idealism for mankind, *Major James Brown* (1788 A.D.) wrote that Guru Nanak was a man of a most exemplary life and was eminent for his piety, charity and abstinence.⁴⁵ With the teaching of his doctrine he made a great number of proselytes.

Antoine Louis Henri Potier, a Swiss Engineer, read a paper on 'The Siques (Sikhs)' on December 20, 1787 A.D. at the Asiatic Society of Bengal.⁴⁶ He said, inter alia, that the Guru had many followers who embraced his doctrine.

Charles Wilkins (1781) in his 'Observation of the Sikhs and their College at Patna' wrote⁴⁷ that *Naneek Shah* (Guru Nanak), the founder of *Seek* (Sikh) faith taught that there was one God, Omnipotent and Omnipresent, filling all space and pervading all matter; and that He was to be worshipped and invoked; that there would be a day of retribution when virtue would be rewarded and vice would be punished, that a man should practise universal toleration and should not commit murder, theft and other crimes against Society; and that he should practise all the virtues, particularly universal philanthropy and a general hospitality to strangers and travellers.

George Forster (1798) in his 'Observations of the Sikhs' wrote⁴⁸ that *Nanock* (Guru Nanak) to whose name his follower added the appellation of *Shaw* (Shah) which was usually bestowed on Faquiers (Saints), appeared to have been well qualified for instituting and establishing a new sect, that *Nanock* (Guru Nanak) was inflexibly just, rigorously abstinent and that he possessed the most undaunted courage; that *Nanock* forbade his *Seicks* (Sikhs) to worship images.

John Griffiths (1798) in his 'Memorandum on the Punjab & Kandhar' wrote⁴⁹ that the *Seeks* (Sikhs) received their tenets from *Nanuk* (Guru Nanak) who pretended to have received a divine revelation to the following effect:

“Nanak has the same dependence on the Creator, as the tender blade of grass, which receives its nourishment from the dew of heaven.”

and that the tenets of *Nanuk* has been collected into a Book.

William Franklin (1798) in his "History of reign of *Shah Aulum* (*Alam*)", wrote⁵⁰ that *Nanick* (Guru Nanak) framed a system of religion which he delivered to his numerous followers as of divine origin.

44. Ibid., Asa, p.356

45. James Brown, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks (Sikhs)*, p.3

46. Antonine Louis Henri Potier, "The Siques" (Sikhs), *The Asiatic Register*, 1802, pp.9-12

47. Charles Wilkins, 'Observation of the Sikhs and their College at Patna', *Asiatic Reserches*, 1788

48. George Forster, 'Observations of the Sikhs'. Home miscellaneous series, Volume 685(3), pp.90-114

49. John Griffiths, 'Memorandum on the Punjab and Kandhar', Press Lists of Public Department Records, 1748-1800

50. Williams Franklin, *The History of the Reign of Shah Alam*, p.13

Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm (1812) in his 'Sketch of the Sikhs' wrote⁵¹ that *Nanac* (Guru Nanak) was a man of more than common genius. His great aim was to blend Muslim and Hindu jarring elements in peaceful union. His wish was to recall both Muslims and Hindus to an exclusive attention, sublimest of all principles, which inculcated devotion to God and peace towards man.

Sir Charles Gough and Arthur Innes (1880) in their book 'The Sikhs and The Sikh Wars' wrote⁵² that Nanuk (Guru Nanak) was remarkable as a being, not only a really great reformer but one who seems to have inspired singularly little animosity. He founded the brotherhood, who called themselves Sikhs; a sect entirely religious, without any political aim or organisation, based on two fundamental principles: the Unity of God and the Brotherhood of Man, without distinction of race, caste or creed.

W. L. McGregor (1846) in his book 'The History of the Sikhs' wrote⁵³ that *Nanuk's* (Guru Nanak) intellect was precocious.⁵⁴ His precepts were those of peace with all mankind.⁵⁵ He forbade all the abuses and idolatries of the *Hindoos* (Hindus) and the intolerance of the *Mussulmans* (Muslims).⁵⁶

Joseph D. Cunningham (1849) wrote⁵⁷ that the whole scope of Nanak's teachings was that God was all in all and that purity of mind was the first objective and urged all men to practise devotion. He referred to past prophets but he never attributed to himself any superiority over them. He was a man among men, calling upon his fellow creatures to live a holy life.

E. Trumpp (1877) wrote⁵⁹ that Guru Nanak built up a concise system on scientific principles. The chief points in Nanak's doctrine were: Unity of Supreme Being,⁶⁰ identification of the whole universe and all things therein with the Supreme,⁶¹ and representation of human as being a light from the True Light.⁶²

C. H. Payne (1930) wrote⁶³ that Baba Nanak was essentially a reformer. He protested against the idolatry, the blind superstitions, and the empty rituals which had so long estranged religion from morality and the hearts of men from their Creator.

Dorothy Field (1901) wrote⁶⁴ that Nanak was a spiritual descendant of monetheistic reformers and broke away very much more from the older faith.

51. J. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, pp.22-23

52. C. Gough and A. Innes, *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars*, p.17-18

53. W. McGregor, *The History of the Sikhs*, I, p.33

54. *Ibid.*, p.33

55. *Ibid.*, p.35

56. *Ibid.*, p.35

57. J. D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p.40, n.1

58. *Ibid.*, p.40

59. E. Trumpp, *Adi Granth*, p.xcvii

60. *Ibid.*, p.xcvii

61. *Ibid.*, p.xcix

62. *Ibid.*, p.cii

63. C. H. Payne, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p.25

64. Dorothy Field, *The Religion of the Sikhs*, p.10

M. Macauliffe (1909) wrote⁶⁵ that Guru Nanak's devotion to one God, the True, the Immortal, the Self-Existent, the Pure, the Invisible made him reject incarnations and idols as abominations, while his insistence on right conduct cut away the basis of ritualistic practices and set prayers.

I have produced above a few comments of some of the European writers about the tenets of Guru Nanak, which are essential in the making of an ideal man. All the writers, without exception, agree that Guru Nanak was a messenger of God and that he directed his followers to believe in one God, holy life and universal brotherhood.

Guru Nanak's life as told by *Janam Sakhis* and accounts of Bhai Gurdas Bhalla and Bhai Mani Singh was a replica of love, simplicity, holiness and brotherhood. The Guru wanted his Sikhs to follow his example. Bhai Mani Singh commenting on the Guru's concept of an Ideal man wrote,

“An ideal man should be humble, should not take pride for anything, should attend religious congregations, should believe in one God, should always remember God in his heart, should listen to His hymns with concentration and love, and should not let any corrupt ideas come in his mind and should develop love, for Universal friendship.”⁶⁶

GURU ANGAD (1504–1552) the second Nanak, stressed mental as well as physical development through education, sports and discipline as the important characteristics of an ideal man.

He said,

- (i) “Salvation (*Mukti*) can only be gained by education and knowledge and not by futile acts like piercing ears.”⁶⁷
- (ii) Make feet out of fear, hands out of love and eyes out of education; Nanak says, in this way, O wise woman shall you meet the Bridegroom.⁶⁸
- (iii) ‘In the morning during the fourth watch they who remember God feel delight, They love to run to streams for exercise and bath, and the True Name is in their hearts and on their lips.’⁶⁹
- (iv) “Devotion, meditation, everything is obtained by following the Will of God; all other occupations are in vain.”⁷⁰

Guru Angad continued the work of Guru Nanak for about thirteen years.⁷¹ His chief trait was his absolute obedience and the same quality he imparted to the other followers of the House of Nanak.⁷²

65. M. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, I & II, p.177

66. Bhai Mani Singh, *Bhagat Ratnavali*, Pauri 14

67. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Ramkali, p.903; Guru Angad, in total, composed 62 Sloaks (see S. S. Kohli, *A Critical Study of the Adi Granth*)

68. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Var Majh, p.139

69. *Ibid.*, p.146

70. *Ibid.*, Ramkali, p.954

71. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op. cit.*, p.17; From September 1539 to March 1552

72. *Ibid.*, p.18; See also E. Trumpp, *op. cit.*, p.Lxxvii

Satta and Balvand, the musicians of the Guru's court, described the Guru's nobility in the following words:

"Lahina (Guru Angad) obeyed all orders of Guru Nanak without any question."⁷³

Professor Puran Singh has described the Guru's obedience and love for Guru Nanak in his own poetic style. He wrote, "One day Guru Angad, following Guru Nanak, strayed too far out from Khadur towards Kartarpur, whereupon Guru Nanak asked him to go no further, but to stay there and wait for his next visit. Guru Angad stood looking at the back of the Master as he was slowly going towards Kartarpur, turning now and then to look back at Guru Angad. When his luminous figure had disappeared, Angad saw it entering in his own soul. He felt bewildered with joy and wonder. There he sat on the road-side; lost in himself, his eyes fixed on the half-closed eyes of the mystical Guru Nanak sealed in his heart, his soul fast asleep in the Master's soul. Days passed in that ecstatic trance, dust settled on his hair, and the tendrils of green grass caught his toes. So did Guru Angad sit in a trance of *Dhyanam* (spiritual concentration), with nectar tears flowing out of his closed eyes, till Guru Nanak returned in haste from Kartarpur to see his mighty lover and his divine Beloved seated on the roadside. The Master strained him to his bosom; it was God embracing man. From such holy and secret confluence of the two Beloveds, the life of spirit flowed in a thousand shining rivers to the soul of the people."⁷⁴

To secure the individuality of the members of the house of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad standardised the use of Gurmukhi script, compiled Guru Nanak's biography and strengthened the tradition of free kitchen (*Langar*).⁷⁵

Apart from his teaching of obedience, Guru Angad commanded his followers to take part in physical fitness exercises and to attend daily drill, athletics and other outdoor games.⁷⁶ He asked his Sikhs to lead a life of active householders.⁷⁸ He instructed them to take full care of their bodies.⁷⁹ If the words of Confucious, that a "journey of a thousand miles is started only with a step" are true, then the seed of the concept of 'Saint Soldier' was indeed laid by Guru Angad, which in the times of Guru Gobind Singh bloomed into the Khalsa.

In the words of Malcolm,⁸¹ Guru Angad taught the same doctrine as Guru Nanak. According to Cunningham,⁸² Guru Angad Dev undertook the task of compiling the biography of Guru Nanak, and

73. Guru Granth Sahib, Var p.967-968

74. Puran Singh, *The Ten Masters*, p.28

75. G. C. Narang, *Glorious History of Sikhism*, pp.27-29; See also I. B. op cit., p.159

76. Khushwant Sing, *A History of the Sikhs*, I p.52

77. *Ibid.*, p.52; see also S. S. Gandhi, *History of the Sikh Gurus*, p.179

78. P. S. Gill, *History of Sikh Nation*, p.91

79. S. S. Gandhi, *History of the Sikh Gurus*, p.179

81. J. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p.25

82. J. Cunningham, op. cit., p.44

during all the years of his pontificate he very strongly adhered to the principles of his great teacher, Guru Nanak. Trumpp⁸⁴ refers to Guru Angad's blind obedience to the commands of Guru Nanak. Payne⁸³ mentions Guru Angad as a zealous preacher who committed to writing all that he knew of Guru Nanak. Dorothy Field⁸⁵ writes about the Guru's invention of Gurmukhi script which was thenceforth specially employed for all Sikh literature. According to Macauliffe.⁸⁶ Guru Angad used to delight in watching the sports and wrestling matches of his Sikhs. On such occasions, he would often take opportunity to instruct the spectators how to overcome anger and other deadly sins. According to Mohammed Latif,⁸⁷ Guru Angad was very strongly attached to Guru Nanak. He spread the religion of his Guru by following studiously in the path which Nanak had laid for his successors. Cole and Sambhi⁸⁸ mention that Guru Angad was noted for his practice of meditation; he frequently played with the children of Khadur and watched wrestling matches; qualities of generosity and wisdom were his main characteristics.

These are some of the comments on the qualities and teachings of Guru Angad which he wanted to inculcate in the followers of the house of Nanak.

As stated above, Guru Angad taught all the doctrines of Guru Nanak; his special emphasis, however, was on education – to illuminate minds, on sports – to maintain healthy bodies and in obedience – to foster a sense of discipline.

GURU AMARDAS (1479–1574) the third Nanak, put more weight on *SEWA*, ie, selfless service to mankind, help to the destitute and humility as the core qualities of an ideal man.

He said,

- (i) "God becomes compassionate to us for we serve Him, becoming the slave of His slaves."⁸⁹
- (ii) "God is the Sea, the ever pure One,
The Ideal man picks at the pearls like the swans (on its shores)
And day and night, they wash off the dirt of their ego with its waters."⁹⁰
- (iii) "The Ideal man, through the Guru, enjoys eternally the status of Wedded Life and bears the Lord in his heart (for) he who speaks sweetly and is humble in his ways, enjoys the bed of the spouse."⁹¹

83. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Lxxvii

84. C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.31

85. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.16

86. M. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion V*, p.15

87. M. Latif, *History of the Punjab*, p.250

88. O. Cole & P. S. Sambhi, *The Sikhs*, pp.18-19

89. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Malhar. p.1257

90. Ibid., Majh, p.129

91. Ibid., Siri, p.31

Guru Amardas impressed upon the members of the house of Nanak, the intrinsic value and sanctity of human life.

He said,

- (i) "All mankind that you see created is the image of God."⁹²
- (ii) "O man, God infused His light into you and then you appeared in the World."⁹³

The Guru's simple and devotional life attracted large numbers of followers from far and near,⁹⁴ and he organised the scattered followers into parishes⁹⁵ which were called *Manjis*. With his mature statesmanship and clear farsightedness, the Guru saved the infant church of Guru Nanak from a premature death.⁹⁶ His contribution amongst other things was inculcation, amongst his followers, of a sense of responsibility. He said that *Simran*, *Sewa* and *Humility* were extremely essential to build the character of a man. In fact, *Simran* has also been identified with *Sewa* at many places in *Guru Granth Sahib*.⁹⁷ In the Sikh Way of life, the term *Sewa* means both the service of mankind and devotion to God.⁹⁸ *Sewa* as understood in *Gurbani* (Hymns of the Gurus) is the service of mankind without expectation of any reward.⁹⁹

The Guru said.

- (i) "By serving the 'True One', one gets solace and peace, and cherishes the nine treasures of *Nam* in the mind."¹⁰⁰
- (ii) "The Ideal man is approved in life as in death,
The egocentric is born only to die
But he, Nanak, dies not who is merged in his *Nam*."¹⁰¹

The *Sewa* of mankind, as recommended by Guru Amardas, helps man to realise the ideal of universal brotherhood,¹⁰² an essential quality of an ideal man as recommended by Guru Nanak. Commenting on *Sewa* Guru Nanak also said,

"If you earn *Sewa* in this World
You will get a seat in the Lord's Court."¹⁰³

In Sikhism, for salvation (*mukti*) the individual follower has to work hard with honesty, while always remaining a member of the society. A recluse has no place in Sikhism. A person has to be an active member of the society, serving wholeheartedly in accomplishing the good and social welfare. Every member of the house of Nanak must work earnestly for the well-being of his fellow-beings.¹⁰⁴

92. Ibid., Ramkali, Anand Sahib, p.921

93. Ibid., p.921

94. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.22

95. R. Majundar, op. cit., p.489

96. G. C. Narang, op. cit., p.32

97. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Dhanasri, p.660

98. Darshan Singh, *Seva in Sikhism, Journal of Sikh Studies, February 1978, p. 95*

99. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Gauri Sukhmani, pp.286-287

100. Ibid., Majh, p.115

101. Ibid., Var Sorath, p.643

102. Darshan Singh, op. cit., p.96

103. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Siri, p.26

104. Darshan Singh, op. cit., p.95

In the *Gurbani* are enumerated a number of pre-requisites of Sewa. True service can only be performed if the heart is free of egoism,¹⁰⁵ if the *Sewa* is free from any expectation of reward,¹⁰⁶ if it is performed willingly and sincerely,¹⁰⁷ if an absolute surrender to the Will of God is made¹⁰⁸ and if it is performed with an open mind.¹⁰⁹

Guru Amardas's twenty-two years of pontificate (1552-74) was an important phase in the strengthening of the Sikh Church.¹¹⁰ He was a very popular teacher because his ways were simple and straightforward.¹¹¹

Satta and Balwand in their Var, in the praise of Guru Amardas, said,

“He made divine knowledge his steed and chastity his saddle,
On the bow of truth he strung the arrow of God's praise.
In the age of utter darkness, he rose like the Sun.
He sowed the seed of truth and reaped its fruit.”¹¹²

According to Malcolm,¹¹³ Guru Amardas was distinguished for his activity in preaching the tenets of Guru Nanak, and was very successful in obtaining converts and followers. The Guru was also successful in separating the regular Sikhs from the Udasi sect.

In the words of Cunningham,¹¹⁴ Guru Amardas was active in preaching and successful in obtaining converts. The Guru also found an attentive listener of Guru Nanak's *Bani* and teachings in the tolerant Emperor Akbar. Guru Amardas also saved the infant church of the Sikhs from an early death by wholly separating the passive and reclused 'Udasis' from the regular Sikhs.

Trumpp¹¹⁵ refers to Guru Amardas as a humble, patient and pious man; and calls his compositions preserved in the Guru Granth Sahib simple and clear.

According to Payne,¹¹⁶ Guru Amardas was a zealous preacher who gained many new followers. He is chiefly remembered for his vigorous crusade against the practice of *Sati* (burning widows on their husbands' funeral pyres).

In the words of Dorothy Field,¹¹⁷ the third Guru is specially remembered for his intense humility.

Describing Guru's simple living, Macauliffe¹¹⁸ says that the Guru

105. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Maru Sohilay, p.1070

106. *Ibid.*, Gauri Sukhmani, pp.286-287

107. *Ibid.*, Var Suhi, p.787

108. *Ibid.*, Dhanasri, p.661

109. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Asa, p.468

110. *Ibid.*, Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.54

111. *Ibid.*, p.54

112. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Var, pp.967-968; The Guru composed 907 hymns including Pauris and Sloaks

113. J. Malcolm, op. cit., p.26-27

114. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.44-45

115. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Lxxix

116. C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.31

117. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.17

118. M. Macauliffe, op. cit., II p.58

had kept only one suit of clothes for himself. Whenever he received a new suit, he gave the old one to a deserving Sikh.

According to Mohammed Latif,¹¹⁹ Guru Amardas was a successful teacher and his zeal and activity in preaching, combined with his genial habits and affable disposition, secured for him many converts to the new faith. He was a just and wise Guru, humble and patient. He composed beautiful verses, which have been incorporated in the Guru Granth Sahib and are much liked for their simplicity of diction and purity of idea.

In the words of I. B. Bannerji,¹²⁰ Sikhism made considerable headway during Guru Amardas's times. The pontificate of Guru Amardas may be regarded as a turning point in the history of Sikhism. The Guru introduced a number of reforms and changes in the ceremonies connected with marriage and death.

According to Cole and Sambhi,¹²¹ it was a sign of the character of Guru Amardas that he was able to hold the community together and leave behind him a growing and well organised faith.

According to G. S. Mansukhani,^{121A} Guru Amardas worked for the uplift of women. He discouraged the practice of veiling among women. Moreover, he prohibited the use of alcohol and intoxicants by the Sikhs. Summing up, he writes: "So all in all, the contribution of Guru Amardas to the development of Sikhism has been both significant and permanent."

GURU RAM DAS (1534–1581) the fourth Nanak, laid more emphasis on simplicity, modesty and submissiveness as the important attributes of an ideal man.

According to the Guru,

- (i) "All those who show pride, fall down like a decayed leaf."¹²²
- (ii) "In ego one is attached by fear and one passes all one's life in fear. Ego is a great malady: involved in it, one is never released from transmigration."¹²²

Guru Ram Das was crowned as the fourth Nanak on the eve of Guru Amardas's death in 1574.¹²⁴ Satta and Balwand mentioned this event, thus, in one of their verses:

"You are Nanak, you are Angad and you are Guru Amardas, so do we regard you.....

deeming you as the Transcendental Lord, your followers and congregation bow before you."¹²⁵

Guru Ram Das continued his work for seven years. He consolidated the Sikhs by giving them a sacred place – Amritsar; a

119. M. Latif, op. cit., p.250

120. I. B. Bannerji, op. cit., I, pp.167, 181, 182

121. O. Cole and Sambhi, op. cit., p.20

121A. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Amardas*, p.14

122. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Var, pp.967-968

123. Ibid., Var Wadahans, p.592

124. I. B. Bannerji, op. cit., p.184

125. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Var, pp.967-968

unique organisation – ‘Masand system’; and a central treasury.¹²⁶

In keeping with the policy of his predecessors, the Guru continued the work of organising the Sikhs into a self-conscious, coherent community outside Hinduism by initiating a number of social reforms. Like his predecessor, he also forbade the practice of *Sati*¹²⁷ and the custom of *Purdah* (veiling women’s faces).¹²⁸ He allowed widows to remarry.¹²⁹ He also composed *Lavan* (the ‘Wedding Song’) and thus initiated a new type of simple and dignified marriage – known as *Anand Karaj*.¹³⁰

The Guru clarified the meaning of *Nam Yoga* and *Sahaj Yoga*. He said as the teats on a goat’s neck yield no milk, so Yoga without piety yields no advantage. His Sikhs were family men and would obtain salvation in that condition of life. The best means of Yoga was the repetition of the Holy Name. Without love and devotion to God, all other means of obtaining salvation were unprofitable.¹³¹

Guru Ram Das laid down the Sikh way of life and worship. He declared that simplicity, humility and absolute surrender to God were the essential qualities of his Sikhs.

The Guru said,

“He who calls himself a Sikh of the great true Guru rises early and meditates on God’s name.

He makes every effort early in the morning, takes a bath and has a dip in the tank of nectar.

By repeating the Lord’s name under the Guru’s instruction, all his sins, misdeeds and lapses are wiped off.

Afterwards at sunrise, he sings His Word, and whilst sitting or standing, he meditates on God’s name, The Guru’s disciple, who with every breath contemplates on my Lord, becomes pleasing to the Guru’s heart.

The Guru imparts instructions to that disciple of his, to whom my Lord is merciful.

The slave ‘Nanak’ seeks the dust of the feet of that Guru’s disciple who himself repeats God’s Name and makes others do the same.¹³²

Guru Ram Das, like his predecessors, believed in the sanctity of the family life and holy living, and held that everyone was under a duty to help those who were in need of help. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh have quoted an extract from Macauliffe to illustrate this conviction of the Guru. Guru Ram Das once said to his Sikhs; “When a Sikh has an important business in mind, join him and pray

126. S. S. Gandhi, op. cit., p.212; See also Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.25; I. B. Bannerji, op. cit., pp.186-187

127. O. Cole and P. Sambhi, op. cit., p.23

128. Ibid., p.23

129. Ibid., p.23

130. Ibid., p.23; The word ‘Anand Karaj’ was originally used in Guru Amardas’s pontificate though formalised by Guru Ramdas

131. M. Macauliffe, op. cit., II, p.259

132. Guru Granth Sahib, Var Gauri, p.305

for him. If you see that it cannot be carried on without funds, collect subscriptions for him from every quarter, and at the same time contribute something yourselves.¹³³

According to G. S. Mansukhani, Guru Ramdas simplified the quest of the devotee for a holy life: "Secular life and religious life have to be lived side by side in harmony, in pursuit of higher values."^{133A}

The Guru issued some special commandments to his Sikhs. He told them that they all should be ever ready to serve others. All the guests must be served well and looked after well. No one should go empty-handed from a Sikh's house.¹³⁴

Commenting on the Sikhs and their idealism, the Guru said,

- (i) "The Ideal men know God's way, for them
There is no obstacle in the way to His Door
They praise the Lord's Name, believe in it
and are attached to it eternally."¹³⁵
- (ii) "The Ideal man realises the One alone, through the Guru
And meets with Him in his Self and hears the unstruck melody
of the Word
God has created the whole creation, but it is the ideal Men
who are blessed with glory."¹³⁶

According to Malcolm,¹³⁷ Guru Ram Das has become famous for his piety and organisational skill. Cunningham¹³⁸ observes that Guru Ram Das is among the most revered of the Gurus and was also held in esteem by Akbar. Trumpp¹³⁹ says that the construction of the nectar tank (Amritsar) helped tremendously in the strengthening of the organisation of the Sikhs, for they obtained thereby a fixed central place of worship, where the Sikhs annually assembled and performed their ablutions. He also mentions the great many hymns¹⁴⁰ composed by the Guru. Payne¹⁴¹ also mentions the Guru's piety and his good relations with Akbar. Dorothy Field¹⁴² refers the Guru's task of completing the excavation of the holy tank at Amritsar and organising the system of *Masands*. Macauliffe mentions the Guru's administration through *Masands*,¹⁴³ interpretation of *Sahaj Yoga*¹⁴⁴ and zeal for missionary work.¹⁴⁵

133. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., pp.25-26; see also M. Macauliffe, op. cit., II, p.275

133A. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Ramdas*, p.118

134. Sahib Singh, *Gur-Itihas from 2nd to 9th Guru*, p.58

135. Guru Granth Sahib, Siri, p.42

136. Ibid., Sloak Varan Te Wadeek, p.1422

137. J. Malcolm, op. cit., p.29

138. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.45

139. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Lxxx

140. The Guru composed 679 hymns including *pauris* and *sloaks* – see S. S. Kohli, *A Critical Study of The Adi Granth*, p.6

141. C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.31

142. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.17

143. M. Macauliffe, II, p.49

144. Ibid., p.64

145. Ibid., p.68

Syed Mohd. Latif¹⁴⁶ noted that the Guru was a man of considerable merit. He possessed a quiet and peaceful disposition. He lived with piety, devotion, eloquence and energy and kept busy in literary pursuits. According to I. B. Bannerji,¹⁴⁷ Guru Ram Das earnestly took up the missionary work and sent preachers to different parts of the country to spread the new faith.

Bhai Gurdas said,

- (i) "The Sodhi King Ramdas sat on the throne, and was called the True Guru. He dug a perfect tank, and awakened the light of divine knowledge in Amritsar."¹⁴⁸

Thus, apart from teachings, Nam and Devotion, the Guru laid greater emphasis on humility, modesty and love of the lowly as the qualities of an ideal man.

The Guru said,

- (i) "The Lord honours
His poor and lowly worshipper."¹⁴⁹
- (ii) "Always look up to the Highest, living among your kith and kin,
Like the lotus that stands above its roots which are in mud."¹⁵⁰

GURU ARJAN (1563–1606), the fifth Nanak, laid greater stress on *Nam-Simran* and the company of saints as the indispensable features of an ideal man.

The Guru said,

- (i) "By *Simran* you shed your fear, By *Simran* your worries go,
Meditate on the Lord in the company of saints
If you meditate on the Lord with Love
You are the master of all the treasures."¹⁵¹
- (ii) "He whose mind and tongue are filled with truth,
He who does not see any one but the Lord,
Such, Nanak be the qualities of an ideal man."¹⁵²

Guru Arjan organised the faith of Nanak on a sound basis and established a centre of worship and religious assembly. The Guru gave to the Sikh community, *Harmandir* (The House of God), later called the Golden temple, and Holy Granth (The Book of God's Revelations), later called *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Guru Arjan was a great composer. Out of a total of 5894 hymns included in *Guru Granth Sahib*, 2218 hymns (including pauris and sloaks) were composed by Guru Arjan. He was a writer of intellectual vigour, classical restraint, serenity of feeling and practical outlook on life.¹⁵³

146. M. Latif, op. cit., p.254

147. I. B. Bannerji, op. cit., p.187

148. Bhai Gurdas, Var I, Pauri 47

149. Guru Granth Sahib, Siri, p.42

150. Ibid., Maru, p.998

151. Ibid., Gauri Sukhmani, p.262

152. Ibid., p.262

153. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.30

The Guru's pontificate lasted for 25 years (1581–1606). Under his guidance the number of Sikhs increased dramatically. There was hardly any city in the Punjab or outside where some Sikhs were not to be found.¹⁵⁴

Guru Arjan incorporated the hymns of the preceding Gurus and a few eminent saints and sufis in *Guru Granth Sahib* to provide a guide-book and a manual to impart theoretical and practical spiritual instructions for the guidance of the ideal man. He also built Harmandir to provide a place of worship of the Supreme, and training ground for the ideal man.

In this connection the Guru said,

- (i) "Ever and ever, remembering, remember Thy Love
In whose rememberance you shall attain bliss."¹⁵⁵
- (ii) He that remembers the Lord, goes not to the cave of rebirth.¹⁵⁶
- (iii) "By remembering the Lord we obtain wealth, mystical powers, and the nine treasures."¹⁵⁷
- (iv) "To remember the Lord is the highest religious duty."¹⁵⁸
- (v) "Among all men that man is foremost
who in the company of saints destroys his self-attachment."¹⁵⁹
- (vi) "Of all religions the best religion is:
To utter the Holy Name with adoration, and to do good deeds."¹⁶⁰
- (vii) "In the company of saints
The mind wanders not wildly,
In the company of saints
The soul attains happiness;
In the company of saints
Man glimpses the Invisible."¹⁶¹

According to Malcolm,¹⁶² Guru Arjan gave consistent form and order to the religion of the Sikhs. Cunningham¹⁶³ observes that during the ministry of Guru Arjan, the principles of Guru Nanak took a firm hold on the minds of his followers. Trumpp¹⁶⁴ mentions that Guru Arjan had a great talent for organization and the Sikh community increased considerably and spread fast over Punjab under his versatile administration. According to Payne,¹⁶⁵ Guru Arjan is revered not only as the compiler of the *Guru Granth*, but also as the first Guru to assume the temporal as well as the spiritual

154. Ibid., p.27

155. *Guru Granth Sahib*. Gauri Sukhmani, p.262

156. Ibid., p.262

157. Ibid., p.272

158. Ibid., p.272

159. Ibid., p.162

160. Ibid., p.262

161. Ibid., p.262

162. J. Malcolm, op. cit., p.32

163. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.48

164. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Lxxxii

165. C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.31

control of his followers. The Guru also framed laws to regulate their social and political life and established his headquarters at Amritsar for administrative control. Dorothy¹⁶⁶ says that Guru Arjan was a very notable figure. He possessed a remarkably handsome appearance and was a fine poet as well as a man of great practical ability. According to Macauliffe,¹⁶⁷ the Guru was a symbol of piety, devotion and *Nam-Simran*. When Bibi Ganga, his wife, was not welcomed by Baba Buddha, to whom she had gone to beg for a boon of a son, the Guru consoled her by saying: 'The saints and the true Guru are not pleased with display. If you desire anything from them, never appear in the character of a superior. Come, I will teach you how to succeed. With devotion of your heart grind corn, knead the flour, and bake the bread with your own hands dress yourself as a peasant woman, and go on foot and alone, so shall you obtain the saint's blessing.'

Mohd. Latif¹⁶⁸ observed that Guru Arjan was an energetic and aspiring Guru, and his aims were high. He organised the Sikhs into a community, and devised measures for extending his spiritual authority.

GURU HARGOBIND (1595–1644), the sixth Nanak, emphasised participation in congregational prayer and acceptance of *Hukam* (God's will) and proficiency in martial arts as the main characteristics of an ideal man. According to Mohsin Fani, a contemporary of Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai, when a Sikh wishes for God's favour or gift, he would come to an assembly of the Sikhs and would request them to pray for him. Even the Guru himself asked the Sikh congregation to pray for him.¹⁶⁹

Guru Hargobind was very meticulously and wisely trained for the pontificate, "which, under the changed circumstances, was not only a place of honour but of great danger as well."¹⁷⁰ The Guru received all his training, martial and spiritual, from Bhai Buddha, who taught the Guru the sacred hymns and the use of weapons for the defence of *dharma* (righteousness).¹⁷¹

While assuming the duties of the spiritual head of the House of Nanak, Guru Hargobind wore two swords, depicting both his temporal and spiritual authority. However, he never allowed the temporal aspect to supersede or overcome the spiritual aspect. Everyday the morning religious service was held, as usual, by singing hymns from Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru encouraged congregational prayers and on many occasions himself led such mass meditation.¹⁷²

166. Dorothy Field, op. cit., pp.17-18

167. M. Macauliffe, III, p.31

168. M. Latif, op. cit., p.253

169. Mohsin Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, Translation by D. Shea and Antony Troyer, p.239

170. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.39

171. Ibid., p.39

172. Ibid., p.39

From 1612 to 1627,¹⁷³ the Guru streamlined his hold on his followers. He travelled to the North up to Kashmir and to the east up to Pilibhit. All along the route of his travels, he had *Gurdawaras* built. He also appointed missionaries who could initiate the converts into the pacifist faith of Guru Nanak and his martial mission.¹⁷⁴

In 1634 the Guru met Samrath Ram Das, a saint from Maharashtra, at Srinagar (Garhwal).¹⁷⁵ The saint was surprised to see all the pomp and show of the Guru, his wearing of two swords,¹⁷⁶ his personal army of 552 soldiers¹⁷⁷ and stable of 800 horses.¹⁷⁸ He asked the Guru, "I hear that you are the successor of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak had renounced the world, while you wear the swords, keep horses and an army, and people call you 'The True King'. What kind of a *Sadhu* are you?" Guru Hargobind replied:

"Saintliness within, worldliness without;

Arms are for poor man's protection and enemy's destruction;

Nanak gave up the world, and

he (Hargobind) gave up the worldliness."¹⁷⁹

On his return from Garhwal, the Guru had another encounter with Shah Daula at Gujarat. Shah Daula asked the Guru, 'How can a Hindu be a fakir? How can you be a religious man, when you have a wife and children, and possess worldly wealth?' The Guru replied,

'A wife is her man's conscience,

His children continue his memory

and wealth gives him his sustenance.

As for a fakir, he is neither a

Hindu nor a Mussalman."¹⁸⁰

According to Taja Singh & Ganda Singh, after Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind was the first Guru who went outside the Punjab to spread his religion."¹⁸¹

Commenting on Guru Hargobind's innovation of temporal authority, Bhai Gurdas said,

"People say the former Gurus used to sit in the temple;

The present Guru remains not in any once place.

The former Emperors used to visit the former Gurus;

The present Guru was sent into the fortress by the Emperor.

In former times the Guru's Darbar could not contain the sect;

The present Guru leads a roving life and fears nobody.

The former Gurus, sitting on their thrones, used to console the Sikhs,

173. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.65

174. Ibid., p.65

175. S. S. Gandhi, op. cit., p.318

176. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.39

177. Ibid., p.39

178. Mohsin Fani, op. cit., p.288, II

179. Satbir Singh, *Guru Hargobind*, p.64

180. Teja Singh and Ganda Sing, op. cit., pp.41-42

181. Ibid., pp.41-42

The present Guru keeps dogs and hunts.

The former Gurus used to compose hymns, listen to them and sing them;

The present Guru composes no hymns, nor listens to them, nor sings them;

He keeps not his Sikh followers with him, but has taken enemies of his faith and wicked person as his guides and acquaintances;

I say, the truth within him cannot possibly be concealed;

the true sikhs, like the bumble bees, are enamoured of his lotus feet.

He supports a burden unbearable for others and asserts not himself."¹⁸²

Guru Hargobind's emphasis on the use of force to protect the innocent and the righteousness proved very popular amongst the Punjabis, resulting in a tremendous increase in the number of converts to Sikhism.¹⁸³ Mohsin Fani,¹⁸⁴ describing the Guru's years in Kiratpur says: "From this time the disciples of the Guru increased considerably, and in this mountainous country, as far as the frontiers of Tibet and Kheta, the name of the Mussalman was not heard of."

Apart from Guru Hargobind's emphasis on congregational prayer, he also introduced the custom of "choirs, called chowkies, moving nightly around the Golden Temple and, with the blare of trumpets and flare of torches, singing hymns in stirring tunes."¹⁸⁵

According to Cunningham,¹⁸⁶ although the Guru led a very hectic life, he never forgot his divine character and always styled himself 'Nanak' in deference to the firm belief of the Sikhs that the soul of their great teacher animated each of his successors. Trumpp's and Payne's¹⁸⁷ account of the Guru's conflicts with the Sikh tradition and history is based on unreliable evidence. Dorothy Field,¹⁸⁸ however, mentions that Guru Hargobind obeyed the injunctions of his father to sit fully armed on his throne, and maintain an army; and that he found his followers well prepared for the new role which they had to assume. According to Macauliffe,^{189A} in an answer to Baba Buddha's question, the Guru had said that his endeavour should be to fulfil his (Baba Buddha's) prophecy; that in the Guru's house religion and worldly enjoyments should be combined; and that it was in fulfilment of Baba Buddha's own prophecy that the Guru was wearing two swords signifying temporal and spiritual powers.

182. Bhai Gurdas Bhalla, Var 26, pauri 24

183. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.66

184. Mohsin Fani, op. cit., II p.276

185. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.40

186. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.54

187. E. Trumpp, op. cit., pp.Lxxxii-Lxxxiv; C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.32

188. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.20

189A. M. Macauliffe, op. cit., IV pp.4-5

Mohd. Latif^{189B} mentions that the Guru's pontificate of thirty-eight and a half years was full of historic events. The Guru was a national hero and was held in great respect and admiration in the hearts of everyone.

Jadu Nath Sarker's¹⁹⁰ account of the Guru's life and teaching seems to be based on Malcolm, Trumpp and Payne; and thus he too has misunderstood the higher lessons which the young Guru gave to mankind, in general, and his followers, in particular.

According to Indu Bhusan Banerjee,¹⁹¹ the sixth Guru was a great mastermind. He was a spiritual and temporal leader. His planning and decision-making policy were superb. His cool imperturbability served him admirably throughout his life; but his greatest assets appear to have been his lovable personality and his never-failing sense of humour, which made him the best of masters and the best of friends.

Anil Chandra Bannerjee¹⁹² states that the Guru's military confrontation with the Mughal Government was not necessarily an integral part of his decision to have a sword-belt as his *seli* and to wear his turban with a royal aigrette. He forged a weapon, indeed, but probably he did not mean to use it immediately or in normal circumstances.

GURU HAR RAI (1630–1661), the seventh Nanak, stressed self-discipline and love of man, nature and God as the basic qualities of the ideal man.

The Guru's pontificate lasted for seventeen years, from 1644 to 1661.¹⁹³ He was only fourteen years old when he was selected by his grandfather, Guru Hargobind, to lead the Sikh nation. For thirteen out of the total seventeen years, the Guru had his headquarters at Taksal near Kasauli¹⁹⁴ in Sirmoor state.¹⁹⁵ He undertook frequent visits to Amritsar, Goindwal, Kartarpur, Khadur and Kiratpur to further the work left by the first six Nanaks.¹⁹⁶

His intense love for man can be better understood by his own words:

“You can repair or rebuild a temple or a mosque, but not a broken heart.”¹⁹⁷

His respect and compassion for objects of nature can be known from his personal reactions:

“One day during his childhood, as he was passing through a garden, his loose coat broke the stems of some flowers which fell

189B. M. Larif, op. cit., p.257

190. J. N. Sarker, *History of Aurangzeb*, III, pp.350-351

191. I. B. Bannerji, op. cit., 2 p.45

192. A. C. Bannerji, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, p.147

193. Mohsin Fani, op. cit., II p.282 – has mentioned 1645 as the year of the coronation of the Guru

194. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.55

195. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.67

196. Ibid., p.68

197. Ibid., p.69

to the ground. The sight was too much for him and brought tears to his eyes.”¹⁹⁸

And –

“He was a mighty hunter, yet he was too kind-hearted to kill the animals he had chased or captured. He would bring them home, and feed them and protect them in a zoo.”¹⁹⁹

The Guru was a man of great generosity and wisdom. He always urged his followers to meditate on the hymns of *Guru Granth Sahib* and to lead a life of self-discipline.²⁰⁰ His pontificate was a milestone in the spreading of the mission of Guru Nanak. Some very important and powerful families were converted to Sikhism during his time.²⁰¹

The Guru has been revered by a number of popular titles such as ‘King of Righteous,’²⁰² ‘Well-bred Saint,’²⁰³ ‘World-Protector,’²⁰⁴ ‘The Great Guru,’²⁰⁵ etc. inscribed on the epitaph of Ram Rai’s monument at Dehra Dun.

The Guru’s wisdom is shown by the following words which he uttered when he declared Ram Rai, his elder son, unfit for Guruship, on account of his showing occult power²⁰⁶ and misquoting one of Guru Nanak’s hymns in the Court of Aurangzeb.²⁰⁷ The Guru said:²⁰⁸

“The Guruship is like a tiger’s milk, which can only be contained in a golden cup. Only he who is ready to devote his life thereto is worthy of it.”

The seventeen years of the Guru’s pontificate were full of significant events. The most important thing, apart from his inculcation of the ideas of self restraint, love of man, love of nature and love of God, was his organisation of the Sikh Church.

According to Malcolm,²¹² Guru Har Rai’s pontificate was relatively peaceful; Cunningham²¹³ also mentions that the Guru’s ministry was mild and peaceful and many converts of higher status owed their origin to the tranquil pontificate of the Guru. Trumpp²¹⁴ states that the Guru was wise and sensible and possessed a peaceful disposition. Dorothy Field²¹⁵ refers to the fact that during Guru Har Rai’s ministry, Guru Nanak’s teachings were faithfully adhered to

198. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.47

199. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.69

200. G. S. Mansukhani, op. cit., p.101

201. Khushwant Singh, op. cit., p.68; The ancestors of the families of Bhais of Kaithal and Bagrain whose descendents played a distinguished role in the building of Sikh faith are said to have received blessing from the Guru. See also G. C. Narang, op. cit., p.88

202. Ram Rai’s monument at Dehra Dun, verse 21

203. Ibid., verse 33

204. Ibid., verse 38

205. Ibid., verse 56

206. P. S. Gill, op. cit., pp.172-173

207. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., p.48

208. M. Macauliffe, op. cit., IV p.310

212. J. Malcolm, op. cit., p.37

213. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.55

214. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Lxxxv

215. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.20

and the followers remained a strong religious body. Macauliffe²¹⁶ mentions that the Guru was a great preacher of love and discipline. His sermons were a very important factor in the spreading of Sikhism. The following quotations were frequently used by the Guru:

(i) "Man with one hand breaks flowers and with the other he offers them, but the flower perfumes both hands alike.

Although the axe cuts the *Sandal*-tree, yet the *Sandal* perfumes the axe. Therefore my Sikhs always return good for evil."²¹⁷

(ii) "He whose deeds are pure is called a holy man."²¹⁸

(iii) "Though one be very beautiful, of high birth, clever, pleasing in words and wealthy, yet shall he be deemed as dead, if he has no love for God."²¹⁹

(iv) "All men's hearts are jewels, to distress them is not at all good;

If you desire the Beloved, distress no one's heart."²²⁰

(v) "Do now the work of tomorrow; and if you do it now, do it at once. Nothing can be done hereafter, when death stands over your head."²²¹

Mohd. Latif²²² observes that the Guru was a quiet and contented man, and was very affable in his habits.

Mohsin Fani²²⁴ felt that the Guru's personality was shaped by the Guru's dignity.

Thus we see that the Sikh and non-Sikh chroniclers of Sikh history are unanimous that Guru Har Rai was a man of love and peace and that his personality became perfect through the development of his love for God and His creation, and his self-restraint.

GURU HAR KRISHAN (1656–1664), the eighth Nanak, stressed the help of the needy as the core quality of an ideal man.

The eternal light of Guru Nanak, which had manifested itself in a dedicated disciple, Guru Angad; in an elderly yet tireless preacher, Guru Amardas; in an administrator, Guru Ramdas; in a martyr, Guru Arjan; in a warrior, Guru Har Gobind; in a pacifist, Guru Har Rai; now manifested itself in a child-scholar, Guru Har Krishan, who proved beyond any doubt that an ideal man could be a successful leader even at the young age of five and meet fearlessly any challenge of times.

The pontificate of the Guru lasted only two and a half years, from 6th October, 1661 to 30th March, 1664;²²⁵ but within this short span

216. M. Macauliffe, op. cit., IV, pp.279-314

217. Ibid., p.279

218. Ibid., p.281

219. Ibid., p.283

220. Ibid., p.287

221. Ibid., p.314

222. M. Latif, op. cit., p.257

224. Mohsin Fani, op. cit., II, p.282

225. Sahib Singh, op. cit., pp.54-55

of time, the Guru contributed to the mission of Guru Nanak the 'spirit of help and assistance.' The Guru declared that the followers of Guru Nanak must always be ready to help others irrespective of the recipient's colour, caste, creed and religion.

While staying in Delhi, in 1664, the Guru helped and nursed the smallpox stricken people of the Capital, without any fear of contacting infection and brought new life, hope and happiness to many hundred families at the cost of his own young and tender life.

As a child-Guru, he baffled the *Pandits* by his divine knowledge and spiritual powers.²²⁶ The Guru also disregarded, without any fear, the occult powers of his elder brother, Ram Rai.²²⁷

Child-Guru Har Krishan carried forward the work where it was left by Guru Har Rai. He sent out missionaries far and wide to spread the gospel of Guru Nanak.²²⁸ He himself taught, with all confidence, those who asked from him the path of truth.²²⁹ The Guru, with his missionary work, proved that spiritual attainment does not depend on age. It was a gift of God²³⁰ and could be bestowed on anyone.

Aurangzeb, though close to Ram Rai, was convinced that the choice of Guru Harkrishan as a successor to Guru Nanak's throne was not wrong and that Ram Rai's claim was spurious.²³¹

The various sermons of the Guru, *inter alia*, included the following:

When the Guru received the summons from Aurangzeb he consoled his followers by saying,

- (i) "What cause is there for anxiety? Whatever Wahe-guru has decided shall take place. Why be anxious regarding it? What can poor mortal do if he has not God's succour?"²³²
- (ii) When the Guru instructed an ego-stricken Brahman at Panjokhara, he said:
"The eyes of understanding are very good, but the cataract of pride so blinds them that they cannot see God's way."²³³
- (iii) On an emissary's insistence the Guru sent to the Emperor the following instructions based on Guru Nanak's hymns:
"If the True God dwell's not in the heart
Every other thought and act is useless.

.....

- (iv) Except the true Name all other things are perishable."²³⁴
When the Guru was to breathe his last he consoled his mother, Krishan Kaur, by quoting the various hymns of Guru Arjan.

226. Trilochan Singh, *Historical Sikh Shrines in Delhi*, p.15

227. *Ibid.*, p.15

228. S. S. Gandhi, *The Spokesman Weekly*, July 24 1978, p.4

229. *Ibid.*, p.4

230. G. S. Mansukhani, 'Guru Harkrishan', *The Spokesman Weekly*, July 31, 1978, p.5

231. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op. cit.*, p.50

232. M. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, IV, p.319

233. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, p.321

234. *Ibid.*, p.324

He said,

“The Master may gather the crop whether it be green, half-ripe, or ripe and fit to be cut:

The reapers make preparations, bring sickles, and arrive on the ground;

They cut the crop as it is measured out to them when the owner gives orders.”²³⁵

Guru Har Krishan with his sense of service and nursing of the sick inculcated the idea of selfless help as an essential attribute of an ideal man.

As the Guru died at a very young age and remained on the throne of Guru Nanak for only two and a half years, the non-Sikh historians have commented very little of his life. Cunningham²³⁶ has mentioned Aurangzeb’s acceptance of the Guru as the rightful successor, Dorothy Field²³⁷ mentions the Guru’s refusal to see the tyrant Aurangzeb in response to the later’s summons. Mohd. Latif²³⁸ refers to the Guru as ‘infant apostle’.

GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1621–1675), the ninth Nanak, emphasised the Sikh view of *Jiwan Mukat* (liberated soul) and *Sacrifice for others* as the basic attributes of an ideal man.

Guru Tegh Bahadur’s pontificate lasted for eleven years and eight months, from March 30, 1664 to November 11, 1675.²³⁹ During this period of Guruship, the work done by him to further the ideology and philosophy of Guru Nanak and his seven successors was commendable.

The Guru’s sacrifice of life for the protection of the faith and religion of others added a new dimension to the philanthropy of the Sikhs. In the words of Santokh Singh:

“Who like him there ever was in the world,

Who sacrificed his head,

For the sake of others’ faith.”²⁴⁰

The Guru gave his life for the sake of the faith of the Hindus, without uttering a groan.²⁴¹ His sacrifice was a mighty challenge to the mightiest empire of the age, and this challenge was given in the metropolis and to the emperor in person.²⁴²

The Guru’s contribution towards the attributes of an ideal man are very significant. He showed the importance of service and help to others even at the cost of one’s life, through his hymns, sermons and action – by laying down his own life to protect the Hindu faith.

235. Ibid., p.326

236. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.56

237. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.21

238. M. Latif, op. cit., p.258

239. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op. cit., pp.51, 58

240. Santokh Singh, *Sri Gur Pratap Suraj Granth*, VII, pp.2762-63

241. Sri Ram Kohli, ‘Guru Tegh Bahadur’, *Guru Tegh Bahadur Commemorative Volume*, p.33

242. Ibid., p.33

Commenting on the requisites of an ideal man, the Guru wrote:

- (i) "Rid yourself of ego, and love of *Maya*,
Attune yourself to the All-pervading God,
This is the way of deliverance;
Become an ideal man and attain deliverance."²⁴³
- (ii) "In this world only that person is liberated who devotes himself to the adoration of the Lord."²⁴⁴
- (iii) "Call him a Yogi who has no slander for others or flattery,
For whom gold and iron are one, who is untouched by joy and sorrow."²⁴⁵

The Guru described the attributes of *Jiwan Mukar* in one of his hymns. He wrote:

"The man who in the midst of grief is free from grieving
And free from fear and free from the sense of delight,
Nor is covetous of gold that he knows to be dust,
Who is neither a back-biter nor a flatterer,
Nor has greed in his heart, nor vanity, nor any worldly attachment,
Who remains in equipoise, unmoved by good or ill-fortune,
Who is indifferent to the world's praise and blame,
And discards every wishful fantasy, accepting his lot in a disinterested fashion,
Not worked upon by lust or by wrath;
In such a man God dwells.
The man on whom the grace of the Guru alights,
understands the way of right conduct.
His soul is mingled with the Lord
As water mingles with water."²⁴⁶

Guru Tegh Bahadur was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind. From his childhood, he was a serious boy and looked like a saint in the making.²⁴⁷ He was always polite and calm and loved all his playmates and class fellows.²⁴⁸ The Guru studied languages, history, metaphysics, logic, theology, Indian philosophy, elementary Islamic lore, Qoranic traditions and Sufi doctrines.²⁴⁹ The Guru was also given a comprehensive military training and he learnt the use of all weapons of war current in the times.²⁵⁰ The Guru also took a special interest in music and poetry.²⁵¹ In April, 1635, when the Guru was fourteen years old, he took part in one of the battles

243. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Gauri, p.219

244. *Ibid.*, Sarang, p.1231

245. *Guru Granth Sahib*, *ibid.*, p.685

246. *Ibid.*, Sorath, p.633; According to G. S. Mansukhani (*Hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur*, *Commemorative Volume*), p.10; this was the Guru's first hymn and was composed in 1664 when the Guru was 41 years old. The year was the first of the Guru's pontificate.

247. Prakash Singh, 'Birthday, Early life and marriage of Guru Tegh Bahadur', *The Sikh Review*, December 1975, p.7

248. *Ibid.*, p.8

249. Trilocham Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur, Prophet & Martyr*, p.19

250. *Ibid.*

251. *Ibid.*, p.20

which Guru Hargobind fought against the Mughal forces.²⁵² From 1644 to 1664 the Guru lived in Bakala with his wife Gujari and mother Nanaki.²⁵³ All these years he was mostly absorbed in meditation of the *Name*.²⁵⁴

His twenty years of meditation gave him the secret of the reality of life. He, then, expressed some of his ideas in his Sloaks. He wrote:

- (i) "If strength is our support, all bonds are freed and all efforts prove of avail."²⁵⁵
- (ii) "Whom pleasure, pain, covetousness, attachment and pride affect not; listen O mind, he is the Image of God."²⁵⁶
- (iii) "He who is unaffected by praise or blame or honour or ignominy, for whom gold and iron are alike; listen O mind, he is *Jiwan Mukat*."²⁵⁷
- (iv) "He who is not moved by joy or sorrow, and to whom friend and foe are alike; Listen O mind, he is *Jiwan Mukat*."²⁵⁸

After resuming the responsibility of the Guruship, the Guru planned to visit Amritsar in November, 1664; there the doors of the Harmandir were slammed in his face by the *masands*.²⁵⁹ On May 13, 1665, he reached Kiratpur after passing through village Walla, Khadur, Goindwal, Taran Taran, Khem Karan, Bangar and Dhamdan.²⁶⁰

On June 19, 1665, the Guru reached Chak Nanaki. From 1665 to 1670 he was away from the Punjab, visiting various places enroute to Assam.²⁶¹ From 1673 to 1675 the Guru made another tour of Malwa and Bangar.²⁶²

During this period of time, when the Guru was spreading the mission of Guru Nanak far and near, Aurangzeb was giving finishing touches to his policy for the spread of Islam and conversion of Hindus to Islam by force.

On May 25, 1665 a deputation of sixteen Brahmins, under the leadership of Kirpa Ram Dutt,²⁶³ called on the Guru to help them to save the Hindu faith. The Guru gave them a sympathetic response.

Aurangzeb, whose 'intelligence service' had already reported to him about the Guru's extensive tours to preach the gospel of Guru

252. Harbans Singh, A Panoramic view, Guru Nanak to Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, *The Sikh Review*, January 1976, p.11

253. Taran Singh, 'Tegh Bahadur's 20 years of meditation at Bakala before becoming Guru', *The Sikh Review*, December 1975, p.19

254. *Ibid.*, p.19

255. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Sloak 54, p.1429

256. *Ibid.*, Sloak 13, p.1426-1427

257. *Ibid.*, Sloak 14, p.1427

258. *Ibid.*, Sloak 15, p.1427

259. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, I, p.71

260. S. S. Gandhi, *op. cit.*, p.353

261. *Ibid.*, pp.353-361

262. *Ibid.*, p.365

263. Ganda Singh, 'Brahmins in search of a Saviour', *The Sikh Review*, December 1975, p.65

Nanak, was already suspicious of the Sikh movement which his grandfather, Jahangir, had wished to put an end to.²⁶⁴

The Fresh reports about the Kashmiri Brahmins' approach to the Guru for help and the sympathetic response of the Guru to the Brahmins' cause and his promise to sacrifice even his own life to help this just cause added fuel to the fire. As a result, Aurangzeb wrote to the governor of Lahore, in 1675, to arrest the Guru. The Guru was arrested on July 12, 1675,²⁶⁵ and was brought to Delhi on November 6, 1675.²⁶⁶ On November 11, 1675 the Guru was publicly executed at Chandni Chowk.

Thus, the Guru, with his immortal hymns and unparalleled sacrifice, taught his followers the spirit of *Jiwan Mukat* i.e., liberation (*Mukti*) while still in embodied existence and self-oblation.

According to Malcolm,²⁶⁷ the Guru was put to death by Aurangzeb, without even the allegation of a crime. Cunningham²⁶⁸ wrote that the Guru's own example powerfully aided in making the disciples of Guru Nanak a martial as well as a devotional people: Payne²⁶⁹ mentions that the Guru was executed for refusing to embrace the faith of Islam. Dorothy Field²⁷⁰ states that the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur left Aurangzeb in great distress and that he never regained his peace of mind. According to I. B. Bannerjee²⁷¹ the Guru was of a peaceful disposition. His spirit of forbearance and his love of peace are clearly brought out in the manner in which he sought to meet the intrigues of his kinsmen and those of the masands; and his writings unmistakably testify to the saintliness of his character. *Mohd. Latif*²⁷² states that the Guru told his disciples that he was 'Deg Bahadur,' meaning he was a cherisher of the poor and supporter of the hungry, rather than 'Tegh Bahadur' meaning the cherisher of the sword.

Thus we see that the supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur is the first known sacrifice in medieval Indian history for the protection of fundamental human rights, which are the foremost and important parts of most of the world constitutions, and include the right of freedom of religion and worship.

The Guru's sacrifice was a practical demonstration of the Sikh ideal.

264. Ibid., p.68

265. Ibid., p.69

266. Ibid., p.69; see also Darshan Singh, Idea of Jiwan Mukat in Sikhism', *The Spokesman Weekly*, August 14, 1978

267. J. Malcolm, op. cit., p.39

268. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.58

269. C. H. Payne, op. cit., p.32

270. Dorothy Field, op. cit., p.24

272. M. Latif, op. cit., p.259

CHAPTER IV

GURU GOBIND SINGH'S CONCEPT OF AND EFFORTS TOWARDS CONCRETION OF AN IDEAL MAN

There is a great deal of debate on Guru Gobind Singh's concept of an ideal man. Many historians, Indian as well as European, have been critical of Guru Gobind Singh's teachings and have alleged that the Guru deviated from the teachings of Guru Nanak and changed completely the character of his religion. The veritable picture of Guru Gobind Singh's ideal man is thus blurred by extreme and conflicting views. Its strength and relevance can only be judged by a discreet study of:

- a. Guru Gobind Singh's life history as recorded by his contemporaries, and
- b. Guru Gobind Singh's own compositions and writings contained in *Dasam Granth*.

Dasam Granth in its present form contains 1,428¹ pages and its various portions are composed in Braj, Hindi, Panjabi and Persian languages. It comprises of sixteen compositions versified in different forms of poetry in the following order:

1. Jāp
2. Akāl Ustat
3. Bachittar Natak
4. Chandī Charitar 1
5. Chandī Charitar 2
6. Chandī Di Vār
7. Giān Pradodh
8. Chaubīs Avtār
9. Brahm Avtār
10. Rudar Avtār
11. Shabad Hazāre
12. Swayyae
13. Khālsā Mehmā
14. Shaster Nam Mālā
15. Triyā Charitar
16. Zafarnāmā and Hikāyats

1. *Dasam Granth*, (as published by Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh, Amritsar (1966))

Historically, the *Dasam Granth* was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh on the instructions of Mata Sundri, Guru Gobind Singh's widow, in 1711 A.D.² The first voice raised against the authorship of the *Dasam Granth* was at Damdama Sahib in 1740 A.D.³ Since that date, two schools of thought have existed on this vital issue. The first school which considers that the whole *Granth* was composed by Guru Gobind Singh consists of:

1. Bhai Sher Singh – 'Dashmesh Darpan' (1935)
2. Dr. Tarlochan Singh – 'Sikh Review' (1955)
3. Bhai Randhir Singh – '*Dasam Granth Da Itihas*' (1955)
4. Dr. D. P. Ashta – 'Poetry of the Dasam Granth' (1958)
5. Dr. Harbhajan Singh – '*Gurmukhi Lipi Vich Hindi Kave Di Alochna*' (1959)
6. Dr. Taran Singh – '*Dasam Granth: Roop te Ras*' (1961)
7. Dr. (Miss) Prasinni Sehgal – '*Guru Gobind Singh-Jeewni Te Sahit*' (1961)
8. Mr. Piara Singh Padam – '*Gobind Sagar*'
9. Dr. Mahip Singh – '*Dasam Guru De Sahit Bare*' (1963)

The second school regards only some of its compositions as the work of the Guru, and others as those of the Guru's court-poets. The advocates of this school of thought are:

1. Bhai Santokh Singh – 'Suraj Prakash' (1844)
2. J. D. Cunningham – 'History of the Sikhs' (1849)
3. M. A. Macauliffe – 'The Sikh Religion' (1909)
4. Dr. G. C. Narang – 'Transformation of Sikhism' (1912)
5. Babu Teja Singh – '*Dasam Granth Sar*' (1916)
6. Indubusan Bannerjee – 'Evolution of the Khalsa' (1947)
7. Dr. Mohan Singh Diwana – 'Introduction to Punjabi Literature' (1951)
8. Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi – '*Dasam Garanth da Kartritar*' (1966)

In the midst of this controversy, reference required for the present study have been drawn mainly from those compositions which are accepted by the majority of scholars as Guru Gobind Singh's own.

The concept of an ideal man as established by the first nine Gurus was, in a way extended by Guru Gobind Singh through the creation of the Khalsa. It was certainly not a departure from the concept of an ideal man as presented by the first nine Gurus and as is described in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The extension was an evolution and not a revolution.⁴

The ideal man of Guru Gobind Singh was an embodiment of the greatest virtues – Truth, Justice, Compassion coupled with Valour and Fearlessness. Universal brotherhood, Physical development

2. Mohinder Singh Sahdev. *Dasam Granth: a Study, Gurmat Praksh*, Jan, 1979 p.166

3. Ibid., p.171

4. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, A paper presented at a seminar held at Coventry, England, January 13, 1979

through education and sport, Service and Help, Humility and Simplicity, 'Nam Simran' and Company of the saints, Congregational prayers and submission to His Order, Self-discipline and Love for God and Nature, Nursing of the sick, 'Jiwan Mukh' and self-sacrifice had already been established as the essential attributes of an Ideal man. To these were added the Tegh (the sword) by the Tenth Guru. He said, "The cauldron and the sword shall prevail in the world fighting and dying for the preservation of the highest values is a sign of courage."⁵

In order to get a right perspective of the institution of the Khalsa, it must not be forgotten that Guru Gobind Singh:

1. was an heir to a religious mission,
2. was ordained by the Almighty to uproot evil and administer justice,⁶ and
3. was to declare the mission of Guru Nank fulfilled.

The Guru was confronted with a difficult and complex task of upholding a faith which had been created by Guru Nanak and nursed by his successors. He had succeeded to that religious and spiritual office which involved innumerable responsibilities, far-sightedness, dynamism, courage, fearlessness and boldness. He had accepted this role with great enthusiasm and challenge. He was a man of destiny in his own words. The Guru affirmed,

"The Lord sent me for righteousness' sake,
On this account I have come into the world,
To extend the faith everywhere and
To seize and destroy the evil and the sinful,
Understand this, all holy men in your hearts,
I assumed birth for the purpose of spreading the faith,
For saving the saints and
For extirpating all tyrants."⁷

His identity with the Khalsa was to the point of asserting that:

"Khalsa is my True Guru
Khalsa is my Perfect Teacher."⁸

His respect for the Khalsa is nowhere better seen than in one of his compositions:

"All the battles I have won against tyranny,
I have fought with the devoted backing of these people.
Through their help I have escaped from harm,
The love and generosity of these Sikhs have enriched my hearth
and home.

Through their help in battle-field I have slain all my enemies.
I was born to serve the Khalsa, through whom I attained eminence.

What would I have been without their kind and ready help?

5. Ibid.

6. *Bachittar Natak*, Chapter VI, Verses 29-33.

7. *Bachittar Natak*, Chapter VI, Verses 29-33

8. 'Sarab Loh Granth', Quoted in *Amrit Kirtan*, p.291

There are millions of insignificant people like me.
 True service is the service of these people.
 I am not inclined to serve others of higher caste.
 Charity will bear fruit in this and the next world,
 If given to such worthy people as these.
 All other sacrifices and charities are profitless.
 From head to foot, whatever I call my own,
 All I possess and carry, I dedicate to these people.”⁹

Looking for a right interpretation of the Guru’s concept of an ideal man, it must be firmly understood that the Guru’s fundamental assumption about the basic and most important obligation of a human being, was to worship One – Formless and Deathless God. It was on this basic assumption that the moral failure of God’s heavenly and earthly beings was explained by the Guru.¹⁰ The failure of the creatures, in general, consisted chiefly in their forgetfulness of the Creator,¹¹ and the failure of the divinely appointed instruments was due to their interposing themselves between God and His creatures.¹²

The Guru said,

“..... The immortal One told me how the demons were first created, but they trusted their own arms and so were destroyed. Then the gods were created; but they became proud, made a big show of their own strength and called themselves Supreme God Then the so-called Witnesses – Earth, Sun, Moon, Wind, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh – were created, but people began to worship them. Some people worshipped stones, some worshipped water and many others became engrossed in egoism”¹³

It is to be noted with care that the Guru’s main concern, here, was the wrongful identification on the part of the above-mentioned divinely appointed witnesses with God Himself. To prevent his own worship by his followers he warned them,

“.....Those who call me Supreme God shall fall into the pit of hell, Know me as His slave only and have not the least doubt of that,
 I am the slave of the Supreme Being, and have come to behold the spectacle of the world. What the Lord told me, I tell the world and I will not remain silent through fear of mortals.”¹⁴

Though the Guru showed interest in so-called incarnations (*avtars*), he had no belief in them. He said that he did not accept the opinions of the *Puranas* or of the *Qoran*, nor the doctrines of the *Smritis*, *Shastras* or *Vedas*. In the Guru’s words:

9. *Dasam Granth*, Swayyae, p.717

10. Bal and Grewal, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.104

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter VI, Verses 1-9

14. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter VI, Verses 30-33

- (i) "I do not at the outset propitiate Ganesh,
I never meditate on Krishna or Vishnu
I have heard of them but I know them not.
I love only God's feet."¹⁵
- (ii) "The *Puran* of Ram (the god of Hindus)
And the *Qoran* of Rahim (the prophet of Muslims)
Express various opinions, but I accept none of them.
The *Smritis*, the *Shastras* and the *Vedas* all expound many
different doctrines, but I accept none of them."¹⁶
- (iii) "Forsaking all other doors I have clung to Thine
It is to Your prerogative to protect me
O God, Gobind is your slave."¹⁷

In the Guru's philosophy, the forces of evil and good, vice and virtues were continuously at work in the world and God intervened in this endless cosmic drama from time to time in different ways, to uphold good against evil. One of the many ways employed by the Almighty was to send His messengers to this mortal world as ordinary human beings, who would mix with ordinary folks, speak their language and win their confidence with Wisdom, Ideal way of living, Purity of thought, Truthfulness and through worship of the Formless One. Their ordained duty was to destroy unrighteousness and uphold justice, to uproot evil and establish good, to rescue the weak and to guide the innocent, to protect saints and redeem devotees and to uplift downtrodden people.¹⁸ This idea of the duties of God's messenger also appears in *Bhavagad Gita*¹⁹ and Hebrew literature.²⁰

In the Guru's views, the ceaseless cycles of life and death emanated from God and would ultimately end in Him. As everything has come out of Him, He is, in a sense, both matter and spirit. In the Guru's words,

"From one fire, millions of sparks of fire arise and in course of rising remain separate, yet they again merge in the same fire. From one heap of dust innumerable particles of dust fill the expanse in a distinct way and yet they again unite with the dust. From one stream millions of waves arise and yet these being made of water again become water. In the same way all sentient and non-sentient forms have emerged from the One Universal Being, yet having sprung from Him they all are bound to blend again in Him."²¹

Explaining the uninterrupted cycle of life and death, the Guru says,

15. *Krishan Avtar*, Translated by Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. V, pp.314-5

16. *Ram Avtar*, Translated by Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion* Volume V, p.310 (*Dasam Granth*, p.254)

17. *Ibid.*

18. D. P. Ashta, *Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, pp.73-74

19. *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 2, Verse 42.

20. *The Book of Jeremiah*, I, Verses 5-10

21. *Akal Ustat*, verse 17(87)

"There are many that swim and many that waddle
 And many that eat them up,
 There are myriad birds, the feathery beings,
 That in a trice can take to wings,
 But up in the sky are many others
 That on these warblers sup,
 Where are the waters, where the land
 And where the vaulted blue?
 Yet all that "Time" has brought forth
 Both "Time" itself subdue,
 As darkness mingles with light
 As light embraces dark,
 All will at last dissolve in Him
 From whom they got their spark."²²

According to the Guru, God's messengers are allowed to make use of force to uproot evil. The examples of Krishna, Rama, Shiv, Durga, Moses and Mohammed are known to all. This power to the messengers is God's and is given at a particular time and for a particular purpose.²³ Thus a very important attribute of God's messenger was the use of this power.²⁴

In one of the scenes in the *Chandi Charitar*,²⁵ the god Indra appeals to Chandi for help. She mounts her tiger and rides into the demon-army. A bloody battle follows; and whoever is struck by her arrows 'never even asks for water' and dies instantly. Finally, she kills the 'Buffalo-demon' and then disappears.²⁶

In the *Chandi di Var*, a struggle between the forces of Evil and Good is depicted, in which Divine Aid weighs the scales in favour of the Good.²⁷

In the *Ram Avtar*, which the Guru completed on the eve of instituting the Khalsa,²⁸ some sages who were being harassed by the demons approached Brahma who asked Vishnu to take birth in the world to remove the terror of demons and proclaim the rule of peace.²⁹

Again in the *Chandi di Var* the Guru has referred to the physical forces used by Krishna, Rama and Durga for uprooting evil. The Guru said,

"The Lord created first, the Sword,
 which begot the universe
 Nature is the pageant, Holy Three,
 Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh,

22. *Akal Ustat*, verse 17(87) (*Dasam Granth*) p.19

23. Sher Singh, *Philosophy of Sikhism*, p.77

24. *Ibid*

25. *Chandi Charitar*, I verse, no.40

26. *Ibid*.

27. *Chandi Di Var*, stanza no. 2

28. Bal and Grewal, p.107

29. *Ram Avtar*, verses 2 & 4

Heavens hanging sans support,
 hills, oceans, earth.
 And He made all gods and devils grim,
 set as rivals fierce,
 And then, O Sword, thou Durga made
 the devils' pride to pierce.
 Ram you blessed who Dehsir felled,
 with his arrows fast,
 Krishan who dragged the evil Kans,
 and his flock in deadly grasp.
 For aeons long sat god and sage
 in meditation profound,
 Thy secret was not found.³⁰

It is an established fact of the religious history of the world that whenever God thought that his saints and innocent people were in trouble and were being harassed by the wicked and whenever evil had overpowered good, God's anger had manifested itself on this earth. It took the form of thunder, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, famines, epidemics and droughts; and sometimes the form of super human-instruments (weapons) like the magic stick used by Moses, the arrow employed by Rama, the steel boomerang utilized by Krishna, the spear used by Durga, and the sword used by Mohammed and Guru Gobind Singh. A strict control and balance between the parameters of good and evil, through the use of force, is an essential feature of the moral world.³¹ The idea that God protected the good and cast down the wicked was also expressed by Guru Nanak.³² According to Guru Gobind Singh, God subdued the enemies of virtue, so did the sword; therefore the sword was God and God was the sword.³³

It is in the context of these basic facts that we should examine Guru Gobind Singh's presentation of his own mission in the *Bachitar Natak*³⁴ which was composed in 1698, about one year before the institution of the Khalsa.³⁵ The long composition of *Bachitar Natak* which the Guru wrote when he was 32 years old also gives us the clues of his proposed additions, and definitely not the alteration, to the mission of Guru Nank.

The composition of *Bachitar Natak* begins with a couplet invoking the blessings of the Holy Sword. Many Hindu historians maintain that in Guru Gobind Singh's writings, the word *Bhagauti* or *Kharg* or sword meant Durga, a Hindu deity. Macauliffe has given sufficient proof against this notion.³⁶ Bhai Gurdas (II), a contemporary of the Guru, has also given the true significance of the word

30. Chandi Di Var, stanzas 1-5, 21.

31. Bal and Grewal, p.109

32. Randhir Singh, *Shabad Murit*, quoted by Bal and Grewal, p.109

33. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, volume V, p.83

34. Bal and Grewal, p.109

35. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh: Cosmic Hero*, p.106, Macauliffe, however has quoted different date - 1692 A.D., p.1, note 1

36. Macauliffe, op.cit., p.81

in his *Vars*,³⁷ which according to him meant the Invincible Power and thus God. In the Guru's words,

"I bow with love and devotion to the Holy Sword,
Help me that I may complete this work."³⁸

The rest of the composition (*Bachitar Natak*) is divided into fourteen cantos. The first canto contains the praises of God. The second to fourth cantos are devoted to the geneological tables of the descent of both the Bedis and the Sodhis. There is at the end a prophecy that in *Kalyug*, Nanak (Guru Nanak) would bestow blessings on two Sodhis, and would, on his fourth mortal appearance, become one of that tribe.³⁹ Guru Gobind Singh elaborating the mission of Nanak, said:

"He established religion in the *Kaliage*,
And showed the way unto all holy men.
Sin never troubles those,
Who follow in his footsteps.
Those who embrace his religion
Pain and hunger never annoy them
And they never fall into Death's noose."⁴⁰

In the fifth canto, he describes how Guru Nanak came with a Divine message and the Divine light was passed on to his successors, one by one in different bodies. The Guru said,

"Nanak assumed the body of Angad,
And made his religion current in the world,
Afterwards Nanak was called Amardas,
As one lamp is lit from another
And Amardas became Ramdas.
The pious saw this, but not the ignorant,
Who thought them all different;
But some rare persons recognised that they were all one.
They who understood this obtained perfection –
Without understanding, perfection cannot be obtained.
When Ramdas was blended with God,
He gave the Guruship to Arjan.
When Arjan was going to God's city,
He appointed Hargobind in his place.
When Hargobind was going to God's abode,
He seated Har Rai in his place
Har Krishan, his son, afterwards became the Guru,
After him came Tegh Bahadur
Who protected the frontal marks and sacred threads of the
Hindus."⁴¹

The sixth canto describes the Guru's own story, wherein he

37. Bhai Gurdas II, Pauri, 6, Var 25

38. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter 1, verse 1

39. Chapter IV, verses 7 & 9

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter V, verses 7-13

mentions the order of God telling him to go to the world to uproot evil and restore justice. He narrates the details of his own mission in this canto. The Guru says:

“On the mountain of Hem Kunt
I performed great austerities
And worshipped Great-Death (*Maha Kal*)
The Supreme Guru was pleased
When Great God gave me the order,
I assumed birth in the *Kaliage*.
And He sent me into this world with the following order:
.....‘I have cherished you as My son
And created you to extend My religion,
Go and spread My mission in the world,
And restrain the people from senseless acts’.”

The last canto is again an invocation in praise of the Almighty. The Guru says:

“O God: You have always preserved Your worshippers from evil,
And have inflicted punishment on the wicked;
You have treated me as Your devoted slave,
And nursed me with Your own hands;
Now all that I behold,
And all Your glories which I have witnessed,
Will I faithfully relate to the world.
What I beheld in the pre-birth world,
By Your blessings will I make known to all.
In all my undertakings, Your goodness has been showered upon me
Your sword has been my preserver;
Through Your kindness and goodness have I become strong.
And all that I have observed and seen during the various ages,
I will put in a book,
And everything shall be fully made known to the world.”⁴³

In the couplets quoted above, from the *Bachitar Natak*, we observe that the praise of All-Steel God; an account of the Guru's ancestors, his autobiography (covering a period of thirty-two years of his mortal life); a description of his life before birth; a satire on the religious practices of ascetics and the ultimate reason for his taking to the sword, form the main subject matter of this composition. It is in this long poem that we find the seeds of the Guru's concept of the Khalsa, the saint-soldier of tomorrow. It should also be observed that most of the ancestors in the Guru's family were warriors. Some of them had conquered parts of Northern India, singing the hymns of Vedas.⁴⁴ These Vedic Aryans could be classed as crusaders. They had lost their image and identity under the haze

43. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter XIV

44. C. H. Lehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.26

of time and the Guru was ordained to improve on that image. The methods of refinement and the zeal for reform take many different forms. Sometimes, it could take the form of a missionary and gentle spirit as of Lord Buddha, Mahavir, Jesus Christ and Guru Nanak. At other times, this zeal took the shape of a martial spirit as of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Moses, Prophet Mohammed and Guru Gobind Singh. The second mode of resurrection was the underlying philosophy behind the Guru's concept of the Khalsa.

Many historians⁴⁵ while discussing the necessity of the creation of the Khalsa have stressed the point of 'changed times' as the basis of their argument. Their contention had been that the Guru had to resort to the sword for that was the demand of the time. A critical analysis of the historical background of Guru Nanak's and Guru Gobind Singh's times does not, however, prove this point satisfactorily. The political and social environments of these two periods were not much different.

When Guru Nanak appeared on the world scene in 1469, India had already experienced about sixty foreign invasions dating from 960 A.D.,⁴⁶ including one by Alpatigin of Ghazni around 960 A.D., three by Sabkutigin between 977 A.D.-997 A.D., seventeen by Mahmud of Ghazni between 1175 to 1206; ten by Shihab-ud-din Ghorī between 1175-1206; twenty-five by Mongols between 1220-1399 and five by Babar between 1497 and 1524 A.D.⁴⁷

All these invasions had caused destruction of Indian people and their cherished possessions. The invaders had killed innocent people including women and children. Looting, destruction, killing and raping had been inflicted upon Indian masses by foreign hordes during the five hundred years which preceded Guru Nanak.

At the time of Guru Nanak's birth, India was being ruled by Lodis who were as cruel and tyrannical as the previous rulers. In their rule, Hindu temples were demolished and priests butchered. The arts and seats of learning were wilfully wiped out.⁴⁸ Sikander Lodi's hatred of the Hindus had figured very prominently in history. He many times 'went beyond the bounds even of excess,'⁴⁹ At many religious places, famous Hindu temples were destroyed, their stone images were given to the butchers to serve as meat-weights, and the Hindus were prohibited from shaving their heads and performing their ablutions in the sacred river Yamuna.⁵⁰ Guru Nanak himself witnessed the great massacre at Sayyidpur when the town was ransacked by the soldiers of Babar in 1520 A.D.⁵¹ In 1524 A.D., after a great deal of bloodshed of innocent people, Babar also

45. C. H. Lehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.26

46. H. R. Gupta, *History of Sikh Gurus*, p.1

47. *Ibid.*, p.18. See also R. Majumdar, *Advanced History of India*, pp.172, 173, 270, 272 and 418

48. *Ibid.*, p.2

49. *Tabaquat-i-Akbari*, Volume 1, p.335

50. *Tarikhe-i-Daudi*, Translated by Elliot & Dawson, IV, p.447

51. Beveridge, *Babar Nama*, I, p.429

conquered Lahore. In the next six years, the Mughal rulers were firmly established in India. In several verses of Guru Nanak, known as *Babar-Vani*, there is a description of that inhuman destruction and devastation.⁵² In the prophetic words of Guru Nanak –

- (i) “As the Word of the Lord comes to me,
 So do I make it known, O Lalo
 With a mighty force Babar has come from Kabul,
 Like a bridegroom with a sinful crowd as bridal procession.
 With brutal force has he snatched India’s wealth as his bride.
 Woe and misery has disfigured the unfortunate land.
 Modesty, honour and righteousness have all vanished
 Evil and open vice have held its sway, O dear Lalo
 Just is the Lord, true is His verdict, true the Justice
 That he sentences all according to their deeds.
 Nanak has spoken the Word of the True Lord now,
 And will proclaim the rest at the time of occurrence.”⁵³
- (ii) “How strange is your dispensation, O Lord,
 How incomprehensible are your ways!
 All is death and confusion now,
 All happens as it pleases Him, O Nanak,
 How can man resist His Will.”⁵⁴
- (iii) “You have sent death disguised as the Mughal,
 Terrible has been the sufferings of the poor,
 Helpless people, O Lord of pity!
 So terrible that they all cried aloud in deep agony.
 Did you feel no pang or pity at all, my God?
 You belong equally to all, O Creator!
 You must equally feel for all.
 If a strong man attacks another who is equally strong,
 One need feel no grief or anger.
 But when lions and hungry wolves are let loose,
 On herds of sheep and cattle,
 The Master of the herd must be held responsible,
 For the wanton and avoidable destruction.
 The hounds of war have licked many a precious jewel of life,
 How mysterious are Your ways, O Lord!”⁵⁵
- Speaking about his times, he tells us at another place:
- (iv) “The kings are tigers and their courtiers are dogs,
 They go and disturb the sitting and the sleeping,
 The officials dig their claws, causing wounds,
 They lick up the blood and flesh that come out,
 But at the Divine court where they will be judged,

52. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.722 Translation by Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *Life of Guru Nanak, Guru Nanak:*

Apostle of Love, pp.27-32; pp.5-7

53. *Ibid.*, p.722

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.1245

Their noses will be chopped off, denigrating them as unworthy.”⁵⁶

Guru Angad received the spiritual light from Guru Nanak in 1599 A.D. During his pontificate, the whole Indian political scene was chaotic and confused. Hamayun, son and successor of Babar, was on the run after his defeat from Sher Shah at Bilgram in May 1540 A.D.⁵⁷ In July 1555 A.D., when Hamayun returned from Persia and reoccupied the Imperial throne, the light of Guru Nanak had passed to Guru Amardas. But the thirteen years period of Guru Angad's pontificate was full of political and religious persecutions and torture, social uncertainty, and restlessness and economic bankruptcy. The periods of the Guruship of Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas were relatively less eventful. It was the era of Akbar's reign and this was the only period in the whole Muslim rule in India, covering roughly about seven hundred years, when there was relatively less religious discrimination and cruelty. Akbar had a feeling of respect for the holy men of all religions and he also paid them homage.⁵⁸ On the other hand, strangely enough, he was charged by the orthodox Muslims as an enemy of Islam.⁵⁹

The uneventful political horizon and comparative calm and peace of Guru Amardas's and Guru Ramdas's times must not be mistaken to mean that the Gurus faced no problems, in propagating the message of Guru Nanak. Though there was no external oppression, there was a great deal of internal strife and jealousy among the existing communities and resistance to the egalitarian aspect of the Gurus' mission. The greatest opposition in the way of Guru Amardas came from Guru Angad's sons, Dasu and Dattu;⁶⁰ and in the way of Guru Ramdas from the sons of Guru Amardas, Mohan and Mohri.⁶¹ Guru Amardas was compelled to leave Khadur for Goindwal to avoid the hostility of Dasu and Dattu and Guru Ramdas left Goindwal for the newly established township of *Guru Ka Chak* to avoid an open conflict with Mohan and Mohri. Other obstacles in the progress of the Gurus' mission were also formidable. For example, at the times of Guru Amardas, several jealous *Khatri*s and *Brahmins* filed an official complaint against the Guru before Emperor Akbar for the Guru's egalitarian and unorthodox views.⁶² On another occasion some Muslim priests raised voices against the Guru's teachings and preaching of Guru Nanak's doctrines to the Muslims.⁶³ But relatively speaking, the times of Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas were peaceful.

56. Ibid., p.360

57. A. C. Bannerju, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, p.104

58. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.87

59. P. S. Gill, *History of Sikh Nation*, p.125

60. M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, pp.64-66

61. M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, pp.64-66

62. Ibid., pp.102-109, see also I. B. Bannerji, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, I, p.21

63. M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, p.213

Guru Arjan received the Guruship in 1581 A.D. at the age of eighteen when Emperor Akbar was still alive. The period from 1581 A.D. to 1605 A.D., i.e. till Akbar's death, was uneventful in relation to external persecution. The only obstacle in the functioning of the Guru's house came from the Guru's elder brother, Prithia,⁶⁴ who had become inimical on account of his supersession by Guru Arjan in the line of succession to Guruship. During the first twenty years of Guruship, Guru Arjan did remarkable work to consolidate and strengthen Guru Nanak's religion. He constructed many important Sikh shrines including *Harmandir Sahib* (Golden Temple), Taran Taran and Santokhsar. He also compiled and edited *Guru Granth Sahib* the holy scripture of the Sikhs. He took the important step of bringing the Jats of Majha into the fold of Sikhism, thus sowing the seeds of the growth of the infant Sikh community into a future Sikh Nation.⁶⁵ Akbar died in 1605 A.D. and a week after his death Jahangir, his son, succeeded to the throne at the age of thirty-six.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, Jahangir did not inherit his father's liberalism in religion. Meantime, the Sikhs had also increased considerably in number. Whereas the total number of the Sikhs in the time of Guru Ramdas appeared to be insignificant,⁶⁷ the number increased quite considerably in the time of Guru Arjan.⁶⁸ In every town in the country a few Sikhs were definitely found.⁶⁹ The rapidly growing number of the Sikhs, who were mainly converts from Hindus and Muslims, made the Islamic Government highly suspicious.⁷⁰ The Guru's relations with the Mughal government were further complicated by the intrigues of the Guru's elder brother, Prithia. He persuaded a Mughal army officer, Sulhi Khan, to kill the Guru. Sulhi Khan tried but failed. In Guru Arjan's own words:

"God preserved me from Sulhi
Sulhi by no means succeeded;
Sulhi died unclean,
God drew forth his axe and smote off his head,
and in a moment he became ashes.
He who practised evil was consumed,
He who created him thrust him into fire."⁷¹

Besides this, Chandu Shah, another officer in the Mughal government, became the Guru's enemy on the Guru's refusal to accept Chandu Shah's daughter in marriage with his son, Har Gobind.

This trio – Prithia, Sulhi Khan (while alive) and Chandu Shah – also repeatedly made representations to Jehangir stating that Guru

64. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.91

65. P. S. Gill, op.cit., p.107

66. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.456

67. J. D. Cunningham, *History of Sikhs*, p.46, f.n.1

68. Mohsin Fani, *Dabistan*, 225, 233

69. Ibid.

70. E. Trumpp. *The Adi Granth*, p.lxxxii

71. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Bilawal, p.825

Arjan was an enemy of Islam and the holy book – *Guru Granth Sahib* which he had compiled, contained derogatory remarks against Islam and Prophet Mohammed. Jehangir was, thus, becoming alarmed with the Guru's religious, economic and social activities; and was looking for an excuse to punish the Guru. When Prince Khusrau, the eldest son of Jehangir, revolted against his father and during his run took refuge with the Guru, who as usual showed kindness to him as to any man in distress; Jehangir got an excuse to put the Guru to death on a fictitious charge for harbouring and assisting an enemy of the throne. The Guru was tortured to death in 1606 A.D.⁷² thus becoming the first martyr in Sikh history.

The period beginning 1606 A.D. to 1799 A.D., was an era of the persecution of the Sikhs, along with Hindus and other non-Muslims. Guru Arjan was succeeded by his son, Guru Har Gobind, who was only eleven years old at the martyrdom of his father.

According to some historians, the last message of Guru Arjan to Guru Hargobind was that the young Guru should arm himself and should maintain an army to the best of his ability.⁷³ The seventy years period from Guru Hargobind to Guru Tegh Bahadur (1606 A.D. to 1675 A.D.) was once again an era of religious torture, bigotry and oppression. Jehangir died at Rajauri on 29th October, 1627, A.D.⁷⁴ when Guru Hargobind was thirty-two years old. Before his death, he issued a warrant for the arrest of the Guru and his imprisonment in the fort of Gwalior. Historians disagree on the term of imprisonment. Whereas many historians⁷⁵ state a period of two years, Mohsin Fani, a Persian writer and a contemporary of the Guru, refers to the period of imprisonment as twelve years.⁷⁶ Jehangir was succeeded by his son, Shah Jahan, who too was an orthodox Muslim⁷⁷ and far less liberal in religious policies.⁷⁸ Under his orders, a large scale destruction of Hindu temples was carried out.⁷⁹ Persecution of the Hindus now became the persecution of the Sikhs as well. The Guru, in his life-time, had to fight six battles against Mughals for survival and for affirming the mission of Guru Nanak.

Guru Hargobind, thus, became the first religious hero of medieval times who combined the qualities of a saint and a soldier. He taught the art of carrying a sword along with a rosary.⁸⁰ The Guru infused a military spirit into the disciples of Guru Nanak.⁸³ He, with his new teaching, saved the Sikh nation from a premature

72. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.457

73. P. S. Gill, op.cit., p.153; M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., III p.99 H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.108

74 Ibid.

75. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p.40, f.n. 1; P. S. Gill op.cit., p.157. He, however, refers to this period of imprisonment as three years.

76. Mohsin Fani, op.cit., 234

77. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.115

78. A. C. Bannerji, op.cit., p.143

79. Ibid.

80. P. S. Gill, op.cit., p.159

83. C. Payne, *Short History of the Sikhs*

annihilation and separated them a longway from other religious groups.⁸⁴ According to Greenlees,⁸⁵ 'Though it is true Guru Hargobind's somewhat martial temperament led him into ways different from those of his predecessors, it seems clear to us now that Guru Nanak willed through his body, to propose to the Sikhs to become a manly fighting nation.'

Guru Hargobind was succeeded by his grandson, Guru Har Rai, at the age of fourteen in 1644 A.D., when Shah Jahan was still on the throne. Shah Jahan's reign ended when he was imprisoned by his youngest son, Aurangzeb, who declared himself the emperor of India.⁸⁶

During this period of fourteen years the relations of the Guru, the Sikhs and the Mughals remained peaceful.⁸⁷ But Aurangzeb wasted no time, after taking the throne, to show his hatred for non-Muslims. He summoned Guru Har Rai to his court in 1661. The Guru sent his son Ram Rai to represent him. The young Ram Rai, out of fear, changed a word of one of Guru Nanak's hymns when he was asked to explain the meaning of the hymn in Aurangzeb's court. Guru Har Rai was greatly disappointed at his son's behaviour for having insulted Guru Nanak and the Guru Granth Sahib.⁸⁸ The Guru declared Ram Rai unfit for Guruship and ordered him not to come into his presence. Soon after this, Guru Har Rai died at the young age of thirty-two.⁸⁹ Thus nothing unusual happened during this period of Guru Har Rai. The Guru was succeeded by his younger son, Har Krishen, who was only five years old at his father's death. On a complaint from Ram Rai, Aurangzeb summoned Guru Har Krishan to Delhi to justify his right to Guruship,⁹⁰ but the Guru suffered from smallpox at Delhi and died on March 30, 1664 at the age of eight.⁹¹ This short period of Guruship was also, politically, eventless.

Guru Har Krishan was succeeded by his grand uncle, Guru Tegh Bahadur, in 1664. He held his pontificate for eleven years. By the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur's succession, the reign of Aurangzeb had been well established. In his acts, he surpassed the theocracy of both Jehangir and Shah Jahan.⁹² He let loose an unprecedented oppression on Hindus. In 1671 he sent one of his officers, Sher Afghan, as the new officer-in-charge of Kashmir to spear-head the imperial policy of destruction of temples and forcible conversion of the Hindus to the fold of Islam. Emperor Aurangzeb's policy was that if the Kahmiri Brahmins, who had the reputation for scholarship, were converted to Islam, the other Hindus would readily

84. J. D. Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p.53

85. D. Greerleas, *The Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib*, p.lxxxvii

86. R. Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p.484

87. P. S. Gill, *op.cit.*, p.170

88. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.131

89. *Ibid.*

90. Tirlochan Singh, *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, p.108

91. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.178

92. P. S. Gill, *op.cit.*, p.178

follow their example. Moreover, Peshawar and Kabul, the centre of Islam, were near, and if the Kashmiri Brahmins offered any resistance to the policy of conversion, the Mohammadians might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them. It was also believed by the Emperor, without any foundation as it turned out, that the Kashmiri Brahmins might be tempted by promises of money and government appointments, because the beggary and meanness of the inhabitants of that country was proverbial.⁹⁴

Aurangzeb was a very zealous Sunni Muslim. According to his interpretation of the Qoranic law, it was the birthright of every Muslim to wage holy war (*Jehad*) against non-Muslims till they were converted into the fold of Islam.⁹⁵ This was the reason for his launching such an aggressive policy in Kashmir. The persecution of Hindus in Kashmir was brutal and ruthless. In 1669, Aurangzeb issued a general order for the destruction of all schools and temples of Hindus. In Delhi, war elephants were let loose against the Hindus who had come to beg the Emperor for relief from exorbitant *Jazia* (a kind of tax for non-Muslims). Many hundred Hindus were trodden to death by elephants.⁹⁷ In this way the panic and terror caused by the bigoted policy of Aurangzeb entered into all sections of Indian life.⁹⁸

When completely demoralised by the atrocities of Aurangzeb, the Kashmiri Brahmins were about to surrender and accept Islam, they were advised by some of their leaders to go to Guru Tegh Bahadur for help.⁹⁹ As a result, a large deputation of Kashmiri Brahmins came to Anandpur to request Guru Tegh Bahadur to help them in that hour of need. The Guru was deeply moved on hearing their tales of woe and realised the gravity of the situation. He told the delegation to petition the Emperor that if by any means he could convert the Guru to Islam then all the Brahmins would follow his example. This was a big challenge for Aurangzeb. He immediately decreed that the Guru be arrested and brought over to Delhi. As expected, Aurangzeb offered the Guru a choice between death by torture or conversion to Islam. Obviously, the Guru preferred his faith to his life and was executed after five days of severe torture.¹⁰⁰ The most authentic account of this incident is contained in Guru Gobind Singh's autobiography:

“When I was mature enough,
To shoulder duties and responsibilities,
My father left for the heavenly home;
He sacrificed his life,

94. M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, IV, p.369

95. R. Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p.489

96. Saqui Mustaad Khan, *Maasiri-Alamigiri*, p.60

97. M. Latif, *History of Punjab*, pp.176-177

98. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, III, p.156

99. P. N. Bamzai, *History of Kashmir*, p.544. On the same page, P. N. Bamzai mentions that some Brahmins got the revelation of Lord Shiva at the sacred Amarnath Cave, to go to Guru Tegh Bahadur for help.

100. W. Haigh and Richard Burn, *The Cambridge History of India*, IV, p.245.

For protecting the rights of the Hindus,
 To wear their sacred thread and frontal marks;
 In this *Kali Age* of ignorance,
 Guru Tegh Bahadur performed a supreme heroic act;
 He gave up his head without uttering a word of sorrow,
 For the sake of righteousness;
 He did this great heroic deed,
 He readily gave up his head,
 But did not give up his faith.
 He refused to perform miracles,
 A cheap way of fooling people;
 True prophets of God are ashamed of displaying their occult
 powers.”¹⁰¹

From the evidence produced, it is proved beyond doubt that the times before and after Guru Nanak were as bad and oppressive as during Guru Gobind Singh's life time. Thus the 'Time Theory' advanced by many historians does not answer all the questions in full and the answer has to be found somewhere else.

Commenting on the message, the teaching and the personality of the Sikh Gurus, one must not be tempted to view them in isolation. The basic truth that the Divine Spirit in all of them was the same and the mission before them was the same must not be confused and forgotten. The strategy, sometimes, did differ, as the mission reached different stages at the times of the various Gurus; but this does not mean that their objectives and teachings were different. Thus we might conclude that the 'Time Theory' did not actually mean the environmental time but the time of different stages of the mission.

Guru Nanak had given his first sermon of the Divine message in 1496 A.D.¹⁰² at Sultanpur¹⁰³. The work was carried on, as ordained, by the succeeding Gurus till 1699 A.D. when the Tenth Master realised that the time had come to give finishing touches to that Divine duty. The last step, as explained by Guru Gobind Singh, was to bind all the followers of Guru Nanak in a unique type of brotherhood. It was an unusual type of act completely impersonal in nature. The Guru explained this in his composition, *Bachitar Natak*,¹⁰⁴ as below:

“The Eternal Being thus addressed his worm (the Guru):
 – ‘I have regarded you as my son,
 And appointed you to establish a perfect *panth* (organisation)
 Go into the world, establish virtue, expel vice,’
 – for this sole reason, to establish virtue –
 Was I sent into the world by the Divine Guru,

101. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter V *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, p.311

102. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.39

103. *Ibid.*

104. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter VI, verses 29-33

Everywhere, to establish virtue and exterminate the wicked,
and the vicious —,

For this purpose have I got mortal birth”¹⁰⁵

The Guru also said,

“Recognise all mankind as one,
The same Lord is the Creator and Nourisher of all.
Recognise no distinction among them.
The temple and mosque are the same,
So are the Hindu worship and Muslim prayer.
All men are same and one!”¹⁰⁶

He also affirmed,

“God, the Lord, said to me: ‘When mankind was created,
The *Daityas* were sent into the world, who became each other’s
enemies, And being strong and possessed of too much power
forgot me as their God,
Then *Devtas* were sent into the world.
But they caused themselves to be worshipped by men as Shiv,
Brahma and Vishnu.
The *Sidhs* were afterwards born,
But they, following different ways, established many sects:
Then Gorakhnath appeared in the world.
And he, making many kings his disciples, established the sect of
Yogis.
Ramanand later came into the world,
And he established the sect of *Bairagis* after his own fashion.
Mahadin (Mohammed) too was born.
And became lord of Arabia.
He established a religion of his own and required his followers to
repeat his name.
Thus they who were sent into the world to guide mankind,
perversely adopted modes of their own and misled the world.
None taught the right way to the ignorant.”¹⁰⁷

Guru Gobind Singh rejected the claim of other prophets as being
the incarnation of the Supreme Lord. To avoid the repetition of old
mistakes and to instruct the world to worship only God and no one
else, the Guru said,

“Whosoever regards me as the Lord (and worships me)
Shall be dashed into the pit of hell,
For I am, as other men are, a beholder of the wonders
of His Creation”¹⁰⁸

It is in the light of the above quotations from the Guru’s hymns
that his teachings and achievements must be examined. The Guru
was creating the Brotherhood of Khalsa in pursuance of and in

105. Ibid

106. *Akal Ustat*, verses 85-86

107. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter VI, verses 6-28

108. Ibid., VI, verses 32-33

keeping with the commands he had received from the Almighty.¹⁰⁹ The Command had already warned him against letting the new institution become a communal and personal organisation,¹¹⁰ working not for the Commands of God but for its own selfish and limited interest,¹¹¹ like the Daityas, Devtas, Sidhs, Gorakhnath, Ramanand and Mohammed.¹¹² The Divine Command had also made it crystal clear to the Guru that different prophets had appeared from time to time with God's Command which they had failed to carry out in full.¹¹³ The communities which the prophets had created had later turned themselves into sects and groups at war with one another, for their own domination. The new *Panth* (organisation), the Khalsa Brotherhood, whose seeds were sown by Guru Nanak and nursed by his successors, was not to be allowed to decay or form itself into a denomination, nor were its new teachings and principles to be contracted into mere monastic discipline. The Divine Command had also informed the Guru of the injustice and tyranny which had engulfed humanity from time to time and had given the Guru full discretion to exterminate it by any means.¹¹⁴ The new organisation had to be a champion in the field of annihilation of wicked and vicious. It had to be an 'Army of the Immortal Being',¹¹⁵ which would be always ready to defend the innocent and establish truth and justice. The new Brotherhood was founded, unlike any other religion, to make oblation and sacrifice only for God and His mankind in general.

The Guru, in his own words, had said that all human beings were the same,¹¹⁶ no one was inferior or superior on the basis of religion, caste or colour.¹¹⁷ The new Brotherhood was open to every person irrespective of his denomination. The Khalsa was destined to be a world-wide movement, always ready and specially designed for the service and help of mankind.¹¹⁸ The religious ideology of the Khalsa was the worship of One Formless, Fearless and All-Powerful God, and those other attributes of God which the circumstances demanded. The Guru has made this expression clear in one of his hymns –

“Eternal God, You are our Shield,
 In the battlefield You are our Dagger, Knife and Sword,
 For us You are the Protector,
 O Timeless, Deathless Lord of Heaven.
 You are All-Steel, You are the greatest Power,
 For us You are the only Protector.

109. Ibid., verse 29

110. Ibid., verses 6-28

111. *Bachitar Natak*, VI, verse 28

112. Ibid., verses 6-28

113. Ibid., verse 28

114. Ibid., verses 42-43

115. Ibid.

116. *Akal Ustat*, verses 16-86

117. Ibid.

118. Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Samarpan Granth*, p.22

But, I know it for sure, that You save only brave people,
And all those who are Your servants.”¹¹⁹

The Guru has used new and different attributes for God in his compositions, e.g. *Akal* (the Immortal), *Sarbloh* (All-Steel), *Mahanloh* (Supreme-Steel), *Sarbkal* (All Death), *Mahankal* (Mighty Destroyer), and many others.¹²⁰ The Guru has envisaged God as the protector and destroyer of the world, compassionate to the poor, punisher of enemies, cherisher of all and free from death's noose.¹²¹ In his message, amongst other attributes of God, the Guru was also stressing the All-Powerful, the Punisher of enemies and All-Steel aspects of God. The Brotherhood of Khalsa, described by the Guru as an 'Army of Immortal Being', had to have the attributes of Power, Fearlessness, Upholders of Justice and Restorers of Righteousness. However, this power of Steel or Sword, the Guru stresses, was to be used only as the last resort. In the Guru's words:

“When all efforts to restore peace prove useless,

And no words avail,

Then it is lawful to lift the sword.”¹²²

The Khalsa was to be a group of Saints plus Soldiers, an army of a very high moral character,¹²³ a band of fearless soldiers. Thus along with the spiritual teachings and saintly life-style of the House of Guru Nanak, the Tenth Nanak infused in the followers of the House a new spirit of self-sacrifice, fearlessness, bravery, boldness, truthfulness, benevolence, brotherliness and graciousness. According to the Guru, these were to be the requisite attributes of the Khalsa. The Khalsa was to be a tough saint.

To create the great Khalsa and to announce the completion of the mission of Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh appeared before a huge gathering of the Sikhs at Keshgarh (Anandpur) on 30th March 1699 A.D.¹²⁴ The Sikhs had been ordered to come to Keshgarh with their hair and beards unshorn.¹²⁵ In front of this huge gathering, in a very firm and commanding voice and raising his sword aloft, the Guru stood up and asked whether there was any amongst the gathering who was ready to lay down his life for *Dharma* (Faith/Truth).¹²⁶ It was an unusual and unprecedented call. By it the Guru did not mean his disciples to come forward and offer their lives for

119. *Akal Ustat*, verse 1

120. M. A. Macauliffe, V, p.261

121. *Akal Ustat*, Verse 75

122. *Zafarnama*, verse 22

123. Qazi Nur Mohammed, *Jang Nama*

124. Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, iii 21; Sainapat, *Gur Sobha*, V

125. Sainapat, op.cit., p.18

126. Teja Singh & Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.68

I. B. Bannerji, op.cit., II, p.113

M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., V, p.91

Kartar Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.132

Bal & Grewal, op.cit., p.116

Harbans Sing, *The Tenth Master*, p.34

Tirlochan Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh* (a brief sketch), p.18

him, for that they had already done in hundreds and thousands. A number of battles had been fought, first during the times of Guru Hargobind and then in Guru Gobind Singh's own times wherein very many followers were slain to save *Dharma* at the faith of Guru Nanak. In almost all these battles both Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh had exerted a powerful influence on their followers. By leading almost all the battles and fighting side by side with their followers, both Gurus had won their utmost confidence, loyalty and devotion much before the creation of the Khalsa. Thus the present call was of a very different kind. It was absolutely impersonal in nature. Sacrificing oneself for an ideology was certainly unique in its character. The objective before the Guru was to create a brotherhood which would ever be ready to stand against evil and tyranny in every shape and form and who could sacrifice themselves only to God. Thus, when the Guru asked for "heads" (sacrifices), it was an impersonal demand, as impersonal as the Sword (Power – an attribute of Guru Gobind Singh's concept of God) was or as *Dharma* was. The surrender of lives to the Sword symbolised complete effacement of self in the service of God.¹²⁷

Few moments after the call, one after the other, five Sikhs stood up and offered their lives for the *Dharma*. They included: Bhai Daya Ram, a Khatri (businessman) of Lahore, aged about 30 years,¹²⁸ who in the last days of the Guru took the Guru's letter, known in history as *Zafarnama*, to Aurangzeb and lived with the Guru at Nanded till the Guru's death; Bhai Dharam Singh, a Jat (agriculturist) from Delhi, aged 33 years,¹²⁹ who was the Commander of the Guru's army in a number of battles and also remained with the Guru till the Guru's death; Bhai Muhkam Chand, a washerman of Dwarka, aged 36 years, who later died fighting heroically at Chamkaur¹³⁰; Bhai Sahib Chand, a barber from Bidar, aged 37 years, who also died fighting bravely at Chamkaur¹³¹; and Bhai Himmat Rai, a water-carrier from Jagannath, aged 39 years,¹³² who also died fighting fearlessly at Chamkaur.¹³³

After the unconditional surrender to the Guru, the five heroes were taken into a tent one by one, wherein according to the Sikh tradition the Guru cut the head of a goat each time he went in and came out with the sword dripping blood which the people thought was of the hero who had gone into the tent with the Guru. After the Guru went in for the fifth time he came out, to the surprise of all those who were present there, with the five beloved ones robed in new shining yellow uniforms and decorated with arms.

127. Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Samparan Granth*, p.22

128. Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.133

129. Ibid.

130. Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.134

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid., p.135

133. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.184

134. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.68

They were then administered the new baptism of double-edged dagger.¹³⁵ The Guru hugged all of them and called them as his Beloved Ones (Panj Piyaras). Individually, each one was called a *Singh* (Lion) and collectively they were given the name 'Khalsa', into which the Guru himself begged to be included and was baptised and initiated as the sixth.¹³⁶ During the first few days of the month of April, 1699 A.D. some eighty thousand men received the new Baptism to join the Order of the Khalsa.¹³⁷

Thus was created the Brotherhood of Khalsa.¹³⁸ Just as the Guru was the chosen prophet of God, deputed to punish the wicked and vicious people,¹³⁹ so the Khalsa was to act as the Guru's proxy to carry on the mission of the Guru for ever.

The Khalsa so created was to wear a distinctive look and was not to fall back to be a mere ordinary and closed sect as had happened in the past and as was narrated by the Guru in the *Bachitar Natak*.¹⁴⁰ The distinctive look of the Khalsa was to be their uncut hair – 'Keshas' – as well as their arms.¹⁴¹ – Some writers¹⁴² state that the distinctive look of the Khalsa was the wearing of five weapons; others state it was the wearing of Uncut hair (Keshas), Comb (Kangha), Dagger (Kirpan), Steel wristband (Kara) and Under-pants (Kachha).¹⁴³ In due course, a well-formulated code of conduct – 'Rehat' – was also prescribed and the Khalsa was expected to conduct his personal and social life in accordance with that code.¹⁴⁴

135. Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna*, p.2. In this book, also known as 'The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh. The author says, ".....The five ideas to which Guru Gobind Singh gave concrete expression on the day of Baisakhi are: (1) The absorption of the individual into the Infinite Soul, as the ultimate aim and *Summum bonum* of human life, and as a corollary the religion and religious activity, as the activity, par excellence, worthy of serious minds, (2) An egalitarian and global fraternity into which this ideal must permeate, (3) Acceptance of new principles of Politics, subordinated to those of Ethics, resulting in the universal acceptance of the tradition of open Diplomacy, (4) Organisation into the Order of the Khalsa, of those who agree to dedicate their lives to these ideas, and (5) the vision of a new and regenerated humanity, heralded by the Baisakhi of March 30, 1699 and symbolised on the day of Baisakhi." (pp.11-12)

136. *Ibid.*, p.2-3

137. Ahmed Shah Batalia, *Twarikh-i-Hind* (manuscript form); Bute Shah alias, Ghulam Mohiuddin, *Twarikh-i-Punjab*, Quoted by Kapur Singh, *op.cit.*, p.6; Bute Shah and other chroniclers like Budh Singh, Bakht Mal, Khushwant Rai, Ganesh Das, Ahmed Shah of Batala, Sohan Lal and Aliuddin have presented the causes of the creation of Khalsa as the idea of revenge and political ambition of Guru Gobind Singh. See. M.A. Macauliffe, V, p. 93-94; I. B. Bannerji, *op.cit.* II, p.115; J. S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p.57-59

138. Sainapat, *op.cit.*, p.

139. *Bachitar Natak*, VI, verse

140. *Ibid.*, VI, verses 6-28

141. Sainapat, *op.cit.*, pp.20, 21, 22, 28

142. Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, p.45 Bal and Grewal, *op.cit.*, p.188

143. *Ibid.*

144. Sainapat, *op.cit.* There are *Rehat Namas* (Books of the Code of Conduct) composed by some eminent and devoted contemporaries of the Guru. These are – *Bhai Nanad Lal*: A great Persian poet and a very dearly loved disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. He wrote two *Rehatnamas*, one before the creation of the Khalsa and the other after the creation of the Khalsa. The second *Rehatnama* is known as *Tankhanama*. *Bhai Daya Singh*: The First of the Five Beloved Ones. He wrote his *Rehatnama* after the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

Bhai Desa Singh: Bhai Desa Singh was Bhai Mani Singh's son. Bhai Mani Singh was Guru Gobind Singh's class mate. Bhai Desa Singh also wrote a comprehensive *Rehatnama*.

Bhai Chaupa Singh: Bhai Chaupa Singh was an attendant of Guru Gobind Singh from the boyhood of the Guru. He wrote a code of conduct during the lifetime of the Guru.

All the above *Rehatnamas* are available in small printed tract form but are not regarded very authentic as there are later interpolations in the main text. See Randhir Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.78-79

The name 'Khalsa' which the Guru gave to the new brotherhood had a special meaning and significance.¹⁴⁵ In Persian, a language in which the Guru was a great scholar, the word 'Khalsa' consists of Five letters, a sacred number which even Guru Nanak had blessed as holy and supreme¹⁴⁶, and which meant 'Pure'.

For the preparation of the new Baptismal nectar for the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh used five things,¹⁴⁷ all of which had special significance and meanings:

(i) *All-Steel Bowl:*

The word 'All Steel' has a special mention and significance in the Guru's writings.¹⁴⁸ According to Edmund Chandler,¹⁴⁹ the Guru proved himself very wise and farsighted in inaugurating the sacrament of the steel, for the steel represented Truth and Firmness. According to Evola,¹⁵⁰ it represented the transcendent toughness of the principle of the all-conquering spirit.

(ii) *Water:*

In Guru Nanak's hymns,¹⁵¹ water represents the first source of life. It also denotes Truths, the natural truths which are knowledge from the Word.¹⁵² In Gaskell's *Dictionary of all Scriptures and Myths*,¹⁵³ water is described as the symbol of creation and the origin of life. According to *Upnashids*,¹⁵⁴ water is an embodiment of God.

(iii) *Sugar Pellets (Patashas):*

According to the historical narration, the sugar pellets were mixed in the Baptismal Nectar by *Mata Sahib Kaur*, later called the Mother of the Khalsa.¹⁵⁵ While Steel and Sword (referred in point (iv)) represented valour, fearlessness and the fiery pacifism of an unconquerable spirit, the sugar pellets instilled feminine grace, tenderness, sweetness and compassion.¹⁵⁶

(iv) *Two Edged Sword (Khanda):*¹⁵⁷

The two-edged sword represented 'All-Powerful God.' The two edges symbolise –

- (a) the power of protection of the good; and
- (b) the power of destruction of the evil.

145. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.187

146. G. S. Mansukhani and S. S. Kohli, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.107. See also G. S. Talib, *The Impact of Guru Gobind Singh on the Indian Society*, p.116

147. Kapur Singh, op.cit., pp.356-357

148. Trilochan Singh, *The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs*, p.63

149. Edmund Chandler, *The Mantle of the East*, pp.120-121

150. Evola, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p.312

151. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.8

152. Swedenborg Apoe Rev: no. 50

153. Gaskell, *Dictionary of all Scriptures and Myths*, p.804

154. Brihad, *Upnashid V*, 5.1

155. Kartar Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.139

156. Trilochan Singh, op.cit., p.71

157. Sainapat, op.cit., verse 33 (149), 34 (150).

The Guru says in one of his hymns:

“God first created the two-edged Sword,
And then He manifested the whole phenomenal world.
He created Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv,
As Divine instruments of Creation.
This way He created the playful drama of Nature.”¹⁵⁸

(v) *Five Prayers (Banis)*:

The most important part of the preparation of the baptismal nectar was the recitation of the following Five Prayers (*Banis*):—

(a) *Jap Ji* – A composition of Guru Nanak consisting of *Mul-Mantar* (invocation), 38 Pauris (Stanzas) and 2 *Saloks*,

(b) *The Jaap* – A composition of Guru Gobind Singh consisting of 199 verses.

(c) *Das Sawaiya* (quatrains) – A composition of Guru Gobind Singh, forming part of his long poem, ‘*Akal Ustat*’, numbering from 31-40

(d) *Benti Chaupai* (quatrains) – A composition of Guru Gobind Singh consisting of 25 quatrains.

(d) *Anand Sahib* – A composition of Guru Amardas consisting of 40 stanzas, symbolising Divine Power and Grace.

For the guidance of the newly created Khalsa Brotherhood, Guru Gobind Singh also prescribed a Code of Five Principles,¹⁵⁹ each governed by Five Rules. The five principles were:

(a) Five Beliefs; (b) Five Symbols; (c) Five Vows; (d) Five Deliverances; and (e) Five Rules of Conduct.

I. FIVE BELIEFS

(a) BELIEF IN ONE GOD

The fundamental belief of Guru Gobind Singh, like all other Sikh Gurus, was based on the philosophy of Idealism – that there is only One Reality, One God and that all that exists arose from the function of that One Reality and must eventually merge into that One Reality.

The Guru advocated the concept of God as preached by Guru Nanak and later expanded by the subsequent Gurus. According to the Guru, the Khalsa would believe in only One Supreme God, Absolute yet All-Pervading, the Eternal, the Creator, the Cause of Causes and would bow to no one else. God the Creator has two aspects – the Transcendental, Impersonal or the Absolute One (*Nirgun*); and the Related, Immanent and Personal (*Sargun*). Before the creation of God’s play, the whole universe

158. *Var Bhagauti Ki*, Verse 2.

159. G. S. Mansukhani and S. S. Kohli, *op.cit.*, p.107

was a big void.¹⁶¹ There was nothing except the Transcendental God and all else was within Him; the subject and object were still not distinct. God existed in the form of Consciousness – this was His Absolute aspect. But when He willed, He created the Universe and manifested Himself in it. It is He from Whom in the beginning all came, it is He who acts in all who act, Who lives and loves in all who live and love, Who is the final refuge and home of all. When He revealed Himself, He presented His Personal aspect. In the Guru's own words:

- (i) "He is the Absolute One, the Invincible and the Imperishable Lord. His Light manifests itself in many worlds."¹⁶²
- (ii) "To Him I bow, at whose Will the world was created;¹⁶³
To the Fearless One I bow;
I bow to the God of gods, who is in the Present and in the Future."¹⁶⁴
- (iii) "When You, O Creator, projected Yourself,
All creatures of the Earth assumed diversified shapes.
But whenever, O Lord, You draw the Creation within Yourself,
All embodied beings are absorbed in You."¹⁶⁵

Though God Himself is distinct from His creation, He pervades in all that He has made. Apart from Him nothing exists.

In the Guru's own words:

- (i) "At first, when God extended Himself,
The world was created by Him.
He Himself created and then recognised Himself."¹⁶⁶
- (ii) "I bow to the Supreme God,
Who created sea and land, the earth and sky."¹⁶⁷
- (iii) "Some live in water, some on land and some fly in the skies;
God made them and He will destroy them too.
As light blends with darkness and darkness with light,
So all things have sprung from Him and shall be united in Him."¹⁶⁸

God is everywhere and is ever-existent. He is the sole source of existence. As sparks cannot exist without fire, similarly souls cannot exist without Him, the Creator of endless flow of individual souls. He is both matter and spirit. He is not merely within and without; He is Himself everything

In the Guru's own words again:

161. Guru Nanak, Maru Solhe, 15: 1, 4, 6, 13, 15. "In the very beginning all was darkness; no earth, no sky, no day, no night, no moon, no sun....." *Guru Granth Sahib*, op.cit.

162. *Akal Ustat*, verse 1

163. The literal translation however, is – 'One who holds the Arrow in His hand, meaning the Creator, for the 'Arrow' symbolises God's purposive Will, which none can resist.

164. *Bachitar Natak*, verse 1:3

165. *Benti Chaupai*, verse 13

166. *Bachitar Natak*, verse 2:10

167. *Akal Ustat*, verse 1

168. *Ibid.*, verse 80

**“You are Space, You are Time,
You are the Place as also the Dweller.”¹⁷⁰**

Yet You are unborn, fearless, impalpable and indestructable.”

There was never a time when God did not exist. He was there all the time. Never will time see his end. His greatness is untold. Every one hears and calls Him great but no one can ever describe His greatness. His extent can neither be grasped nor described. Those who try to speak of Him are held lost in Him. To quote from his own *Bani*:

- (i) **“The Supreme Spirit is without birth and death,
Every possible spot in the vast universe is filled with His
Glory.
He has unlimited forms, He has unbounded Light.”¹⁷¹**
- (ii) **“The Supreme Spirit is in water, and on the dry land,
He is near as also far in the forest.
He is in the mountains, in the caves, in the earth and in the
skies.
He is here, He is there, He is in time and in space.
Yet he is unknowable and without form.”¹⁷²**
- (iii) **“God is not confined to any place or work,
His honour is universal so is His worship.
He is One and is present in different forms and in us all;
He is One and is the only producer of this worldly drama.
His secrets are not known, even to the gods and holy books.
His description is a secret and no one knows about His profile
and colour.”¹⁷³**
- (iv) **“God is self-created and is beyond all descriptions,
His characteristics cannot be explained.”¹⁷⁴**

God has made this universe to please Himself and to watch the play of His Creation. He knows all, sees all and understands all. The Inner-Knower of all hearts knows everything. In the Guru's own words:

- (i) **“The Supreme Lord knows the past, present and future of all
He knows every secret hidden in every bosom.”¹⁷⁵**
- (ii) **“.....He is the Creator
The Healer of diseases,
Remover of griefs, and
Corrector of mistakes.”¹⁷⁶**
- (iii) **“The Kind-one becomes sad when His saints face sorrow,
He finds happiness in the happiness of the righteous,
He knows and is pained for the sufferings of everybody.
He knows the innermost secrets of every man's heart.”¹⁷⁷**

170. *Ibid.*, verses 66-70

171. *Ibid.*, verse 1(31)

172. *Akal Ustat*, verse 4(54)

173. *Jap*, verses 81-82

174. *Ibid.*, verse 85

175. *Akal Ustat*, verse 7(10)

176. *Ibid.*, verse 10

177. *Benti Baupai*, verse 12

God alone is real and everlasting. He is omnipresent. The greatest of men appeared in this world, did the work the Creator gave them to do and went back to Him at His call. The prophets and gods are all His slaves. It is blasphemy and treason to exalt God's servants and slaves to His uniqueness. To quote from his own *Bani* again:

(i) "God created and extended this world and other worlds,
He created all of them with utmost thought.....
He made millions of Indras and Kings.
Many Brahmas and Vishnus meditate on Him,
Many Ramas, Krishanas and Muhammads He created,
And they were acceptable to Him only for their devotion."¹⁷⁸

(ii) "Many deities and sons of Brahma,
Many incarnations of Krishna and Vishnu,
And many Indras sweep before His door."¹⁷⁹

(iii) "Abandoning help of all, O my Lord,
I take Your protection and refuge,
The honour and dignity of this humble servant of Yours is
entirely in Your holy hands."¹⁸¹

God is unincarnated. He is beyond all births and deaths. He is created from no one. He is the cause of His whole Creation. He is self-created. He is beyond Time. He has no beginning and no end. He is above worldly entanglements. The Guru tells us:

(i) "God is unborn, garbless and unseen, but is contained in all things;

He is the Creator..... of the whole Universe,
All acts ultimately proceed from Him, though they appear to be done by His human instruments."¹⁸²

(ii) "God is not subject to birth or death."¹⁸³

(iii) "God has no father, no mother;
He has no Creator;
He is above birth and death."¹⁸⁴

(iv) "God is without passion, without colour, without form, without outline,
He is without worldly love, without anger, without enmity, without jealousy;
He is without *karma*, without error, without birth, without caste;

He has no friend, no enemy, no father, no mother;
He has no worldly attachment, no house, no desire, no home;
He is invisible, without distinguishing dress, He is unborn;
He has no disease, no sorrow, no worldly love, no caretaker;

.....
I bow to Him as He is One and Unique."¹⁸⁵

178. *Akal Ustat*, verses 37-38

179. *Ibid.*, verses 39-40

181. *Ibid.*, verse 864

182. *Chaubis Avtar*, verses 13, 15, 34 35, 6, 5

183. *Akal Ustat*, verse 31

184. *Jap*, verse 82

185. *Akal Ustat*, verses 91-93

God's relationship with His Creation is not only of a Creator and Creatures, but of Father and Child, Man and His Beloved, Provider and Recipient. According to Guru Gobind Singh:

- (i) "The Timeless is our Infinite father....."186
- (ii) "God is the Mother of the world "187
- (iii) "God is the Companion and Friend of all."188
- (iv) "God is the Supreme Lord who feeds us all from His treasures without being seen."189
- (v) "God is the Benefactor of us all.....
He has all the wisdom.....
He is the Giver of lives,
He is the Giver of shelters,
He is the Giver of happiness,
He is the Giver of knowledge.
He gives us all, He cares for us all."190

Apart from the above-mentioned description, analysis, narration, expressions, definitions, attributes and concepts of God, which Guru Gobind Singh wanted His Khalsa to believe in, he also symbolised God in the weapons of war. He called God 'All Steel'¹⁹¹ 'All Death'¹⁹² and with many more similar attributes. In Guru's own words:

- (i) "You are the Arrow, You are the Spear,
You are the Hatchet, You are the Sword,
You are the Goddess of Death, You are the Sword and the Arrow,
You are the Symbol of Victory, You are the Hero of the World.
You are Lance, Chisel, Axe and Spear.
You are Knife and Sword, You are Arms and Missiles
.....
You appear in all these forms."193
- (ii) "I bow to the Scimitar, the Two-Edged Sword, the Falcon and the Dagger,
I bow to the Holder of the Mace "194

According to Guru Gobind Singh, the war weapons are the symbols of God Himself. They perform the dual role of destroying the evil and protecting the good. Addressing God thus in his autobiography, he states:

"You bestow happiness on the Good
You terrify the evil, You scare the sinner.

186. *Bachitar Natak*, 14, verse 5

187. *Jap*, verse 52

188. *Ibid.*, verse 36

189. *Ibid.*, verse 60

190. *Ibid.*, verses 76-78

191. *Akal Ustat*, Introductory verse

192. *Ibid.*

193. *Shastar Nam Mala*, verses 4-7

194. *Bachitar Natak*, I, verse 87

I seek Your protection.
 Hail! Hail! to the Creator of the World,
 The Saviour of Creation,
 Hail to Him, Hail to Sword.”¹⁹⁵

Guru Gobind Singh, in his compositions, as mentioned above, has contemplated a wide variety of names for God. But it is not in any way a concession to polytheism, rather in this way he led people to feel that though they might use different names, there was but One God.”¹⁹⁶ Guru Gobind Singh, with his own style and way of living in the love and fear of God, brought to fulfilment not only the vision of a society in which right must assert itself to prevail, but also that flaming spirit of God-Consciousness which was issued in the Word of God as revealed to Guru Nanak and his successors.

(b) BELIEF IN THE GURU¹⁹⁷

Guru Gobind Singh, like his predecessors, laid great stress on the need of a Teacher-Guru to help in the communication with God;¹⁹⁸ and warned not to give, under any circumstances, the position of God to the Teacher-Guru.¹⁹⁹ He himself stated in unequivocal terms:

“..... Whosoever regards me as Lord,
 Shall be damned and destroyed.”²⁰⁰

The Guru said that he was warning everyone against the repetition of this blasphemous act of equating Teacher-Guru with God as had happened in the past;²⁰¹ he would not allow it to be repeated in the future. The Teacher-Guru, according to Guru Gobind Singh, was only an instructor, a guide and a minister of the Lord, chosen by Him to serve and guide His Creation.

In the Sikh scriptures, the word ‘Guru’ has been used in at least three senses.²⁰³ Firstly, it has been used for God himself. In *Guru Granth Sahib*,²⁰⁴ God has been called and addressed as *Guru* again and again. Guru Gobind Singh has also mentioned God as True and Supreme Guru, as below:

(i) “Give me Your hand, O God, for protection,
 The desire of my heart is fulfilled,
 When my mind seeks refuge in You
 Support me as Your slave,

195. Ibid., I, verse 2

196. D. P. Ashta, op.cit., p.199

197. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.199

198. *Bachitar Natak*, VI, verse 34

199. Ibid., VI, verse 28

200. Ibid., verse 32

201. Ibid.

203. For details see – Darshan Singh, *Sikh Dharam Vich Guru Da Asthan*, in ‘*Sikh Phalsaphay di Roop-Rekha*’, Edited by Pritma Singh. pp.79-1200

204. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp.599 (Sorath M1), 759 (Suhi M4), 802 (Bilawal M5), 879 (Ramkali M1), 930 (Ramkali M1), 1025 (Maru Sohlay M1), 1043 (Maru Sohlay M1)

Destroy all my enemies,
 Give me Your hand, and save me.
 From the beginning to the end there is only One God.
 And only Him know to be my True Guru.....”²⁰⁵

(ii) “The Almighty God, A King of Kings,
 Is our Supreme Guru.....”²⁰⁶

(iii) “God, our Lord is the Great Guru, To compare with Him
 there is none.....”²⁰⁷

Secondly, the word ‘Guru’ has been referred to as ‘Teacher-Guru’. In this form the word ‘Guru’ is used to denote a divine institution or the eternal spark of the divine light which continuously and eternally shows in the form of divine word through the chosen men to inspire mankind and to guide their destiny.²⁰⁸ The institution of Sikh Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, falls in this category. The Sikh Gurus, in their attempt to fulfill their duties, simplified, crystallised and chiselled the form of *Dharma* and gave the divine light a new lustre and shape.²⁰⁹

The Teacher-Guru in this sense is an enlightened soul, a perfect being, through whom the Revelations of God or the Word of God is spread.²¹⁰ The ten Gurus of the Sikhs were the manifestations of the Divine Soul and were entrusted with the Divine Work.²¹¹ Commenting on the Divine Light in Guru Nanak and his successors, Guru Gobind Singh said,

“The holy Nanak was revered as Angad,
 Angad was recognised as Amardas,
 And Amardas became Ramdas,
 The pious saw this but not the fools,
 Who thought them all distinct.
 When Ramdas blended with God,
 He gave the Guruship to Arjan.
 When Arjan was going to God’s city,
 He appointed Hargobind in his place.
 When Hargobind was going to God’s house,
 He seated Har Rai in his place.
 Har Krishan, his son, afterwards became Guru.
 After him came Tegh Bahadur,
 As one lamp is lit from another.”²¹²

In his historic address at Keshgarh, on March 30, 1699 A.D., the day of his administering *Khanday-di-Pahul*, the Guru told the Khalsa:

205. *Pakhyān Charitar, Benti Chaupai*, verses 377, 378, 385, 388

206. *Zafarnama*, verse 71

207. *Ibid.*, verse 75

208. Taran Singh, *Guru Nanak*, p.54

209. *Ibid.*

210. S. S. Kohli, *Outlines of Sikh Thought*, pp.89-90

211. D. Greenlees, *The Gospel of the Guru Granth*, p.6

212. *Bachitar Natak*, V, verses 7-12

“.....Believe in Guru Nanak and his successors.....”²¹³

Bhai Gurdas, a contemporary of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind, accepted the unity of the six Gurus known to him.²¹⁴ Mohsin Fani, a contemporary of Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai, also commented on the unity of the soul of the Sikh Gurus. He stated in his *Dabistan*,

“.....The belief is that all the Gurus are identical with Nanak.”²¹⁵

Thirdly, the Guru is referred as Word of God – The *Nam*. The *Nam* represents the qualitative expression of God’s personality. The *Nam* is a symbol that treasures within itself all that God is, and is not. There is one Divine Personality that pervades universally without any difference and, which the Guru called *Nam* or *Shabad*. Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed:

“I will pay no regard to anyone but God,
What God told me I will do,
I will worship only his *Nam*, who is our protector from the evil.
I will not repeat any other Name.
Nor will worship any other object.
I will meditate on the *Nam* of the Immortal-One,
And obtain the Supreme Light.”²¹⁶

Nam is God’s Word revealed to the world through His messengers. *Shabads* contained in Guru Granth Sahib are thus collectively known as *Nam*. In this sense, *Nam* is the all-pervading spirit which sustains and gives meaning to the whole creation. Guru Gobind Singh condemned all religious rituals, worship of idols, gods and goddesses and other religious ceremonies except meditation of *Nam*. He stressed that all the worldly and religious duties without meditation on the *Nam* were of no value.

In the Guru’s own words:

“Some wear the garb of Yogis and become ascetics,
.....
Know that all these acts are vain,
Know that all rituals are futile,
Without the assistance of His *Nam*,
Consider all deeds and ceremonies to be a delusion.”²¹⁸

The *Nam*, however, was not a mere word to be uttered mechanically without its essence being realised. It should be uttered with concentration realising its ultimate truth. The traditional concept of ‘Mantras’ (repetition of holy words without concentration and understanding) was a fruitless exercise. One also did not necessarily

213. This address is based on a report of a newswriter sent to the Mughal court and is vouched for by the Persian historian, Ghulam Mohiuddin. This report is quoted in a number of Sikh histories, e.g. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh; p.68 Khushwant Singh, *The History of the Sikh’s* p.85, M. A. Macauliffe, V, pp.93-94; Kapur Singh, *The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.4-5

214. Bhai Gurdas I, *Vars I* (45-48), 3(12), 20(1), 24(5-25), 26(31,34)

215. Mohsin Fani, op.cit., pp.253-255

216. *Bachitar Natak*, VI, verses 34-35

218. *Akal Ustat*, verses 42, 50

have to resort to Yogic practices in order to recite *Nam*. The only thing required was the control over one's passions by submitting one's mind to the *Nam*. In Guru's words,

- (i) "One who concentrates on his *Nam* even for a moment,
Is freed from the bondage of death for ever."²¹⁹
- (ii) "Many practice Yoga for ages together,
Even then His whereabouts are not known.
Many million indulge in other branches of knowledge,
Even then, they see not the Lord.....

.....
"Without absorption in *Nam*, all religious practices are useless."²²⁰

True love is the basic requirement for God-realisation. The unity with God is possible only by practising love. The *Nam*, thus, must be uttered with love. Love is the essential nature of God. Stressing true love and *Nam*, the Guru says:-

- (i) ".....I speak to all, hear me -
Those who love truly God and *Nam* blend with Him."²²¹
- (ii) "O Lord of Universe!
May these two (Lover and Beloved) join together in devotion
and love to God."²²²
- (iii) "How to kill a fish and a love-lorn woman?
Separate the one from water, and the other from her lover.
They will breathe their last within moments."²²³
- (iv) "All are doomed to die.....
But he alone does well.
Who sacrifices himself at the altar of love."²²⁴

Those who realise *Nam*, see unity in diversity as they attain a clarity of vision. The illusion of duality is removed. The whole universe is seen to belong to one Brotherhood. The Guru says,

- (i) "Some become Hindu, some Musalmaan (Muslim),
Some become *Pandit* (Hindu priest), some Immam (Muslim
priest),
But all are essentially the same."²²⁵
- (ii) "The Temple and the Mosque are the same,
The *Pooja* (Hindu worship) and *Namaz* (Muslim prayer) are
the same.
All men are one, it is through error that they appear
different....."²²⁶

The *Nam*, as a form of the Guru, is thus the sound (*Nad*) which emanates from God and is revealed through Teacher-Guru. When

219. Ibid., verse 10

220. Ibid., verses 39-40

221. Ibid., verse 29

222. *Pakhyan Charitar*, 108. Translated by H.S. Shan, *The Sikh Review*, February-March, 1967

223. Ibid., Charitar, 308

224. Ibid.

225. *Akal Ustat*, verse 85

226. Ibid., verse 86

God's Word was revealed to Guru Nanak, he said –

“As the Word of the Lord comes to me,
So I make it known.....”²²⁷

Guru Nanak and his successors, one after the other, received *Nam* and broadcast it through themselves as the transmitting medium. The corpus of the *Nam* is now *Guru Granth Sahib*. The hymns of the *Granth* are the *Nam*.

When Guru Gobind Singh, like Guru Nanak,²²⁸ said that he did not believe in *Vedas*, *Purans* and *Qoran*,²²⁹ he was not questioning the validity of truth revealed in them, but he was asserting that he was not bound to recognise the teachings of *Vedas*, *Purans* and *Qoran*, as authoritative, for himself.

(c) BELIEF IN GURU GRANTH SAHIB

On 6th October, 1708 A.D.,²³⁰ more than 270 years ago, Guru Gobind Singh assembled his followers at Nanded and told them that the line of Teacher-Gurus was to end with him and the Sikhs were, thereafter, to look upon the *Granth* (*Guru Granth Sahib*) as the symbol of *Nam*.²³¹ In his last farewell message, the Guru told the Khalsa:

“I have entrusted you to the Immortal God.....I have infused my mental and bodily spirit into the *Granth Sahib* (*Guru Granth Sahib*) and the Khalsa should henceforth obey the *Granth Sahib*. It is the visible body of the Guru.”²³²

According to Sainapat,²³³ a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, a day before the Guru's death, on Saturday 6th October 1708, the Khalsa asked the Guru about his successor. In reply, the Guru said that he had given his physical self to the Khalsa and his spiritual self to the *Nam*. Henceforth the *Granth* would be the spiritual guide of the Khalsa. According to *Bhai Nand Lal*,²³⁴ a learned disciple and contemporary of the Guru, the Guru had told him that one of the Guru's future forms would be *Guru Granth*. Whosoever would wish to talk to him could fulfil his desire by reading the *Granth Sahib*. Whosoever wish to listen to him could do that by reciting the *Guru Granth* with concentration. No one should have any doubt that *Guru Granth* was his own form. *Bhai Prahlad Singh*, another contemporary of the Guru, has also mentioned this fact of the bestowing of Guruship on the *Guru Granth Sahib*. In his *Rehat Nama*

227. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Tilang, p.722

228. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Var Sarang, p.1243

229. *Tav Prasad*, *Swayyas* no.9

230. Khuswant Singh, *The History of the Sikhs*, I, p.95 See also — I. B. Bannerji, op.cit., p.150, I. B. Bannerji gives this date as Wednesday, 17th October. Ganda Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh's death at Nanded*, p.15 confirms the date as given by Khushwant Singh.

231. Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.95; See also Ahmed Shah of Batala – *Tarikh-i-Hind* (manuscript) Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar.

232. M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., p.244. Also quoted by Ganda Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh's Death at Nanded*, p.13 and A. C. Bannerji, op.cit., p.237

233. Sainapat, op.cit., verses 805-808. About the physical self of the Guru see also J.N. Sarkar, *History of the Aurangzeb*, III, p.362

234. *Rehatnama*, quoted by Ganda Singh, op.cit., pp.14-15

(Code of conduct), he has recorded the Guru's words as under:²³⁵
 "With the order of the Eternal Lord has been established the Khalsa Panth (Organisation); all the Sikhs are hereby commanded to obey the *Granth* as the Guru." *Bhai Chaupa Singh*, yet another contemporary of the Guru, has also vouched for this fact in his *Rehat Nama*.²³⁶ *Bhai Sohan*, the Guru's court poet, has also recorded the Guru's command regarding the Guruship of *Guru Granth*. He wrote, in the following words:

"Hear you all, this precept of mine (Guru Gobind Singh) as true and certain,
 Recognise the *Granth* to be the same as the Guru,
 Think not of any difference between the two.
 In the Dark-Age, the *Guru Granth* has assumed the form of the Sri Guru,
 Recognise the *Guru Granth* to be the very self of the Gurus
 He who wishes to see the Guru, let him see the *Guru Granth*,
 And, he who wishes to speak to the Guru, let him read the *Granth* with a devoted mind."²³⁷

Koer Singh wrote in 1751 A.D.:

"After hearing an assembly of Sikhs, the Guru said from his holy mouth

..... All my Sikhs will henceforth believe *Granth Sahib* as the Guru.

..... He who wished to talk to me should read *Guru Granth* and gain peace of mind.

There is no other Guru equal to *Guru Granth*,
 Without any hesitation, I utter this truth.

There is no other Guru like this anywhere,

Therefore, it should be accepted as the True Guru²³⁸

Kesar Singh Chhibar, whose ancestors had been in the service of the Guru as *Diwans* (ministers) wrote in 1769-70 A.D.:

"The *Granth* is the Guru, seek the protection of the Timeless God

Guru Granth is the Guru and no one else is to be recognised as the Guru

Bhai Sukha Singh, wrote in 1797:

"The Guru entrusted the Khalsa to the care of God and asked them to read the *Bani* (Hymns) of the ten Gurus."²⁴⁰

Bawa Sarup Das Bhalla, a descendent of Guru Amar Das, stated in 1801 A.D.:

235. Ibid.

236. Ibid.

237. *Gur-bilas Chhevin Patshahi*, Chapter IV, verses 409, 412, 413. This book is said to have been completed on July 22, 1718

238. *Gur-bilas Patshahi Das*, Chapter XXI, verses a, b, (89-93), c-e (100-102). This book is said to have been completed in 1751

239. Kesar Singh Chhibar *Bansawala Nama*, (a) Chapter 10, verse 650, (b) Chapter 14, verses 220-221, (c) Chapter 14, verses 330, 307.

240. Bhai Sukha Singh, *Gur Bilas*, Chapter XXX, verse 27

“..... Guru said..... Our ten forms have come to an end. Now recognise the *Guru Granth Sahib* in my place. He who wishes to talk to me should read the *Granth*. This will be like talking to me.....”²⁴¹

Munshi Sant Singh, a *munshi* of the Bedis who completed his work in 1865 A.D., composed the most popular verse which every Sikh recites daily after *Ardas* (Prayer) –

“All community should recognise the *Guru Granth* as the *Guru*,
And obey the commandments contained therein.

Recognise the *Guru Granth* as the visible body of the *Guru*,
The Sikh who wishes to meet me should find me therein.

(*Guru Granth Ji Manayo, Pargat Guran Ki Deh,
Jo Mujh-Ko Mil-Bo Chahay, Khoj Isi-Meh Lay*)”²⁴²

From the evidence produced above, there remains no doubt that the *Granth* is, now, and for ever, the Spiritual Teacher of the Sikh Nation. The Khalsa must accept this fact and pay no regard to the claims of any others to be the living Teacher-Guru of the Sikhs. The word Teacher-Guru, here, must not be confused with holy men and saints of any religion and denomination.

(d) BELIEF IN FREEDOM

Freedom refers to a state of being free.²⁴³ Broadly it includes freedom of action, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of religion and freedom of way of living. Though the whole question of freedom and control has been a difficult one in all religious and philosophical systems,²⁴⁴ it has been the most important question. When the Sikh Gurus appeared on the stage of the worldly drama, none of these freedoms existed on the Indian sub-continent. The whole Sikh movement was a growing protest against tyranny and injustice. It was a movement to restore freedom and honour to the Indian people. All the Sikh Gurus were uncompromising theists,²⁴⁵ and thus did not believe in any sort of materialism. To them the concept of determinism was, to some extent, wrong and irrelevant;²⁴⁶ God, the Creator of the Universe is not under the control of any one's laws. He has a free Will. Man, who has been made in His own image²⁴⁷ is the chief evolutionary being. He has been given a mind to think, a heart to love, a measure of capacity to act, and some basic strength to protect himself. In *Guru Granth Sahib*,²⁴⁸

241. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mehma Prakash*, Sakhi 27, pp.892-893

242. Munshi Sant Singh, *Bayan-i-Khandan-i-Karamat Nishan-i-Bedian*, pp.64-65

243. Oxford English Dictionary, Sixth edition, p.421

244. Daljeet Singh, *The Idea of Freedom and Responsibility in Sikhism*, The Journal of Sikh Studies, February 1978, p.88

245. Ibid.

246. Ibid. See also G. S. Mansukhani, *Introduction to Sikhism*, p.52

247. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Anand, p.921

248. *Guru Granth*, pp.12, 855, 913, 932

the Gurus have repeatedly tried to educate the men at large to avail themselves of this opportunity of becoming God-oriented beings. This very option implies a freedom and a choice to make the needful effort. The opening lines in Guru Gobind Singh's historic letter, *Zafarnama*, to Aurangzeb highlight this point of 'Freedom.' It reads,²⁴⁹

“Glory to God Almighty who is eternal and merciful,
Miraculous are His gifts,

He is the sustainer and the bestower of Peace and Freedom.”

The situation in which the Sikh Gurus entered the wonderful play-arena was a scene of slavery and chaos. The concept of freedom had long been lost. The Gurus were, in a sense, ordained to infuse a new spirit of freedom and courage amongst their followers. Guru Gobind Singh in fact fertilised with his dynamic and spiritual thoughts and teachings the seeds of the revolution which were sown by Guru Nanak to win back the lost freedom. The Sikh Gurus imbued the enslaved mankind with a sense of equality as members of a society, and a concept of freedom in religious centres and free will to enjoy their cultural heritage.²⁵¹ The most striking landmarks of Sikh religion, such as – (i) *Golden Temple*, the greatest and holiest seat of the Sikh community, with its four gates opening in all the four directions, meaning the freedom of entry to the temple by any one irrespective of one's religion, belief, colour, creed and sex;²⁵² (ii) *Guru Granth Sahib*, the spiritual Guru of the Sikhs and the universal scripture containing the Word as revealed not only to the Sikh Gurus but also to various other holy men and saints irrespective of their beliefs and social order. For example, it contains hymns of a Muslim – Farid, a Brahmin – Jaidev, a King – Pipa, a Vaish – Tirlochan, a Butcher – Sadhna, a Farmer – Dhanna, a Barber – Sain, a Weaver – Kabir, a Cobbler – Ravidas, six Kshatriya Sikh Gurus and eleven Brahmin Bhattas;²⁵³ (iii) *Khalsa Brotherhood*, an emblem of equality and unity representing the faith of Sikh community in the freedom of mankind.

Commenting on the personality of Guru Gobind Singh, Dr. Balbir Singh once said,²⁵⁴ “Guru Gobind Singh's life is symbolic. It is an emblem of sacrifice. It represents the price the spirit has to offer to redeem freedom.”

Like the Sikh Guru's philosophy and strong belief in freedom, Alexandre Solzhenitsyn, the Russian Nobel Prize winner, said in his Harvard speech,²⁵⁵ that most of the world democracies upheld freedom as one of the rights of man because man was created by God. Man was to be granted freedom in recognition of his spiritual

249. *Zafarnama*, verse 1

251. Shamsher Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh, the Liberator of Mankind*, *The Sikh Review*, January 1977, pp.20-21

252. Joginder Singh, '*Nahin Tudh Jeha*', pp.53-54

253. S. S. Kohli, *A critical study of the Adi Granth*, pp.2-9

254. Balbir Singh, *Message of Guru Gobind Singh, The Tenth Master*, p.44

255. *One World*, no. 127, January 6, 1979, p.4

nature and with it went a responsibility to God. This implies that Man's spiritual nature is a proof of his right of freedom.

On the social front, at the times of the Sikh Gurus, there existed yet another type of slavery and hatred. The two predominant Indian religious groups, the Hindus and Muslims looked down upon each other with contempt and hostility. The Hindus considered the Muslims *malechhas* (unclean), while Muslims regarded the Hindus as *Kafirs* (infidels). Then, within the religious groupings there were numerous caste sub-groupings, and each group was at loggerheads with another group. The Sikh Gurus denounced this idea of social apartheid and religious exclusiveness, and upheld the concept of social mobility in which people were free to work out their destiny according to their different potentials.²⁵⁶ In order to translate this idea into reality, the institutions of *Sangat* (Congregation) and *Pangat* (Dining together in the Community kitchen) were introduced.²⁵⁷

On the political front, too, the Khalsa was commanded to believe in total freedom. Freedom in this context meant doing good to oneself and for others, avoiding evil at any cost, living in peace and letting others live in peace, obeying the just command of the government in power and rising against all injustices and tyranny. The Gurus' teachings emphasised that religion should preach tolerance and love, not hatred and violence. People should be free to choose their own religion and way of life.²⁵⁸ Here, on the one hand, Guru Gobind Singh preached discipline and respect for law, on the other hand, he taught resistance and war against oppression and despotism. Commenting on this point, the Guru wrote to Aurangzeb:

- (i) "Your Commanders, who had taken the oath (not to disturb us), attacked us from the back without a moment's notice with arrows, bullets and swords.....
"In this desperate situation I was left with no other alternative except to jump into the battle and face the onslaught. In that critical situation I, too, was compelled to shower volley after volley of arrows, bullets and spears; I, too, was compelled to take up the sword and fight....."
- (ii) "You are the Emperor of a vast country. Your rule extends over millions of people; but pitiable is your sense of justice..... Still more pitiable is the way you are serving your faith. Deplorable, yes, a hundred times more deplorable, is the despotism of your rule."^{259a}
- (iii) "Deplorable is your application of Qoranic laws to oppress and convert people. For a ruler, it is a sin to depart even a bit

256. Fauja Singh, 'Social and Economic Ideas of the Sikh Gurus', *The Sikh Review*, January 1966, p.57

257. Ibid.

258. Baldev Singh, *The Sikh Review*, April 1977, p.18

259. *Zafarnama*, verses 20-22

259a. Ibid.

from the truth and the righteous path.”

“Do not indiscriminately and fearlessly use your sword of power to shed the blood of innocent people. Remember that the sword of God will fall on you also one day and bleed you to death.”²⁶⁰

- (iv) “You should now do everything with utmost wisdom and sagacity. Undo all evil and oppression with a strong hand.”²⁶¹
- (v) “If you have any power, do not use it to inflict pain and suffering on the poor and helpless. Do not hack the innocent with the axe of false oaths.”²⁶²

The message of freedom removed the fear of torture and death from the minds of Khalsa and inspired the simple and crushed people of India to challenge the mighty Moghuls. There is hardly any parallel in Indian history to the way in which Guru Gobind Singh elevated the low with his new message of freedom and made them rise against slavery and injustice. He exalted them by placing the power in their hands. Under his command, they wielded the sword and acquired the dignity that goes with the office of army-men. After taking the ‘baptism’ as initiated by the Guru, all became equal in spirit, mind and body.²⁶³

(e) BELIEF IN DEMOCRACY

The unique community of fearless saint-soldiers, the Khalsa Brotherhood, was established and administered by Guru Gobind Singh on the basis of a staunch belief in democracy. Guru Gobind Singh was the first Indian leader who taught democratic principles and made his followers regard each other as ‘Bhai’ (brother) and act by ‘Gurmata’²⁶⁴

The Guru had stipulated that the future heir to human civilisation was not the genotype, a racial group; not the phenotype, the votary of a language for the elect; not the behaviour type, the traditionalist, but the democratic type, one who believes and follows up values meaningfully manifest in the conscience of mankind.²⁶⁵ He founded the Khalsa Brotherhood with these ideas in mind, and was thus surely a true forerunner of modern socialism. The Guru by raising his disciples to his own level and by abolishing the distinction between himself and the Khalsa, established complete equality of expression and thought with his community of saint-soldiers.²⁶⁶ He organised a socio-political body of the spiritually awakened but

260. *Zafarnama*, verses 66-69

261. *Ibid.*, verse 77

262. *Ibid.*, verse 109

263. Balbir Singh, *The Tenth Master*, p.42

264. Gokal Chand Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p.83

265. G. S. Doel, *Philosophy of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.116-117

266. Gurmukh Nihal Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh, the Saviour*, p.40

earth-aware people who were to spearhead the movement for the liberation of a whole society.²⁶⁷ He transformed the whole socio-political set-up working alongside the people and for the people, in the interests of the whole people, in every sphere of their lives.²⁶⁸ Sher Singh has called the Khalsa Brotherhood a 'Gobindian Republic',²⁶⁹ and has differentiated it from the extreme leftist republic of U.S.S.R. and the extreme rightist republic of U.S.A.²⁷⁰ The Khalsa Brotherhood in the early days of their inception, when they were confined only to the boundaries of India, met once a year on Diwali at Amritsar, to choose an executive committee called *Sarbat Khalsa* for administering the affairs of the Brotherhood of the Khalsa for the following year. In the truest democratic sense, the whole *Sangat* – i.e. all Sikhs, baptised or unbaptised, present on the occasion elected the executive committee. These days when the Khalsa has multiplied in numbers and has spread all over the globe, the election of old-type Khalsa assembly is not possible. But the basic principle of electing at least 'Five Beloved Ones', from however small a *Sangat* (congregation), for taking decisions, still exists.²⁷¹ Everywhere in the Sikh world, the Gobindian Democratic Republic (Khalsa Brotherhood) consists of a *Sangat*, a congregation of True Sikhs,²⁷² which elects its Government of a minimum of Five – (symbolically the First Five Beloveds of Guru Gobind Singh) all of whom are to be baptised Sikhs. The election, or rather the selection, is held in the presence of *Guru Granth Sahib*, beginning and ending with *Ardas* and each time invoking the grace and strength from God.²⁷³

As the Khalsa Brotherhood represents an organisation of brave but God-fearing saints and fearless but God-loving soldiers of the Immortal One, so every God worshipper and virtuous man should be entitled to join the *Sangat*.²⁷⁴ Until the enactment of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925 A.D., most of the *Sangat*'s decisions were unanimous except one big vote in 1725 A.D. which was taken to settle a dispute between Bandai Khalsa (the followers of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur) and Tat Khalsa (the orthodox section of the Khalsa).²⁷⁵ According to Teja Singh,²⁷⁶ "Resolutions were not voted upon individually or passed by majorities, but were carried *nem.con.* (without opposition) – a thing very difficult to contemplate these days.'

267. Gopal Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.82

268. Ibid.

269. Sher Singh, *Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.228

270. Ibid.

271. Ibid., p.233

272. Ibid.

273. Ibid., p.234

274. Sher Singh, *Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.228

275. Ibid., p.235

276. Teja Singh, *Sikhism*, p.43

In Guru Gobind Singh's times, the *Sangat*²⁷⁷ was known as *Sarbat Khalsa* in whose name all prayers were offered and all formal decisions taken, any person, however highly placed, was not considered above the jurisdiction of *Sarbat Khalsa* rules. Even Guru Gobind Singh was once fined Rs.125 for lowering his arrow in salute before the tomb of a Muslim saint, Pir Dadu, an act which was strictly forbidden in the Khalsa Brotherhood, and which the Guru had done deliberately to test the discernment of his followers. Thus the whole decision making power was vested in *Sarbat Khalsa* selected by the *Sangat*. No one was above it, not even the Guru.²⁷⁸

The supremacy of the *Sikh Sangat* can be compared with the supremacy of the British Parliament which also is the supreme body of the United Kingdom and has no-one above it, not even the monarch. Another historical example of the supremacy of the *Sangat* over the Guru can be given when the Guru was besieged in the fortress of Chamkaur in December 1704 A.D. and was later ordered by an assembly of 'Five Sikhs' from amongst a small *Sangat* of seven Sikhs, to leave the fortress at night,²⁸⁰ which the Guru did, to set an example and as a token of respect for and obedience to the *Sangat* of the Sikhs. The Guru, as ordered by the 'Five Sikhs' left the fortress in the dark, throwing dust into the eyes of the allies who were waiting in eager expectancy of his capture or death.²⁸¹ Before leaving the fortress, the Guru said to those who were with him, 'I shall ever be among five Sikhs. Wherever there are five Sikhs of mine assembled, they shall be priests of all priests. Wherever there is a sinner, five Sikhs can give him baptism and absolution. Great is the glory of five Sikhs.'²⁸² Thus the supremacy of the elected body of the 'Beloved One', usually 'Five', has been a main feature of Khalsic Democracy. Guru Gobind Singh, till his death, always stressed to his followers the utility and glory of freedom and democracy.

Even before his death, his last instructions to his followers were to stick to the path of democracy and hold *Khalsa Sangat* in high esteem. According to Sainapat,²⁸³ when the Guru was asked about his last instructions to the Sikhs, the Guru said,

- (i) "Khalsa is my own image,
I will always be with the Khalsa."²⁸⁴
- (ii) "To be a Khalsa,
One has to be Pure and Truthful,

277. Sangat usually assembled at Baisakhi.

278. G. L. Chopra, *Punjab as a Sovereign State*, mentions that Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not submit himself to 'gurmata'. P. S. Gill, *History of the Sikh Nation*, p.329, mentions that after 1783 the power-hungry Sardars did not submit to 'Gurmata.'

280. I. B. Bannerji, op.cit., pp.135-136, see also M. A. Macauliffe, V, p.190

281. I. B. Bannerji, op.cit., pp.135-136, see also M. A. Macauliffe, V, p.190

282. M. A. Macauliffe, V, p.189, see also J. N. Sarkar, op.cit., p.362

283. Sainapat, op.cit., verses 42-43

284. Here, Khalsa represents *Sarbat Khalsa*, the *Sangat*. Thus the Guru had declared that the *Sangat* was always the Supreme body of the Sikhs.

One has to be God-fearing and God-loving
And Khalsa will be the last judge of everything.”²⁸⁵

Koer Singh has stated that the Guru surrendered his personality to the Khalsa *Sangat* and reminded the Sikhs of the following writ as his last commandment:

“*Sarbat Khalsa Sangat* is my image
And I will always be with them.”²⁸⁶

Sukha Singh wrote that the last commandment of the Guru to the Sikhs was to obey the *Khalsa Sangat* and that he was entrusting *Khalsa Sangat* to the care of God.²⁸⁷

According to Bhai Santokh Singh, some time before the Guru's death, he was said to have declared that he had transferred his 'Light' (Spiritual power) to the *Khalsa Sangat*.²⁸⁸

Thus the establishment of *Sarbat Khalsa* produced a new societal institution.²⁸⁹ The socio-religious congregations established by Guru Nanak reached their culmination when Guru Gobind Singh bestowed the spiritual sovereignty on the *Guru Granth Sahib* and the temporal sovereignty on the Khalsa.²⁹⁰

Guru Gobind Singh thus stood for a new pattern of society, a new socialism of the spirit.²⁹¹ “The position of transcendental self in man not only ensures against reduction of man's essence to an 'ensemble of social relations' but also serves to provide a metaphysical basis for equality of all men. The empirical inequalities – social, economic, political – appear irrational and contrary to the Divine theology in the context of the transcendental unit of all men. Hence the historical thrust of the Sikh movement for creating a non-hierarchical democratic, egalitarian, 'open' society.”²⁹²

II. FIVE SYMBOLS

According to Teja Singh, “The Sikh forms (symbols) were not conceived in a spirit of exclusiveness, or as essential to the spiritual advancement of individual souls. They were simply intended to serve as aids to the preservation of the corporate life of the community, and any man who likes to serve humanity through the Sikh Panth can wear them. It is possible for a man to love God and cultivate his individual soul without adopting these forms; but if he wants to work in a systematic manner not only for his own advancement but for the good of others as well in the company of Sikhs, he must adopt the disciplinary forms of their organisation.”²⁹³

285. *Sainapat*, op.cit., verses 42-43

286. Koer Singh, *Gur Bilas Pathshahi Das*, verse 56(125)

287. Sukha Singh, *Gur Bilas*, XXX, verse 27.

288. Bhai Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, N.2, Chapter 34

289. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, 'Sikhism and Marxism,' *Journal of Sikh Studies*, August 1977, p.46

290. Nihaarranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, Punjabi University 1970, p.101

291. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.50

292. J. S. Ahluwalia, 'Sikhism and Marxism,' *Journal of Sikh Studies*, August, 1977, p.48

293. Teja Singh, op.cit., p.33

The Sikh history stands witness to the fact that these symbols have effectively helped the Sikhs to live and die together and to keep their ideals unsullied even in the times of the greatest trial.²⁹⁴ Undoubtedly, the symbols are very important as an indication of the type of and personality of an individual.²⁹⁵ They constantly remind the wearer not to do anything against the erosion of his faith and plighted word.²⁹⁶ It is as ridiculous to wear the symbols without practising the virtues they represent as dressing an ass in a lion's skin. Without a good life and excellent moral character, these symbols have little meaning. Therefore, the devotee's life should show in practical living the great qualities which the symbols stressed.²⁹⁷ According to Khuswant Singh,²⁹⁸ there is little doubt that Guru Gobind Singh did prescribe five symbols, though the disturbing and unrestful period that followed the new baptismal ceremony did not give him any time to explain the significance of those symbols. The Guru created Khalsa in 1699 A.D. and²⁹⁹ from 1699 A.D. till 1705 A.D. he had to fight eleven³⁰⁰ battles for the survival of the Khalsa. The next three years, from 1705 A.D. to 1708 A.D., were relatively quiet and peaceful, but the Guru had to work and travel a lot to give the finishing touches to the mission he had to fulfil. In 1706 A.D.,³⁰¹ the Guru went to Talwandi Sabo; early in 1707 A.D.,³⁰² he left for Deccan on the invitation of Aurangzeb. In the same year he returned to Delhi on hearing of Aurangzeb's death.³⁰³ The Guru himself died in 1708 A.D.³⁰³ at Nanded. Thus he passed through a turbulent period after the creation of Khalsa till his death and had no time to answer a number of questions which are perturbing the students of Sikh history of the present era.

After the Baisakhi of 1699 the wearing of the five Ks i.e., the uncut body hair, the steel bangle, the comb, the underwear and the sword, became a strong tradition and practice with the Khalsa. These symbols have stood the test of the history and are the glory and honour of our young nation.

294. Teja Singh, op.cit., p.35

295. G. S. Mansukhani, op.cit., p.102

296. Ibid.

297. Ibid., p.103

298. Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.86

299. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit.

300. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.198-220

301. Ibid., pp.222-236

302. Ibid.

303. Ibid.

304. Randir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, p.45

305. Bal & Grewal, *Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.228-229, see also: footnote 47, p.188

306. C. Loehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood*, p.102

I will endeavour to look at the available historical account of the Sikh Symbols and will then try to draw some conclusions. Amongst the eighteenth century and nineteenth century Sikh writers, mention can be made of Bhai Gurdas II who composed his 'Var' (ode) during Guru Gobind Singh's lifetime, Sainapat who compiled his work '*Sri Gur Sobha*' in 1711 A.D., Kesar Singh's Chibber who compiled his work '*Bansawali Nama*' in 1769-70 A.D. Sarup Das Bhalla who wrote his '*Mehma Prakash*' in 1801 A.D., Bhai Santokh Singh who finished his work '*Suraj Prakesh*' in 1843 A.D., Giani Gyan Singh who completed his works '*Panth Prakesh*' in 1880 A.D., and the '*Twarikh Guru Khalsa*' in 1891-92 A.D., and Bhai Mangal Singh who compiled his work 'Life of Baba Buddha Ji' in the early nineteenth century.

Sainapat, who was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh; has mentioned that like the Guru himself, his Khalsa were to keep their hair as well as arms. Sainapat has also stated that in order to be a Khalsa the Sikh should not have any relations with the *massands*,³⁰⁸ he was not to smoke,³⁰⁹ was to give one-tenth of his earnings directly to the Guru,³¹⁰ was to carry out all the orders of the Guru,³¹¹ was to be an example of generosity and sacrifice,³¹² was to have the new baptism of the double-edged dagger,³¹³ was to meditate on One Immortal Being,³¹⁴ was to regularly attend holy congregation,³¹⁵ and was to be ever-ready for war against injustice and tyranny.³¹⁶

According to Kesar Singh Chibbar,³¹⁷ the Khalsa of the Guru was not to shave or cut his hair,³¹⁸ was not to indulge in bad deeds,³¹⁹ was always to be ready to rise against religious persecution,³²⁰ was not to move in bad company,³²¹ was to worship only One God,³²² was to regularly recite the Word of God (Gurbani),³²³ was to regularly attend religious congregations,³²⁴ was to love his own wife,³²⁵ and was to use honest means for livelihood.³²⁶

Bhai Santokh Singh wrote³²⁷ that after the creation of the Khalsa the Guru made it obligatory that all who had received the new baptism must not cut their hair,³²⁸ must wear a wrist-band (*Kara*),³²⁹ must wear underpants,³³⁰ and must always keep a sword.³³¹ He also wrote that the Khalsa must not believe in caste-

307. Sainapat, op.cit., verse 31(147)

308. Ibid., verse 19(135)

309. Ibid., verse 21(137)

310. Ibid., verse 25(141)

311. Ibid., verse 31(147)

312. Ibid., verse 31(147)

313. Ibid., verse 33(149)

314. Ibid., verse 40(156)

315. Ibid.

316. Ibid., verse 76(192)

317. Kesar Singh Chibbar, op.cit., p.129

318. Ibid., verse 325

319. Ibid., verse 326

320. Ibid., verse 327

321. Ibid., verse 328

322. Ibid.

323. Ibid.

324. Ibid.

325. Ibid.

326. Ibid.

327. Bhai Santokh Singh, op.cit., Rut 3, Chapter 14

328. Ibid.

329. Ibid.

330. Ibid.

331. Ibid.

distinctions,³³² the Khalsa must not frighten any one and must also not live in fear and slavery.³³³

Giani Gian Singh has written³³⁴ that the Khalsa must not cut his hair, must not eat *Halal meat* (Kosher meat),³³⁵ must not smoke,³³⁶ must recite every day five *Banis* (Prayers) viz., *Jap Ji, Jaap, Shabad Hazare, Rehras* and *Kirtan Sohila*, must not socialise with *Minas, Massands* and *Dhirmalis*,³³⁸ must always wear underpants,³³⁹ must keep uncut hair,³⁴⁰ must wear sword,³⁴¹ must keep a wrist-band,³⁴² and a comb.³⁴³ He has also stated³⁴⁴ that after the Guru's call for heads at Keshgarh in 1699 A.D., he decorated all the 'Five Beloveds' with weapons and thus gave each of them his own image.³⁴⁵ Sarup Das Bhalla wrote³⁴⁶ that the Khalsa was ordered to keep uncut hair and take new baptism,³⁴⁷ the Khalsa was also ordered to wear weapons³⁴⁸ and keep ready for war in case of need.³⁴⁹

Bhai Guards II has written in his *Var*,³⁵⁰ that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the Immortal One and with His command created the Singhs (Khalsa) and that hundreds got converted to Khalsa Brotherhood and decorated themselves with shining weapons. In another Verse³⁵¹ he wrote that Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth Nanak; he worshipped only One God and was ordained to create a new fearless and brave community of the Khalsa, and that the Khalsa with saint-like long hair and steel-swords defeated all the enemies and that the Khalsa wearing underpants and holding swords in their hands repulsed all the enemy attacks.

Bhai Mangal Singh wrote³⁵² that when the Guru brought the Five Beloved Ones out of the tent, they were all wearing five Ks – sword at the waist, underpants on the under-half, steel band on the wrist and comb in the hair. They all had a shining glow on their faces which represented the image of the Guru.

Lastly, Kanhaya Lal wrote³⁵³ that when the Guru created the Khalsa, he ordered them not to worship anyone else except the Immortal Being and that the Khalsa would keep long unshorn hair, would wear underpants and steel wrist-bands and would always carry all-steel weapons.

Amongst eighteenth century European writers on the Sikhs, mention can be made of Colonel A. L. H. Potier (1780 A.D.), Charles Wilkin (1781 A.D.), George Forster (1783 A.D.), and Major James Brown (1788 A.D.).

332. Ibid.

333. Ibid.

334. Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*,

335. Ibid. pp.222, 223, 229, 232, 233, 234, 249

336. Ibid.

337. Ibid.

338. Ibid.

339. Ibid.

340. Ibid.

341. Ibid.

342. Ibid.

343. Ibid.

344. Ibid.

345. Ibid.

346. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mehma Prakash*, p.826-828

347. Ibid., verses 10, 12

348. Ibid., verse 18

349. Ibid., verse 22

350. Bhai Gurdas II, *Var*, 41 Pauri 19

351. Ibid., Pauri 15

352. Bhai Mangal Singh, *Life Baba Budha Ji*

353. Kanhaya Lal, *History of Punjab*

Colonel Potier wrote a paper *The Siques* and read it at a meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal at Calcutta on December 20, 1787 A.D.³⁵⁴ According to him, Guru Gobind Singh had laid the foundation of a kind of republic, which proved very formidable to its neighbours. The Sikhs were required to wear an iron bracelet on one arm and let the hair of the head and beard grow.

Charles Wilkin wrote his observations on the Sikh institution, titled *The Sikhs and their College*.³⁵⁵ ('College' here does not mean an educational institution; it refers to the Temple built at the birth spot of Guru Gobind Singh – at which Mr. Wilkin conducted his enquiries regarding the Sikh religion from some of the priests and attendants at the Temple, called *Takhat Patna Sahib*). Though Wilkin made no mention of the Sikh symbols, he did mention a Five-man Sikh executive of the Sikh Commonwealth and new baptismal ceremony.

George Forster, in a letter to Mr. Gregory written in 1783 A.D. had given his observations about the Sikhs. In it he stated that the Sikhs permitted the growth of their hair of the head and the beard, and wore an iron wrist-band on the left hand (though it is always worn on the right-hand side) and that they were completely forbidden the use of tobacco.

Major James Browne's *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks (Sikhs)* was presumably the first complete account of the Sikhs by an Englishman. This book is partly Browne's own work and partly a translation of an abridged Persian version of a Devnagri manuscript. Mr. Brown has mentioned this in the introduction of the book. According to him,³⁵⁷ Guru Gobind Singh had established a new ceremony for the reception of new proselytes, had worn a dark blue dress, had let his hair and beard grow to their full length, and had instructed his disciples to follow his example on those points. He had also directed them to arm themselves.

Nineteenth century European writers on Sikh History include Sir John Malcolm (1812 A.D.), the Honourable W. C. Osborne (1840 A.D.), General Sir Charles Gough (1842 A.D.), W. L. McGregor (1846 A.D.) Captain J. D. Cunningham (1849 A.D.), and Dr. E. Trumpp (1877 A.D.).

John Malcolm wrote³⁵⁸ that true disciples of Govind (Guru Gobind Singh) were required to devote themselves to arms, always to have steel about them in some shape or other, to wear a blue dress, to allow their hair to grow, to exclaim when they met each other 'Wa! Guru Ji ka Khalsa! Wa! Guru Ji Ki Fateh!' (Waheguruji Ka Khalsa, Wahegurji Ki Fateh, meaning the Khalsa is of the Wonderful Lord who is always victorious.)

354. Copy of the manuscript is in India Office Library, London, Reference Number Orme Ms., XIX, pp.73-83.

This work of Potier is the first known European account of the Sikhs

355. Charles Wilkin, *The Sikhs and their College at Patna*, pp.1-5

356. George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, I, letter no. XI

357. James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs*, p.5

358. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, p.48

According to W. G. Osborne,³⁵⁹ Guru Gobind Singh's plans were very different from those of his predecessor Nanak (Guru Nanak). He had ordered his Khalsa to wear arms, to be grouped into troops, to be marshalled under trusty leaders. He had also instituted *Guru Mata* by which he had given a federal form to the commonwealth of the Sikhs.

General Sir Charles Gough wrote³⁶⁰ that all who participated in the new ceremony of baptism received the surname of *Singh*, signifying 'Lion', and were admitted to the Khalsa Brotherhood. The Guru introduced the curiously distinctive custom of not cutting the hair or beard, and prohibited the use of tobacco.

According to W. L. McGregor, the Guru had selected 'Ten Beloved Ones' and not 'Five Beloved Ones' as the Sikh tradition asserts.³⁶¹ From the day of initiation of the new baptism, he had changed his name from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh.³⁶³

Captain J. D. Cunningham wrote³⁶⁴ that the Guru hailed and baptised Sikhs as *Singhs*, and declared them to be the Khalsa. He further added that Gobind (Guru Gobind Singh) had thus abolished social distinctions (by mixing all the Hindu castes and the Muslim social classes) and had taken away from his followers the useless rituals and superstitions.³⁶⁵ Henceforth the Khalsa was to have one form of initiation, the sprinkling of water by five of the faithful, was to worship only One God, was to show honour to the memory of Nanak and his successors, was to have a new watchword, 'Hail Guru'. (*Wahe-guru*), was to bow only to the *Granth*, the book of *Gurbani* (it must be noted that at this period of time the *Granth* had not been declared as the Guru) and to no one else, was to bathe from time to time in the pool of Amritsar, was to keep their hair uncut, was to name himself as *Singh* and was always to carry arms.³⁶⁶

According to Dr. E. Trumpp³⁶⁷ after the Guru had given baptism to the five Sikhs, in the new manner, he took it likewise from them; and in this way all the rest of his disciples were initiated, to whom he gave the name of Khalsa, adding to the name of each of them the ending of *Singh*. Then he gave the order that whoever desired to be his disciple, must always have five things with him, which all commenced with the letter *Kakka* (i.e. K) – viz., the hair (*Kesh*), a comb (*Kanga*), a knife (*Kard*), a sword (*Kirpan*) and under-pants (*Kuchch*) reaching the knees,³⁶⁸ Here, it must be noted that Trumpp has not mentioned 'Iron Bracelet' (*Kara*), instead has mentioned *Kard* which is completely foreign to the Sikh tradition.

359. W. G. Osborne, *The Court and Camp of Ranjeet Singh*, pp.XIV, XV

360. Charles Gough, *The Sikhs and Sikh Wars*, p.19

361. W. L. McGregor, *The History of the Sikhs*, I, p.75

363. Ibid.

364. J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.66

365. Ibid.

366. Ibid.

367. E. Trumpp, op. cit., p.Xci

368. Ibid.

The last noteworthy writer of the nineteenth century on the history of the Sikhs in English is Syed Mohammed Latif. He wrote about the Khalsa Brotherhood and the Sikh symbols stating³⁶⁹ that the faithful disciples were hailed as *Singhs* and declared to be Khalsa, or purified and unalloyed. The Guru ordained that whenever five Sikhs would be assembled together, it would be considered as if the Guru was himself present. The Guru also declared at the same time that whoever wished to be the true follower of the Guru must not be without 'Five Things', all commencing with the letter 'K', namely, *Kangi* (comb), *Kachch* (breeches reaching to the knee), *Kard* (Knife), *Kesh* (long hair) and *Kirpan* (sword); and whosoever was without these, would not be considered a true disciple. Latif further wrote³⁷⁰ that the disciples of Guru Gobind Singh were required to dedicate themselves from birth or on initiation to arms, always to keep steel with them in some shape, to allow their hair to grow, to wear a blue dress, to refrain from wearing red clothes or eating or smoking tobacco.

The notable European writers of the early twentieth century on Sikh history include John J. H. Gordon, C. H. Payne, M. A. Macauliffe and Dorothy Field.

According to C. H. Payne,³⁷¹ Dorothy Field,³⁷² J. H. Gordon,³⁷³ and M. A. Macauliffe,³⁷⁴ the members of the Khalsa were required to carry arms, to keep 'Five K s,' to salute with '*Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*' to surname themselves as *Singhs* (ie, lions) to abstain from the use of tobacco, wine and other stimulants, to avoid all the superstitious practices of the Hindus – such as pilgrimages, idol worship, *suttee* (burning alive of young widows on their husbands' pyres) and female infanticide and to eat only that meat which was from the animal slain by one stroke of the sword.

By analysing the evidence of Guru Gobind Singh's contemporaries – Sainapat and Bhai Gurdas II produced above the conclusions are:

- a. Guru Gobind Singh initiated a new type of baptism;
- b. He forbade his followers to shave or cut their hair;
- c. He made it compulsory for his followers to wear arms;
- d. He fixed a number of other duties and obligations for the Khalsa; and
- e. He made it obligatory for them to wear under-pants.

By analysing the evidence of eighteenth and nineteenth century Punjabi historians and writers, produced above, the conclusions are:

- a. Guru Gobind Singh forbade the Khalsa to cut their hair or to shave;
- b. He ordered the Khalsa to always carry arms;

369. M. Latif, *op.cit.*, p.263

370. *Ibid.* p.264

371. C. H. Paynes, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p.32, 35

372. Dorothy Field, *The Religion of the Sikhs*, pp.26-27

373. J.H. Gordon, *The Sikhs*, pp.40-41

374. M. A. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*

- c. About the obligation of the other three Ks i.e. comb, underpants and steel wristbands, however, the accounts are different. K. S. Chibbar does not mention any of them; Bhai Santok Singh mentions only steel wristbands and the underpants; Giani Gian Singh mentions iron wristband and the comb; Sarup Das Bhalla does not mention any; Bhai Mangal Singh mentions all the five Ks and Kanhaiya Lal mentions only underpants and the iron wristband.

We see from the above conclusions that apart from Uncut Hair and Steel Weapons (including Sword), all accounts differ about other obligations. No one, except Bhai Mangal Singh, has mentioned the word 'Five Ks' believed in the Sikh tradition to have been used by Guru Gobind Singh at the time of the creation of the Khalsa.

By analysing the evidence of eighteenth century European writers of the history of the Sikhs, as produced above, the conclusions are:

- a. Guru Gobind Singh initiated a new type of baptism and created the new brotherhood of Khalsa from amongst the Sikhs;
- b. He forbade the Khalsa to cut hair or shave;
- c. About other obligations of the Khalsa, the accounts are different.

Potier and Forster have mentioned the wearing of Iron Wristband and Forster has mentioned the prohibition of the use of tobacco.

By analysing the evidence of the nineteenth-century European writers produced above, the conclusions are:

- a. Except Trumpp no one else has mentioned the 'Five' obligatory 'Ks';
- b. All have affirmed the Guru's instructions not to remove hair and not to shave; and
- c. All have emphasised the obligation to wear arms.

Lastly by analysing the evidence of Mohammed Latif and early twentieth century European writers on the subject, as produced above, the findings are:

- a. All have mentioned the term 'Five Ks'
- b. All, except Dorothy Field, have mentioned the Khalsa's duty to carry arms;
- c. Some of them have mentioned *Kard* (Knife) as the obligatory symbol instead of Iron Wrist-band.

We see from the above conclusions that the term 'Five Ks' was first used amongst the non-Sikh writers, by E. Trumpp (1871 A.D.) and later on it has been invariably used by other writers, Indians as well as European. How Trumpp got hold of this term of the Sikh tradition – 'Five K's', is a real mystery as Trumpp has not given any references about these obligations.

Other sources of contemporary evidence which are produced to support the case of Five K's are the '*Tankhah Nama*' of Bhai Nand Lal and *Rehat Namas* of Bhai Prehlad Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Desa Singh. Unfortunately, all these sources are regarded as not fully satisfactory.³⁷⁵ All available copies of the *Rehat Namas* are supposed to contain later interpolations,³⁷⁶ to be misleading on some points,³⁷⁷ and though claimed to be of Guru Gobind Singh's times, some of them cannot be authoritatively traced to the period of the Tenth Master.³⁷⁸ However, mention of Five K's as it means today is not found in any of these *Rehatnamas*.

Yet another piece of reference to the 'Five K's' occurs in the following Persian verse of *Sarb Loh Granth*:

"Know these 'Five Ks' to be emblems of Sikhism,
Under no condition can one be exempt from them.

Sword and Wrist-band, Under-pants and Comb – these four

Without hair, the fifth, all other emblems are meaningless."³⁷⁹

The above verse has been quoted by a number of Sikh historians³⁸⁰ in support of the directive on the Five Ks, but the authorship of the *Sarb Loh Granth* is itself doubtful. Though the precise date of its compilation is not known, it is believed that it was compiled long after the compilation of *Dasam Granth*. Some writers believe that it reached Punjab in 1860 A.D., and before that it was somewhere in the south of India.³⁸³ It is also believed that a number of hymns of Guru Gobind Singh which Bhai Mani Singh was not able to acquire are preserved in it.³⁸⁴

Almost all Sikh historians of the twentieth century, except Bhagat Lakhsman Singh (1909),³⁸⁵ have mentioned, without quoting any source, the Sikh obligation to wear 'Five Ks'. The important names are: Kahn Singh (1913),³⁸⁶ Khazan Singh (1914),³⁸⁷ Puran Singh (1929),³⁸⁸ Teja Singh (1938),³⁸⁹ Ganda Singh and Teja Singh (1950),³⁹⁰ Kapur Singh (1959),³⁹¹ Khushwant Singh (1963),³⁹² Ranbir Singh (1965),³⁹³ Harbans Singh (1966),³⁹⁴ Gopal Singh

375. Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, pp. 78-79

376. Bal and Grewal, *op.cit.*, p.229, n. 47

377. Trilochan Singh, *The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs*, p.90

378. Avtar Singh, *Ethics of the Sikhs*, p.18. See also S.S. Kohli, *Sikh Ethics*, pp. 6-7; Sher Singh, *Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.85. Jodh Singh, *Gurmat Nirnay*, p.282.

379. According to Harbhajan Singh, (*Vishesh Gurmat Lekh*, p.121) the verse was written by a Persian Scholar, sometimes in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

380. Quoted by Satbir Singh, *Rehat-te-Kurehat*, p.1 (21)

Trilochan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.107

Bhagat Singh, *The Tenth Master*, p.93

383. Sampuran Steek, *Sri Sar Loh Granth Sahib Ji*

384. Trilochan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.105 n 1

385. Bhagat Lakhsman Singh, *A Short Sketch of the Life and Works of Guru Gobind Singh*.

386. Kahan Singh, *Mahan Kosh*, (ie *Encyclopedias of the Sikh Religion*)

387. Khazan Singh, *History of the Sikh Religion*, II p.

388. Puran Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 38, 42, 43

389. Teja Singh, *Sikhism*, p.34

390. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*,

391. Kapur Singh, *Parashaprasna*

392. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, I. p.84

393. Ranbir Singh, *Glimpses of the Divine Masters*, p.265

394. Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.67

(1966),³⁹⁵ Narain Singh (1966),³⁹⁶ R. S. Ahluwalia (1966),³⁹⁷ Sahib Singh (1967),³⁹⁸ Gobind Singh Mansukhani (1967),³⁹⁹ Sher Singh (1967),⁴⁰⁰ Taran Singh (1976),⁴⁰¹ Tirlochan Singh (1977),⁴⁰² Pritam Singh Gill (1978),⁴⁰³ Surjit Singh Gandhi (1978).⁴⁰⁴ Harnam Singh Shan (1967)^{404a}

Again, almost all known non-Sikh writers of the twentieth century on the Sikh history, except Jadhu Nath Sarkar,⁴⁰⁵ have mentioned the obligation of wearing the 'Five Ks.' These writers have also not mentioned any original source to support their view point. The important names are: G. C. Narang, (1912)⁴⁰⁶ I. B. Bannerji (1947),⁴⁰⁷ D. Greenlees (1952),⁴⁰⁸ H. R. Gupta (1973),⁴⁰⁹ C. H. Loehlin (1974),⁴¹⁰ and O. Cole (1978).⁴¹¹

Finally, I also wish to produce two more pieces of evidence from the records of the Muslim writings about the Khalsa, its creation and the much debated obligations of the 'Five Ks.' Firstly, a newsletter published just after the emergence of the Khalsa in 1699 reads, inter alia, as follows:

"The Sikhs however became converts to the faith through the *Massands* (the delegates appointed by the Gurus to spread the mission of Guru Nanak) and made offerings etc. Guru Gobind Singh totally did away with the Massands some time back and created the Khalsa, and it was ordained that the Sikhs coming under the Order of the Khalsa should grow hair on head and keep moustaches and beards and they came to be known as the Sikhs of the Order of the Khalsa."⁴¹²

Secondly, a manuscript written by Ahmed Shah Batalia in 1818 A.D.⁴¹³ and partly published by Sohan Lal Suri, in his history book as an appendix to the first volume, also mentions the incident of the creation of the Khalsa.

It reads, inter alia:

"I (Guru Gobind Singh) wish you all to embrace one creed and

395. Gopal Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.30

396. Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Retold*, p.240

397. R.S. Ahluwalia, *Deshmesh Pita Guru Gobind Singh*, p.80

398. Sahib Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.24

399. G.S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh, Cosmic Hero*, p.64

400. Sher Singh, *Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.196

401. Taran Singh, *Bhagti te Shakti*, p.8

402. Trilochans Singh, *The Turbans and the Sword of the Sikhs*, p.197

403. P. S. Gill, *History of the Sikh Nation*, p.222

404. Surjit Singh Gandhi, *History of the Sikh Gurus*, p.432

404a. H. S. Shan, *Chardi Kala De Puni: Guru Gobind Singh*.

405. J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, III

406. G. C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p.135

407. I. B. Bannerji, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, p.115

408. D. Greenlees, *The Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib*, p.cvii

409. H. R. Gupta, *History of Sikh Gurus*, p.188

410. C. H. Loehlin, *The Sikhs and their Scriptures*, p.10

411. O. Cole, *The Sikhs*, p.106

412. *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla*, May 13, 1710 Quoted by A.S. Baagha, *Banhur had orders*, p.85

413. Ahmed Shah Batalia, *Twarikh-i-Hind*, 1818.

See also Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.68; Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.85; Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.4

follow one path, rising above all differences of the religion as now practised. Let the four Hindu castes, who have different *dharmas* (faiths) laid down for them in the *Shastras* (holy books of the Hindus), containing institutes of *Varnashramdharma*, abandon them altogether, and adopting the way of mutual help and cooperation, mix freely with one another. Do not follow the old scriptures. Let none pay homage to the *Ganga* (river Ganges) and other places of pilgrimage which are considered to be holy in the Hindu religion, or worship the Hindu deities such as Rama, Krishna, Brahma, and Durgan etc., but all should cherish faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. Let men of four castes receive my baptism of the double-edged sword, eat out of the same bowl, and feel no aloofness from, or contempt for one another. When the Guru had thus addressed the crowd several *Brahmans* and *Khattris* stood up and said that they accepted the religion of Nanak and of the other *Gurus*. Others on the contrary, said that they would never accept any religion which was opposed to the teachings of *Vedas* and *Shastras*, and that they would not renounce at the bidding of a boy the ancient faith which had descended to them from their ancestors. Thus, though several refused to accept the Guru's religion, about twenty thousand men stood up and promised to obey him, as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission."⁴¹⁴

Guru Gobind Singh is beyond any doubt a historical personality. He had declared that he had come into this world to fulfill a divine mission. The creation of the Khalsa and the prescription for its Uniform and the Code of Conduct was, no doubt, a part of that mission.

Referring to the significance of the Sikh symbols, G. C. Narang says,

"If it was not a copy of the uniform of Bhim's army mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit work *Nala Champa* by Trivikram Bhatt; it was a strange coincidence that the Guru prescribed a similar uniform for his followers. The observances at once singled out the genuine Sikh from the mass of the luke-warm Hindus and produced a cohesion in the internal body of the Khalsa which in a short time was to make a strong *Panth* (organisation) of them."⁴¹⁷

414. Shoaan Lal Suri, *Umadataat-Twarikh*, p.5, see also – Bute Shah, *Twarikhe Punjab*, pp. 405-406 (translation: Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna*, pp.4-5)

415. Hair of head and face

416. No historical account is found regarding the description of these weapons.

417. G. C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, p.136

The Sikh symbols have not been made obligatory without any purpose. They have their social and metaphysical functions and they also have definite connection between themselves.⁴¹⁸

Socially, they have promoted group-consciousness and have fostered the brotherhood feelings.⁴¹⁹ They have also worked as a reminder of the Sikhism's spiritual ideal, which stands for the secular as well as the spiritual good.⁴²⁰ They are the fence or a protective mechanism surrounding the Sikh's daily life, though they are not their daily life itself. They make it possible for Sikhism to survive, but they are not the reasons for that survival.⁴²¹ In the words of Bhai Gurdas,

“Just as a fence is necessary to keep away stray cattle from the farm, just as the thorny *Kikar* (a type of tree) guards the orchards, just as the snake protects the *Sandal* (a special type of tree which gives very pleasing and lasting odour; the sandal wood is one of the most expensive woods in the world), just as the dog guards the house against the strangers, in the same way, the man of God must protect himself with the sword.”⁴²²

The Sikh symbols, according to Kapur Singh,⁴²³ are grounded in meta-physical postulates of transcendental aesthetics, in the basic aims and objects of Khalsa Brotherhood, which seek to show human beings a path of liberation and self-realisation through organised social and political activity, in contradiction to the renunciation of the world and non-cooperation with the generative impulses of the Universe and in the cultivation of a mature and integrated personality, which deliberately outgrows personal vanity and boyishness, and accepts the principle of growth and ageing as fundamental to religious discipline.”

In the Islamic and Hindu world, the political, social and ideological structure rests upon a tripartite division and a system of inter-relation amongst the three stages of human growth symbolised by *Hukumat* or *Rajaya* (rule), *Shariat* or *Varna Grihasia* (family commitments) and *Tariqat* or *Sanyasa* (renunciation). The symbols of Sikhism may be said to signify these inter-relationships, e.g. *Hukumat* or *Rajaya* signified by Sword and Wrist-band; *Shariat* or *Varna Grihasia* signified by Under-pants and Uncircumcised state and *Tariqat* or *Sanyasa* symbolised by Uncut-hair and Comb.⁴²⁴

418. J. P. Singh Oberoi, *The Five Symbols of Sikhism*, p.136

419. Bhagat Singh, 'The Sikh symbolism', *The Tenth Master*, pp. 97-98

420. K. Singh. 'The Sikh Symbols', *The Sikh Review*, April 1977 p.9.

421. Kapur Singh, 'Sikh Symbols and the Sikh in Canada'. *The Sikh Review*, April 1973, p.22

422. Bhai Gurdas I, *VAR 34 pauri 12/13*

423. Kapur Singh, *The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 106-107

424. J. P. Singh Oberoi, *op.cit.*, 136

III. FIVE VOWS

The Khalsa Brotherhood had also embodied the acceptance of certain vows – negative imperatives; solemn duty not to commit any of the following heinous sins:

(i) *Vow not to remove body hair:*

Under point II above on the Sikh Symbols, sufficient historical evidence has been presented to prove that the most important Sikh symbol as prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh was the preservation of body hair. Its inclusion in both the negative and positive imperatives should indicate its vital importance.⁴²⁶

(ii) *Vow not to eat Halal (Kosher) meat:*

The Khalsa was forbidden to eat meat prepared by the process of gradual and painful slaughter of the animal, popularly known as *Halal* or *Kutha*. According to Kapur Singh,⁴²⁷ 'in the ancient Hindu tradition, only such meat as is obtained from an animal which is killed with a stroke of the weapon, thus causing instantaneous death without exciting fear or gland-secreting poisons into its bloodstream, and without causing harmful psychic waves to emanate from the animal-mind is fit for human consumption. Under the influence of compassionate Buddhism, the flesh became taboo, for the generality of the Hindus. With the establishment of Islam and the Muslim political hegemony in India, it became an item of state policy in India not to permit slaughter of animals for food in any other manner except that made lawful by the *Qoran*, which is the Kosher method of slowly severing the main blood-artery of the throat of the animal, while reciting religious formulae, the main object of slaughtering in this manner being a "sacrifice" to God to expiate sins of the slaughter and its flesh to be used as food only a secondary object.' Guru Gobind Singh took a rather serious view of this aspect of the whole matter, and while making it permissive to eat meat as food, repudiated the whole theory of this expiatory sacrifice and the right of the ruling Muslims to impose it upon others.

(iii) *Vow not to smoke*

Under point II above, on the Sikh symbols, sufficient evidence has been given to prove that Guru Gobind Singh had strictly forbidden his Khalsa to take tobacco in any form. According to Kapur Singh,⁴²⁸ 'the smoking of tobacco is held in peculiar abhorrence by the Sikhs, which originates in the draconian injunction of Guru

425. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189 See also – S.S. Kohli, *Sikh Ethics*, p.49 *Ethics of the Sikhs*, p. 143

426. Avtar Singh, op.cit., p.143

427. Kapur Singh, op.cit., pp 69-70., note 9. See also Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.148; Sahib Singh, op.cit., p.129

428. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.109

Gobind Singh to all Singhs (Khalsa) to refrain from this practice absolutely, while previous to this formal injunction it was merely a general precept of the Sikh Gurus.' Similarly, the chewing of tobacco or taking it as an ingredient of *Pann* or any other similar thing is forbidden to the Sikhs.

(iv) *Vow not to worship tombs, graves and relics of cremation and cherish superstitions*

According to Guru Gobind Singh,
"He who does not have faith even by mistake in fasting,
He who does not worship cemeteries, places of cremation or
Yogis' places of sepulchre.

.....
He is recognised as a pure member of the Khalsa."⁴³⁰

The worship of tombs, graves and relics of cremation had been strictly forbidden by the Tenth Guru. His command was to worship God alone and discard all rituals and ceremonies. The Guru said,
"Many Brahmins recite *Vedas*, many Muslims recite *Qoran*, many are *Bairagis*, others are *Sanyasis*, many wander in the guise of *Udasis*.

Know that all these things are vain.

And that such religion is fruitless.

Without the support of the One Name, all religions and religious ceremonies are useless."⁴³¹

(v) *Vow not to indulge in adultery*

Guru Gobind Singh had strictly forbidden the practice of adultery. It may be noted that on account of the beastly and immoral behaviour of some of the Muslims towards Hindu and Sikh women, some Sikhs approached the Guru to allow retaliation, but the Guru strictly forbade them from any such action.⁴³³

According to Qazi Nur Mohammed,⁴³⁴ 'the Khalsa did not commit rape or plunder any Muslim woman during their fight against Muslim rulers.' Bute Shah has stated⁴³⁵ that the Khalsa did not insult, rape, or mug any woman. According to Bhai Santokh Singh⁴³⁶ adultery is a very serious offence in the Sikh moral code. Bhai Gurdas Bhalla has also written⁴³⁷ that the Sikh is to treat all women, except his own wife, as his daughters or sisters.

430. *Swayyas*. No. 1

431. *Akal Ustat*, verses 49-50

432. Kapur Singh, *op.cit.*, p.69, See also - S. S. Kohli, *op.cit.*, p.51; Avtar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.143; Sahib Singh, *op.cit.*, p.128

433. G. S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh, Cosmic Hero*, pp.28, 74

434. *Jangnama*, quoted by Satbir Singh, *Rehit-te-Kerehit*

435. Bute Shah, *Twarikh-e-Punjab*, quoted by Satbir Singh, *op.cit.*, p.14

436. Bhai Santokh Singh, *Surai Prakash*, Rashi 6, Chapter 26

437. Bhai Gurdas I, *Var 6*

IV. FIVE DELIVERANCES

(i) *Janam-Nash* (The deliverance from the shams of caste system):⁴³⁸

In the Khalsa Brotherhood all Hindu castes are blended on a democratic basis as all are regarded equal.⁴³⁹ Though there has been numerous reformers in ancient times who tried to remove the evil of caste system from the Indian soil, each time the disease had outstripped the remedies, for men had got into the habit of living with it, nursing the ulcer thriving within the viscera.⁴⁴⁰ According to Dr. Balbir Singh,⁴⁴¹ "there is hardly any parallel in the Indian history to the way in which Guru Gobind Singh elevated the low caste. He exalted them by placing the real power in their hands. Under him they wielded the sword and acquired the dignity that goes with the office of army-men. After taking the baptism devised by the Guru, all became equal in spirit, mind and body. The untouchable shed their inborn inhibition; the men of low origin put aside their innate repression. They stood liberated. The transformation was verily a psychological miracle. He opened the gateway for all to come in. He welcomed the pariah, the castaway, the excluded, the estranged. His original baptismal ceremony extended to five men, three of whom belonged to various categories of the low-born Hindu groups denied, in perpetuity, the privileges of men bred from pedigree stock." The new baptism meant a new birth or rebirth of the Sikh in the Khalsa Brotherhood. The newly baptised Khalsa was thus born in the family of Guru Gobind Singh, with the Tenth Master as the father of Khalsa; his wife *Mata* Sahib Devan as Khalsa's mother; and Anandpur, his abode, as Khalsa's birthplace.

(ii) *Sharam-Nash* (The deliverance from hereditary profession):⁴⁴²

Guru Gobind Singh's new baptismal ceremony brought about an immediate and absolute break with the past. It gave the Khalsa new hope and emancipation from the hereditary professional restrictions. All the old professional labels like that of priests, teachers, businessmen, soldiers, weavers, tailors, barbers and sweepers etc., were discarded and all were given an equal social and religious status.⁴⁴³ The Khalsa was free to choose his trade or profession and not necessarily follow that of his ancestors. In the new code of the Khalsa, no honest profession in itself was to be deemed inferior or superior, and no diversions were to be set up on the basis of professions followed by the Sikhs.⁴⁴⁴

438. J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151 See also—J.D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64; H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189; M. Latif, op.cit., p.263

439. J. N. Sarkar, op.cit., pp. 358-359

440. Balbir Singh, *The Tenth Master*, p.42 441. Ibid

442. J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151 See also—M. Latif, op.cit., p.263

443. Balbir Singh, op.cit., p.42 444. Kartar Singh op.cit., p.149

(iii) *Dharam Nash* (The deliverance from previous religious practices and traditions):⁴⁴⁵

The Khalsa Brotherhood was the bridge the Guru constructed across the gulf of hate and misunderstanding among different warring creeds. It brought about harmony, peace and reconciliation in place of strife, enmity and animosity. It taught true religion and true religious practices in place of useless rituals and meaningless customs. It gave a new ethical and idealistic direction to the individual and the society.⁴⁴⁶ The Khalsa was to have one faith, one form of worship and one code of rules.⁴⁴⁷ The Khalsa started on a clean state; he was a monotheist and belonged to a monist brotherhood; for the Khalsa, God was not only One, but there was also nothing except Him. All that which emanated from God was, in a way God Himself. Guru Gobind Singh said,

(i) "Recognise One Light in all beings that are known to us."⁴⁴⁸

(ii) "There is no one other than God in all forms and colours."⁴⁴⁹

(iii) "He alone resides in all, yet all are made to appear different."⁴⁵⁰

(iv) "The One pervades the infinite Creation,
Know ye all that there is only one Supreme Creator,
He makes and moulds and then breaks,
The Sole, the One Creator,
None else can arrogate to himself this power;
All that exists wear His form and colour."⁴⁵¹

(iv) *Karam-Nash* (The deliverance from the past deeds):⁴⁵²

According to Guru Gobind Singh, the past bad deeds can be pardoned by God's Grace and the sinners can be absolved of their sins.⁴⁵³ Guru Gobind Singh's teachings in this direction are clear, understandable and practical. The teachings of other Sikh Gurus are also similar. According to the Gurus, all basic problems of mankind can be solved and past bad deeds pardoned by establishing harmony with Truth, by performing honest and noble deeds, and by completely submerging oneself into the Will of the Supreme Being and bowing unquestionably to His Command.⁴⁵⁴ The submission to His Command is one of the major points of the Guru's teachings.⁴⁵⁵

The word *Karam* (deeds) has been used in *Guru Granth Sahib* to convey a definite set of meanings, e.g. law of retribution,⁴⁵⁷ rituals

445: M. Latif, op.cit., p.263; See also - J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64; J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151

446. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *The Impact of Guru Gobind Singh on Indian Society*, p.11

447. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.149

448. *Chaubis Avtar*, verse 35

449. Ibid.

450. *Chaubis Avtar*, verse 37

451. *Brahamavtar*, verses 7-9

452. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.263; J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64; J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151

453. Mohan Singh, *The Tenth Master*, p.134

454. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Japji, p.5; Guari, pp.151, 154, 223;

455. Ibid.

457. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Siri, p.78

as liturgical sacrifices and ceremonies,⁴⁵⁸ grace and mercy,⁴⁵⁹ and moral action.⁴⁶⁰

Almost all existing Karma theories pre-suppose three basic points: (a) the concept of God; (b) the concept of soul and deliverance; and (c) the concept of Nature and Cosmos.⁴⁶¹ Sikhism is a monotheist religion.⁴⁶² It advocates family life and rejects all sorts of world-renunciation.⁴⁶³ It does not approve of penance or fasting to achieve long life or rebirth in a high family as in the Hindu faith.⁴⁶⁴ According to Sikhism, man's soul can get salvation out of the cycle of transmigration on the basis of noble deeds, meditation on God's Name, honest living and God's Grace. The *Karma* theory in Sikhism rejects all forms of caste-system; however, it divides human beings into two categories as *Gurmukh*, God-oriented, one who leads holy life and performs, noble deeds, and *Manmukh*, self-oriented, one who follows his ego and performs bad and sinful deeds.

In Sikhism human birth is considered a precious opportunity to achieve salvation.⁴⁶⁵ It is in this birth that by good and noble deeds and God's Grace, all the past bad and sinful *Karma* can be pardoned or erased and the soul freed from the pangs of transmigration and be absorbed in God for good. Truthful conduct and true living are considered good deeds of the highest value.⁴⁶⁶ Service of mankind with compassion and sincerity is the highest form of honest living.

Nam-Simran, i.e. remembering God through *Gurbani* (i.e. God's Word revealed through the Sikh Gurus) is the highest devotion. Good and noble deeds, honest living and *Nam Simran* win His Grace which can forgive all the bad and sinful deeds of the past.

Guru Gobind Singh prayed:

- (i) "Grant me Your Grace, O God,
That I should never refrain from righteous acts."⁴⁶⁷

While writing to Aurangzeb, he stated:

- (ii) ".....I who trusted your oath on the *Qoran*, taken with God as witness was protected by the Grace of the same God."⁴⁶⁸
- (iii) ".....Not a hair of my body was touched. No injury whatsoever came to my body, God protected me with His Grace....."⁴⁶⁹
- (iv) "God alone is my King. I acknowledge no other king and I am God's humble servant. To fulfill God's Will and Command I

458. Ibid., p.162

459. Ibid., p.109

460. Ibid., p.676

461. Harbans Singh Brar, 'Karma in Sikhism, A comparative study,' *Journal of Sikh Studies*, February 1978, p.98

462. *Akal Ustat*, verse 1

463. Ibid., verse 15

464. Ibid.

465. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.450

466. Ibid., p.62

467. *Chandi Charitar*, I, verse 231

468. *Zafarnama*, verse 43

469. Ibid., verse 44

- am always prepared to sacrifice my life.”⁴⁷⁰
- (v) “It is your foremost responsibility to fear God and take up righteous ways.....”⁴⁷¹
- (vi) “.....fear God and fall at His feet before it is too late. God takes no sides in judging Truth. Beg for His Grace.”⁴⁷³
- (vii) “In the presence of God you and your men will have to account for all your deeds you have performed in this world.”⁴⁷⁴
- (viii) “To perform true and righteous acts is the noblest deed of a king. This can earn him His Grace.”⁴⁷⁵

Thus the ideal of good *Karma* as stressed by Guru Gobind Singh and the Gurus who preceeded him, was cognitive, aesthetic and conative. God’s Grace and moral action occupies a very important position in the Guru’s *Karma* theory.⁴⁷⁶ As the head of a country can pardon even the most dangerous criminal, so does God as the Head of the Universe.

(v) *Bharam Nash* (The deliverance from all the superstitions, taboos, rituals and austerities):⁴⁷⁷

The Khalsa is not to believe in any rituals.⁴⁷⁸ The belief and worship of God does not require the observance of any rituals. The Guru deplored any sort of religious hypocrisy. To him the rituals that masqueraded as religion were meaningless and utterly wasteful.⁴⁸⁰

The Khalsa is not to be extreme or fanatical in any way. He has not to perform any special ceremonials or go on pilgrimage or observe fasts or make sacrifices. The Khalsa is to be practical, and is required to lead a family life while practising love and charity. The Guru said:

“Swine eat filth, elephants and donkeys bespatter themselves with dust.

Jackals live at places of cremation,

Owls live in tombs, deer wander alone in the forest trees ever die in silence;

The man who restrains his seed should only have the credit of the hermaphrodite;

Monkeys ever wander bare-footed.

They who eat grass and renounce the desire of wealth are no more than calves and oxen.

They who engage in meditation resemble cranes, cats and wolves

470. Ibid., verse 62

471. Ibid., verse 65

472. Ibid., verse 69

473. Ibid., verse 70

474. Ibid., verse 81

475. Ibid., verse 84

476. Avtar Singh, Guru Gobind Singh’s theory of Karma, *The Sikh Review*, April 1975, p.33 See also – G. S. Mansukhani, *Introduction to Sikhism*, pp 50-51

477. J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151, J. D. Cunnigham, op.cit., p.64; M. Latif, op.cit., p.263; H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189

478. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Asa p.470. *Var Bihagra*, pp. 548-556; *Wadhans*, p.590; *Sorath*, p.635

480. Harbans Singh, ‘Sikhism’ *The Spokesman*, November 1976, p.55

For grazing on *Akk* (a type of wild plant) eating fruits and flowers
And ever wandering in the forests, there is no animal like the goat.
In the cold season the jackals bark five times,
And the elephants and the monkey utter various cries.

What avails it that a fool puts a halter round his neck and gets
drowned himself in the Ganges? Thugs put man to death by
putting halters round their necks.

If any were to win by penance the Lord who suffers not pain,
the wounded man suffers pain of many kinds.

If any one were by repeating God's name to unite with God who
cannot be obtained by lip-worship, the warbler ever utters – *Tu-
hi! Tu-hi!*

If any one were to obtain God by flying in the heavens, the bird
called '*Anal*' wanders in the firmament.

If salvation be obtained by burning oneself in the fire, why
should not the '*Sati*' be liberated?

If salvation were obtained by dwelling beneath the earth, the
snake which dwells in the nether regions should also be saved."⁴⁸¹

The above hymn of the Guru is a satire on various penances and
austerities practised by certain Hindu sects and demonstrate their
uselessness. The Khalsa is not to practise any rituals or austerities.

V. FIVE RULES OF CONDUCT⁴⁸²

The Khalsa is to practise the following five rules of conduct:

(i) *Life of honesty:*

The Khalsa would earn his livelihood only by his own honest,
lawful and creative effort and would not dwell on the earnings of
others.⁴⁸³ One-tenth of all earnings of the Khalsa are expected to be
given to the central treasury of the Khalsa,⁴⁸⁴ called *Daswand*. It is
not a compulsory tax; it is a voluntary offering for religious and
charitable purposes.

(ii) *Life of truth:*

The Khalsa would lead an ideal life, a life of truth. He should
share all his possessions with the needy, he should live under the
discipline of the *Nam* and should always be a responsible member of
the Khalsa community.⁴⁸⁵

If any member of the Khalsa committed a social wrong he should
submit himself to a Khalsa assembly and should accept the penalty
imposed on him by the assembly.⁴⁸⁶

481. *Akal Ustat*, verses 71, 80, 83, 84

482. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189. See also – Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.71; Harbans Singh, op.cit., p.70

483. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p.70

484. Ibid.

485. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.74

486. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.74

(iii) *Life of restraint:*

In the world's philosophical literature, human mind has been called 'restless'. The Khalsa is to restrain and discipline this restlessness of mind. With the power of the spirituality of *Nam* the Khalsa is to develop an inner discipline⁴⁸⁷ to control the ego and thus lead an awakened, purified and restrained life.⁴⁸⁸ To those who practised yoga to control their restlessness, the Guru's message was,

- (i) "O man! practise yoga in this way –
Make truth your horn, sincerity your necklace and apply meditation as ashes to your body;
Make restraint of your heart your lyre and the support of the Nam your alms."⁴⁸⁹
- (ii) ".....know, that it is through mere ignorance that you run after deeds of religious show. Amass the wealth of contemplation, and run away from egoism – the mortal sin"⁴⁹⁰

(iv) *Life of a householder:*

The Khalsa is to lead a life of a householder. Desires and egoism were to be curbed by leading a life of self-discipline and not by renouncing the life of a householder and rejecting the family responsibility. The householder is a person with a moral duty, which he must face and assume even at the cost of suffering.⁴⁹¹ The Guru recommended the doctrine of detachment while living in all worldly comforts and luxuries. Sikhism allows all comforts and luxuries of life but warns against deep attachment which most people develop for worldly goods. The Guru's teachings were not to get involved in worldly affairs but honestly and nobly to enjoy them and to share all comforts and luxuries with others who do not have them. The life of a recluse or an ascetic has thus been rejected by the Guru. To obtain the Grace of God, it is not essential to renounce family-life.

The Guru said,

- (i) "I have seen people bathing at sacred places, performing acts of special mercy, restraining their senses, giving alms, practising complete abstinence I have closely watched thousands of fasting ascetics and celibates but without God's remembrance, even emperors are destitute and of no account."⁴⁹²
- (ii) "What, if a person in the garb of a great ascetic matted hair wanders over different countries; he shall not find the beloved God by these practices"⁴⁹³

487. G.S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh, His Personality & Achievements*, pp 109-110

488. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sikhism*, p.89

489. *Shabad Hazare*, hymn 2

490. *Ibid.*, hymn 3

491. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sikhism* p.95

492. *Swayyas*, number 4

493. *Ibid.*, number 10

The Khalsa is not to enter into any permanent social relationship with *the Minas, the Dhirmalias, the Ramraiya*s and *the Masands* who in the past had tried to create schism in the historical growth of Sikhism.⁴⁹⁴

(v) *Life of Dharma (Gurmat)*:

The Khalsa is to start his day with prayer to God, to recite *Jap Ji* of Guru Nanak and *Jap Sahib* and *Ten Swayyas* of Guru Gobind Singh in the early morning. *Rehras Sahib* at the sunset and *Kirtan Sohila* before retiring for the night.⁴⁹⁵ He is to be a saint par excellence and was always to be ready to infuse courage and confidence in the downfallen, the depressed and victims of tyranny. The Khalsa is to wield his sword for the defence of the true *Dharma*, and it not to enforce his faith, by aggression on others,⁴⁹⁶ The Khalsa is to be the Guru's Warrior-Saint⁴⁹⁷

Thus Guru Gobind Singh expounded his concept of an Ideal man – the Saint-Soldier of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL MAN AS PROPOUNDED BY GURU GOBIND SINGH

As already explained on the foregoing pages, Guru Gobind Singh's mission has to be interpreted in relation to:

- (a) His role as the last heir of the Sikh Gurus,
- (b) His responsibility to give finishing touches to the mission of Guru Nanak and;
- (c) His responsibility to give to the world, in the form of the Khalsa, a community of fearless saint-soldiers, as was dreamt of by Guru Nanak and his eight successors, to uphold Truth and Justice and to annihilate evil and tyranny all over the globe.

Three hundred and twenty-one years ago, the world witnessed, in the unique personality of Guru Gobind Singh, a confluence of *Bhakti* (Devotion), *Shakti* (Power) and *Sarsvati* (Knowledge).⁴⁹⁸ He took up the sword to annihilate evil. With the Name of God on his lips, he launched a revolution through his Khalsa. It was an unusual revolution in the history of mankind. To date, the world history has witnessed a number of revolutions, e.g. capitalist revolution, proletariat revolution, socialist revolution, military coupes, religious revival and other economic and social revolutions; but the revolution brought by the Guru was one of its own kind. It was a sociospiritual type of revolution which opened for its participants

494. Kapur Singh, op.cit., pp.74-75

495. Ibid.

496. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.141

497. Ibid

498. Kumar Rajnish, 'Guru Gobind Singh' *The Sikh Review*, April 1978, p.33

the gateway of salvation. It gave a new turn to human history and left behind an indelible and unique impression.

In one of his prayers the Guru said,

‘O God! grant me this boon,

I may never be deterred from doing good and noble deeds,

I may never fear the enemy when I go to the battlefield.

I may ever be confident of my victory.

I may teach myself only one thing –

To sing only Your praises.

And when the last days of my life come,

I may die fighting in a holy war.”⁴⁹⁹

At another place, he stated,

“..... I speak the truth, let every one hear,

Those who love truly, can only achieve God.”⁵⁰⁰

The Guru taught us love, brotherhood, loyalty and democracy. He taught us how to worship God and how to protect people from tyranny and injustice. Commenting on Sikh religion, Dr. Mohammed Iqbal once said that Sikhism was ‘Higher Islam’ as it does not have two main limitations of Islam, viz., the reference to Allah only as a God of fear and not a God of love, and non-recognition and disrespect for other religions.⁵⁰²

Waheguru, the Supreme God of the Khalsa, is God of love and mercy and is also a universal God. The Khalsa of the Guru is to respect all other religions of the world.

(i) In the Guru’s words,

“Recognise all men as equal...”

(ii) “You are the Sustainer; You are the Maintainer;

You are the Rescuer; Boundless is Your Mercy;

And Superb Your Majesty and Love.”

According to the Sikh thought, all the ten Gurus of the Sikhs were one. Though they were born in ten different forms, they had the same soul, the same light. Their teachings, philosophy and ideology was the same. Their sermons and hymns had the same underlying idealism. The concept of Khalsa, though thought by many historians to have been conceived by Guru Gobind Singh, can be traced in Guru Nanak’s hymns. Guru Nanak said,

“The Mother God simultaneously produced three disciples – the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer.”⁵⁰⁵

Guru Nanak had reminded us about the unity of God and His Power. The three creations – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv of the Godhead – could not have been born simultaneously unless they

500. *Akal Ustat*, Swayyes, verse 9(29)

501. Mohammed Iqbal, *The Sikh Review*, March 1950, p.47

502. Khoda Baksha, *Essays – Indian and Islamic*, p.276

503. *Akal Ustate*, verse 14(85)

504. *Jap*, verse 108

505. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Japji p.7

were one.⁵⁰⁶ The three creations so mentioned depict the basic functions of God.

Guru Nanak in his hymns has mentioned a number of functions and forms of a religion. Most important of them are, however, two. Firstly, a religion establishes justice. In the Guru's words:

"The law that regulates the Universe is human, like the law of 'fabled bull'

The mystic bull is *Dharma*: the offspring of compassion,
Which is patiently holding the earth in order."⁵⁰⁷

Guru Nanak and his successors have taught us that the laws of God are equitable, just and merciful. The true religion should establish an organisation in which justice could prevail and the truth could survive. The religion should strengthen the social organisation and make it holy, harmonious, dignified, cultured, moral and amicable.⁵⁰⁸

Secondly, religion saves mankind from degradation and extinction. It follows the middle way of safety. In the Guru's words,⁵⁰⁹

"In complete detachedness and attachedness, the Religion acts as a guide and conductor."

According to the Sikh Gurus, it is the middle way which links man with God. The Gurus reject complete renunciation and too much involvement. Guru Nanak's monotheism is not impinged when he says:

"Wherever I see, there is union of Spirit (*Shiv*) and Matter (*Sakti*)."⁵¹⁰ Guru Amardas also said:

"He created Shiv and Sakti,
He Commands all the Powers."⁵¹¹

In the above hymns, Shiv and Sakti are shown to be two aspects of the same Reality. *Shiv Purana*⁵¹² and *Kurma Purana*⁵¹³ have also stressed the same point. These two aspects of the Reality are complimentary and are not in conflict with each other. Every living religion does contain in itself some sort of built-in security device to save it from the onslaught of fanatics of other religions and the non-believers. These security devices can acquire different forms at different time. In Hindu religion both Rama and Krishna were *Kshatryas* and in their own times played the part of war heroes to save good from evil. Both acquired the status of divine persons (*Divyacara*) through their heroic life (*Viracara*).

Islam, from its very inception was nursed under the shadow of the sword. Prophet Mohammed, in his life, had to fight a number of battles for survival and for the spread of the Muslim Gospel.

506. Jatinder Mohan Chatterji, 'Guru Gobind Singh and the Sakti Cult' *The Sikh Review*, December January 67, p.155

507. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Jap Ji, p.4

508. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Siri, p.74

509. *Ibid.*, Malhar, p.1280

510. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Siri p.74

511. *Ibid.*, Ramkali p.920

512. *Shiv Puran - Vayaviya* (2) 5-12

513. *Kurma Puran - Purva Bhag*, 2-92

Christian kings, too, had to resort to sword for the survival of their faith and for its spread in the West and the East.

Thus the use of sword in Sikhism for its survival was not a unique phenomenon in a religion, as is advocated by a number of historians and religious leaders who were hostile to Sikhism. In Sikhism, the idea of *Shakti* was there right from the beginning. It was that *Shakti* (moral power) which results from *Tap* (Devotion to God), one which results from a combination of service to humanity, good deeds and Simran. This *Shakti* is uncompromising in its conflict with evil and wicked forces. It is different from the *Shakti* used by Lord Rama, Lord Krishna and Prophet Mohammed. It is certainly unique in Sikhism. This *Shakti* was not to make others slaves and wage war to get the fruits of power and territory and to spread the faith. It was to protect morality and the saints of God, and to uproot evil and injustice. It was based on the principles of service and self-sacrifice for the protection and survival of human dignity and moral values.

The concept of Saint-Soldier envisages that *Bhakti* (Saintliness) without *Shakti* (Power or Strength) becomes pitiable and debilitated and fails to survive for long. It becomes too weak and too vulnerable. On the other hand *Shakti* without *Bhakti* breeds fascism and authoritarianism. Thus in an ideal state *Bhakti* and *Shakti* must go together. This theme has been discussed at length by Guru Gobind Singh in his compositions: *Chandi Di Var* and *Chandi Charitar*.

In Sikhism, even the architectural unity of Golden Temple (the place of Spiritual Sovereignty) and Akal Takhat (the abode of Immortal Sovereign) represent the necessity of acceptance of the concept of the Saint-Soldier, or *Meeri* and *Peeri* as is mentioned in Sikh history.

In Christianity, a few hundred years ago, the Pope used to wear two swords to show his spiritual and temporal authority.⁵¹⁴

In Islam, the *Khalifas* (successors to Prophet Mohammed) too had the dual authority: spiritual and temporal authority.⁵¹⁵

In Sikhism though the concept of Saint-Soldier, was completely concretised in the form of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh, its seeds were sown, as has been discussed above, by Guru Nanak the founder himself. The other Gurus also made their contribution to this unique concept in their own times. Guru Angad, defied the *Brahmans* (the Hindu priestly class) and the *Mullas* (the Muslim priestly class) of their monopoly to learn and teach religious scriptures. He invited men of all castes to come forward and rally against this unjustified hold or privilege of Brahmans and Mullas. Guru Amardus, the third Guru, broke the barriers of social stratification. He carried forward the revolution of *Sangat* and *Pangat* and thus

514. David Thomson (Ed), *Political Ideas*, p.36

515. J. S. Ahluwalia, 'The Sociology of Sikhism', *Miri-Piri Da Sidhant*, p.29

established social equality. Guru Ramdas, the fourth Master, laid down the foundation of Amritsar, the city of Immortality and Bliss, to infuse light in the darkness of the hearts of hundreds of his followers to rise and break the chains of slavery and untouchability. He told his disciples to undo the injustice of the caste system and other social inequalities, by settling as equals in the new township of Amritsar. Guru Arjan, the fifth Master and the first martyr of the Sikh history, rose against arbitrary authority and protested against the Mughal dictatorship. He preached the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man to all. He challenged the existing religious traditions by designing Harimander Sahib (the Golden Temple) so as to keep it open to men of all faiths and also by compiling Granth Sahib which included hymns of Muslim saints, low-caste Hindu saints and Brahmin Bhattas, besides those of the Sikh Gurus.

Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, donned two swords to demonstrate his spiritual and temporal sovereignty. In the words of Bhai Gurdas I,⁵¹⁶

“Five cups and the five saints led to the installation of the sixth mighty saint.....”

i.e. five saints (Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas and Guru Arjan) – practised collectively five virtues – truth, faith, compassion, patience and contentment and Guru Hargobind, in addition practised a sixth virtue, called Shakti (power). At another place, he also maintained:

“Just as one has to tie the pail’s neck while taking out water;
Just as to get *Mani* (a type of jewel) the snake is to be killed;
Just as to get *Kasturi* (musk) from deer’s navel, the deer is to be killed;

Just as to get oil, the oil seeds are to be crushed

Just as to get *Kernel*, pomegranate is to be broken,

Similarly, to correct senseless people, sword has to be used.”⁵¹⁷

Guru Har Rai and Guru Harkrishan, the seventh and the eighth Guru, also taught protest against tyranny and injustice. Both defied the unjust orders of Aurangzeb and refused to attend his court. Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Master, destroyed the myth of selfish living and gave to his followers the idea of living and dying for others. He sacrificed his life to save Hindu religion, while he himself was not a Hindu and had no belief in its doctrine.

Thus we see that all the predecessors of Guru Gobind Singh had made their contribution to the building of the concept of the Khalsa, which the Tenth Master was ordained to declare to be complete and final.

The concept of the Khalsa as finally completed and personified by Guru Gobind Singh has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by a number of historians, statesmen and men of letters including

516. Bhai Gurdas I, *Var 1*, pauri 48

517. Bhai Gurdas I, *Var 34*, pauri 13

A. Toynbee,⁵¹⁸ J. N. Sarkar,⁵¹⁹ Mahatma Gandhi,⁵²⁰ Mohammed Latif⁵²¹ and Rabindranath Tagore.⁵²²

In the words of A. Toynbee,

- (i) "Sikhism, again originated as a concordance of Hinduism and Islam, and it fell from this religious height into a political trough because the Sikh Gurus, Har Govind (Hargobind) and Govind Singh (Gobind Singh), and their eventual political successor, the Sikh war-lord Ranjiit Singh, succumbed, like Prophet Mohammed, to the temptation to use force."⁵²³
- (ii) "In the encounter between the Islamic and the Hindu civilisations, Sikhism, which had been founded to transcend the division between Hindus and Muslims by preaching the gospel of the higher religions to all men in terms that all men could accept, was diverted – under provocation from a Mughal Empire that grew more intolerant as it became more decrepit – into serving as the instrument of a militant Hindu reaction against the militancy of Islam."⁵²⁴

According to J.N. Sarkar,

"Clearly, Nanak's ideal of the kingdom of heaven to be won by holy living and holy dying, by humility and prayer, self restraint and meditation, had been entirely abandoned."⁵²⁵

In the words of Mohammed Latif,

"Henceforth a new leaf opens in the history of the Sikhs. It is no longer the records of a sect who, following the peaceful tenets of their founder, desired merely to protect themselves and had no wish to injure other; but that of a race which, actuated by a deep sense of the wrongs done by a persecuting Government, strove to make itself prominent in the world by those deeds of valour and patriotism which make nations great and glorious."⁵²⁶

According to Mahatma Gandhi,

"Guru Gobind Singh was a misguided patriot."⁵²⁷

In the words of Rabindarnath Tagore,

"Guru Nanak, as a religious leader, preached universal truths and religion which had immense possibilities of elevating the people of India. It was his aim to hold out before the people the highest ideal of salvation. But Guru Gobind Singh forsook this ideal and put in its place the one single aim of his life, namely: to destroy the enemy of the Sikhs. This has no doubt made the Sikhs a fighting race, but the great treasure leading to salvation which it

518. A. Toynbee, *An Historian's approach to religion*, pp. 110-113

519. J. N. Sarkar, op.cit., p.359

520. Mahatma Gandhi, quoted by C. Loehlin, *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood* preface

521. M.Latif, *History of Punjan*, p.261

522. Rabindernath Tagore, *Modern Review*, April 1911

523. A. Toynbee, op.cit., p.110

524. Ibid., pp. 112-113

525. J.N. Sarkar, op.cit., p.359

526. M. Latif, op.cit., p.261

527. Quoted by C. Loehli, op.citl, p. Preface

was the aim of Nanak's life to distribute amongst the people at large, was neglected and lost sight of, with the result that the onward march of the Sikhs was stopped forever. In the place of a Guru or a religious leader, Guru Gobind Singh gave his followers only the sword; and when he died the great truth preached by Nanak remained confined in the *Granth Sahib* and could not do any service to humanity through a succession of religious leaders. Instead of a flowing river, Sikh religion became a closed pool of stagnant water."⁵²⁸

Alas! the persons mentioned above and some more like them, failed to realise the causes which led Guru Gobind Singh to resort to the sword and the kind of call he made.

Basically, there is nothing morally or spiritually wrong in wielding the sword for the defence of justice and righteousness. Is the act of maintenance of armies by different countries in the world immoral? Are the soldiers who kill the enemy for the protection of their countries not decorated with honour? A soldier is certainly not a killer but a trained protector or defender of his country and a person who carries out his pledge of maintaining freedom from aggression. In almost every country of the world the military profession is one of the most honourable and respectable professions. It carries with it the highest honour, status and prestige.

The soldier created by Guru Gobind Singh was not merely a fighter but had another great and unparalleled feature of saintliness. His soldier was a composite and complete Saint-Soldier. His Commonwealth of the Khalsa was a universal brotherhood of the pure in spirit. Guru Gobind Singh was very well aware of the fact that he was the heir of Guru Nanak's throne when he said,

"I have no other ambition but to wage the war of righteousness."⁵²⁹

It is really amazing how people like Jadunath Sarkar, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindarnath Tagore who had such a great regard for the *Bhagvad Gita* and *Ramayna*, the epics full of war-glory and instructions for waging a holy war, could misjudge the intentions of Guru Gobind Singh! Were Rama and Krishna not soldiers? How could Mohammed Latif, the follower of the holy *Qoran*, misinterpret the activities and mission of Guru Gobind Singh when the author and the hero of *Qoran*, Prophet Mohammed, was himself a preacher and a warrior.

Guru Gobind Singh, the saviour of the Indian nation, did not get the much deserved honour and justice from Indian as well as foreign historians. Mainly because the literature of the Guru had not been available to them in their respective languages.

528. Rabindarnath Tagore, 'Shiva Ji and Guru Govinda Singh' *Modern Review*, April 1911. See also R.C. Mazumdar, Rabindarnath and Guru Gobind Singh, *The Sikh Review* December 1966-January 1967, p.220

529. *Krishnavtar*, verse 10

Dr. R.K. Dasgupta writing about Rabindarnath Tagore's remarks about the Guru said,⁵³⁰

“Rabindarnath Tagore wrote a letter to Professor Teja Singh saying that he did not mean any disregard for the Guru and that he had developed his theme from what he had read about the Guru's self-preparation in McGregor and Cunningham.”

This shows how historians and other learned people draw wrong conclusions when the right record or evidence is not made available to them or they do not care to obtain it on their own for its proper use in their writings.

Guru Gobind Singh, author of the concept of saint-soldier, was indeed, the hero of Dharam-Yuda, the Holy War. His wars were different from other wars in this world. A number of points of startling difference may be mentioned:

Firstly, the battles waged by the Guru were without any ill-will, and without the feelings of hatred and desire for revenge. As a worldly being, the Guru lost, more or less, everything he had. His father, mother, his sons, his dearest disciples, all his possessions and almost all his literary manuscripts were lost; but there was not even a single frown or sign of complaint on his face. Never in his whole life he uttered a word of lamentation, revenge or reprisal against anyone. On the contrary, when *Mata Sundri*, his wife, asked him about their sons, the Guru told her –

“What if we have lost four sons,

Thousands of our Sikhs have survived in the bargain!”

Some misguided writers have mentioned the Guru's anti-Muslim bias. This is incorrect. The Guru fought against Hindu rulers of the hills and also against the Mughal Emperor of India. His army consisted of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh soldiers. He had no bias against any religion, but only against evil-doers. The selfless service of *Bhai Kanahaya*, a wonderful devotee in the battle-field, amply supports this view and reminds us of the Guru's humanism and magnanimity. The Guru loved all. He did not differentiate between Hindus, Muslims and low-castes. For him all were the same, the sons of God. His war was not against any religion or sect, but was against the tyrant rulers. His instructions to the Khalsa were not to yield to injustice, oppression and tyranny from any and under any circumstances.

Secondly, his wars were righteous wars. They were not fought for fun or glory but for upholding justice. As the Guru repeatedly said,

“I have no other ambition but to wage the war of righteousness.”⁵³²

This ambition of his is also reflected in his Divine Mission, as mentioned in his autobiography, the *Bachitar Natak*, stating that –

“The Divine Lord has sent me for the sake of religion.....

..... to seize and destroy the evil and the sinful.....”⁵³³

530. S. S. Uppal (Ed), *Guru Gobind Singh the Saviour*, p.60

530. S. S. Uppal (ed.). *Guru Gobind Singh the Saviour*, p.60

532. *Krishnavtar*, verse 10

533. *Bachitar Natak*, VI verses 42-43

Thirdly, he had no lust for armed victories. Alexander's, Napoleon's and Caesar's militarism reflected their keen desire to conquer the world, but Guru Gobind Singh had no such motive. He fought battles, nine before the creation of the Khalsa and eleven after its creation. Of these, though he had won sixteen, he did not desire to acquire even an inch of territory, nor did he permit any of his forces to plunder the enemy's property or molest their women.

Fourthly, the Guru had no desire or inclination for exercising autocratic power or rule. He did not want to establish a reign of his own, though he had all the opportunities to establish one. Despite being a Guru and leader of such a large number of followers, he was very humble and human. It is a fact of history that having administered the new baptism to the first five Chosen Ones, the Guru stood up in supplication and with folded hands begged the Chosen Ones to baptise him in the manner he had baptised them. This scene has been very well described by Bhai Gurdas II, a contemporary in the following words,

“Divine Guru arranged the great drama,
Guru Nanak, the fearless prophet, put *Sidhs* on the right path

.....

Guru Gobind Singh meditated on the Immortal One,
He was commanded by God to initiate New Baptismal Order;
Those who came forward and took the new baptism -
Were turned from ordinary men to fearless soldiers;
Great was Guru Gobind Singh who was the Guru as well as a
disciple.”⁵³⁴

Fifthly, the Guru's call to wage war was not a political revolt or mutiny. It must be remembered that the Guru was not against any particular political set-up if it was truly democratic. He was not establishing any new political order of his own. He was only craving for justice and equality for one and all. In his letter to Aurangzeb, he wrote:

- (i) “Laced with sword and the shield,
You, Aurangzeb, must personally take the field.
It is cowardly to fire human beings,
For your evil aims and vanity.”⁵³⁵
- (ii) “It is your foremost responsibility to fear God and take up
righteous ways. Without being misguided by anyone, you
should stop oppressing people.”⁵³⁶
- (iii) “People call you Aurangzeb, the ruler of a sub-continent, but
alas you are utterly devoid of righteousness and truth.”⁵³⁷

534. Bhai Gurdas II, *Var*, pauri 1

535. *Fatehnama*, verse 24. Guru Gobind Singh is said to have written two letters to Aurangzeb. The first called 'Fatehnama' and the second 'Zafarnama'. 'Fatehnama' is supposed to have been written when the Guru was at Machhiwara. Although it remained lost for many years, about a third of it (ie, about 24 verses) has been located. (See Trilochan Singh, 'Fatehnama', *The Sikh Review*, April 1977, p.26)

537. *Zafarnama*, verse 65.

537. *Ibid.*, verse 94

- (iv) "If you punish the wrongdoers and oppressors, God will forgive you and bless you....."538
- (v) "To be righteous is the noblest deed of a king. To realize God should be his highest ideal."539

Sixthly, the Guru's instructions to his soldiers were to go into the battle without fear, to fight courageously, to face bullets or arrows and not to turn their backs, and always to remember God even in the midst of shower of arrows and bullets. The Guru himself wished to die on the battle-field like a hero, he said:

"And when the last moments of my life come,
I should die in the war of righteousness."540

In his letter to Aurangzeb, Guru Gobind Singh emphasised the faith he had in God, even in the midst of battles and wars:

- (i) "When the arrow struck me,
The War-spirit in me was strengthened."541
- (ii) "What could the mischievous betrayals,
And the wicked attacks of the enemy do,
When my protector, my guide in those dark hours
Was God Himself."542
- (iii) "Even when a single person was chased and attacked,
By a hundred thousand swordman,
The Merciful God, my Saviour,
Saved him from the least possible harm."543
- (iv) "If you are proud of your armies and wealth,
I depend on and am inspired by the strength of God."544
- (v) "Even though the enemy attacked with forces of thousands,
Not a hair of my body was affected,
Because God the Saviour was with me."545

Seventhly, the Guru's call for recruits was answered by the people fired by an ideal, by crusaders and not by mercenaries. It was a call to come forward and enrol in the army of God, wherein every soldier was to be ever ready to sacrifice his life, to uphold his ideals. Even the Guru's instructions to keep long hair and unshorn beard were to revive the ancient saintly tradition. The unshorn hair and beard had been symbols of the holiness and purity, and only the pure of heart had a right to wield arms to uphold God's ideals. Commenting on the role of Khalsa as the army of God, the Guru said,

- (i) "The Khalsa is my image, I reside in the Khalsa."547
- (ii) "The Khalsa is the army of the Immortal One,

538. Ibid., verse 83

539. Ibid., verse 84

540. *Chandi Charitar 1*, verse 231

541. *Bachitar Natak*, VI, verse 31

542. *Zafarnama*, verse 103

543. Ibid., verse 104

544. Ibid., verse 105

545. Ibid., verse 111

547. *Sarb Loh Granth*, p.667

- The Khalsa has been created by His Command.”⁵⁴⁸
- (iii) “So long as the Khalsa retains his individuality,
I shall give him all the glory.
But when he deviates to misguided ways,
I shall not support him.”⁵⁴⁹
- (iv) “I am respected for I raised the Khalsa under God’s
Command,
Otherwise there are millions like me, for whom no one
cares.”⁵⁵⁰

Lastly, the Guru had instructed the Khalsa to wage a war only when all other means and negotiations had been explored and had failed. The war had to be the ultimate and last resort for the settlement of issues. The Guru asserted in his letter to Aurangzeb,

“When all other possible means fail,
It is but just to raise the sword.”⁵⁵¹

From the above, we see that the theory of war as propounded by Guru Gobind Singh was entirely different from those of an ordinary war. The Guru’s concept of a Saint-Soldier was unique in character and unparallel in history.

It is therefore clear that Guru Gobind Singh had not changed the religion preached by the first nine Gurus. On the contrary, his injunctions, acts and instructions were, in every way, the logical and appropriate development of the teachings, commandments and traditions initiated by the house of Nanak.

In Guru Gobind Singh’s concept of the ideal man, we find Guru Nanak’s strong belief in the One Universal God and international brotherhood; Guru Angad’s emphasis on healthy mind, strong body and pure consciousness and Guru Amardas’s strong will-power and insistence on service to God, to the Guru and to mankind; Guru Ramdas’s stress on humility in actions and simplicity in living; Guru Arjan’s directive for *Nam-Simran* and keeping the company of saints; Guru Hargobind’s, Guru Har Rai’s and Guru Harkrishan’s instructions to attend to congregational prayers, to bow to God’s Command and to offer selfless service to humanity; and Guru Tegh Bahadur’s teaching of the ideal of a *Jiwal Mukh* and self-sacrifice for the sake of others. Guru Gobind Singh added to all that courage, strength and power, which transformed sparrows into hawks and jackals into lions.

548. Ibid., p.668

549. Ibid.

550. *Gyan Prabodh*, Swayyas 2 (645)

551. *Zafarnama*, verse 22

CHAPTER V

THE RELEVANCE AND ROLE OF GURU GOBIND SINGH'S IDEAL MAN IN HISTORY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

History of the Khalsa dates from March 30, 1699 when Guru Gobind Singh created his ordained Ideal Man in the form of a 'Saint-Soldier.' The events of the last two hundred and eighty eight years have proved the importance of the contribution by the Khalsa to the Indian sub-continent and the Indian people. The times have also vindicated the Guru's dream of creating an army of the Immortal Being, consisting of fearless, courageous, daring, heroic and gallant 'Saint-Soldiers' who could uphold Truth, Justice and Freedom at the cost of their lives, families and property.

KHALSA UNDER THE COMMAND OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (1699-1708)

The Khalsa, under the command of Guru Gobind Singh, fought eleven battles after its creation within a short span of six years.

Of these, six battles were fought at Anandpur, and one each at Nirmohgarh, Bharsali, Sirsa, Chamkaur and Mukstar. All these battles were fought for survival as the Mughal rulers and Hindu rajas had sworn to crush the Guru and annihilate the Khalsa Brotherhood.

The First Battle of Anandpur, 1699

There were three main causes for this battle. Firstly, the Khalsa, a nation created by Guru Gobind Singh, had caused fear in the minds of the Hindu rajas of the hills. Secondly, on the basis of hill rajas' complaints to Aurangzeb regarding the armed activities of the Guru, the Emperor was hard pressed to have Anandpur vacated.¹ Lastly, as a result of the first two causes, the Governor of Punjab was given full powers from Delhi to crush the Guru. The creation of Khalsa, thus, gave an excuse to the allied forces to march on Anandpur. As a result, a force of ten thousand men² under the command of General Painde Khan and General Dina Beg marched towards Anandpur.

1. H. R. Gupta, *History of Sikh Gurus*, p.198

2. M. A. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, V, p.124

The *raja* of Kahlur had also written to the *raja* of *Handoor* to besiege Anandpur and force the Guru to leave Anandpur.³ Thus the allied forces of the hill chiefs joined the Mughal forces at Ropar. The battle was fought on open ground outside Anandpur. Ajit Singh, the eldest son of the Guru, fought with unparalleled bravery.⁴ Painde Khan was killed in a duel with the Guru. Dina Beg and the hill *raj*as fled away and the victory was of the Khalsa.

The Second Battle of Anandpur, 1699:

The humiliating defeat of the allied forces made the hill *raj*as review their war-tactics. In a hastily summoned meeting, it was decided to organise a surprise attack on Anandpur. The exasperated *raj*as made a second coalition and organised a strong force of twenty thousand soldiers.⁵ Guru Gobind Singh had only eight thousand men⁶ in the fort. In the fighting which lasted only one day,⁷ the Khalsa gave a crushing defeat to the hill forces. The retreating armies then decided to besiege Anandpur and starve the inhabitants to death. The siege lasted for two months. Raja Kishan Chand of *Jaswan* and Ghamand Chand of *Kangra* lost their lives and others fled away.⁸

The Battle of Nirmohgarh, 1700:

Nirmohi is a village situated about 4 kilometres away from Anandpur. Guru Gobind Singh had made a small fortress there on a hillock. The third battle of the period was fought there. A short time after the second battle of Anandpur, the Guru was informed of an advancing Mughal contingent spearheaded by the frustrated and demoralised hill *raj*as.

The Guru planned to intercept the advance of the enemy at Nirmohi. Sainapat has described this battle in detail in *Sri Gur Sobha*.⁹ It lasted for about three hours.¹⁰ The brave soldiers of Guru Gobind Singh, once again, gave a crushing defeat to the enemy.

The Battle of Bharsali, 1700:

After the battle of Nirmohi, Guru Gobind Singh summoned a meeting of his generals and discussed future strategy. The Guru told them that according to the information received by him, Aurangzeb has issued secret instructions to the Governor of Sirhind to collect as many soldiers as possible and avenge defeats of the Mughal army. The Guru suggested moving his camp temporarily to Bharsali,¹¹ a

3. Sainapat, *Gursobha*, Chapter 9

4. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.199; see also M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., V, pp 128-137

5. Sainapat, op.cit., Chapter 9

6. Sainapat, op.cit., Chapter 9

7. G. C. Narang *Transformation of Sikhism*, p.150

8. Ibid., p.150

9. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.199

10. Satbir Singh, *Purkh-Bhagwant*, p.150

11. H. R. Gupta, *History of Sikh Gurus*, p.99; Hari Ram Gupta also writes that the battle was actually fought at Anandpur. The Sikhs suffered defeat and retreated towards *Bharsali*. But Dr. Gupta has not given any references in support of his statement.

village about 45 kilometres from Anandpur across the river Swan. The choice of Bharsali was based on a strategy as it was a very difficult spot to reach and the soldiers of the Guru had natural cover against the enemy's fire. The enemy's army was commanded by Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sirhind.¹² Wazir Khan did not consider it profitable to pursue the Guru to Bharsali¹³ as tactically it was dangerous and there was a possibility of an ambush. Most of the hill *rajās* also felt satisfied that the Guru had vacated Anandpur, after all,¹⁴ but Ajmer Chand of Kahlur remained adamant and with the assistance of inhabitants of Kalmot, he attacked the Guru.¹⁵ Sainapat has described this skirmish in the following words:¹⁶

“People ran from their houses, every one got panicky,
No one could face (the Guru) in the battle.
The enemy soldiers started trembling with fear.”

Thus the Guru gave the enemy a crumbling defeat and returned to Anandpur after a short while.¹⁷

The First Battle of Chamkaur, 1702:

Chamkaur is about 24 kilometres west of Ropar. The battle which took place there was a surprise attack by the Mughal Commanders – Sayed Beg and Alif Khan – on the Guru when he was returning from Kurukshetra after attending a festival.¹⁸

General Sayed Beg was the brother-in-law of Pir Buddh Shah who had sacrificed his two sons for the Guru in the battle of Bhangani in 1688. The General had stayed with Buddhu Shah before that expedition and had learnt a great deal about the Guru from his sister and brother-in-law. All that had greatly impressed him, but he could not decide between carrying out the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb to arrest the Guru and complying with, the wishes of his sister and brother-in-law who wanted him to make peace with the Guru. The combined Mughal forces was of five thousand men.¹⁹ As the attack was made half-heartedly by Sayed Beg, on account of vacillation, it proved utterly ineffective. Moreover, the General was so impressed by the charismatic personality of the Guru²⁰ that he soon called off his attack. The disheartened Alif Khan retired with the remaining army and the Guru returned to Anandpur.²¹

12. Narain Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh Retold*, p.267

13. Sahib Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.149

14. Satbir Singh, *op.cit.*, p.150

15. Sainapat, *op. cit.*, verse 15 (393) 20 (398)

16. *Ibid.*, p. 138-142

17. Sahib Singh has given January, 1703 A.D. as the month of this battle.

18. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.200

19. Fauja Singh, *The Travels of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.14

20. M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, V, pp. 153-154

21. M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, V, pp. 154-156; See also Sahib Singh, *op.cit.*, p.151. According to Sahib Singh, the Guru's force consisted of 800 armed men. No other historian has given any numbers

The Third Battle of Anandpur, 1703:

The battle was fought at the gates of Anandpur. That was the last individual effort of the hill *rajas* to oust the Guru from Anandpur. The alliance consisted of Rajas Bhim Chand, Bhup Chand, Wazir Chand and Dev Saran. A fierce battle was fought and the *rajas* were again completely routed.²²

The Fourth Battle of Anandpur, 1703:

At the request of the defeated *rajas*, the Viceroy of Delhi sent another strong Mughal contingent with instructions to annihilate Anandpur and arrest or kill Guru Gobind Singh. It was commanded by General Sayed Khan, General Ramzan Khan and General Dina Beg;²³ and consisted of ten thousand men; whereas the Guru had with him only five hundred strong men.²⁴ The Guru also had on his side, General Sayed Beg and General Mian Khan.²⁵ In the battle that followed, Sayed Beg killed Raja Hari Chand and himself fell under the sword of General Dina Beg.²⁶ General Syed Khan saw with his own eyes Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs fighting on the side of the Guru. He too, like General Sayed Beg, called off the troops under his command and went towards the hills.²⁷ But the other Generals chose to remain in the battle-field and fight. Ten thousand trained imperial soldiers fighting against five hundred Sikh soldiers, was really an inequitable match. To avoid heavy casualties, the Guru chose to move towards Kiratpur.²⁸ For a while, the Mughal army took possession of Anandpur; but it was suddenly attacked by the Guru's forces in the midst of their celebrations for getting the possession of Anandpur. Complete chaos prevailed for a while and Anandpur was recaptured by the Guru.²⁹ The enemy suffered heavy casualties. It was on gaining that victory that the Guru composed famous poem *Khalsa Mehma*.³⁰

Fifth and the last Battle of Anandpur 1704:

That was the eighteenth battle which was thrust upon the Guru. The previous seventeen battles, six of which were fought against the hill *rajas* on their own, and eleven which were fought against the imperial army aided by hill *rajas*, had humiliated the Mughal government at Delhi. Guru Gobind Singh had proved his following claim, as stated by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh,³¹ by combating 500 of his soldiers against more than ten thousand of the enemy in the last battle of Anandpur:

22. S. S. Johar, *Guru Gobind Sign*, p.162

23. *Ibid.*, p.162

24. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.201

25. S. S. Johar, *op.cit.*, p.102

26. S. S. Johar, *op.cit.*, p.162

27. *Ibid.*, p.162

28. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.201; See also M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, V pp.156, 162-1654, *Dasam Granth*, p.716

29. *Ibid.*, p.201

30. S. S. Johar, *op.cit.*, p.163; see also H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.202

31. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, p.70

“When I shall send a sparrow and the imperial hawks shall fall before it;

When I shall cause a single Sikh to fight against an army of a hundred and twenty five thousand (*Sawa Lakh*);

Only then shall I be known as Gobind Singh.”

All that worried Emperor Aurangzeb. The growing power of the guru was considered a threat to his throne. It is said that on listening to the news of repeated defeats of the Mughal army, Aurangzeb trembled with rage and ordered that the Guru must be exterminated by hook or by crook.³² The Emperor also sent a letter to the guru through a Qazi.³³ The letter said, “There is only one Emperor. Your religion and mine are the same. Come to me at once, otherwise I shall be angry. If you come, you shall be treated as the holy men are treated by monarchs. I have obtained this sovereignty from God. Be well advised and thwart not my wishes.”³⁴ The Guru sent the following reply to the Emperor, “My brother, the Sovereign who has made you Emperor has also sent me into the world to do justice. He has commissioned you also to do justice but you have forgotten His mandate and practised hypocrisy. Therefore, how can I be on good terms with you who pursue the Hindus with blind hatred? You recognise not that the people belong to God and not to the Emperor, and yet you seek to destroy their religion.”³⁵

The Emperor, terribly annoyed with the reply, ordered the despatch of all available troops at Delhi, Sirhind and Lahore to launch a combined and strong attack on Anandpur under the supreme command of Wazir Khan, Governor of Sirhind.³⁶ The forces of fifty-two hill rajas also joined the imperial forces for a final showdown with the Guru. The Guru received the information about all military activities from his Sikhs. He issued several letters³⁶ to his followers for immediate help, one of which rendered into English, is given below:

“Sri Guru Ji addressed the letter to Bhai Sukhya, Bhai, Mukhya, Bhai Persa. The Guru would take care of all his disciples. Repeat Guru Guru. You will have the best in life. The entire community of my Khalsa. Come with cavaliers, footmen, gunners and daring youth. Every Sikh young man coming to pay respects would be blessed with prosperity. He would flourish fully well. The Guru would fulfil all their desires. Come for a *Darshan* (meeting) 1704 A.D.”³⁷

Sainapat³⁸ has described this battle as below:

The Battle started on May 20, 1704 A.D.³⁹ In the first ten days of

32. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.202

33. M. A. Macauliffe, op.cit., V, p.165; see also Gopal Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.46

34. Ibid., p.165; see also Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.47; Satbir Singh, op.cit., 154

35. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.48

36. H. R. Gupta, op. cit., p.203

37. Ganda Singh, *Hukamnamas*, *Guru Gobind Singh's Hukamnama* no. 60, p.181

38. Sainapat, op.cit., verses 20-22 (424-426)

the battle, the guns of the Guru, named *Baghan* (Tigress) and *Vijayagosh* (Victory Warrant) wrought havoc in the enemy ranks and the combined imperial forces lost nine hundred men.⁴⁰ At the time of dusk, the Guru had sent two of his Generals, Ude Singh and Daya Singh, to charge the two best soldiers of the enemy in combat. They too inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.⁴¹

The battle continued for a month or so⁴². The Mughal officers were surprised to see the bravery and tenacity of the Guru's Sikhs. On those days of the battle when the Guru himself commanded his troops, the enemy ranks were stunned to see his skills in archery, accuracy of his shooting and courage of his advance. After a month the enemy losses were alarming; many a soldier had fled. The fear lurked in the enemy's mind that the victories of the Guru were the result of his supernatural powers.⁴²

Having lost a large number of men, Wazir Khan changed his strategy. He withdrew all his men from the battlefield and retreated to a distance which was reasonably far from the range of the Guru and his army's arrows and other weapons of destruction. He then laid an intensive siege of the city of Anandpur. The battle was halted, but all essential supplies to Anandpur were cut off. Anandpur was a small town and most of the essential supplies were brought in from the outside. Provisions started running out. The prices of essential goods soared. Flour was selling at two rupees a seer.⁴⁴ Hardship increased with each day. Starvation stared everyone in the face. The civilian population began to flee. Soldiers' rations were drastically cut. Each soldier was allowed only one hundred grams of flour each day.⁴⁵ The worst was yet to come. A small hill-stream supplied water to Anandpur. Bhimchand diverted its course. Such and allied hardships lasted for seven long months.⁴⁶ Wazir Khan then thought of another plan. To divide the forces of the Guru who were living only on faith, loyalty and devotion, he sent word to the Guru that their (Wazir Khan and Hill Rajas) mission was only to have Anandpur vacated and that they had no enmity with the Guru. If the Guru would only leave Anandpur and move somewhere else, they would lift the siege and go back to their homes. Wazir Khan also confirmed that statement with an oath on the holy Qoran.

39. S. S. Johar, op.cit., p.164; G. C. Garang, op.cit., p.151 has given this date as 1701 A.D. He also says that the Guru had come out of Anandpur to meet the imperial forces and that the first two days of the battle was fought at Kiratpur. But most of the other historians have given 1704 A.D. as the year of the battle and Anandpur as its venue.

40. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.203; See also Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.49 and Kartar Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.172.

41. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.49

42. S. S. Johar, op.cit., p.165

43. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.49

44. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.203; a Seer is equivalent to about 2.02 lbs.

45. Ibid., p.203

46. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.50

This clever message did create dissensions in the forces of the Guru as Wazir Khan had anticipated. A group of local residents threatened to desert the Guru if he would not listen to their counsel of vacating the fort. Even the Guru's mother insisted on his acceptance of the offer of Wazir Khan.⁴⁷ But the Guru knew well that the enemy could not be trusted. To prove his point the Guru also made a plan. He sent a word to Wazir Khan that he had accepted his offer of vacating Anandpur on assurance of a safe exit and that he would send his valuable treasure under proper guard and then he would leave. The Guru secretly ordered his soldiers to fill sacks with rubbish and horse-dung and cover the contents with velvet cloth.⁴⁸ The moment that caravan of mules and bullock-carts reached enemy lines, the enemy attacked and looted the property. The guards, however, escaped and rushed back into the fort.⁴⁹ The feelings of the enemy on discovering the contents of the booty and having acted contrary to their oath and promise can be well imagined.

Wazir Khan's ruse had failed but he sent a letter of apology to the Guru for the misconduct of some of his troops. He also sent to the Guru a letter signed and sealed by Aurangzeb,⁵⁰ which read:

"I have sworn on the Qoran not to harm you, If I do I may not find a place in God's court hereafter. Cease warfare and come to me. If you desire not to come here, then go wheresoever you please."

The envoy who brought that note also brought a message from the Commander of the army which read as follows:⁵¹

"O Guru, all who go to the Emperor's court praise you. On that account the Emperor feels certain that an interview with you will add to his happiness. He has sworn by Prophet Mohammed and called God to Witness that he will not harm you. The hill *rajas* have also sworn by the cow and called their idols to witness that they will allow you safe conduct. Bear not in mind anything that has occurred. The attack on your oxen was not prompted by any *raja*. The attackers have been generally punished and the ring-leaders are in prison. No one now, O True Guru, dare to do you any harm; therefore vacate the fort, at any rate for the present, and come with the Commander to the Emperor. You may afterwards do what you please."

The Sikhs were in a desperate position. They again pressed the Guru to accept the offer. Mata Gujri also joined hands with them. The Guru asked them to wait for five more days and that God would

47. M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, V, pp.168-176

48. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.204

49. Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, verses 5819-5822

50. *Ibid.*, *op.cit.*, verses 5823-5826; see also M. A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, V, p.179, Kartar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.176

51. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.204; see also, Kartar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.176; Gopal Singh, *op.cit.*, p.51; Narain Singh, *op.cit.*, p.272

52. Kartar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.176; see also Narain Singh, *op.cit.*, p.272

send them some help.⁵² But some of the Sikhs who were desperate on account of hunger, thirst and hardship wanted to leave. The Guru then said that those who wished to desert him in that hour of need must formally disown him by putting their signatures on a letter of desertion. Only forty Sikhs signed such a letter⁵³ and went away. Others pleaded with the Guru that it was a bliss to die fighting, in spite of starvation and thirst. In that hopeless situation, the Guru accepted the offer of safe exit⁵⁴ and ordered the burning or destruction of such possessions which could not be carried away.⁵⁵ The evacuation started on the night of 20-21 December 1705 A.D.⁵⁶ The first batch consisted of all women and the Guru's younger sons along with most of the manuscripts prepared by the Guru and his court-poets. It was escorted by two hundred armed horsemen under the command of Ude Singh.⁵⁷ The Guru's family was to proceed to Nahan and await the command from the Guru.⁵⁸ The second batch consisted of the Guru, his two elder sons and about four hundred armed men.⁵⁹ The weather at the time of evacuation was terrible, it was the severe cold of midwinter, wet and very windy.⁶⁰

Battle of Sirsa – 21st December 1704 A.D.

The river Sirsa is a tributary of the river Satluj. It is usually a dry passage except during rainy seasons. On that particular night it was running like a mighty torrent.⁶¹ It was almost impossible to cross. The first batch was waiting on its bank about 15 K.M. to the east for the Guru's arrival.⁶² When the Guru reached the bank of Sirsa, it was the beginning of the last quarter of the night.⁶³ The Guru and his party had hardly finished their prayers and *Kirtan*⁶⁴ when they were attacked by a strong enemy contingent under the command of Wazir Khar.⁶⁵ Severe fighting ensued. Ude Singh and his contingent lost their lives. In that dark and wet night, complete confusion prevailed among the Sikhs. Some brave warriors helped the Guru's mother, wives and younger children to cross the river. In that pandemonium Mata Gujri, two younger sons and one escort went on one side; whereas other ladies, Mata Jito and Sahib Deva, went on the other side. The daring act of those Sikhs who formed a wall against the swirling waters to make way for the Guru's family is a memorable event of history. In this attempt all the property and

53. Santokh Singh, op.cit., Verses 5834-5838; Kartar Singh (op.cit., p.178) does not agree with this figure. He puts this number as between two and three hundred. Fauja Singh (op.cit., p.14) put a number of 1,500.

54. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.51

55. *ibid.*, p.52; see also H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.205

56. Santokh Singh, op.cit., verses 5838-5841

57. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.205

58. *Ibid.*, p.205

59. *Ibid.*, p.206, Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.52 puts a figure of five hundred armed men. G. C. Narang (op.cit., p.154) says that the Guru was left with only 45 men.

60. H. K. Gupta, op.cit., p.205

61. *Ibid.*, p.206

62. *Ibid.*, p.206

63. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.179

64. *Ibid.*, p.180

65. Santokh Singh, op.cit., verses 5841-5847

manuscripts were washed away.⁶⁶ According to Sainapat,⁶⁷ Mata Jito and Mata Sahib Deva were taken towards Ambala in the disguise of rustic women. The Guru lost almost all his men, some perished in the current of the river Sirsa and others were killed in the battle, shielding their Guru and his family. When the Guru reached the other side of the river, he was left with Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, five beloved ones and only thirty five other Sikhs.⁶⁸ The situation looked completely hopeless. On his left were hill states whose rulers were fighting against him. On his front and back were the allied forces of the enemy. The only choice for the Guru was to move to his right. So he hurried in that direction. His goal was the vilage of Chamkaur, about 16 K.M. from that place.

Battle of Chamkaur — December 22, 1704 A.D.

Chamkaur is about 15 miles west of Ropar. Guru reached this place just before sunset on December 21, 1704 A.D.⁶⁹ He was escorted to a mud-house, which he quickly converted into a fortress with the help of the chief landlord of the village.⁷⁰ The Guru lost no time and worked out his own strategy. He knew that his contingent of forty-two would have to face a hundred thousand enemy troops. He posted his soldiers to guard each wall. Everyone was ready to fight and die rather than surrender. As expected, the imperial army came up during the night and surrounded the village.⁷⁰ Inayatullah Khan⁷² says the Mughal army which besieged Chamkaur was seven hundred cavalry equipped with artillery. H. R. Gupta⁷³ however, says that the number appeared to be much larger. Grewal⁷⁴ puts the number at one million forty. Guru Gobind Singh's own estimate is one million (ten lakhs).⁷⁵

The battle began on the morning of 22nd December 1704. It was a unique scene. Each of the Sikh soldiers fought heroically. The Guru refers to this battle thus in his first letter addressed to Aurangzeb:

“What could forty hungry and ill-equipped Sikhs do against the treacherous attack of ten lakhs of fully equipped soldiers of your

66. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.206

67. Sainapat, op.cit., p.65

68. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.206

69. S. S. Johar, 'The Battle of Chamkaur', *The Spokeman Weekly*, Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1976, p.29. If this timing is correct then it means that the Guru must have taken about 10 hours to cover a distance of about sixteen kilometres.

70. Ibid., p.29; Narain Singh, op.cit., p.274, however, gives a different version. He says "On reaching Chamkaur, the Guru went straight to the house of a Jat Singh. But that man refused to give shelter to the Guru for fear of the imperial forces, which he knew were in hot pursuit of the Guru.... Now since there was no time to be lost, there was no choice but to occupy the house immediately and prepare against what was coming..... In this critical situation, the Jat was held and his house occupied forcibly." H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.207, says "The Guru halted in a garden and sent two Sikhs inside the village to find a suitable place to shelter. They chose a mud-built storey house with a large open compound. One of its two owners offered his portion. The Guru and the Sikhs hurried into it."

71. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.183; H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.207, however says that the imperial army arrived on the morning of December 22; S. S. Johar, op.cit., p.29, mentions December 21, night.

72. Inayatullah Khan, *Ahakame-e-Alimigir*, p.11

73. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.207

74. J. S. Grewal, *Essays on Sikh History*, p.63

75. Guru Gobind Sings, *Zafarnama*, verse 19.

army? These forty dear ones had not taken a morsel of food for days and yet fought till death to the last man.

Your commanders, who had taken the oath, attacked us from the back without a moment's notice with arrows, bullets and swords. In this desperate situation I was left with no alternative except to jump into the battle and face the onslaught. In that critical situation, I too was compelled to shower volley after volley of arrows, bullets and spears. I too was compelled to take up the sword and fight.

When all other possible remedies fail, it is but lawful to resort to the sword.

How can I ever believe in your oaths on the *Qoran* now? Tell me, what else could I do in the face of such a situation? You left me no other alternative except to take up the sword.

I never knew that a man of your stature would reveal himself as a deceitful fox. On no other condition but that of your oaths would I have ever left my fort.

You were duty-bound neither to attack nor imprison that person who had accepted your terms of peace and conciliation trusting your oaths.

Like a swarm of flies the clamourous hordes of your armies attacked us from all sides.

Whoever came near the wall received but one arrow from my bow and fell dead, weltering in a pool of blood.

Those who did not attack us received no injury from our hands. When I saw Nahar Khan coming forward to fight, I gave him a taste of my arrow and he fell dead.

The Pathans who boasted of their prowess ran for their lives and all the supporters of Nahar Khan retreated in terror.

Then another Afghan commander advanced like a sweeping tide. With the swiftness of an arrow and the suddenness of a bullet he attacked. He made assault after assault, some wisely and some with desperate madness.

He conducted many stormy attacks, got wounded and after killing two Sikhs was himself killed.

But the unscrupulous rascal Khwaja Mardud remained hidden behind the wall like a coward.

What a pity that I did not chance to see his face! With but one arrow I would have given him a taste of death.

In a very short time the exchange of bullets and arrows killed a number of people.

The bullets rained in a heavy shower and the whole battlefield was deluged and made red with the blood of horses.

The whole battlefield was covered with piles of heads and feet which were lying in heaps like balls and hockey-sticks.

You could hear nothing but the twanging of the bow and the whizzing of the arrows, the pitiable cries of the wounded and the

death-pangs of the dying. The whole atmosphere was filled with the cries of 'hai' and 'hoo'.

In the terrorizing twang of the shooting arrows even the bravest seemed for a moment unnerved. Even the boldest lost his presence of mind.

What could moral courage do when only forty half-starved Sikhs were fighting against countless hordes?"⁷⁶

Before dusk, in seven hours of battle, two elder Princes, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh,⁷⁷ three beloved ones⁷⁸ Himat Singh, Mokham Singh and Sahib Singh, and thirty-two other Sikhs laid down their lives at the altar of faith and freedom.⁷⁹ In four hundred and twenty minutes' fight, thirty seven soldiers of the Guru had kept ten lakh soldiers of the enemy at the bay: what an incredible achievement in the history of wars!

By the close of the day, the Guru had been left with only five soldiers, Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, Man Singh, Sangat Singh and Sant Singh.⁸⁰ The five gathered in a group, decided on a *gurmata* (resolution) between themselves and standing in front of the Guru, recreated "the scene of Anandpur in which the Guru, five years earlier, had played a double role of being the Guru and the disciple at the same time."⁸¹ They said to the Guru that at that moment of time they were the Guru and the Guru was the Khalsa and it was their "Gurmata" that he should leave the fortress and save his life in order to raise tens of thousands of more Khalsa to destroy the oppressor and save the faith;⁸² that Daya, Singh, Dharam, Singh and Man Singh would go with the Guru while Sangat Singh and Sant Singh would stay behind and engage the enemy with their shooting, and that Sant Singh, who bore a great resemblance to the Guru, would pose as the Guru and would sit in his place to befool the enemy. The Guru had no choice but to accept this *Gurmata* and create one of the greatest examples of an applied democratic principle in the history of the world. The Guru, however, made one request to the council of 'Five Sikhs' that he should be allowed to escape like a lion and not like an ordinary ambushed soldier. This request was accepted by the council. The Guru and his companions dressed themselves as Mughal soldiers and left the fortress at about 2 a.m.⁸³ The Guru, as he had said, discharged two arrows as a

76. Guru Gobind Singh, *Zafarnama*, verse 19-41

77. G. C. Narang, *op.cit.*, pp. 154-155, writes that Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh and Mata Sundri were slain before the Guru reached the fortress of Chamkaur, and the Guru with only five Sikhs could gain entrance into the fortress. This is obviously wrong and misleading.

78. Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-e-Twarikh-e-Sikhan*, p.8

79. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, 208

80. *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209

81. *Ibid.* p.209

82. *Ibid.*, p.209; See also Narain Singh, *op.cit.*, p.276, Gopal Singh, *op. cit.*, p.54 Kartar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.187; G. C. Narang, *op.cit.*, p.155, however, writes ".....when the Mughgals were yet busy in disposing of their dead, the Guru caused a hole to be made in one of the walls and in the darkness of the night he and his five followers escaped one by one running in different directions.

83. H. R. Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.209

warning to the enemy that the lion was going⁸⁴ and shouted at the top of his voice⁸⁵ that the Guru was leaving. Two torch-bearers rushed in that direction. A great confusion ensued. A rumour immediately spread that a fresh Khalsa army had come. In complete darkness many enemy soldiers fell by mutual slaughter. The Guru and his companions thus had a very easy and safe escape.

In the morning, however, the Mughal army, with all their might attacked the fortress and killed Sangat Singh and Sant Singh. The Mughal Generals and the Commanding Officers, were, however, greatly distressed and disappointed to find that out of the killed the Guru was not one.

Battle of Muktsar – January 1705

From Chamkaur to Muktsar was a long and eventful journey. When the Guru reached Muktsar a sizeable number of Sikhs had come and joined him.⁸⁶ This once again caused panic to Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sirhind, whose repeated attacks on the Guru had borne no fruit. In sheer desperation and fury, he murdered two younger sons of the Guru, Wazir Khan mustered yet another army of 7000⁸⁷ strong soldiers and advanced towards Muktsar.

The forty deserters from Anandpur repented their disloyalty and desertion. They resolved to return to the Guru and lay down their lives like other martyrs. In a nearby village called Jhabal there lived a young woman named Mai Bhago. She was determined to heal the scar of infamy inflicted by these deserters. So, under the command of Mai Bhago they all also proceeded towards Muktsar.⁸⁸ They saw the Mughal army advancing towards the place where the Guru had camped. To attract the Mughal forces towards them, they spread large white cotton sheets on the trees and shrubs all around. The enemy seeing a Sikh camp, moved towards them and after a fierce battle killed all of them. The din and spiral of dust also attracted the attention of the Guru who immediately mounted his steed and advanced towards the enemy.⁹⁰ Under the crushing assault personally conducted by the Guru, the army panicked in another long and bloody battle⁹¹ forced on the Guru, and was completely routed. The Khalsa came out victorious. After the battle, the Guru went to see the dead and the wounded. There he saw the badly-wounded Mai Bhago who told the Guru how the forty deserters had fought valiantly and died for the Guru. One Mahan Singh had a few breaths left. The Guru placed his head in his lap and told him to ask a boon.

84. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.54

85. Kartar Singh, p.189

86. G. C. Narang, op.cit., p.158 puts the number at 10,000; see also Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.60, he numbers them only 40.

87. G. C. Narang, op.cit., p.158

88. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.211

89. Gopal Singh, op.cit., p.60

90. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.219

91. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.213

Mahan Singh requested the Guru to destroy the letter of desertion and pardon all the forty deserters.

The Guru immediately produced the note from his coat and tore it in front of the dying Mahan Singh and granted pardon to all and declared them as *Muktas* (the liberated ones). Thereupon Mahan Singh breathed his last in peace.⁹²

Of the eleven battles fought by the Khalsa, the Khalsa came out victorious in nine battle, while the others were indecisive. In all these victories the Khalsa kept alive their ideals. There was no plunder, no rape no destruction and no unnecessary killing by the Khalsa. No enemy territory was annexed and no innocent blood was spilled.

KHALSA UNDER THE COMMAND OF BANDA BAHADUR (1708–1716)

Guru Gobind Singh passed away on October 7, 1708. Before his death, he gave the command of the Khalsa to Banda Bahadur alias Baba Banda Singh⁹³ and sent him to the Punjab to finish the task started by the Guru. Banda Singh marched in the direction of Sirhind. On 26th November 1709 he captured Samana, the native place of Jalal-ud-Din who was deputed to execute Guru Tegh Bahadur.⁹⁴ Passing through Ghuram, Thaska, Shahbad and Mustafabad, which surrendered to the army of Khalsa without much resistance, the Khalsa captured the town of Kapuri, a stronghold of Qadam-ud-Din, a tyrant and fanatic *Faujdar*. After this, they conquered Sadhura, another centre of oppression.⁹⁵

A fierce battle was fought on 12th May, 1710⁹⁶ on the outskirts of Sirhind, between Banda Singh who had no artillery, no elephants and not even a sufficient number of horses for all his men, and Wazir Khan, the Governor, and his allies from Hissar, Lahore, Eminabad, who had a number of field guns, zamburaks, a long line of elephants and over twenty thousand⁹⁷ well-trained soldiers. Despite all the odds, the Khalsa Army emerged victorious and entered the town of Sirhind on May 24, 1710.⁹⁸ By October 1710,⁹⁹ the Khalsa army had punished the tyrant *Faujdar*s of Saharanpur Behat, Ambheta and Nanauta. Nanauta was completely destroyed and since then the town has been called the 'Phuta Shahr' (Ruined Town).¹⁰⁰ The march eastwards was halted by the monsoons and the Khalsa army returned to Punjab and liberated the whole of Jullundur Doab without much resistance.¹⁰¹

92. Bhai Vir Singh, *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, p.694; see also Kartar Singh, *op.cit.*, pp214-215, Gopal Singh, *op.cit.*, p.61

93. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.80

94. *Ibid.*, p.81

95. *Ibid.*, p.81

96. *Ibid.*, p.81

97. *Ibid.*, p.83

98. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, I, p.106

99. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.91

100. Williams, *The Sikhs in the Upper Doab*, *Calcutta Review*, volume LX, p.23

101. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.108

“The victories of the Khalsa served as a signal for a general uprising throughout the country and it revived in the Indian masses a new spirit of independence.”¹⁰²

By November 1710, the region of Majha and Riarki also became Khalsa territory and the Khalsa was now master of the Punjab, east of Lahore.

According to Malcolm,¹⁰³ if Bahadur Shah, the emperor, had not quitted the Dek'nin (Deccan), which he did in 1710, there is a reason to think the whole of Hinustan (India) would have been subdued by these.....invaders? Khushwant Singh says,¹⁰⁴ ‘In those fateful days, had Banda shown more enterprise he could have captured Delhi and Lahore and so changed the entire course of Indian history. But the otherwise daring Banda showed a lack of decision which proved fatal to his dreams.’

Bahadur Shah on his return to the North in the later half of 1710,¹⁰⁵ called upon the Subedars of Delhi and Oudh, the Faujdars and Nazims of Moradabad and Allahabad, and the Sayyeds of Barha to march towards the Punjab.¹⁰⁶ The combined imperial forces besieged Banda Singh and the Khalsa army stationed in the fort of Lohgarh near Sirhind on 4th December 1710. According to Narang,¹⁰⁷ ‘The Emperor did not even enter his capital to take breath after his Southern successes, but marched straight towards Sihind to punish the Sikhs.’ According to Iradat Khan¹⁰⁸ who was an eyewitness of the whole scene, ‘the Emperor’s orders to his *Omerahs* (Commanders) were to the effect that they were not to attack the Sikhs in their strong posts, under any pretence, but were to use every means in their power to induce them to sally forth from the forts. After the contending parties had remained inactive for some days, Khan-i-Khanan sallied forth with a number of his troops to reconnoitre his adversary’s position. When he had arrived within canon-shot of their position, the enemy opened fire on the royal troops, while their musketeers and archers who occupied some of the surrounding elevation volleyed their arrows of death in quick succession.’

The imperial troops could no longer be held in check; they carried all before them, driving the enemy from the heights surrounding the fortress.....The Sikh chieftain effected his escape during the night by a narrow path leading from the fort to the hills.....’

On the morning of December 11, 1710 the Mughal army captured the fort and Bahadur Shah took his vengeance on a handful of prisoners and the *Raja* of Nahan into whose territory Banda had escaped with his Khalsa army.

102. Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, p.100

103. J. Malcolm, *Sketch of Sikhs*, p.79

104. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, I, p.109

105. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.9

106. *Ibid.*, p.92

107. G. C. Narang, *op.cit.*, p.173

108. Iradat Khan, *Twarikh-i-Iradat Khan*, pp.61-62

Banda took about six-months to consolidate his position and in June, 1711 he appeared at Behrampur near Jammu. Bayazid Khan, Governor of Jammu, with his newpnew Shams Khan, advanced to meet him, but they were defeated and killed in action.¹⁰⁹ The towns of Raipur, Behrampur, Kalanam and Batala were overrun by the Khalsa. Earlier in 1711, the Khalsa army had defeated Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur and Raja Sidh Ram of Mandi. Raja Udey Singh of Chamba had submitted to Banda without any resistance. All these battles were fought with guerrilla tactics. The northern hills were still under the Khalsa army's possession.

Bahadur Shah, in the meantime, had issued orders to kill the Khalsa wherever found.¹¹⁰ Sikh prisoners were being sold in the horse market at Lahore.¹¹¹ To distinguish the Sikhs from the Hindus, a royal proclamation was issued ordering all Hindus to shave off their beards.¹¹² The Emperor, however, died on Monday, the 18th February, 1712.

Jahandar Shah, son of Bahadur Shah, succeeded him but reigned only for few months. He was ousted by his newpnew, Farrukh Siyar, towards the end of 1712:

For the next two years, Banda did not appear on the scene of the Punjab. He lived in a small village, Dera Baba Banda, a few miles above Jammu. But these years were very unfavourable to the Sikhs. Thousands were captured and put to death.¹¹⁴

In February, 1715 Banda reappeared on the plains of the Punjab, unfortunately for the last time. The Khalsa army once again overran Kalanaur and Batala. A combined imperial army of Mughals, Pathans, Bundela Rajputs, and Rajputs of Katoch and Jasrota beseiged Banda near Gurdaspur. According to Mohd. Quasim,¹¹⁵ who was an eye-witness of this siege: 'The fearless and heroic deeds of the abominal Sikhs were great. Twice or thrice a day, some forty or fifty of these black-faced infidels would come out of their den, go and gather grass for their cattle and when the allied forces of the imperial army attacked them, they made an end of the Mughals with arrows, muskets and small swords and disappeared. Such was the terror of these people and the fear of the sorceries of their leader that the commanders of the imperial army prayed that God might so ordain things that Banda should seek his safety in escape from the fortress.'

The siege lasted for about eight months. Provisions ran out, the desperate soldiers ate whatever they could find including their horses and mules. Many of Banda's companions deserted him. According to Irvine,¹¹⁶ 'Sikhs slaughtered oxen and other animals,

109. G. C. Narang, op.cit., p.179

100. Khushal Chand, *Tarikh-i-Mohammed Shahi*, p.2240

111. W. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, p.119

112. Amin-ud-Saula, *Ruqaat-i-Amin-ud-Daula*, letters

114. G. C. Narang, op.cit., p.179

115. Mohammed Qasim, *Ibratnama*, p.42

116. W. Irvine, op.cit., p.315

and not having any firewood etc. ate the flesh raw. Many died of dysentery and privation. When all the grass was gone, they gathered leaves from trees. When these were consumed they stripped the bark and broke off the small shoots, dried them, ground them down and used them instead of flour, thus keeping body and soul together. They also collected the bones of animals and used them in the same way, Some assert that they saw a few of the Sikhs cut flesh from their own thighs, roast and eat it.'

The fortress was captured by the imperial troops on December 7, 1715, and Banda and his half-dead soldiers were taken prisoners. According to Teja Singh and Ganda Singh,¹¹⁷ 'The whole concourse moved slowly towards Delhi, where it arrived on February 29, 1716. Banda Singh and other Sikh prisoners were conducted in a procession through the main street of the imperial capital. At the head of the procession were carried two thousand Sikh heads, raised on bamboo-poles, their long hair streaming in the wind. Along with them, the body of a cat was hung at the end of a pole, to show that every living creature even down to the quadrupeds like cats, found in the enclosure of Gurdas Nangal, had been destroyed.' In the words of Mirza Mohammed Harisi¹¹⁸ who was an eye-witness of this procession, 'Such a crowd in the bazaars and lanes had rarely been seen. The Muslims could hardly contain themselves for joy. But the unfortunate Sikhs, who had been reduced to this condition, were quite resigned to their lot. Not the slightest sign of dejection or humiliation was visible on their faces. In fact most of them, as they passed along on their camels, seemed to be happy and cheerful, merrily singing their sacred hymns..... And if anyone said, 'Now you will be killed', they shouted, 'Do kill us. When were we afraid of death. Had we been afraid, how could we have fought so many battles with you? It was only through want and hunger that we fell into your hands; otherwise you know already what deeds of bravery we are capable of.'

The executions started on 5th March 1716. Every day one hundred Sikhs were executed. Life was promised to everyone who would renounce his faith and embrace Islam. According to Surman and Stephenson¹¹⁹ who were eye-witnesses to this horrible massacre, 'to the last, it has not been found that one apostatised from this new-formed religion.'

Banda was executed on June 9, 1716. According to Ghulam Hussain Khan,¹²⁰ Mohammed Amind Khan who was standing by him, was so impressed by the noble bearing of Banda Singh that he was impelled to say, 'It is surprising that a man possessed of so much acuteness and nobility should have involved the world in so much

117. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., pp.99-100

118. Mirza Mohammed Harisi, *Ibratnama*, p.53

119. John Surman and Edward Stephenson. Letter dated March 10, 1716 published in J. T. Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, p.180

120. Ghulam Hussain Khan, *Siyarul Mutaakhirin*, p.403

misery and brought calamity upon himself! Banda Singh replied with great composure – ‘whenever the corruption in the world increases so as to outstep all bounds, then the Divine Power raises up a scourge like me to chastise the race – but afterwards He grants power to men like you to destroy him in return.’

Banda Singh, who fought against the tyrants on behalf of the oppressed Indian masses,¹²¹ who heard the cries of the poor and the destitute,¹²² who was a patriot, a good Sikh, a great national hero,¹²³ and ardent desirer of the liberation of India,¹²⁴ who shook one of the most powerful empires in the world to its very foundation,¹²⁵ who was a man of valour,¹²⁶ cool in the face of death,¹²⁷ who changed the psychology of the people and made them nationalists,¹²⁹ who gave a new prestige and power to the Khalsa,¹³⁰ who was a man of exemplary piety, lofty character,¹³¹ and undaunted spirit,¹³² and who was an energetic and daring leader¹³³ has earned a great deal of hatred from the Persian writers¹³⁴ and also from those who based their history on those Persian sources.¹³⁵ However, according to Thornton,¹³⁷ the contemporary Persian writers could not be free from bias and could not be implicitly trusted. According to the Sikh tradition, Kesar Singh has given an authentic account of Banda in his *Bansavalinama*. He states,¹³⁸ ‘In Banda’s life-time there was hardly any visible contradiction in his policy or action that could be labelled heterodox. It is clear from his *Hukam-namas* that he never used for himself the title of the Guru. He called himself ‘Banda’ (slave of the Guru) and asked the Sikhs to follow the injunctions of the *Guru Granth*, for the best worship of a ruler is to be just... If you call yourself Sikhs of the Great Man (Guru Gobind Singh), do not do anything that is sinful, irreligious or unjust, advance the cause of true Sikhism and smite those who behave in an un-Sikh manner.’

GENOCIDE OF THE KHALSA BY THE MUGHALS, NADIR SHAH AND AHMED SHAH DURRANI (1716-1769)

One of the most important factors in the down-fall of the Mughal Empire was the rise of Sikhs¹³⁹ and the Marathas. Banda Singh raised the banner of revolt in the Punjab, while Shivaji rose in Maharashtra.

121. Karm Singh, *Banda Bahadur*, p.196

122. Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, p.251

123. B. Sarwati, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, p.16

124. *Ibid.*, p.16

125. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.117

126. J. Archer, *The Sikhs*, p.219

127. *Ibid.*, p.219

128. *Ibid.*, p.219

129. P. S. Gill, *History of the Sikh Nation* p.286

130. G. C. Narang, *op. cit.*, p.185

131. G. C. Narang, *op.cit.*, p.185

132. Mohammed Latif, *The History of the Punjab*, p.281

133. J. D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p.79

134. Mohammed Qasim, Mirza Mohammed Harisi, Iradat Khan

135. Mohammed Latif, *op.cit.*, p.281

137. Thornton, *History of the Punjab*, I, p.176

138. Keshar Singh Chibbar, *Bansavalinama*, p.136

139. Edward and Garrett, *Mughal Rule in India*, p.155

After the most cruel and inhuman murder of Banda, the Mughal governmental machinery launched a vigorous campaign in the Punjab to exterminate the entire Khalsa brotherhood. According to Malcolm,¹⁴⁰ a proclamation was issued by Emperor Farrukh Siyar, stating that every Sikh who refused to embrace Islam should be put to death. A reward and royal honour was also offered for the head of every Sikh. According to Teja Singh and Ganda Singh,^{140A} 'Such was the keen spirit animating the persecutors, such was the success of their exertion that for a time it appeared as if the boast of Farrukh Siyar to wipe out the name of Sikhs from the land was going to be fulfilled. Hundres of them were brought from their villages and executed.' That gruesome genocide lasted from 1716 to 1721.

When the Muslim hatred of the Khalsa slackened a little, the remaining Khalsa returned to the plains of the Punjab from the hills where they had taken shelter to escape the Mughal persecution.

That, was the first time the Khalsa found themselves without a leader, but they still remembered the edict of Guru Gobind Singh. The temporal authority of Guruship bestowed upon the Khalsa Panth by the Guru was still fresh in their memory. The Khalsa assembled at Harimandar Sahib, Amritsar and laid the foundation of *Sarbat Khalsa*, a representative body of the entire Sikh nation. For all important decisions the organisations would sit in the presence of *Guru Granth Sahib* and take decisions known as *Gurmata*s. Those in the *Sarbat Khalsa* who were physically fit and were proficient in the use of arms etc. were grouped in *Jathas* (Sections) and the combined force of these *Jathas* was named *Dal Khalsa*. The transformation of ideas and formation of *Sarbat Khalsa* and *Dal Khalsa* took place in 1720-1721.

In 1721 Bhai Mani Singh also reached Amritsar to take charge of the affairs of Harimander Sahib. In 1726 Zakaria Khan was appointed the Governor of Punjab. He was a fanatic Muslim and was totally against the Sikhs. He issued a number of proclamations authorising the killing of Sikhs at sight. Once again prices were fixed for the heads of Sikhs. That wave of brutal genocide lasted upto 1739. In those thirteen years of bloodshed, thousands of innocent people including women and children lost their lives at the altar of faith. Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Bota Singh, Sardar Mehtab Singh and Sardar Sukha Singh were amongst them.

In 1739 Nadir Shah attacked India. All the way from Persia, he came down to Delhi. Zakriya Khan was compelled to kneel down before him. The city was plundered. The rape, murder and looting continued without let or hindrance. Thousands of inhabitants of Delhi were killed. Nadir Shah stayed in India for only a couple of months.

After the return of Nadir Shah to Persia, in the summer of 1739, the anger of Zakriya Khan fell upon innocent Sikhs. Once again the

140. See also Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.120

140A. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.148

rage of merciless killing lasted until Zakriya Khan's death in July 1745. According to Khushwant Singh, 'Zakriya Khan made head-hunting a profitable business by offering a graded scale of rewards: a blanket for cutting off a Sikh's hair, two rupees for information of the whereabouts of a Sikh, fifty rupees for a Sikh scalp; plunder of Sikhs was made lawful; giving shelter to Sikhs or withholding information of their movements was made a capital offence.'¹⁴¹

Zakriya Khan was succeeded by his son, Yahya Khan, in 1745. In 1746, Jaspat Rai, brother of Lakhpat Rai, *Diwan* (Revenue Minister) of Yahya Khan, was killed in a skirmish with a Sikh *Jatha* (section or platoon) near Eminabad, as a result of which Yahya Khan and Lakhpat Rai gathered a large army and ambushed the Khalsa in the marshes of Kahnuwan. About 17,000 were killed and 3,000 were taken prisoner and later beheaded in Lahore. This great tragedy which took place in June 1746 is known as the first holocaust, popularly known as *chota ghalughara* (small holocaust)

Ahmed Shah Abdali, who was a general of Nadir Shah's army, became the new ruler of Afghanistan after Nadir Shah's murder in June 1747.

From June 1747 to 1769, Ahmed Shah Abdali made ten invasions on India. During this long period of turmoil, unrest and chaos, the year of 1753 is especially memorable when Mir Mannu, the Governor of Punjab, fell upon the Khalsa and killed many thousand innocent Sikhs.¹⁴² The persecutions by Mir Mannu, however produced no damaging effects on the growing numbers of the Sikhs. In the words of Aliud Din¹⁴³, the war-song of the Sikhs during Mir Mannu's reign was:

"Mannu is our sickle,
And we are a crop for him to mow,
The more he cuts us the more we grow."

Mir Mannu died on November 4, 1753. The other memorable years of this period are 1757 and 1762. In 1757, Ahmed Shah Abdali blew up Harimandar and filled the holy tank with the entrails of slaughtered cows. In 1762, Ahmed Shah Abdali made his sixth invasion on India. This time his only objective was to destroy the power of the Sikhs. Unlimited numbers of the Khalsa were killed and the Harimandar was blown up for the second time. On 5th February 1762, 30,000 Sikh men, women and children were attacked by Abdali's forces in the village of *Kup* near Malerkotla and all of them mercilessly put to the sword. This is known as *Wada Ghalughara* or the *great holocaust*.¹⁴⁴ The volume of the Guru Granth Sahib which was attested by Guru Gobind Singh at Damdama Sahib and later taken to Nanded by Guru Gobind Singh was

141. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.127

142. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.143

143. Aliud Din Mufti, *Ibratnama*, p.240

144. Aliud Din Mufti, *Ibratnama*, p.240

also lost during the period of persecution.¹⁴⁵ In 1765 the Khalsa conquered Lahore.¹⁴⁶ In 1768 and 1769 Ahmed Shah made two more attempts to re-establish his reign but failed. His soldiers had become too fearful of the brave nation of the Sikhs.¹⁴⁷ Thus by the end of 1769, the Khalsa Commonwealth extended from *Jamuna* to the Indus.¹⁴⁸ 'The seed sown by Nanak (Guru Nanak) had now, thanks to the talents of his successors, the great military genius of Govind (Guru Gobind Singh) and the unconquerable spirit of Banda (Banda Bahadur), blossomed into a rich crop. The nation started with the rosary ended by snatching the sceptre from the oppressing hand of its tyrannical masters. The political organisation of the Sikhs was now complete, and the sovereignty of the land of Five Waters (Punjab) had now permanently passed to the children of the Khalsa to be kept in custody for a greater power which after a century was to mould its destinies for the future.'¹⁴⁹

KHALSA – THE MISLS (1769–1798) AND RANJIT SINGH (1799–1839)

The Khalsa became an important power in the Punjab by the end of 1769. During the next thirty years, the Khalsa ruled Punjab on the basis of a federation, administrating the whole territory as thirteen federal units known as *Misls*. The Misls, which emerged as the most convenient unit of control, had been organised during the period of confusion and anarchy that prevailed from 1752 to 1761.¹⁵⁰ 'And it must be remembered that these Misls were not deliberately devised or knowingly adopted at one particular time, but were on the other hand, gradually evolved to most certain exigencies of the time.'¹⁵¹

The striking peculiarities of the Misls period were: the revival of the organisation of *Sarbat Khalsa* and the reanimation of the decision-making technique of *Gurmata*. The main role of the Misls was to liberate the Punjab from foreign rulers, to consolidate the power of the Sikhs, to strengthen *Rakhi System* – a scheme to protect *rajas*, *zamindars* (landlords) and other people from foreign adventurers and local bandits in lieu of some cash payment or supply of some portion of the land crop to the Misls – and to restore some kind of stability to the region disturbed by quarrel and confusion during that period.

This period of Sikh history was the period of the resurrection of the Sikh nation. Men like Nawab Kapur Singh, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, and the Bhangi Sardars built up a new Khalsa Commonwealth in which the people of every denomination were treated alike.

145. Gyani Gyan Singh, *Panth Prakash*, p.740

146. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.183 *

147. P. S. Gill, *op.cit.*, p.311

148. G. C. Narang, *op.cit.*, p.240

149. *Ibid.*, p.240

150. G. S. Chhabra, *Advanced study in the History of Punjab*, II, p.18

151. Charles Gough, *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars*, p.28

Ranjit Singh converted the federal character of the Punjab into a unitary set-up. He brought under his control all the Misl. In 1797 when he was only 17, he took control of his Misl – Sukerchakiya.¹⁵² By 1809 almost the whole of the Punjab belonged to him.¹⁵³ According to Sinha, 'Ranjit Singh was to guru Gobind Singh what Lenin was to Karl Marx, and Omar to Mohammed Sahib, (Prophet Mohammed).'

Guru Gobind Singh called on the physical, mental and moral energies of the Sikhs from all areas and made it flow in a particular direction. By those means the Sikh Nation was poured into the mould of a special purpose and required solidity; he converted the spiritual unity of the Sikhs into a means of worldly advancement..... 'Ranjit Singh, who could secure the support of all sections of his people – Sikhs, Hindus, Mohammedans –, who could defend the North-western frontier against a powerful Afghanistan and unruly border tribes and administer it successfully, who could train an army whose fighting qualities came as a revelation to their famous opponents, who could to a certain extent furnish Indian nationalism with what it greatly needed – a tradition of strength to stand in the fore-front of great men of Indian history.'¹⁵⁴

Ranjit Singh as a man, as a soldier and as a king is reviewed differently by different historians. According to Griffin,¹⁵⁵ Ranjit Singh's kingdom was founded on violence, treachery and bloodshed.

According to Latif,¹⁵⁶ Ranjit Singh's policy was self-aggrandizement at any price. Might was right with him. With him the weak were sure to go to the wall, and their ruin was the foundation upon which he built his greatness.' Cunningham¹⁵⁷ states that 'Ranjit Singh's rule was founded on the feelings of the people.' Commenting on the personality of Ranjit Singh, Baron Hugel¹⁵⁸ who visited Lahore in 1834 says '.....as he mounts his horse and with his black shield at his back puts him on his mettle, his whole form seems animated by the spirit within, and assumes a certain grace of which nobody could believe it susceptible.' Princep,¹⁵⁹ who had also seen Ranjit Singh from very close quarters says '.....Ranjit Singh's penetrating look, the restlessness of his fiery eye, which seemed to dive into the thoughts of the person he conversed with and the rapidity of his laconic but searching questions, denoted the activity of his mind and his insatiable curiosity.' According to Osborne,¹⁶⁰ 'Cross-legged in a golden chair, dressed in a simple white, wearing

152. G. S. Chhabra, op.cit., p.17

153. Ibid., p.17

154. N. K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p.282

155. Lepen Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, pp.88-110

156. Mohammed Latif, op.cit., p.365

157. J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.200

158. Baron Hugel, *Travels in Kashmir and Punjab*, p.380

159. H. T. Princep, *History of the Punjab*, II, pp. 171-172

160. W. G. Osborne, *Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh*, pp. 71-72

no ornaments but a string of enormous pearls round the waist and the celebrated *Kohinoor* or mountain of light, on his arm – the jewel rivalled if not surpassed in brilliancy by the glance of fire which every now and then shot from his single eye as it wandered around the circle – sat the lion of Lahore.’

We see that this lion of Punjab really established a near-ideal state in the land of five rivers. An ardent believer in the tenets of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, he revered all religions. In his eyes, according to the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, *Ram* and *Rahim*, and *Puran* and *Qoran* were the same. He tried to establish the kingdom which Guru Gobind Singh had designed in his own times.

Ranjit Singh died on 27th June, 1839 at the age of 59. During the next four and a half years, a bloody *holi* (carnage) was played in a tense war of succession. On October 8, 1839 Chet Singh, a *de facto* Prime Minister (Raja Dhian Singh was Prime Minister *de jure*), was murdered; on November 5, 1840, Maharaja Kharak Singh, son and successor of Ranjit Singh’s throne, was poisoned; on the same day Kharak Singh’s son, Nau Nihal Singh, was killed, though his death was officially announced on November 8, 1840. On June 9, 1842 Chand Kaur, widow of Kharak Singh, was murdered. Maharaja Sher Singh, son of Ranjit Singh and next successor to the throne, was murdered along with young Prince Pratap Singh on September 15, 1843 and Raja Dhian Singh, the Prime Minister, was also murdered on September 15, 1843.

Thus during four years and three months after Ranjit Singh’s death, most of his descendents in the line of succession were wiped off by murder and treachery.

The next four years (1845-1849) were a period of Anglo-Sikh wars. The Punjab was formally declared a part of British Empire on March 29, 1849. This was certainly a very tragic end to the brave Khalsa Nation which had won a hard-earned independence for northern India after a dark period of slavery of 800 years.

The Khalsa who was destined to bring freedom and independence to India was betrayed by its own brethren. The fall was brought about by the treachery of the Dogras and Brahmins.¹⁶¹ The faith for which Guru Tegh Bahadur laid his life; the *Janeous* (Hindu sacred thread) and *Tilkas* (Hindus mark on the forehead), for the protection of which Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his father, the elders of that same faith – *Brahmins* – with the collaboration of Kashmiri Dogras caused the downfall of the Sikh ideal state so dearly nourished by the Indian people.

But, perhaps, this was not the end of the story but only its beginning. The period which followed this turmoil opened many more chapters of Khalsa sacrifices, Khalsa nationhood and Khalsa patriotism.

161. P. S. Gill, op.cit., p.361

THE INDIAN MUTINY AND THE KHALSA:

The year 1857 was the first eventful year after the annexation of the Punjab. It was the year of the rebellion which started at Meerut on May 10. It later assumed large proportions and developed into a revolt in some parts of the Uttar Pradesh.¹⁶² The Khalsa took no part in the mutiny. According to Ganda Singh,¹⁶³ 'The *Poorbia Sepoys* (who were the main muscle of the mutiny) had not the moral courage to approach the Sikhs for cooperation and assistance against the British, as they had themselves helped them destroy the independent kingdom of the Punjab in 1845-46 and reduce it to British subjection in 1848-1849.'

KHALSA AND THE BRITISH ARMY:

According to Baird,¹⁶⁴ Sikh soldiers proved their fighting quality and loyalty in the Anglo-Burmese War of 1852 and two years later against the Mohamand tribe on the northwest frontier. Lord Roberts (Commander-in-chief: 1885-1893) classified Indian races between 'martial' and 'non-martial'. The Sikhs were recognised as martial,¹⁶⁵ and of the martial races the favourites of the English Officers were the Sikhs and Gurkhas.¹⁶⁶

NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND THE KHALSA:

The Nirankari, Radha-Swami, Namdhari, Arya Samaj, Christian and Brahma-Samaj movements in Punjab made their impact on the young Khalsa brotherhood in the second half of the nineteenth century. According to Sir Richard Temple and Denzil Ibbetson,¹⁶⁷ Sikhism was on the decline during that period.

To nullify the effects of these new religious movements, *Singh Sabhas* were formed in Amritsar (1870) and Lahore (1872) and their important objectives were educational and religious reform. The Singh Sabha movement was formally launched in 1873 at Amritsar. With the joint efforts of the Sikhs of various shades of opinion, the foundation of Khalsa College Amritsar was laid on March 5, 1892. Another important Sikh organisation was the *Chief Khalsa Diwan* started in 1904, the main objectives of which were to safeguard Sikh rights and to fight for adequate representation of Sikhs in government services, particularly in the army.

"These movements not only checked the relapse of the Sikhs into Hinduism but also reacted by carrying proselytising activities into the Hindu camp. Large numbers of Hindus of northern and western Punjab and Sind became *Sahajdhari* Sikhs'¹⁶⁸ ie, gradual converts, non-baptised Sikhs, who believed in *Rehat Maryada* but did not keep long uncut hair.

162. Ganda Singh 'The Indian Mutiny and the Sikhs,' *The Missionary*, January-March 1963 p.34

163. *Ibid.*, p.35

164. J. G. A. Baird (ed) *Private letter of the Marquess of Dalhousie*, pp. 200-201, 321

165. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, II, p.115

166. *Ibid.*, p.115

167. *Census Report*, 1881

168. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.146

PERIOD OF FIRST WORLD WAR AND AFTER AND THE KHALSA: (1914-1935)

Between 1857 and 1915, the Khalsa recruitment to the military services rose by about 200% forming about 20% of the total army.¹⁶⁹ The Khalsa forces fought very bravely and did credit to their race.¹⁷⁰

Unfortunately, the Khalsa, as a community, got no reward from the British for their distinction on the battle-field. On the contrary, the treatment of *Ghadr* party (1911-1917),¹⁷¹ the massacre of *Jallianwala Bagh* (13 April 1919),¹⁷² the hurdles in the passing of the Sikh Gurdawaras and Shrine Act (1922), the atrocities inflicted by the British rulers in *Guru Ka Bagh* (August 1921–Sept. 1921)¹⁷³ and the brutal killings of Jaito (September 23–October 1924)¹⁷⁴ proved otherwise. The Khalsa received ill-treatment at the hands of the British rulers in spite of their numerous sacrifices for the cause of the country.

The constitutional reforms, some of which were introduced before the First World War and thereafter also, did not do justice to the Sikh nation. The important reforms included the Minto-Morley reforms (1909) whereby the Sikhs were denied the privileges granted to Muslims regarding separate electorates and representation in the legislative bodies; the Montague-Chelmsford reforms and the Government of India Act (1919), whereby Hindu-Muslim pacts jointly defeated the just claim and amendments proposed by the Sikhs and where by the Sikh representation in Punjab legislative Council was fixed at 15 out of 93 members, 3 out of 145 members in the Central Assembly and 1 out of 60 members in 'Council of States,' when the demand of the Sikhs was much higher. In the Simon Commission report (May 1930)¹⁷⁵ some sympathy was shown to the Sikh case; the Round Table Conferences, London (November 1930), despite the efforts of all parties, did practically nothing for the minorities. The Communal Award (April 1932) granted the Sikhs a representation of 33 out of 175 in the Punjab Assembly, 3 out of 50 in the North West Frontier Province, 6 out of 250 in the Federal Legislative Assembly and 4 out of 150 in the Council of States; their demand of representation in the Assemblies of United Provinces and Sind was rejected. The Government of India Act (1935) was denounced by the Sikhs for lack of autonomy to the provinces.

169. M. S. Leitch, *The Punjab and the War*, p.44

170. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.169

171. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.211

172. K. S. Gulati, *The Akalis; Past and Present*, p.19-20

173. *Ibid.*, p.28

174. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, p.211

175. *The Tribune (India)*, June 13, 1947

SECOND WORLD WAR AND THEREAFTER:

Great Britain declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939. Almost all Sikh organisations declared their support for Britain. It was in this confused and chaotic situation that the Muslim League in a session at Lahore formally declared its aim to have an independent Muslim State causing a dilemma for the Sikhs; for this demand of the Muslim League involved a division of the country including the region which was the homeland of the Sikhs and their Gurus.

The political situation on the world-scene deteriorated in December 1941 when the Japanese chose Rash Bihari Bose to organise the Indians of Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore to rise against the British and appointed General Mohan Singh as a Commanding Officer of the newly raised Indian National Army (INA) at Singapore. Netaji Subash Chander Bose took the Command of INA in June, 1943.

On July 10, 1944, C. Rajagopalachari, who later became the first Indian Governor-General of Independent India (1948-50), announced his formula, with the support of Mahatama Gandhi, whereby a state of Pakistan could be carved out of the Indian Union. The Muslim League supported the demand for the immediate independence of India. The recognition of Pakistan by the Congress leaders was a betrayal of the Sikhs, as the proposed Pakistan contained half of the Sikh homeland. On May 7, 1945 the Allied forces won the Second World War. In the same year Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy of India, summoned a conference of the Indian leaders including Master Tara Singh in order to form an Executive Council composed entirely of Indians for administration. The conference broke down as the scheme and representation of Muslims on the Executive Council did not suit Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League.

On February 20, 1947, Mr Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, announced in the British Parliament that the British Government had decided to relinquish power in India by June 1948. On 12th June, 1947 Shromani Akali Dal and the Panthic Pratinidhi Board held a joint conference. The Conference resolved:¹⁷⁹ "The basis of the notional division of the Punjab, is however, inequitable and unjust to the Sikhs. While the plan is designed to carve out a sovereign Muslim State to satisfy the Muslim demand, it fails to provide for the Sikhs any portion of power or status or any means for the protection of their interests in the constitution-making machinery..... We do not want change of masters by passing under subjugation of either the Hindus or Muslims. We are determined to secure our homeland even if we have two big parties to face....."

On August 14, 1947, Pakistan was born, a day later India became a free country. The Sikhs, who protected and guarded the national

179. *The Tribune* Lahore, June 13, 1947

frontiers of India for over two hundred and forty years, felt betrayed of their right to have a homeland of their own. The freedom of India and the creation of Pakistan cut the land of Sikh Gurus and Sikh history into two unequal halves.

After Independence, India once again had to look to the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh to protect her frontiers. The battle of Srinagar (October 1947), the battle of Richmar Ghatt (October 1948), the Nagaland Operation (April 1956), the movement for the liberation of Goa (December 1961), the battle of Walong (October 1962), the battle of Tongpengla (1962), the battle of Chushul in Ladakh (November 1962) and the two wars with Pakistan (1965 and 1971) are witnesses to the bravery and patriotism of the Sikhs. The foreign press was no exception in praising the brave and fearless Khalsa. To quote a few:

“Pakistani forces surrendered unconditionally to the Indians on the Eastern front yesterday.....Lieutenant General J. S. Aurora, the Indian Commander, a turbaned Sikh, was hoisted on the soldiers’ shoulders as dusk fell.”¹⁸⁰

“Shouts of ‘*Sat Sri Akal*’ greeted Indian parachute troops as they entered Dacca today. Bengalis mobbed the first jeeps that swept into the city, hugging and kissing the burly Sikhs of the 2nd Parachute Regiment.”¹⁸¹

“The Indian generals can feel well-pleased with themselves – particularly Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, the charismatic Sikh who has commanded the eastern front.....obviously, India’s military superiority in the East (East Bengal) is being felt. Sikh Regiments, and a Sikh Commander-in-chief, Lt. Gen. Aurora are in complete command of the region”¹⁸²

“General Niazi stripped off his epaulette of rank from his right shoulder, unloaded his revolver and handed over his ammunition to Lt. Gen. J. S. Aurora, the tubaned Sikh leader of the Indian forces... General Aurora was hoisted on his soldiers amid cheering crowds...and thousands of Bengalis greeted the burly Sikh Paratroopers.”¹⁸³

“It was 4.30 p.m. at the grassy Dacca racecourse and the sinking sun cast a brilliant golden shaft of light on the long lines of Sikhs Muslims honour-guards who faced each other near a small wooden table.”¹⁸⁴

It is a fact of Indian history that the Sikhs have always put their country first. Many a time they had the opportunity of lodging their claim for a separate Sikh state, but at all times they believed that the greater India was their homeland. Their sacrifices for the mother land are unparallel in history. Dr. Subramaniam Swamy,

180. *The Times*, London December 17, 1971, p.1

181. *The Times*. London, December 17, 1971 p.6

182. *The Financial Times*, London, December 17, 1971 p.1

183. *The Daily Telegraph*, London, December 17, 1971 p.1

184. *News Week*, International Edition, U.S.A., December 27, 1971, p.9

a prominent Hindu and a matured parliamentarian, wrote: "As a Hindu, I entertain feelings of kinship with the Sikhs. The Ninth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Tegh Bahadur, agreed to be beheaded by Aurangzeb, in order to protect Hindu Pandits. His son, Guru Gobind Singh saw his own sons killed for the same cause. No other community in India has died for Hindus and Hindustan (India) as Sikhs. During the freedom struggle, out of 127 Indians whom the British sent to the gallows, 92 were Sikhs. Of the 2,646 Indians sent for life imprisonment to *Kalapani*, 2,147 were Sikhs. In Subash Bose's army of 20,000 soldiers 12,000 were Sikhs..."^{184A}

The irony of the fate is that the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh has been grossly betrayed by both the successive Indian governments and their own leadership. Their sacrifices for the betterment of the humanity in general and for the independence and defence of India in particular have not been earnestly recognised. The operation Blue Star (June 1984), the mass killing of the Sikhs in Delhi, Kanpur and Bokaro riots (November 1984), the unjustified detention of more than 3,000 innocent Sikhs in the various Indian jails (since June 1984), the non implementation of Rajiv-Longowal accord (July 1985), the inhuman killing of the Sikh youth in the fake encounters by the border security force (from 1986-1997) are all acts of betrayal and treachery. Film Producer-Director Gulzar's Film "Machis" (1997)^{184B} highlights the heinous atrocities inflicted on the Khalsa during that period.

CONCLUSION

Despite the best designs and purposes, all changes and transformations must confront the power of the times. In the unfolding play of the 'Saint-Soldier' transformation, Guru Gobind Singh recognised this reality with Muslims or Hindus, he had to uproot evil wherever it was grounded.

Guru Gobind Singh's mission was a surgical operation. He gave us a concept of unusual value. He was a man of astonishing originality. People often forget that Guru Gobind Singh's message is offered as an interpretation of human experience and as an answer to the problems of human living. What the Sikhs call the Khalsa, are the attributes inherently present in all human beings and are gifts of God, untouched and unexplored. The Guru shook them up. He made them meaningful and realisable for all men by his personal actions and teachings. The Sikhs, all over the globe, struggling to make sense of their own lives in the light of the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, should be able to discover much common ground with all those who are trying to be human, trying to follow all the implementations they discern in their personality when they search for human wholeness.

Although the concept of Khalsa has received very little critical attention from professional theologians of the East and West, there

184A. Illustrated Weekly, India, 13 May 1984

184B. Film got many National Awards.

are reasons why theologians might be interested in this concept.

The Saint-soldier concept was for one thing, intensely concerned about the problem of protection of faith throughout most of the period of Guru Gobind Singh's life. The problems of religious conflicts¹⁸⁵ has attracted great interest in theological circles in recent years, but Guru Gobind Singh was sensitive to some of the major issues involved in the creation of Khalsa when he summoned an assembly at Anandpur back in 1699. He retained a deep and vigilant watch on the development of the new concept until the year of his death. There is a sense in which Guru Gobind Singh did in fact what other prophets have advocated in theory: while others debated the uplift of the poor, the breaking of caste barriers, uprooting the evil, establishing the kingdom of Heaven, absolution for sins and attaining salvation, Guru Gobind Singh was busy creating a new Ideal Man in the form of a Saint-Soldier who has the power to attain whatever is said by others in theory and who has the competence to inspire and influence multitudes.

Theologians might also be curious about the thoughts of a brilliant and young seventeenth century prophet who made possible the difficult transformation from pacifism to militarism. From the times of First Nanak to the Fifth Nanak, the house of Nanak was perfectly pacifist. What the Tenth Nanak said and did therefore, about peace and war, saint and soldier, might be of considerable relevance to the present situation, to other religious Pundits and would-be-believers in this secular age. Guru Gobind Singh's ideology is one of the latest contributions to the philosophy of the world religions. Those who have read his works and life history recognise him as one of the greatest prophets of the world. Considering the new awakened interest with which Guru Gobind Singh's message is being understood and followed in the United States of America, it may well appear that his ideology and message have been found relevant to present day needs.

Dorothy Field, a British writer, claims that no other world religion has made a nation in such a short time as the Sikhs.¹⁸⁶

Both the effects of Guru Gobind Singh's creation of Khalsa and the vitality in the modern society are truly relevant in present times.

Major topics to be considered regarding the concept of 'Saint Soldier' include the theological needs for its creation, its practical use in the world at large and its relevance to the society in the present times. The first two topics - theological needs for its creation and its practical use in the world at large have their answers in the history of the Sikhs. The third topic - its relevance to the society in the present times - is at this time being tested in different parts of the world and is proving exceedingly successful.

185. Middle East, Ireland, Africa

186. Dorothy Field, *The Religion of the Sikhs*, p.9

187. J.D. Cunningham, M.A. Macauliffe & Dorothy Field etc.

We must also not forget that the enrolment in the Khalsa Brotherhood is dependent on the qualities of an individual rather than his social standing. Whosoever has faith in the doctrine and teachings of the Ten Nanaks and who has no fear of death and who is ever ready to die for a righteous cause has the basic requirements of enrolment in the Khalsa Brotherhood.

The method of recruitment to the Khalsa Brotherhood used by Guru Gobind Singh was *conciencia*. Joseph Kahl described conscience, as consciousness, and commitment.¹⁹⁸ According to Carmelo Mesa-lago, 'one has *conciencia* if one is aware of what the transformation (revolution) is all about, what the transformation has done for him and for society, what he or others should do for the transformation and what the goals are of the transformation. Such awareness is more than pure intellectual perception. It also conveys the idea of commitment to action in the pursuance of certain goals.'¹⁹⁹

Guru Gobind Singh's methods were practical. He was a man of action. Until the birth of his new concept of Khalsa in 1699 the world had known only one type of army – an army loyal to the boundaries of one country and beyond the border everyone was an enemy. They had a right to kill anyone who crossed the border with malicious intentions. The recruits had no moral or spiritual tests. If they could pass the academic and physical tests prescribed by their governments, they could qualify to be soldiers. But Guru Gobind Singh's army had no specific boundaries to guard. They were to protect mankind. As has been said before, Khalsa was the army of the Immortal Being who is the Father of all Nations. They were to safeguard the interest of everyone wherever he lived. The basic tests of the recruit were the possession of the attributes as recommended by the Ten Gurus. The moral and spiritual attributes were as important as physical and mental ones.

Thus, the 'Saint-Soldiers' of Guru Gobind Singh belong to the Universal Army, who have God, the Lord, as their Supreme Commander. Their goals are to protect the weak, uproot evil and fight against injustice.

According to Taran Singh, 'The Khalsa believes that the purest among Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists etc. are Khalsa and are striving for the same goal of universal good. The Khalsa is committed to the ideal of universal good and victory to the Lord – and shall go on striving for it. Let all the purest among all religions combine with the Khalsa.'²⁰⁰

198. Joseph Kahl, 'The Moral Economy of a Revolutionary Society', *Transaction* 6, April 1969, p.30

199. Carmelo Mesa-Lago (Ed.), *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*, p.488

200. Taran Singh, 'The White Hawk and Victory to the Lord' *The Sikh Revire*, February-March, 1967

Mohan Singh, while discussing the historical value of *Prem Sumarag*, says, 'the author (of the *Prem Sumarag*) has foreseen the time when a better, nobler, purer class (of Khalsa) will come into power and rule for the good of all.'²⁰¹

Let us go back to the quotation of Syed Mohammed Latif mentioned earlier. The Guru knew that the whole Sikh nation could not become Khalsa, so he asked every Sikh household to enrol some of their male members in the Khalsa Brotherhood. The Guru could comprehend that the number of 'Pure ones' would be limited. He wanted to bring into the fold of Khalsa only those who could understand the value of their membership and work for it. He was not interested in recommending the prescribed uniform to those who had no respect for it.²⁰²

According to Narain Singh, 'It is a great pity that religions, in course of time start to place greater emphasis on symbols than on the inner life for which the symbols were created. It is forgotten that symbols, by themselves, cannot produce spirituality.'²⁰³ Similarly, without a good life and excellent moral character, these symbols have little meaning.^{203A}

Here symbols refer to the uniform of the Five Ks. A man who has no love and respect for his uniform has no right to have it. Nor is it becoming for him to criticise those who keep the symbols.

The idea of keeping symbols without any regard and spirit has also been condemned by Guru Gobind Singh. According to him:

- (i) "Those who put on false garbs, have no worth at all in the estimation of God's men. Know you all. Once for all, that no one can find the Lord through a false exterior."²⁰⁴
- (ii) "Those who make a false show of uniform to influence others for personal ends, are butchered with a knife and their souls are thrown into hell."²⁰⁵
- (iii) "Let people go wherever they like, they will find that God is not to be found in the outer garb."²⁰⁶

If we examine the Guru's above verses carefully we notice that an insult of the uniform is a serious offence. Only those who are loyal to their cause must put on the outer garb. If a man wears dignified outer form but internally is worthless, he is a higher culprit than a man who confesses that he is not a fit person for the uniform and is not worthy of its status and dignity.

Armies all over the world work for a reward, but the army of Khalsa (Saint-Soldiers) is to work without the expectation of any reward, material or spiritual. Material rewards refer to monetary

201. Mohan Singh, *An introduction to Punabi Literature*, pp. 121-123

202. Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*.

203. Narain Singh, *op.cit.*, p.248

203A. G. S. Mausukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.103

204. Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*.

205. *Ibid.*

206. *Ibid.*

payments and spiritual reward refers to salvation or *Mukti*. According to Douglas Davies, "Salvation is that state of sufficiency of durable plausibility existing for an individual or group, under given ideological and social structural conditions, where no alternative is sought."²⁰⁷

When Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa and baptised the Sikhs he declared that the services of the Khalsa would be selfless. The Khalsa, working as a soldier, in the Army of the Almighty, would not long for any reward in return.

God would shower His Grace, according to His own judgement, whenever or wherever He chose. God's independence is unquestionable. According to H. Henderson,²⁰⁸ "One cannot, once reflection upon faith begins, challenge the question of God's independent existence."

Unlike the Jewish faith, the Lord of Guru Gobind Singh is the Father of all Mankind and not only of the chosen few. Though the Khalsa is God's army, God is not the well-wisher only of those few chosen soldiers. God unquestionably is the Father of the Universe and not, as Lourdin A Yozon²⁰⁹ stated, of the faithful Israelites only. When the Guru said –

"So long as the Khalsa retains his individuality,
I shall give him all the glory.
But when he deviates to misguided ways,
I will not trust him."²¹⁰

Here the Guru is stressing the point of loyalty, allegiance, devotion and purity. If one is a Khalsa, one must have all the attributes of a Khalsa. If one loses any of such attributes, it is better to cease to be a Khalsa rather than deceive the people by outward symbols only.

The Guru wanted his Khalsa to be recognised out of millions. He wanted him to be a symbol of Purity and Truth. He wanted the world to be proud of having such a brotherhood. He had created an organisation which nations could rely on, in times of difficulties.

Today's world is in a confused and chaotic mess. Whereas, on the one hand the world powers are building huge nuclear power-stations to produce the most destructive and deadly weapons, on the other hand the same powers are negotiating "Nuclear Non-proliferation and arms control treaties" and organising 'Peace Conferences.' Whereas on the one hand countries like U.S.S.R., Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia are closing down most of the places of worship and converting them into museums and libraries, countries like India, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia are building more temples and mosques rather than factories and power

207. Douglas Davies, 'The Notion of Salvation,' *Comparative Study of Religion*, Volume 8, Spring 1978, p.91

208. H. Henderson, 'Theistic Reductionism and the Practice of Worship,' *International Journal for Philosophy of Religions*, (Netherland), Volume X, No.1, 1979, p.40

209. Lordino A. Yozon, 'The Kingdom of God in Daniel,' *The South-East Journal of Theology*, Volume 19, No.1, 1978, p.23

210. Guru Gobind Singh, *Sarb Loh Granth*.

stations. The world of today is once again practising a double standard: hypocrisy, snobbery and corruption along with ritual and charity. What then is the relevance of the Ideal Man as created by Guru Gobind Singh, 288 years ago, in the world today and in the times to come? The answer, though not simple and encouraging, is also not complex and intriguing. The Khalsa of yesterday has not become impertinent; rather he is emerging as a real choice.

The 'Ideal' created by the Guru is as relevant today as it was about three hundred years ago. Though times have changed, the evils and dangers of the societies are nevertheless the same.

The Khalsa brotherhood will, indeed, play a very important role in the times to come. Guru Gobind Singh is their leader, their beacon-light and their polar star.

1. EMINENT WORLD THINKERS AND PHILOSOPHERS

1.1 Those whose *fundamental ideas coincide* with the Sikh thought

1. Socrates (470–399 BC)
2. Plato (427–347 BC)
3. Aristotle (384–322 BC)
4. G Fichte (1762–1814 AD)
5. H Green (1836–1882 AD)
6. Ramakrishna (1836–1886)
7. J Royce (1855–1916)
8. J M E Mettaggart (1866–1925)
9. Bertrand Russell (1872–1970)
10. G Gentile (1875–1944)
11. M Iqbal (1876–1939)
12. S Radhakrishnan (1888–1975)
13. A Huxley (1894–1963)

1.2 Those whose *fundamental ideas conflict* with the Sikh thought

1. St Augustine (354–430 AD)
2. I Kant (1724–1804)
3. G W F Hegel (1770–1831)
4. G Schelling (1775–1854)
5. A Schopenhauer (1788–1860)
6. T Carlyle (1795–1881)
7. F Nietzsche (1844–1900)
8. S Vivekanand (1836–1902)
9. F Bradley (1846–1924)
10. P Croce (1866–1952)

2. EMINENT WORLD RELIGIONS, RELIGIOUS TEACHERS AND RELIGIOUS SCRIPTURES

2.1 Those whose *fundamental ideas coincide* with the Sikh theory

1. Egyptian thought – *Memphite sesame*
2. Babylonian Code
3. Bhagvad Gita
4. Jesus Christ
5. Prophet Mohammed

2.2 Those whose *fundamental ideas conflict* with the Sikh theory

1. Abraham
2. Zoraster
3. Confucius
4. Lao Tzu
5. The Shinto Scriptures
6. Pre-vedic beliefs
7. Vedic beliefs
8. Ramayana
9. Manu's Code
10. Mahavir
11. Buddha

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ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

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