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DIGEST



Sadbhavana and Punjabiati

Sadbhavana Digest

Issue #13, August 2022

Contents

1. Editorial: Punjabiat.....	3
1.1 सबसे खतरनाक होता है, हमारे सपनों का मर जाना.....	5
1.2 The permanence of Punjabiat.....	6
1.3 Sikh Identity.....	9
2 How to deal with self?.....	10
2.1 Man Jeete Jag Jeet.....	11
2.2 Naam, Daan, Ishnaan.....	12
2.3 Guru Nanak Dev's other teachings- Re self improvement.....	20
2.4 Guru Nanak's Japji Saheb's first and last part.....	21
2.5 Mind, body and soul in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS).....	22
2.6 मैं राहों पे नहीं चलता मैं चलता हूँ तो राह बनते.....	27
3 How to deal with others?.....	28
3.1 Guru Nanak: One of ten greatest Indians of all time.....	29
3.2 Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708).....	32
3.3 Bulleh Shah- The Sufi Poet.....	33
3.4 Human Rights- A perspective from Sikh doctrines.....	37
3.5 Origin and emergence of Punjabi writers.....	50
3.6 Revolutionary Paighams of Bhagat Singh.....	61
3.7 Two Punjabi Dalit Poets - Laal Singh Dil and Sant Ram Udasi.....	65
4 How to deal with Nature?.....	68
4.1 Guru Har Rai- The Green Guru.....	69
4.2 EcoSikhs of today - Reformation: seva, langar and prashad.....	71
4.3 Rising area of Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR).....	75
4.4 Other environment-friendly ventures in Punjab.....	79
4.5 The Tree - A Poem by Shiv Kumar Batalvi.....	93
4.6 शहर के खिलाफ - प्रदीप बोस.....	94

1. Editorial: Punjabiat

There are about 15.5 crore of Punjabis world-wide. Ten crores are in Pakistan's Punjab, three crores in Indian Punjab, about a crore of Punjabis are spread all over India, plus a diaspora of about 1.5 crore Punjabis live in about 15 foreign countries. About 3.5 crore Punjabis are Sikhs (disciples of Gurus), who generally wear turbans.

Punjabi Language is the key identity of a Punjabi. Sheikh Farid was the first writer of Punjabi, who wrote in the 12th and 13th century, followed by Guru Nanak, Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah and others. Modern Punjabi writers emerged in late 19th and 20th century. There is hardly any literate Punjabi who has not read or heard about the immortal poem of Amrita Pritam, "Ajj akhan Waris Shah nu ki tu kabran wichon bol." (I ask Waris Shah today to speak up from his grave), wrote in 1947. Every Punjabi knows about the Heer-Ranjha, the epic poem written by Waris Shah in the 18th century and the 'Heer' sung by various singers. "Maye ni maye, mein ik shikra yaar banaya" (Mother, oh mother, I made a hawk my friend) or "Ek meri akh kashni" (I am a green-eyed damsel) by Shiv Kumar Batalvi are also very popular songs known to many Punjabis. In fiction writing Kulwant Singh Virk, Gurdial Singh and Waryam Singh Sandhu excelled. These days Surjit Patar's poems, songs and ghazhals are becoming famous.

Five romantic folk-lores are very famous in Punjab. These are of: Laila-Majnu, Mirza-Sahiban, Sassi-Pannun, Heer-Ranjha and Sohni-Mahiwal. Dulla Bhatti (famous for Lohri) and Jagga Daku are Robin hoods of Punjab and are parts of Punjabi folklore. Some people identify Punjabis with their folk dances of Bhangra for men and Giddha for women. Besides, Punjab has a large number of folk singers. Folk singers of yester years, viz. Asa Singh Mastana, Surinder Kaur and Prakash Kaur, Kuldeep Manak, Gurdas Mann and Chamkila became very famous. Hans Raj Hans is also a famous folk singer. Every town in Punjab, like: Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar and Bathinda has its own dozens of famous folk singers and each of these towns have separate streets where folk singers abound. Moreover, the folk songs of Jugni are quite popular with all Punjabis. Some of these are: Jugni ja vadi Kalcutte, Jugni katdi Charkha, Oh Naam Laindi Sain da, Jugni tere ander baithi, etc.

Every year a competition is held for Bhangra dance in Toronto. It is called Bhangra-Nation. There are many themes of songs sung during this competition, as the dances go on. Some of the songs are of Gurdas Mann, a renowned folk-singer of Punjab, who says, "अपणा पंजाब होवे, घर दी शराब होवे, गन्ने दा डंडा होवे, बाण दा मंजा होवे।" (To be in my own Punjab, where homemade liquor is available, I have a sugar-cane in my hand and I sit on a string cot, made of munj-baan.)

Punjab has had a long tradition of *mirasis*, the genealogists and traditional singers. They also play key roles during marriages and deaths. The women's folk embroidery of phulkari is another tradition of Punjabis that has survived for about 1400 years. After the advent of Sikhism in Punjab, the traditions of Dhadhis (balladeers of Sikh Gurus and other heroes/heroines), Ragis (singing Gurbani), Granthis (reading Gurbanis) and Jathedaars (head priests) developed.

Punjabi food is also very distinctive. Kulche-chhole, kheer-puri, kesar-lassi, dal-makhni, rajmah-rice, butter-chicken, panir-tikka, makki di roti and saron da saag are some of the famous cuisines from Punjab.

Punjabi has three key components, besides its language, folklore, folk-songs, traditions and cuisine. These are: Anakh अणख (honor/pride), Sirad सिरड़ (high determination) and Sidak सिदक (big-heartedness, contentment). These three qualities of Punjabis distinguish them as a separate community, everywhere. Guru Gobind Singh writes about the martyrdom of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur: 'शीश दिया पर सिरड़ न दिया।' Guru Arjun Dev Writes, 'सिदक कर सजदा, मन कर मकसूद।' It means: Bow to God with contentment and have right intentions in your heart.

Pradeep Bose

Pradeep Bose grew up in Punjab as his father was a practicing doctor in that state. Pradeep studied at the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, where he came in touch with many of the contemporary Punjabi writers and poets. After his graduation in Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, he joined the Institute for Rural Management, Anand, IRMA for a post graduation in Rural Management. After graduating from IRMA Pradeep worked with PRADAN, an NGO promoting livelihoods for the rural poor, initially in Madhya Pradesh and then in Rajasthan. Later Pradeep became an independent development practitioner. For the last two decades, he lives on the outskirts of Udaipur, Rajasthan where his wife Suman and he run an cattle shelter/gaushala. Pradeep writes poetry in Punjabi and many of his poems have been published. He has also translated many Punjabi poems into Hindi.



सबसे खतरनाक होता है, हमारे सपनों का

1.1 मर जाना

पाश (अनुवादक- चमन लाल)

मेहनत की लूट सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती
पुलिस की मार सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती
ग़द्दारी और लोभ की मुट्ठी सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती

बैठे.बिठाए पकड़े जाना . बुरा तो है
सहमी.सी चुप में जकड़े जाना . बुरा तो है
पर सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होता

कपट के शोर में
सही होते हुए भी दब जाना . बुरा तो है
जुगनुओं की लौ में पढ़ना .बुरा तो है
मुट्ठियां भींचकर बस वक्त निकाल लेना . बुरा तो है
सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होता

सबसे खतरनाक होता है
मुर्दा शांति से भर जाना
तड़प का न होनाए सब सहन कर जाना
घर से निकलना काम पर
और काम से लौटकर घर जाना
सबसे खतरनाक होता है
हमारे सपनों का मर जाना

सबसे खतरनाक वो घड़ी होती है
आपकी कलाई पर चलती हुई भी जो
आपकी नज़र में रुकी होती है

सबसे खतरनाक वो आंख होती है
जो सबकुछ देखती हुई जमी बर्फ होती है
जिसकी नज़र दुनिया को मोहब्बत से चूमना भूल जाती है
जो चीजों से उठती अंधेपन की भाप पर ढुलक जाती है
जो रोज़मर्रा के क्रम को पीती हुई
एक लक्ष्यहीन दुहराव के उलटफेर में खो जाती है

सबसे खतरनाक वो चांद होता है
जो हर हत्याकांड के बाद
वीरान हुए आंगन में चढ़ता है
लेकिन आपकी आंखों में मिर्चों की तरह नहीं गड़ता

सबसे खतरनाक वो गीत होता है
आपके कानो तक पहुँचने के लिए
जो मरसिए पढ़ता है
आतंकित लोगों के दरवाज़ों पर
जो गुंडों की तरह अकड़ता है

सबसे खतरनाक वह रात होती है
जो ज़िंदा रूह के आसमानों पर ढलती है
जिसमे सिर्फ उल्लू बोलते और हुआँ हुआँ करते गीदड़
हमेशा के अँधेरे बंद दरवाज़ों.चौगाठों पर चिपक जाते है

सबसे खतरनाक वो दिशा होती है
जिसमें आत्मा का सूरज डूब जाए
और जिसकी मुर्दा धूप का कोई टुकड़ा
आपके जिस्म के पूरब में चुभ जाए

मेहनत की लूट सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती
पुलिस की मार सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती
ग़द्दारी और लोभ की मुट्ठी सबसे खतरनाक नहीं होती।

1.2 The permanence of Punjabi-ness

F.S. Aijazuddin



Secular, Spiritual: An oil painting by Ágoston Schoefft of Maharaja Ranjit Singh listening to the Guru Granth Sahib being recited near the Golden Temple

One wonders what might have happened had both Guru Nanak Dev and Maharaja Ranjit Singh been born around the same time? Would Guru Nanak have used the essential secular character of Ranjit Singh's style of governance as a practical demonstration of the universality he preached? Would Ranjit Singh have regarded Guru Nanak as a saint, a living conscience—but one best kept away from his raucous, rumbustious court?

Four centuries of history separated these two sons of the same Punjabi soil, yet they are linked posthumously as twin examples of two aspects of Punjabi-ness—the spiritual in Guru Nanak and the secular in Ranjit Singh.

Guru Nanak's strength came from the power of meditation. He distilled his experiences of other faiths, particularly Hinduism and Islam, into a potent reaffirmation of the universality of mankind. Legend speaks of his questioning mind and the incipient awareness that he would one day lead people to God. The revelation that commanded him to undertake his lonely mission came to him, like the Buddha and Prophet Muhammad, after he had established himself as a responsible husband, father and householder. Like them, as a mature adult, he renounced the mortal, temporal world.

He set out to imbue others with his own conviction in the oneness of God, travelling, teaching and living the new faith. With him, as companions, he had a Muslim—Mardana—and a Hindu musician—Bala. His years of travelling are said to have ended by 1521, when he settled on a tract of land at Kartarpur donated to him by a rich follower. There, according to one biographer, he developed ‘a simple spiritual and moral discipline that had the capacity of reproducing itself’.

That spiritual amoeba split into a number of facsimiles, and extended across a world Guru Nanak had heard and read about, but whose limits were beyond his comprehension. Ironically, on the 550th anniversary of his birth, his beloved seat of Kartarpur has itself, like his beloved Punjab, been bifurcated—the original site being on the Pakistan side and the later version of Kartarpur on the Indian side of the River Ravi. The flowing waters that had once filled his drinking bowl now touch the lips of two countries that are becoming symbols of state-sponsored Islam and Hinduism, the two religions he sought in his lifetime to conciliate.

By contrast, Ranjit Singh received no revelation, had no premonition of his potential greatness, and no ordained mission to execute. Political and social happenstances moulded his career; supremacy and survival became his goals. He came into prominence in his teens, and before he was 30 (the age that Guru Nanak received his revelation) Ranjit Singh had made himself the undisputed leader of his kingdom, the first nation-state of the Punjab.

The admixture of religions and nationalities at the court of Ranjit Singh was born of expediency. The talent available to him could have been better, had he a wider sea in which to cast his net. Instead he took whoever was best in his field. He used them, assessed their worth and then gave them his abiding loyalty. His price? Their reciprocation. Why else did courtiers such as Dogra Raja Dhian Singh, a Muslim Fakir Azizuddin and a Hindu Dina Nath remain in his service until his death. Such loyalty is a younger cousin of spiritual devotion. Whatever darker motives these and other functionaries at Ranjit Singh’s court may have had to enrich themselves—the Sikh durbar was a veritable cornucopia of wealth— they shared a bond of brotherhood.

If Guru Nanak gave a spiritual voice to the Punjab, Ranjit Singh gave it a temporal identity. Guru Nanak had no battalions to command, no legions at his behest. Yet his army of followers now constitute a powerful force that has produced, among other luminaries, a prime minister of India. Ranjit Singh’s army, by contrast, broke into fragments within a decade of his death. There is no one alive who can claim a right to his legacy, no successor in interest to the throne of Lahore. He came as a shooting star, lit the Punjab during his lifetime and then sank below the horizon of history. Guru Nanak, by comparison, is a constellation.

Today, the Punjab they knew and loved has been vivisected—first in 1947, and again when the Indian Punjab was further carved into the states of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the Union territory of Chandigarh. What is left of the Punjab is dominated today by the principality of Patiala, just as it was during Ranjit Singh's time, when it was the largest of the Cis-Sutlej states that lay in British-controlled territory. History has swallowed its tail.

If there is any message that Guru Nanak and Ranjit Singh can offer us today, it is that religion is too sacred to be a weapon, that secularism should not be a slogan, and that even a truncated Punjab has an enduring identity. Go anywhere—California, New York, Canada, the United Kingdom, East Africa or Australia—and wherever you hear the syllables of Punjabi, you will receive an affirmation that Punjabi-ness is still alive. That identity is not the self-conscious one delineated for themselves by the Welsh. It is not the irascible one woven into a tartan by the Scots. It is not the amorphous one that gypsies carry with themselves. It is not the Jewishness that is trying to reclaim its home in the Holy Land.

Punjabi-ness is more than a linguistic, provincial tradition. It is the legacy of a cultural persona, of linguistic roots, of a tradition of tolerance that spiritual and temporal leaders like Guru Nanak and Ranjit Singh have bequeathed to us. Had we the eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts spacious enough to accommodate.

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[Maharaja Ranjit Singh](#)

1.3 Sikh Identity

Since the formative moments of the tradition, Sikhs have maintained a physical identity that makes them stand out in public, even in the context of South Asia. This identity includes five articles of faith — kesh (unshorn hair), kangha (small comb), kara (steel bracelet), kirpan (religious article resembling a knife), and kachera (soldier-shorts) — and distinguishes someone who has formally committed to the values of the faith by accepting initiation.

While many have attempted to attribute a specific function to each article of faith, these understandings do not capture the connections that Sikhs have with these articles. Perhaps the best analogy (though admittedly an imperfect one) is that of a wedding ring: one cannot reduce the significance of a wedding ring to its instrumental value; rather, one cherishes the wedding ring because it is a gift of love from one's partner. Similarly, Sikhs cherish their articles of faith primarily because they see them as a gift from their beloved Guru. Trying to understand these articles on the basis of their function is missing the point.

Perhaps the most visible aspect of the Sikh identity is the turban, which can be worn by men and women alike. The turban was historically worn by royalty in South Asia, and the Gurus adopted this practice as a way of asserting the sovereignty and equality of all people. For a Sikh, wearing a turban asserts a public commitment to maintaining the values and ethics of the tradition, including service, compassion, and honesty.





2. How to deal with self?

2.1 “Man Jeete Jag Jeet”

It is Guru Nanak's world famous teaching of controlling over the desires of mind lest one gets corrupted by them. It means, one can win the world but one cannot easily win over the mind/desires. Therefore, a man who has controlled his mind is greater than the one who has conquered the world.



2.2 Naam, Daan, Ishnaan

Harbans Lal

In his teachings, Guru Nanak designated three core values that, when blended, would transform life into something wonderful. In doctrinal terms, Guru Nanak named them as **NAAM, DAAN, ISHNAAN**. Translated into today's idiom, they are:

NAAM – Be Mindful, Awareness of Divine Presence

DAAN – Giving, live the life of Altruism when Seeking Divine Benevolence

ISHNAAN – Cleansing, Implement Ethics of Good Deeds that makes you a good human being

Origin and Groundwork

The principles of the Sikh Rehat, which are guidelines for daily practice, first originated in Guru Nanak's teachings. The Guru spread the divine message to all those coming to him and thus laid the groundwork for a universal Code of Conduct (Rehat Maryada). This code was meant to be timeless and meant for everyone without any prejudice of race, religion, gender or nationality. It is a comprehensive guide to living pertinently for every member of humanity.



As the tradition goes, the original code of values was summed up by the Guru himself in three theological terms, **NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN** (ਨਾਮੁ, ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨੁ). In every opportunity to transmit his ministry, the Guru emphasized a lifestyle based upon these precepts. For example, this was the first pronouncement of his ministry after his enlightening meditation along the banks of the rivulet Kali *Bein nadi*, at the age of 27.

The enlightening meditation around vein nadi is considered the most significant event in the life of the founder of the Sikh religion.¹ Historians describe this event as the occasion immediately after which Guru Nanak undertook his universal ministry. It is then that he spoke to the public and pronounced that he was inspired by the Creator with messages for all humanity.

Referring to this message, the writers of the oldest available Sikh history, ancient *Meharban Vaalee Janam Sakhi*, described the Divine instructions to the Guru as saying,

*O' Nanak, those you accept, will be given salvation in the court of the Divine, .. you are ordained to undertake the mission of both articulating and inculcating the practice of **NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN** in the millennium of the coming ages¹...*

In recorded Sikh history, it is from this event and time that the **NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN** terms were rightfully regarded as representing the core doctrines of Sikhism. The same doctrines were routinely preached in the Sikh congregations, and a lot has been written about their meanings and implications in life.

Following this event of vein nadi, the sacred terms, **NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN** (ਨਾਮੁ, ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨੁ) were made a part of the Gurmat philosophy, and Sikh values. Thereafter, the Gurus and other Sikh theologians as well as Sikh exegists actively popularized these terms and the teachings behind them. From this time onward, these terms and the concepts they represented would continue to be recognized as the fundamentals of Sikhism. They were variously translated and explained with the changing times according to the needs of the local languages and customs. This is not unusual. With the changing socio-political milieu, with the cultural as well as the etymological needs, it is expected that, with time, more contemporary terms would be employed to express the essence of the original diction and basic concepts contained in Nanak's three canons.

From this time onward, these terms and the concepts they represented would continue to be recognized as the fundamentals of Sikhism. They were variously translated and explained with the changing times according to the needs of the local languages and customs. This is not unusual.

The evolution of terminology is expected with time; however, a great caution must be exercised to preserve the original terms and their meanings as they embody the canons and the doctrines. When newer terms are introduced, they may subtly begin to taint the original significance of the canons to accommodate the expression of many cultural and geographical needs. Once accepted, the subtle changes have a tendency to introduce distortions of the original meaning.

To guard against any long-lasting variation in the essence of the terms, it must be emphasized periodically that the basic principles must be referred to by the original doctrinal terms coined by the founders themselves; or by those subsequently authenticated by the Gurus themselves; or done so by their contemporary theologians.

Scriptural Sanctity of NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN

Sikhs consider the verses contained in the volume of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) as the Eternal Guru whose wisdom must not be contested. It is these verses that provide indisputable support for the terms that Guru Nanak had chosen. They are then promoted by the Guru's contemporary theologians and exegetics'. Let us examine those documents.



Above all the other supporting evidence, the Gurus themselves emphasized the rehat of NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN. For instance, the Guru wrote down the terms in their own verses as,

**सुणि गला गुर पह आया॥ नामु दानु इसनानु दिडाया॥
सभु मुक्तु होआ सैंसारड़ा नानक सची बेड़ी चाढि जीओ॥**

SGGS, p. 74

I heard of the Guru's repute, and so I went to the Guru. The Guru instilled within me the teaching of Naam, Daan, Ishnaan. Said Nanak, this was the path through which whole humanity may be liberated as the way of Naam, Daan, Ishnaan puts the seeker on the boat of eternal truths.

गुरुमुखि नामु, दानु, इस्नान Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), p. 942
*The Guru-Oriented seekers receive the wisdom of
"NAAM, DAAN, ISHNAAN" (नामु, दानु, इस्नान) to attune to the blissful state.*

नामु, दानु, इस्नानु **द्रिदु हरि हरि भगति सु जागे**, SGGS, p. 419
*The devout is awakened to the Worship of the Divine with firm faith
in the lifestyle of "NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN"*

द्रिदु नामु, दानु, इस्नानु सुचारी, SGGS, p. 740
*Instill in your life, NAAM DAAN AND ISHNAAN
as the acts of piousness.*

When the Guru found an occasion to deliver his sermon, he used those opportunities to stress his mission. He emphasized the principles of his new religion irrespective of the faith of the audience. For example, on two premier holy festivals of Hindus, both Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan preached as follows.

दसमी नामु, दानु, इस्नानु SGGS, p. 840
*On the day of Dasami observance, dedicate yourself to the
life of NAAM DAAN AND ISHNAAN.*

दुआदसी नामु, दानु, इस्नानु SGGS, p. 299
*On the day of Duadsī observance, commit yourself to the practice of NAAM DAAN AND
ISHNAAN.*

The Guru instructed the Sikh theologians to use NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN as subjects for their exegeses.

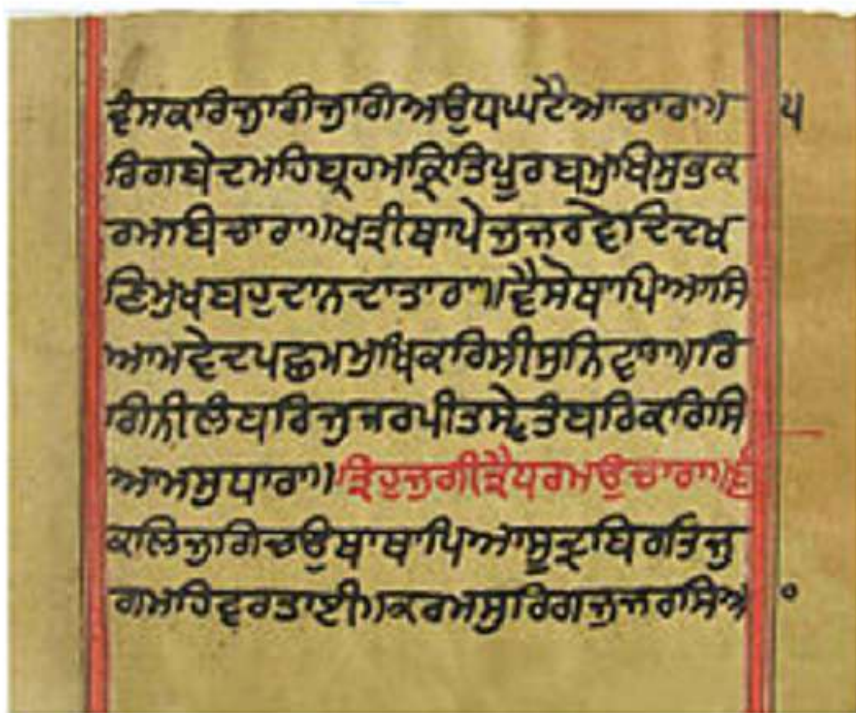
नामु, दानु, इस्नानु **द्रिदु सदा करहु गुर कथा**, SGGS, p. 1101
*Confirm your faith in the NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN, and always
use these topics for exegeses.*

As far as we know, like other Gurus, Guru Gobind Singh continued the tradition of using the terms: "NAAM, DAAN, ISHNAAN." There are several references to them in the Guru's teachings.

It is thus clear that the terms employed to describe the three pillars of the Sikh way of life were never allowed to any alteration in over two centuries of the Gurus' lives. It is not wise, therefore, to permit any change now. This certainly does not preclude any restriction, however, on translating them into contemporary idioms when necessary, as long as the original terms are not forgotten.

Testimony of Bhai Gurdas

Bhai Gurdas (1551 – 1636) was Guru Arjun's scribe who co-compiled the first recension of the Guru Granth. Bhai Gurdas was the son of Datar Chand Bhalla, a first cousin of Guru Amar Das; his cousin's sister, Bibi Bhani, was married to Guru Ram Das and was the mother of Guru Arjan. This made Bhai Gurdas the maternal uncle of Guru Arjan. Thus, Bhai Gurdas may be considered the Sikh best connected to the Gurus' family and the Guru's teachings. Also, he had a singular privilege of living through the time up to the sixth Guru and is considered the first missionary of Sikh philosophy and mysticism.



Bhai Gurdas wrote extensively on the Gurmat philosophy and the Sikh way of life. Guru Arjan designated Bhai Gurdas's writings as the key to the Guru Granth Sahib. In this capacity, Bhai Gurdas was the first to outline Guru's own instructions on the theology and morality of the Sikh community in the Gurus' time and for the times to come.

Bhai Gurdas elected to include his testimony on the injunctions of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN (ਨਾਮੁ, ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨੁ) in his very first Pauri or verse. This pauri was composed as an homage to the founder of the religion, Guru Nanak, and as an overview of his composition. It goes as follows:

भाउ भगति गुरपुरब करि नामु, दानु, इस्नानु द्विढाया ²

I bow to Guru Nanak who transformed his followers world into those who continually rededicate themselves to the Guru's principles through the celebration of the Guru's greatness and emphasize on others the Guru's path of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN.

गुरुमुख पंथु चलाउनु नामु, दानु, इस्नानु द्रिढाया³
*The Guru founded the path of Guru oriented by
emphasizing NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN*

Further, when Bhai Gurdas described the teachings that Guru asked his followers to abide by, it contained *NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN* as a critical component.

पर तन पर धन पर निंद मेटि नामु, दानु, इस्नानु द्रिढाया⁴
*Among the virtues that the Guru had emphasized included; to be truthful, content, merciful,
religious and the practitioner of NAAM, DAAN, AND ISHNAAN.*

सति संतोख दया धरम नामु, दानु, इस्नानु द्रिढाया⁵
*For inculcating the Truth, fulfillment, mercy and divinity,
the Guru emphasized NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN*

Bhai Gurdas considered the practice of *NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN* as a fulfillment of the Guru's teachings. He wrote,

गुरु उपदेश कमावणा गुरुमुखि नामु, दानु, इस्नाना⁵
*To a Guru oriented individual, the practice of NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN constitutes the
fulfillment of Guru's teachings.*

Testimony of Bhai Nand Lal

Bhai Nand Lal was the Poet Laureate of Guru's court and the most dearly loved disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. He wrote two rehatnamas; one known as Rehatnama written in 1695, i.e., four years before the presently most celebrated Vaisakhi of 1699, and the other in 1699 known as Tankhahnama.

Guru Gobind Singh himself asked Nand Lal to compile Guru's injunctions for the guidance of the Sikh communities after the Guru left his human body for his heavenly abode. Both Rehatnama and Tankhahnama were believed to be written under the personal guidance of Guru Gobind Singh. These pieces were composed in the style of a conversation between the Guru and Bhai Nand Lal.

In these compositions, Guru Gobind Singh asked Bhai Nand Lal to convey to the Sikhs the following message for inclusion in their daily code of conduct.

सुनहु भाई नंद लाल जी सिख करम है एहु ॥⁶
नामु, दानु, इस्नानु बिनु करे न अन्न सिउ नेहु

Listen, O, my dear Bhai Nand Lal, the religious deeds of the Sikhs are defined as follows – but for NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN, a Sikh should not form an association with anything else.

After perusing the testimonies above, there should be no question or doubt that NAAM, DAAN, ISHNAAN were the major doctrines and the doctrinal terms that form all of the Sikh teachings.

Conclusion

It was Guru Nanak who gave us the divinely inspired guidelines towards a most fulfilled life. All his successors and the exegetes of the time actively promoted the same, so we may live our life in the most fulfilled way. We continued to follow the Guru for centuries afterward.

A cursory view of the present trend in Sikh publications, youth programs, and other ceremonies reveals that the essence of certain textual canons of Sikh principles may be gradually losing the original intention of the Guru without any one's notice. The Guru's principles of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN (नामु, दानु, इस्नानु)⁷ are being substituted by virtually non-Gurbani phrases to suit the convenience and circumstances. Whereas the motives of those who are popularizing the much-altered terms may be genuine, there is a risk of tainting the Gurmat doctrines this way with the passage of time.

To halt this erosion of the real intention of the Guru, it is prudent to favor references to the doctrinally precise words chosen by the Gurus themselves. It is for this reason that this author decided to cite the original testimonies of the Scriptures in support of the correct representation of these terms. They were for sure, NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN (नामु, दानु, इस्नानु) and none else. It is certainly time for the leadership of our institutions to actively stop the erosion of Gurus' given original terms by preserving and actively propagating their usage again.

Future essays will delve into our current understanding of the Guru's teachings as defined in his spiritually inspired doctrines of NAAM DAAN ISHNAAN (नामु, दानु, इस्नानु). It will also be deliberated that the doctrines embedded in these terms are meant for universal application in today's civil societies.

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- [6] Rehmatnama Bhai Nand Lal, 1. 17. (Also, it appears in Tankhahnama by Bhai Nand Lal).
- [7] For detailed discussion on the meanings of these terms see, Harbans Lal, The Three Pillars of Spiritual Living, From Both sides of the Ocean, January-February Issue, 16-19, 1996.



2.3 Guru Nanak Dev's other teachings – Re self improvement

1. Vaand Chhako: Sharing whatever God has given you with others and helping those who are in need is what Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji preached all his life. This is one of the principles of Sikhism. He said, 'with the grace of the Lord, whatever you have received, share it with the needy and then consume'

2. Kirat Karo: Means, make a living honestly. One should not exploit others to enjoy self-happiness. Earning without fraud and working diligently is what he preached.

3. Naam Japo: Chant the name of 'True God'. Sri Guru Nanak Dev emphasised meditating on God's name to gain control over five evils- kama, krodh, lobh, moh, ahankar means lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego.

4. Sarbat da Bhala: Ask Lord for everyone's happiness.

Sri Guru Nanak dev emphasised the concept of universal brotherhood. He said that despite religion, caste, and gender, everyone should seek well for others and only then one can have that goodness back in return. At the end of daily Ardaas prayer, it is said, "Nanak Naam Chardi Kala Tere Bhane Sarbat da bhala", which means "Nanak with your name and blessings, may everyone in the world be happy. With this prayer, one requests the Lord for the welfare of the whole humanity and not just of our community or our family alone.

5. Speak the truth without any fear: Sri Guru Nanak Dev said to always speak the truth without any fear. He said, getting victory by suppressing falsehood is temporary and standing firmly by truth is permanent. Sticking to the truth is also one of the 'hukums' (orders) of the Guru.



2.4 Guru Nanak's Japji Saheb's first and last part

[एक ओमकार सतनामु करतापुरुखु निर्भउ निर्वैरु अकाल मूर्ति अजूनि सैंभ गुरुप्रसादि]

There is one God, eternal truth is His name, He is the Creator and pervades all His Creations, devoid of fear, enmity, immortal and beyond time, unborn, self illumined, known and realized by Guru's grace.

[पवणु गुरु पाणी पिता माता धरति महतु। दिवस राति दुइ दाइ दाया खेले सगल जगतु॥]

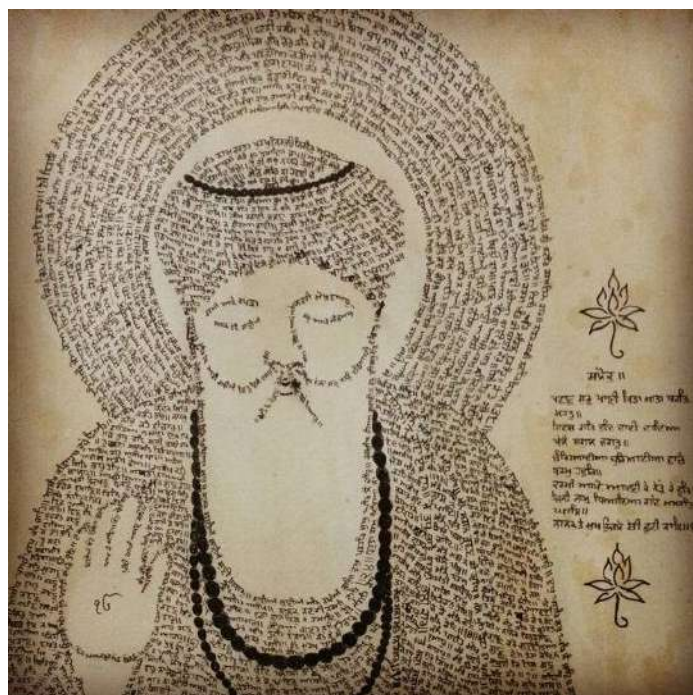
Air is the Guru (like the Gurus word, gives breath of life), Water the father and earth the great mother (as it provides our sustenance). Day and night are the two male and female nurses that watch us in infancy and in whose laps the entire world plays.

[चंगियाइयाँ बुरियाइयाँ वाचे धरमु हदूरि। करमी आपो आपणी के नेड़े के दूरि॥]

The merits and demerits of our acts (right or wrong) will be read in the presence of the righteous judge (in His court). Some shall be seated close (to Him) and some kept distant from the Lord (The false and true will be separated).

[जिनि नामु ध्याया गए मसकति घालि। नानक ते मुख उजले केती छुटी नालि॥]

Those who have pondered and meditated on His Name (worshipped Him) with devotion, have departed after hard toil. O'Nanak their faces are lit with joyful radiance (aglow with His love) and many who have sought their company shall be emancipated (liberated) along with them.



2.5 Mind, body and soul in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS)

Hardev Singh Virk

The human being is comprised of three components, Mind, Body and Soul. For a healthy person, all these components need to function in an efficient and coordinated manner. Your mind, body and soul all have to work together in harmony. What is confirmed by Gurbani is that the body, mind and soul are three distinct and necessary components that make up a person; further, that these are all the product of God and together these three separate components function in unity to excel the human being to the highest spiritual heights. Sri Guru Granth Sahib explores the relationship between mind, body and soul. Human body is obtained by good fortune after passing through a cycle of 8.4 million species as ordained in Hindu scriptures, and is considered to be a gift of God. Body needs to be nurtured as it is the abode of God. Guru Nanak considers the human body as a vehicle of soul. Prime importance is given to soul in Sikh metaphysics. Body is also called temple of God (Hari Mandir). If a man's soul is not tuned to God, he is as good as dead.

**वडै भाग्य एह सरीर पाया। मानस जन्म सबद चित लाया॥
बिनु सबदे सब अंध अंधेरा। गुरमुख किस ही बुझायेदा॥**

By great good fortune, I obtained this body; in this human life, I have focused my consciousness on the Word of the Shabad. Without the Shabad, everything is enveloped in utter darkness; only the Gurmukh understands. (SGGS, M. 3, P. 1065)

**हरि मन्दरु एह सरीर है ज्ञानि रतन प्रगट होए।
मनमुख मूल न जाणनि मानस हरि मंदर न होय॥**

This body is the Temple of the Lord, in which the jewel of spiritual wisdom is revealed. The self-willed manmukhs do not know anything at all; they do not believe that the Lord's Temple is within. (SGGS, M.3, P. 1346)

There are 105 hymns in Sri Guru Granth Saheb where connection between mind and body is elaborated. The mind and body are offered to the Guru by the devotee in utter devotion. The Lord comes to dwell in the body of the devotee and his mind and body blossom forth and flourish. The fire of ego is extinguished and a soothing effect is produced in both body and mind.

तन मन गुरु पह बेचेया मन दिया सिर नाल।

*I have sold my body and mind to the Guru, and I have given my mind and head as well.
(SGGS, M. 1, P. 20)*

सभ तन मन हरिया होया नानक हरि वसिया मन सोये।

Then, the body and mind totally blossom forth and flourish; O Nanak, the Lord comes to dwell within the mind. (SGGS, M. 4, P. 41)

चित आवे उस पारब्रह्म तन मन सीतल होए।

If you come to remember the Supreme Lord God, then your body and mind shall be cooled and soothed. (SGGS, M.5, P. 70)

Consciousness

Consciousness is the state or quality of awareness, of being aware of an external object or something within oneself. In fact, consciousness is directed outwards to objects, inwards to soul (atma). Atma is pure consciousness without any content. Atma is not different from Paramatma, the Cosmic Consciousness. Bhagat Kabir designated it as Ram ki ans (a by-product of Ram). It is the subtlest, purest essence of life

कह कबीर इह राम की अंस।

Says Kabeer, this is formed of the same essence as the Lord. (SGGS, Bhagat Kabir, P. 871)

अध्यात्म करम करे दिनु राती, निर्मल ज्योति निरंतर जाती।

Whoever does the deeds of the soul, day and night, sees the immaculate Divine Light deep within. (SGGS, M.1, P. 1039)

Human body is comprised of five elements namely air, water, fire (heat), earth and ether. After the death, these elements merge in the elements of the environs and the soul is liberated from the body for its onward journey. The birth of human is a biological process explained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, viz. from union of male sperm and female ovum.

पाँच तत् को तनु रचयो जानहु चतुर सुजान, जिहके उपजियो नानका लीन ताहि में मानु।

Your body is made up of the five elements; you are clever and wise - know this well. Believe it - you shall merge once again into the One, O Nanak, from whom you originated. (SGGS, M. 9, P. 1427)

रक्त बिंदु का एहो तन अग्नि पासि पुराण।

This body is made of blood and semen. It shall be consigned to the fire in the end. (SGGS, M. 1, P. 60)

Since the body consists of five elements (Panch Tat); hence the soul in the body has therefore been called Panch Bhoo Atma, the soul of the five elements in SGGS. It means the soul is entangled in the body and has to overcome the influence of its elements.

पंच भू आत्मा हरि नाम रस पोखै।

The soul, the subtle essence of the five elements, cherishes the Nectar of the Naam, the Name of the Lord. (SGGS, M. 5, P. 299)

पंच भू आत्मा वस करहि तां करहि निवासु

If your soul overcomes the five elements, then you shall come to have a home at the true place of pilgrimage. (SGGS, M. 3, P. 491)

Mind is considered to be an integral part of God's consciousness and it needs to be awakened to realize its true potential and origin. The mind is trapped by worldly illusion called Maya and is afflicted by ego, desire and pride. It is led astray from God consciousness and wastes its opportunity to attain liberation from the cycle of re-incarnation. The positive and negative qualities of Mind are elaborated in SGGS.

मन तू जोत सरूप है आपणा मूल पछाण।

O my mind, you are the embodiment of the Divine Light (consciousness) - recognize your own origin. (SGGS, M. 3, P. 441)

मन तू गारबि अटिया गारबि लदिया जाहे, माया मोहणि मोहया फिरि फिरि जूनि भ्वाहे।

गारबि लागा जाहि मुग्ध मन अंत गया पछुतावे, अहंकार तिसना रोग लगा बिरथा जनम गवाहे।

मनमुख मुग्ध चेतहि नाहि अगै गया पछुतावै, एहो कहै नानक मन तू गारबि अटिया गारबि लदिया जाहवे।

O mind, you are so full of pride; loaded with pride, you shall depart. The fascinating Maya has attracted you, over and over again, and lured you into reincarnation. Clinging to pride, you shall depart, O foolish mind, and in the end, you shall regret and repent. You are afflicted with the diseases of ego and desire, and you are wasting your life away in vain. The foolish self-willed manmukh does not remember the Lord, and shall regret and repent hereafter. Thus says Nanak: O mind, you are full of pride; loaded with pride, you shall depart. (SGGS, M. 3, P. 441)

Mind is also considered as an entity composed of five elements in subtle form in SGGS. It is influenced by Maya and worldly desires. It has to be liberated by grace of God.

एहो मन करमा एहो मन धरमा, एहो मन पंच तत् ते जनमा।

This mind commits its deeds of Karma, and this mind follows the Dharma. This mind is born of the five elements. (SGGS, M. 1, P. 415)

तनु जल बल माटी भया मन माया मोहे मनूरु

The body is burnt to ashes; by its love of Maya, the mind is rusted through. (SGGS, M. 1, P. 19)

The human Soul (Atma) and the Cosmic Soul (Parmatma) are intertwined and indistinguishable one from the other. Those who understand the working of their own soul are already in the realm of Supreme Soul or God. Soul (Atma) is also equated with the Creator God in the SGGS:

आतम महि राम रामु में आतमु चिनसी गुरु बिचारा

The Lord is in the soul, and the soul is in the Lord. This is realized through the Guru's Teachings. (SGGS, M. 1, P. 1153)

जिनि आतमु चिन्हया परमातमु सोई।

Those who understand their own souls, are themselves the Supreme Soul. (SGGS, M. 1, P. 421)

The experiential realization of this identification of Soul (Atma) with the Supreme Soul (Parmatma) is the summum bonum of Sikh mysticism. The purpose of human birth is to reunite the atma with Parmatma but the humans have a characteristic affliction, that of ego, which is the real cause of the gulf that is sought to be bridged. Reunion is therefore possible by giving up the ego that caused the duality and hence the separation from God:

आतमा परमात्मा एको करै, अंतर की दुबिधा अंतरि मरै।

*His soul and the Supreme Soul become one. The duality of the inner mind is overcome.
(SGGS, M. 1, P. 661)*

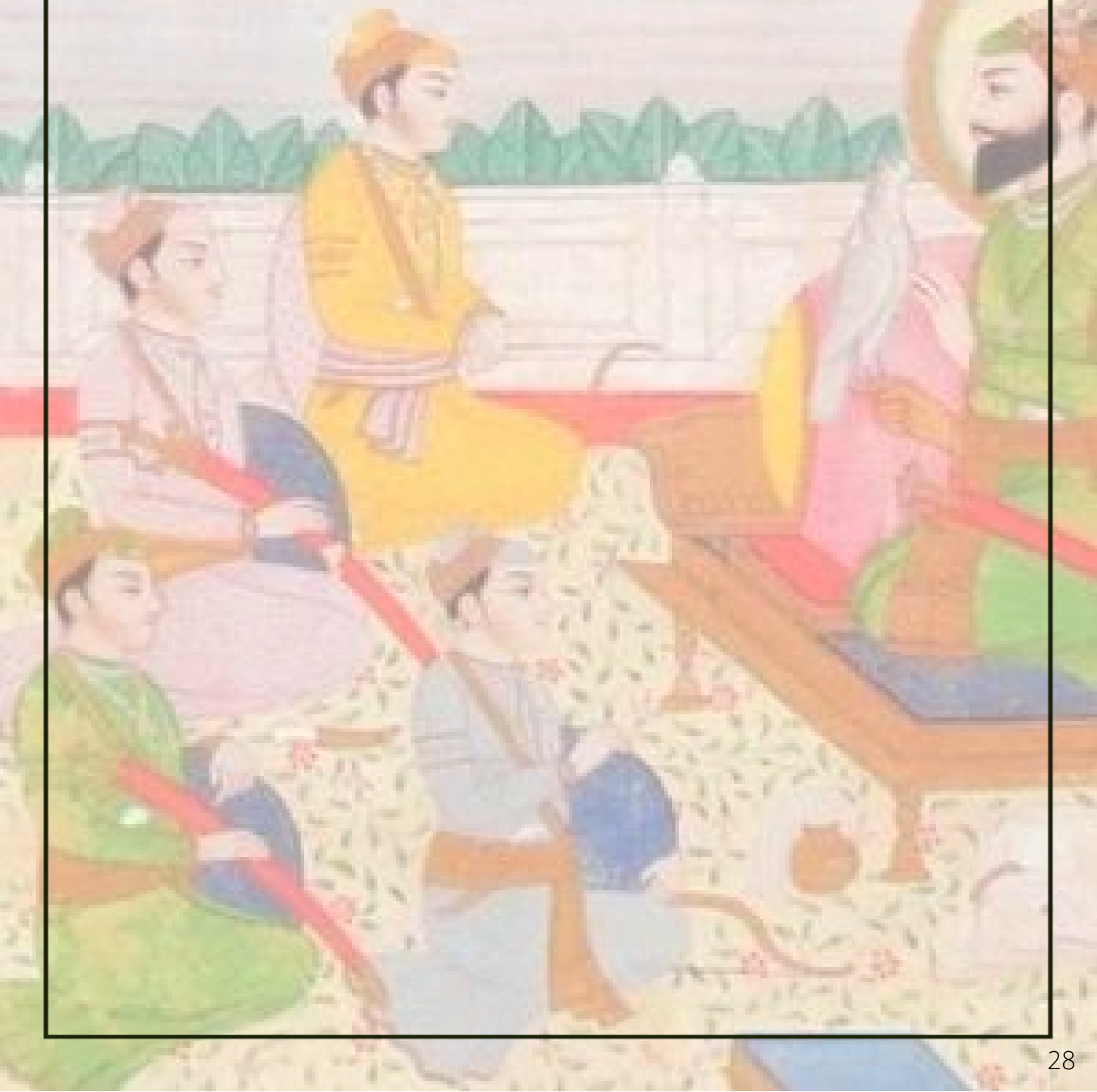


2.6 मैं राहों पे नहीं चलता मैं चलता हूँ तो राह बनते सुरजीत पातर

मैं राहों पे नहीं चलता मैं चलता हूँ तो राह बनते
युगों से काफिले आते इसी सच के गवाह बनते
यह तपती रेत कहती है कि रास्ता ठीक है मेरा
ये जलते पैर, ठरते दिल, मेरे सच के गवाह बनते
जो लौ माथे से निकलती है, वह असली ताज होती है
तवे के तख्त पर बैठकर ही सच्चे पातशाह बनते
(गुरु अर्जुन देव को जहांगीर द्वारा गर्म तवे पर बिठाया गया था)
ये पंडित राग के तो पीछे सदियों बाद आते हैं
मेरे उच्छवास ही पहले बांसुरी की साँस बनते
हमें रीत से बढ के किसी की प्रीत प्यारी है
तू हिसाब कर और लिख जितने भी मेरे गुनाह बनते
रांझे न भी होते, तब भी न बनते हम कैदों
हम या नाथ होते या फिर लुड्डन मलाह बनते
(कैदों - हीर और रांझा किस्से का खलनायक, लुड्डन-मलाह की नाव पर रांझा
हीर के गाँव जाता था। जब खैरा से हीर का विवाह हो जाता है तो रांझा नाथ योगी बनता है)
तब तक तू है दिल में हमारे मरके भी
जब तक जिस्म हमारे भी जलकर राख नहीं होते
फकीरों के लफ्ज कुछ यार, कुछ तारीख के मंजर
जब मैं घायल हो जाता, मेरी खतिर पनाह बनते
मैं इक बात जानता हूँ कि कोई शै है इस वजूद के अंदर
वो तब चमक उठती है जब सब पेड़ स्याह बनते
कभी दरिया अकेला तय नहीं करता दिशा अपनी
जमीं की ढाल, जल का वेग ही मिलजुल के राह बनाते
अचानक किसी बिंदु से चश्मा फूट पड़ता है
ये दावेदार वो दावेदार सब खामखाह बनते
मैं कुछ नादों और क्षणों का मिलन, बिंदु हूँ क्या मैं हूँ
यदि मैं कहूँ कि मैं कुछ हूँ तो कथन गुनाह बनते
यह चलता कौन है मैं कौन हूँ और कौन पूछता है
यह सोचों का सफर है जिसके लिये सीने ही हार बनते
जब तक शब्द जीवित हैं कवि जी के और मर के भी
वो केवल जिस्म होते हैं जो चिताओं में जलकर राख बनते
हमेशा सोचा था कि बनूंगा तुम्हारे प्यार का पातर
कभी न सोचा हमने कि यह बनते या वह बनते।

(अनुवादक-प्रदीप बोस)

3. How to deal with others?



3.1

Guru Nanak: One of ten greatest Indians of all time

K Natwar Singh



Guru Nanak Jayanti celebrations at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, in 2018-19. IANS

On Friday 23 November, 2018, Sikhs all over the world celebrated the 550th anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Devji (1469-1539). He was the founder of Sikh religion. I consider him among the ten greatest Indians of all time. He was a saint, scholar, poet, author, guide, revolutionary, who believed in gender equality. Some of his pronouncements have become a part of Hindi vocabulary: “Kirat Karo, namjapo, wand chhako”—hard and honest labour, meditation and share what you have. He emphasised interfaith harmony, protection of the environment. Another of his saying is “naa koi Hindu naa Musalman.” He decried caste barriers. The langar—community feeding in gurudwaras was available to everyone. He had no regard for ritualism. He interests me because of his glorious spiritualism. His life and teachings inspire me. I cannot read Gurmukhi, but I have read him in excellent English translations, the best perhaps by Khushwant Singh.

Who were Guru Nanak’s international contemporaries? Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Michelangelo (1475-1564), Raphael (1483-1520), Sant Kabir (1440-1518), Nicolaus Copernicus, (1473-1543), Martin Luther (1483-1546), Vasco da Gama (1469-1524), Erasmus (1469-1536), Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), to name the most prominent ones.

Guru Nanak's travels took him to many parts of India and West Asia. When I visited Baghdad, a priest in the main mosque referred to the Guru's visit to Baghdad.

During his lifetime he witnessed the rule of five Muslim rulers—Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489), Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517), Ibrahim Lodi (1517-1526), Babar (1526-1530) and Humayun (1530-1540).

Babar was a fanatic Muslim, who showed no mercy to Hindus. Hari Ram Gupta in Volume 1 of his, *History of the Sikhs* writes about Babar's atrocities in the town of Sayyadpur, not far away from Lahore: "The town was mostly inhabited by Hindu traders and Zamindars. They offered considerable resistance in order to save their lives, honour and property. This infuriated Babar. He ordered a general massacre of the men. All the young women were reduced to slavery. The older ones were forced to grind and cook food for the troops. The town was looted and then destroyed by fire.

Nanak and Lalo (one of the Guru's followers) were forced to carry heavy loads of looted property on their heads to the camps and grind corn (Gurudwara Chakkisaheb is located there). The barbarous treatment of prisoners in the camp, atrocities on women, broke the tender heart of Nanak. The shock and pain were too acute for him to bear. In his four hymns collectively called Babar-Vani, describes Babar's outrageous (actions) against women:

"Their tresses that adorned these lovely heads, were parted with vermillion. Have been shorn with cruel shears; dust has been thrown on their shaven heads, they lived in ease in palaces; Now they must beg by the roadside, having no place for their shelter."

Guru Nanak wished to build a community of self-respecting men and women devoted to God and to fill them with a sense of religious liberty, social equality and brotherhood for all. One of the most memorable of Guru Nanak's "exposition to God" is summed up in the basic formula called "Mul Mantra".

"Ik Omkar, Satnam, Karta Purakh, Nirbhav, Nirvair, Akalmurti, Ajuni, Saibhang, Gurprasad."
The translation is: "There is one God. God is truth. He is the creator. God is without fear. He is without animosity. He is the immortal being. He is unborn. He is self-existent. God is realised by the grace of Guru."

The population of the Sikh community in India is minuscule, yet they enjoy a pan India presence. In whatever field they function, they excel. Be it the armed forces, the civil services, law, business, medicine, Bollywood, politics, sports. The Sikh community abroad too has made its presence felt in creative and positive ways, particularly in the UK and US.

Guru Nanak was a transmogrifying saint, who transformed human life to do good and he did so, magically.



Gurdwara-Chakki Sahib, in Sayyadpur/Eimanabad, Pakistan

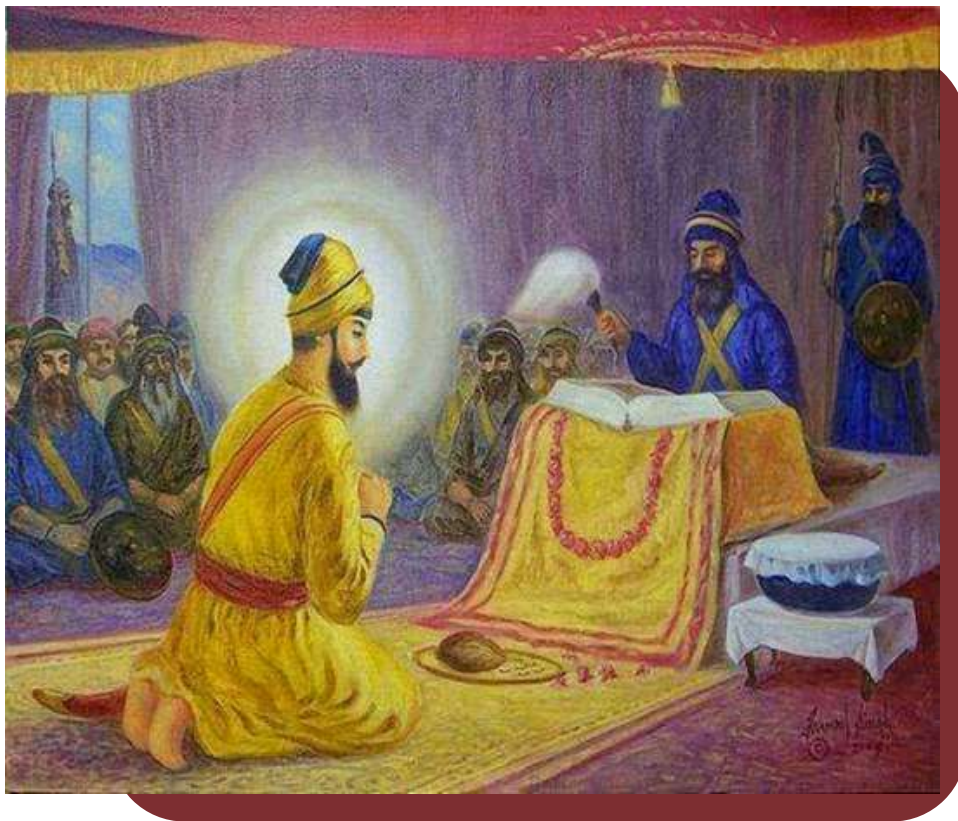


3.2 Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708)

Guru Gobind Singh was a prolific poet. He wrote the Dasham Granth, a scripture of the Sikhs. He was the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs. One of his famous couplets has been presented below:

देह शिवा बर मोहे एहे शुभ करमन ते कभ ही ना टरों, ना डरों अरि सों जब जाए लरों निश्चै कर अपनी जीत करों।
अरु सिख हों आपने ही मन कौ एह लालच हऊ गुन तउ उचरों, जब आव की औध निदान बनै अति ही रन में
तब जूझ मरुं।

Give me this boon, O God Shiva from virtuous deeds I may never refrain, fearlessly may I fight all the battles of life, determinedly may I accomplish my victories. May I instruct to my mind that, my desire be to sing of Thy glories, when this mortal life comes to an end, May I die fighting on the battlefield.



Guru Gobind Singh also wrote,

"सवा लाख से एक लडाऊँ, चिड़ियन ते मैं बाज तुड़ाऊँ, तबै गुरु गोबिंद सिंह नाम कहाऊँ।"

3.3 Bulleh Shah- The Sufi Poet

He was the most famous Punjabi Sufi-poet. Today, even after more than 250 years of his death, he is probably, as popular a Punjabi poet, as he was when he died. Syed Abdullah Shah Qadri, popularly known as Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah, was born at Pandoke village, Lahore district, in 1680 AD and died in 1758 AD. Pandoke is now called Pandoke Bhattian and is placed in district Kasur. Bulleh Shah's father was Sakhi Mohammad Dervish, who was an Imam at a Masjid in Pandoke. Bulleh Shah got his basic religious education from his father, but he looked for something else. Seeing his curiosity, his father took him to Kasur to religious scholar Hafiz Gulam Murtaza Kasuri for further education. Bulleh Shah lived like a cosmopolitan individual, living in Kasur, but journeying through ethereal skies. There is a strong historical evidence to show that Bulleh Shah was an eminent scholar of Arabic and Persian. From his compositions we can find many references to Islamic thought and mystic literature. Later, when he attained mystic realization, his erudition and learning acquired a new significance. But Bulleh Shah had to pass through a hard struggle before he could attain the inner knowledge.



Bulleh Shah

This attainment was possible only through his contact with his Murshid/Teacher or Master, Inayat Shah. The study of scriptures and other holy books had only aroused his interest and curiosity about spiritual realization. His longing for union with the Lord reached its consummation only after he met a perfect Master in the person of Shah Inayat Qadiri. Inayat Shah was a well-known Qadiri Sufi of his time. Inayat analysed the practices of the Hindus of the land and quoted extensively from the Vedic texts. It was this very reason, probably, why the poetry of Bulleh Shah never propagated hatred against any religion, but just sought ways of reaching the God. From the historical point of view the Qadiri Sufis can be traced back to the Sufi Saint Abdul Qadri Jilani of Bagdad. Jilani is also known by the names Pir Dastgir and Piran-i-Pir. Bulleh Shah himself has also given a hint that his "Master of Masters" was born in Bagdad but his own Master belonged to Lahore:

*"My Master of Masters hailed from Bagdad,
but my Master belongs to the throne of Lahore.
It is all the same. For He himself is the kite
and He himself is the string."*

Bulleh Shah's father, Shah Mohammed Dervish, was well-versed in Arabic, Persian and the holy Quran. He was a noble soul with spiritual leanings. It is said that out of the whole family, Bulleh Shah's sister had the greatest love for him, who, like her brother, remained celibate all her life, and spent much of her time in meditation. Both, brother and sister had been greatly influenced by the high moral character of their father who, out of respect for him, had been given the title "Dervish" by the local. The tomb of Bulleh Shah's father still exists in Pandoke Bhattian. Every year an urs is performed at the tomb and Bulleh Shah's kafis are sung there. In this way a tribute is paid to all three of the family, father, son and daughter and it has assumed the form of a tradition to perpetuate their memory.

Tere Ishq ne nachaya kar Thaiya Thaiya - is one of Bulleh Shah's many famous Kafis. Some of his other famous compositions are:

*I have been pierced by the arrow of love,
what shall I do?
I can neither live, nor can I die.
Listen ye to my ceaseless outpourings,
I have peace neither by night, nor by day.
I cannot do without my Beloved even for a moment.
I have been pierced by the arrow of love,
what shall I do?*

*The fire of separation is unending!
Let someone take care of my love.
How can I be saved without seeing him?
I have been pierced by the arrow of love,
what shall I do?*

*O Bullah, I am in dire trouble!
Let someone come to help me out.
How shall I endure such torture?
I have been pierced by the arrow of love,
what shall I do?
I can neither live, nor can I die.*

*Inflicting a wound you hid your face;
who has taught you such thefts, my Love?
With your fancy you captivated my heart,
but then you never showed your face.
This cup of poison I drank myself;
indeed, I was raw in wisdom!*

Bulleh Shah declares that love for the Lord has so radically changed him that his individual self or ego has been totally eliminated. He has now realized his true Self hidden behind the veil of the physical body. His identification with the Supreme Being has opened for him the floodgates of divine light. In this light no one has remained a stranger. All have become His own.

*I have got lost in the city of love;
I am being cleansed, withdrawing myself
from my head, hands and feet.*

*I have got rid of my ego,
and have attained my goal.
Thus it has all ended well.
O Bullah, the Lord pervades both the worlds;
none now appears a stranger to me.*

As for Bulleh Shah, in the transcendence of the finite to the infinite; all disputes of religion, of good and evil, disappeared. To him now all began to appear as virtuous; none seemed to him as evil or a stranger.

*Remove duality and do away with all disputes;
The Hindus and Muslims are not other than Him.
Deem everyone virtuous, there are no thieves.
For, within everybody He himself resides.
How the Trickster has put on a mask!*

Bulleh Shah further writes:

*Bulleh! To me, I am not known.
Not an Arab, nor Lahori
Neither Hindi, nor Nagauri Hindu,
Turk (Muslim), nor Peshawari
Nor do I live in Nadaun,
Bulleh! To me I am not known.*

Bulleh Shah in his indomitable style says, who knows, who I am?

*“Bulla! ki jaana mein kaun?
Na mein momin vich maseet aan
Na mein vich kufar diyan reet aan
Na mein paakan vich paleet aan
Na mein andar ved kitaab aan
Na meina rehnda bhang sharaab aan
Na mein renda masat kharaab aan
Na mein shaadi na ghamnaaki
Na mein vich paleeti paaki
Na mein aabi na mein khaki
Na mein aatish na mein paun”.*



[Click here to watch the video](#)

3.4 Human Rights –A perspective from Sikh doctrines

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Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion. It was founded during the late 15th century in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent. Its adherents are known as Sikhs. Currently, there are about 30 million Sikhs worldwide. Most of them live in the Indian state of Punjab. As per Sikh tradition, Sikhism was established by Guru Nanak (1469–1539) and subsequently led by a succession of nine other Gurus. Before his death, the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666– 1708), bestowed the status of Guru to the sacred scripture of Sikhs, Adi Granth, which is presently known as Sri Guru Granth Sahib [1]. The Adi Granth was first compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru, in 1604. Its second and final version has been the handiwork of Guru Gobind Singh, who added the hymns of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru [2], at Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, Punjab, in 1705.

The holy Sikh scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, contains 1430 pages of text in poetry form. In addition to the hymns of the six Sikh Gurus and four Sikhs, it includes hymns composed by fifteen saints (Bhagats) and eleven poet laureates (Bhats) of the Guru's court. Muslims and Hindus, Brahmins, and "untouchables" all come together in one congregation to create a universal scripture. It is a compendium of mystic, metaphysical and religious poetry written or recited between the 12th and 17th centuries in the Indian sub-continent [3]. Sri Guru Granth Sahib, through its comprehensive worldview, offers a perfect set of values and an applicable code of conduct. Its cardinal message is addressed to the welfare of all humans irrespective of their caste, color, creed, culture, and religion.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib emphasizes love, respect, empathy, and acceptance of others' existence. It prohibits us from infringing on the freedom and rights of others. The life and works of the Sikh Gurus exemplify the practicability of these ideas. Their inter-faith dialogues highlighted that human unity and oneness could be achieved through tolerance, communication, and respect for others [4].

Besides a matchless elaboration of spirituality, Sri Guru Granth Sahib enshrines a powerful expression of the message of revolutionary ideals of social welfare, human rights, multicultural distinctness, and religious freedom. In the present era, when the threats and fear of interfaith conflicts, military aggression, terrorism etc., have overpowered the human sentiments, the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib are even more relevant to resolve all these problems.

Human Rights: Human rights are benchmarks that recognize and protect the dignity of all human beings. These rights are essential to all humans, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, race, language, religion, or gender. They comprise the right to life and liberty, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom from slavery and torture, the right to education and work, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights without discrimination [5].

Sikh Gurus called for universal freedom and the establishment of the benevolent rule of justice for all. Their unique, revolutionary, and liberating philosophy of universal humanism emphasizes primal human rights, e.g., freedom, equity, dignity, and justice for all. It also supplements our current understanding of human rights.

Right to Life: Right to life means that nobody, not even the Government, can try to end one's life. It also implies that the Government should take apt measures to safeguard life by making laws to protect all and, in some circumstances, by taking steps to protect the person if his/her life is at risk [5]. Sikh doctrines strongly endorse this view about the right to life for all. Sikh Gurus proclaimed that human life is precious as it is God's gift; thereby, nobody has the right to terminate it. Guru Amar Das states:

हरि के भाणै जन्म पदारथु पाया मति उत्तम होई।

By the pleasure of the Lord's Will, the prize of this human birth is obtained, and the intellect is exalted. (M. 3, SGGS, p. 365)

Guru Nanak emphasizes that both birth and death happen as per the command of God. Thus, none has the right to interfere in this natural process.

जन्म मरणा हुक्मु पछाणु।

Understand that birth and death take place according to God's Will. (M.1, SGGS, p. 412)

Right to Food: The right to adequate food states that every man, woman, and child, alone or in a community, should always has physical and economic access to adequate food or means for its procurement [5]. According to Sikh doctrines, this right for accessibility of food to everyone is a God-given right to all, so none should be devoid of this right. Guru Ram Das proclaims it as:

विचि आपे जंत उपायुनु मुखि आपे देयि गरासु।

He (God) created the beings here (on Earth), and He also makes the food available to them. (M.4, SGGS, p. 302)

The Right to Water: Pure, clean, and good quality water is second only to oxygen as the most crucial nutrient for sustaining human life. It has an essential action in almost all primary functions of the human body. It regulates body temperature and carries oxygen and nutrients to cells.

Water is a major component of blood and lymph. It greases the walls of the arteries, cushions joints, and is crucial for metabolic reactions. It regulates the body's temperature by absorbing heat produced by physical exercise and cell metabolism. It cleans the body tissues by removing wastes and toxins. Seventy percent of our body is water. It is essential for life. Without it, one would die within days.

The average person requires from 1.5 to 3.0 liters of clean, unpolluted water daily. Without this, our bodies slowly become dehydrated. A dehydrated body is open to disease and degenerative conditions [6]. The right to water has been recognized as being derived from the right to an adequate standard of living. Therefore, it is implicitly contained in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It has also been recognized as a legally binding right in many national constitutions. The right to water includes the availability of sufficient water for personal and domestic uses, physical access within or near each household, affordability, and adequate quality of water [7]. Access to water is also an element of other rights. It can be essential to realize the rights to food and secure livelihoods for farmers or others who rely on water for their daily work. Water is a dire necessity for life to flourish. This crucial role of water is pointed out by Guru Nanak as;

पहला पाणी जीवु है जितु हरिया सभ कोई।

Firstly, water is fundamental to life. All living beings flourish by its usage. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 472) Guru Amar Das asserts that water is essential for the perpetuation of life; without it, none can survive. He articulates:

एहु जल मेरा जीउ है जल बिन रहणु न जाये।

This water is essential to my life; I cannot survive without water. (M. 3, SGGS, p. 1283). Guru Ram Das states that water is one of the blessings bestowed upon us by the Creator. Therefore, it implicitly endorses the fact that each of us has a fundamental right to the accessibility of water to maintain our lives and good health.

सभी जितु पिंडु मुखु नकु दीयां वरतण कउ पाणी।

He gave all beings souls, bodies, mouths, noses, and water to drink. (M. 4, SGGS, p. 167). Guru Gobind Singh writes:

**Jal bin jeevan hohe na kabhun,
Garab maih jeev kau gyan na hohe hain,
Jiv chintan bin cheet na hoye hain,
Ar chintan bin janam na koye hain**

Right to Private Property: In everyday life, we use many essential things that are ours. For example, everyone has the right to own property alone or jointly with others. None shall be arbitrarily divested of their property. It is a fundamental right because a person needs to be able to own what one wants without having it forcibly taken away. Without this right, one wouldn't be able to possess things [8-9]. Sikh doctrines emphasize that God has blessed us with the gifts of life and property. Guru Teg Bahadur states it as:

तनु धनु संपै सुख दियो अरु जिह नीके धाम

He (God) has given you your body, wealth, property, peace, and beautiful mansions. (M. 9, SGGS, p. 1426). According to the Sikh Gurus, to deprive others of their rights amounts to injustice. Even to covet other's things or property is sin. Guru Nanak says:

हकु पराया नानका उसु सूअर उसु गाय

To take what rightfully belongs to another must strictly be taboo as pork eating is for a Muslim and beef-eating is for a Hindu. (M.1, SGGS, p. 141) Guru Arjan encourages us to repudiate what is rightfully others.

पर धन पर दारा पर निंदा इन सिउ प्रीति निवारि

Others' wealth, others' wives, and the slander of others - renounce your craving for these. (M. 5, SGGS, p. 379)

Thus, Sikh doctrines strongly endorse the human's right to own private property.

Right for Human Dignity: The cognition of innate dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all humans is the foundation of freedom, justice, and world peace. A human being's dignity is not only a fundamental right but constitutes the genuine basis of fundamental rights. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1 states: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Thus, human dignity isn't something that people earn because of their race, caste, class, social status, or any other distinction. All human beings are born with it. Just by being human, all people deserve respect. Human rights naturally spring from that dignity [10]. The concept of human dignity isn't restricted to human rights. For centuries, world religions have recognized human dignity as we now understand it. Most religions teach that humans are essentially equal on one account or another.

In Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, it's because humans were created in the image of God, becoming children of God. Dignity is something that a divine being gives to people. In Catholic social teaching, this term is explicitly used to support the church's belief that every human life is sacred. In Hinduism and Buddhism, respectively, dignity is inherent because humans are manifestations of the Divine. In the Shvetasvatara Upanishad, it is stated, "He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the Self within all beings [11]. Buddhism begins with the understanding that humans are "rare" because they can make choices that lead to enlightenment.

Our dignity arises from this responsibility and ability, uniting all humans in their quest [12]. One's dignity includes having a sense of control, making one's own decisions, experiencing hope and meaningfulness, feelings valued as a human being, and being in a treasured and nurturing environment. When everyone is equal, they are all equally deserving of basic respect and rights. Guru Ram Das emphasizes that God's essence is pervading among us all. Thereby dignity is inherent as all humans are manifestations of the Divine. He states:

सब एक दृष्टि समस्तु करि देखै सभी आत्म रामु पछान जियो

Look upon all with equality and recognize the Supreme Soul (God) pervading among all. (M. 4, SGGS, p. 446).

Thus, every human being has been granted dignity by God as a human right. When God has given that right, taking that right away or restricting it is a crime against humanity. The gist of freedom is that humans should not have sovereignty over humans. When someone dominates another person, it leads to the dignity loss for the other person. Such a person loses the opportunity for self-determination becomes a victim of hopelessness and worthlessness. The repressed person becomes a victim of the violation of his/her personal life. Such a situation enhances one's sense of disconnection and alienation. Baba Farid, a saint-poet of Sri Guru Granth sahib, opines that it is better to die than lose one's sovereignty.

He states:

फरीदा बारि पराइये बैसणा साईं मुझे न देहि, जे तू एवै रखिस जीउ सरीरहु लेहि।

Fareed says: O Lord! do not make me live at the mercy of others. If this is my fate, it is better to let me die. (Shaikh Farid, SGGS, p. 1380) Thus, Sikh doctrines strongly advocate the right to human dignity.

Right to Equality: The right to equality connotes the absence of legal discrimination based on caste, race, religion, sex, and place of birth. It ensures equal rights for all citizens. The egalitarian principle [13-14], as laid down by Guru Nanak, advocates all human beings' equality, regardless of gender or birth. It disapproves of all distinctions of caste and color. Guru Nanak vouched for the right to equality for all by raising his voice against demarcation based on religion, race, and gender. He urged treating everyone in the same respectful way. He articulates:

गुरमुख एक दृष्टि करि देखहु घटि छि जोति समोई जियो।

As Gurmukh (Guru oriented person), look upon all as equal; in each heart, the Divine essence is contained. (M. 1, SGGS, p 599).

जानहु जोति न पूछहु जाति आगै जाति न हे।

Recognize God's essence within all and don't discriminate on the basis of social class or status. There are no classes or castes in the world hereafter. (M. 1, SGGS, p 349). Guru Ram Das emphasizes unity in diversity by proclaiming:

एको पवणु माटि सभ एका सभ एका जोति सबाईया।

All inhale the same air. All are made of the same clay. The life essence within all is the same. (M. 4, SGGS, p 96). Bhagat Ravi Das, a saint poet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib denounces the class or caste division among people as:

कायमु दायमु सदा पातशाही, दोम न सेम एक सो आही।

God's Kingdom is stable, steady, and eternal. Therein none has second or third status; all are equal there. (Bhagat Ravi Das, SGGS, p. 345).

In the egalitarian society as enunciated by Sikh Gurus, all are equal, the lowest to the highest, in the creed as in the race, in religious hopes and political rights. In this approach, women enjoy equal status with men. Sikh Gurus sought to release the people from the bondage of caste tyranny by emphasizing the unity of humankind. It has been given an explicitly social character through a series of measures adopted by the Gurus.

The establishment of the institutions of Sangat (a corporate body of the devotees), Pangat (seating of the devotees in rows on the same level), Dharamsala (a place for public worship), Kirtan (collective singing of hymns) and Langar (community kitchen) has led a powerful movement to release people from the stranglehold of the ritualistic, caste-ridden, priest-dominated and a retrogressive social order. The establishment of the institutions of langar, pangat, sangat and dharamsal are outstanding examples of social equality among the Sikhs.

Gender Equality: Having noted several rituals and traditions of his time, Guru Nanak comprehended that men frequently degraded women. Women were thought of as property and considered as lowly and unworthy. He condemned these practices. Guru Nanak spoke against gender discrimination in India's highly male-dominated environment. He opposed established orthodoxy with the radical assertion that women were worthy of praise and equal to men. Besides, God is gender neutral. It is both man and woman, and its creative aspect is portrayed as that of a mother:

आपे पुरखु आपे ही नारी।

God is both man and woman. (M. 1, SGGS, p 1020). Guru Nanak proclaimed that the same divine essence pervades through both men and women.

नारी पुरख सबई लोइ।

Among all the men and women, God's essence is pervading. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 223) Bhagat Kabir articulates that man and women are all forms of the Creator (God).

एते औरत मरदा साजे ए सभ रूप तुम्हारे

You have fashioned all these men and women, O Lord! All these are Your Forms. (Bhagat Kabir, SGGS, p. 1349). Gur Nanak emphasized that rather than being denigrated and mistreated, women should be cherished and respected. Guru Nanak proclaimed:

भंडि जमियै भंडि निमियै भंडि मंगणि वियाहु, भंडहु होवै दोस्ती भंडहु चलै राहु। भंडु मुआ भंडु भालियै भंडि
होवै बंधानु,
सो क्यों मंदा आखिये जितु जंमहि राजान। भंडहु ही भंडु उपजै भंडै बाझु न कोइ, नानक भंडै बाहरा एको सच्चा
सोइ।

We all are born of women; we are conceived in a woman's womb. To a woman, one is engaged and married. One makes friendship with a woman; future generations are born through women. When a woman (wife) dies, a person marries another one; we are bound with the world through woman. So why should we talk ill of her? From her, kings are born. From a woman, a woman is born; without women, there would be no one at all. O Nanak, God alone is without a woman. (M. 1, SGGS, p 473).

Guru Nanak and his successor Gurus ardently advocated women's participation in worship, society, and the battleground, as equals. They promoted freedom of speech, and women were urged to participate in all religious activities, including the SGGS's reading. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, allowed equality to women by admitting them into the Sangat (congregation) without any reservations or restrictions. He declared that his message is as much for women as for men. His successor, Guru Angad, the second Sikh Guru, encouraged the education of all Sikhs, both men and women. The third Sikh Guru, Guru Amar Das, disapproved of the use of the veil by women. He inspired women to take up a leadership role in society. As a practical measure, he entrusted women with overseeing some communities of disciples. Furthermore, he forbade the practices of Sati (custom of widow burning) and female infanticide and encouraged remarriage of widows. Guru Amar Das proclaimed:

सतिया एह न आखि अनि जो मड़या लगि जलनिह, नानक सतिया जाणिअनिह जि बिरहै चोट मरनिह।
Do not call them 'sati' (means: truly faithful), who burn alive on their husband's funeral pyre. Nanak says: They alone be called 'sati', who die from the shock of separation. (M. 3, SGGS, p. 787)

Noting that the custom of dowry, which led to various social evils, was highly prevalent in the strong patrilineal culture of India, the Sikh Gurus strongly condemned it. The fourth Sikh Guru, Guru Ram Das, proclaims it as:

होरि मनसुख दाजु जि रखी दिखालही सु कूडु अहंकारु कचु पाजो।
An arrogant person, who offers dowry and makes a show of it, indulges in only false egotism and a worthless exhibition. (M. 4, SGGS, p. 79)

The sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind, bestowed great respect upon women by declaring, "Woman is the conscience of man." The tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh made the Khalsa initiation ceremony open, both to men and women, proclaiming a woman being just as worthy. He bestowed the honorific "Kaur" (meaning princess) to all the baptized women. Furthermore, he accorded parity among the Khalsa, men or women, by allowing them all to keep the 5 K's. He directed the Khalsa fraternity to avoid the company of kanyapapi (a person who sins against a woman). He also interdicted Sikhs to exercise any proprietary rights over women captured in battle; they could not be kept as enslaved people or wives but were to be treated with the utmost respect. Sikh doctrines also assert that both women and men carry the same divine spirit. So, they both have an equal right to cultivate their spirituality and attain salvation.

Women can participate in all social, cultural, secular, and religious activities. In 1870s, during the Sikh revival movement, the Singh Sabha raised its voice against the female infanticide, child marriage, the practice of dowry, extravagant expenditure during marriage ceremonies, purdah system, sati practice and poor condition of widows. Gender equality has always been one of the hallmarks of Sikhism. Several women have made important contributions in the past.

Sikh history is replete with such instances which portray women as equal to men in devotion, service, bravery, and sacrifice. A few examples are the extraordinary contributions made by Bibi Nanaki Ji, Bibi Bhani Ji, Mata Khivi Ji, Mata Gujari Ji, Mata Sahib Kaur, Mai Bhago, Rani Sada Kaur, Rani Sahib Kaur, and Maharani Jind Kaur in various domains of life. And this progress is continuing even today. Nowadays, Sikh women are playing leadership roles not only in leading congregations but in several diverse fields. They join the Sangat (congregation), work with men in Langar (community kitchen), and participate in other religious and social activities in the gurdwaras. Furthermore, they enjoy the same voting rights as men to elect the members of the Gurdwara Managing Committees, which administers Sikhs' places of worship. Thus, Sikhism strongly supports the human right to equality for all irrespective of one's class, status, caste, race, religion, or gender.

Right to Education: The right to education encompasses the right to free and compulsory primary education and increasing access to secondary, technical, vocational, and higher education. Based on verifiable data, it is realized that people's right to education reduces their vulnerability to child labor, early marriage, discrimination, and other human rights abuses. It also increases their opportunities to realize other human rights, including the right to health and participation in public affairs. Education as a fundamental human right is central to UNESCO's mission. The right to education is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) [15].

Education is an empowering right. It is one of the foremost tools by which socially and economically marginalized persons and children can take themselves out of poverty and participate fully in society. Having recognized education's potential to develop our most excellent abilities, Guru Nanak encouraged his disciples to acquire it to learn about all spheres of life. However, he emphasizes that learning must include apt understanding. He asserts:

मुक्ति नहीं बिदिया बिगियानी।

*Liberation (from ignorance) does not come from learning without understanding.
(M. 1, SGGS, p 903)*

ज्ञान खड़गु लै मन सिउ लूझै मनसा मनहि समाइ हे।

With the sword of knowledge, one must destroy evil thoughts and selfish desires inherent in the mind. (M. 1, SGGS, p 1022)

The ability to read opens worlds for an individual. Without literacy, the exposure to new ideas is minimal, as is one's ability to communicate their thoughts and participate in society. The ability to read enhances the ability to access ideas and information from outside of one's own experiences, promoting cross-cultural awareness and understanding other points of view. According to many experts, education is crucial in alleviating poverty and fostering development. Guru Nanak inspires us to be well educated. He articulates:

जह ज्ञान प्रगासु अज्ञानु मिटंतु।

Wherever spiritual wisdom appears, ignorance is dispelled. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 791)

Guru Nanak emphasizes that wisdom thus acquired should be used for the benefit of society. He encourages us to adopt a generous attitude towards needy and proclaims that only through selfless service to others can one attain inner peace. He proclaims:

बिदिया वीचारी तां परोपकारी

Contemplate and reflect upon knowledge, and you will become a benefactor to others. (M. 1, SGGS, p 356)

सुखु होवै सेव कमाणिया।

You shall find peace, doing selfless service. (M. 1, SGGS, p 25)

Guru Angad was an ardent advocate for education and built several schools for children to learn, read and write. To carry forward his mission, several Sikh organizations, e.g., SGPC, Amritsar; DSGMC, New Delhi; Sikh Educational Society, Chandigarh; Chief Khalsa Diwan Charitable Society, Amritsar; Akal Academy, Baru Sahib (Himachal Pradesh), and Sikh Education Society, Hyderabad etc. have taken great measures to make education easily accessible to all. Following Guru Angad's footsteps these organizations are running over 260 schools, more than 70 colleges and four universities to date. Thus, Sikhism is largely instrumental in actively supporting the right to education for all.

Right to Work: The right to work implies that people have a right to engage or work in productive employment. They should not be barred from doing so. The right to work is contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, it is recognized in international human rights law through its inclusion in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The right to work emphasizes social, cultural, and economic development [11-12, 16]. In his hymns, Guru Nanak emphasizes that the Creator of the world has itself assigned some work to every being. Thereby, it is a fundamental human right. He says:

तुधु आपु जगतु उपाये कै तुधु आपै धंधै लाया।

You Yourself created the world, and You Yourself put it to work. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 138)

जंत उपाये धंधै सभ लाये।

Having created its beings, He (God) has put them all to work. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 434)

Guru Amar Das declares that the Creator of us all encourages us to do work.

आपि कराये करता सोइ।

The Creator Himself inspires us to work. (M. 3, SGGS, p. 124).

Guru Arjan Dev recognizing the fundamental nature of the human right to work urges us to lead a life of action and earn one's living to lead a worthwhile life. He articulates:

उदमु करेदेया जीउ तूं कमावदिया सुख भुंचु।

Live a life of action. Do work, earn your living, and thereby lead a comfortable life. (M. 5, SGGS, p. 522).

Guru Nanak Further says: घालि खाये किछु हथहु देइ, नानक राह पछाणहि सेहि।

Nanak says a person who earns his/her living working arduously; and shares it with others has discovered the path of righteousness. (M. 1, SGGS, p 1245).

Not only the right to work is recognized in SGGS, but all are encouraged to choose the right (honest work) type of work for a living. Guru Arjan says

सोइ कमु कमाइ जितु मुखु उजला।

One must do only that work, which shall bring commendation from others.

(M. 5, SGGS, p. 397)

Thus, Sikh Gurus were supporters of right actions and good deeds. They not only preached but also lived what they preached. For example, after his long travels, Guru Nanak settled himself at Kartarpur Sahib. Therein, he, for almost two decades, worked hard to earn his living via farming. His actions set up an example for others to follow. Thus, the life examples of Sikh Gurus and Sikh doctrines emphatically support human beings' right to work.

Right to Freedom of Thought and Expression: The Human Rights Act's Article 10 protects our right to hold our own opinions and to express them freely without government interference [17]. It includes the right to express our views aloud (for instance, through public demonstrations and protest) or through published leaflets, articles, books, television or radio broadcasting, works of art, the internet, and social media. The law also protects our freedom to receive information from other people by, for instance, via reading a newspaper or being part of an audience. The founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, was a strong proponent of these ideas. He encouraged people to adhere to the right of freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship for all. Guru Nanak articulates that sharing views and ideas (Freedom of thought and expression) must be a continuous process.

जब लगु दुनिया रहियै नानक किछु सुणिये किछु कहिये।

Nanak says that as long as we are in this world, we must listen to others and express our views too. (M. 1, SGGS, p 661).

Bhagat Kabir, a saint-poet of SGGS, recommends that one must share one's views with others and learn from spiritually wise persons.

सांतु मिलै किछु सुनियै कहियै

On meeting a spiritually wise person, talk to him, and listen. (Bhagat Kabir, SGGS, p. 870).

Guru Arjan Dev, however, makes us aware that one must not misuse the right to freedom of thought and expression. He emphasizes:

करन न सुनै काहु की निंदा

Our ears should not listen to condemning others. (M. 5, SGGS, p. 274).

Right to Religious Freedom: Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, favored taking a stand against the misuse or any discrimination, be it on a religious basis. The subjects must be prepared for it and not let the ruler misuse his authority. He, even, proclaims the right to die while facing the challenge for a righteous cause. He says:

जउ तउ प्रेम खेलण का चाउ, सिर धरि तलि गली मेरे आउ, एतु मार्ग पैरू धरीजै, सिरु दीजै काणी न कीजै।

If you wish to play this game of love (of God), then adapt my way of life only if you are ready to sacrifice your life for the cause. On adopting this way of life, don't bother about public criticism even if you may have to lay down your head for it. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 1412)

Guru Nanak appreciates the sacrifice of the warriors for a righteous cause. He articulates:

मरणु मुणसा सूरिया हकु है जो होइ मरनि परवाणो।

A warrior's death is commendable if it is for a righteous cause. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 579-80).

Bhagat Kabir emphasizes that a person who lays down his life for the cause of religion is a true spiritual warrior:

सुरा सो पहचानिये जो लड़े दीन के हेत पुर्जा पुर्जा कट मरे तबहुं न छाड़े खेत।

Recognize only him as a true warrior (spiritual hero) who fights in defence of a righteous cause (dharma). Such a warrior may be cut apart, piece by piece, but he never leaves the battlefield. (Bhagat Kabir, SGGS, p. 1105).

Guru Arjan Dev was martyred (burnt alive and drowned in Ravi River) by Jehangir for his religious beliefs. Thereafter, Aurangzeb martyred Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth guru, at Chandni chowk, Delhi for the same reason. Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed all his four sons fighting for his and their religious freedom in various battlefields of Punjab and ultimately he (Guru Gobind Singh) was also stabbed and butchered in Nanded (Maharashtra). Guru Gobind Singh writes in Zafarnama to Aurangzeb (in Persian):

चू काज अज हमह हीलते दर गुजसत, हलाल अस्तु बुरदन ब शमशेर दस्त।

When all attempts to restore peace prove futile and no words avail; Then, lawful is the flash of steel, and right is the sword to hail. V.22 (Patshahi 10, Zafarnama, 22/1-2).

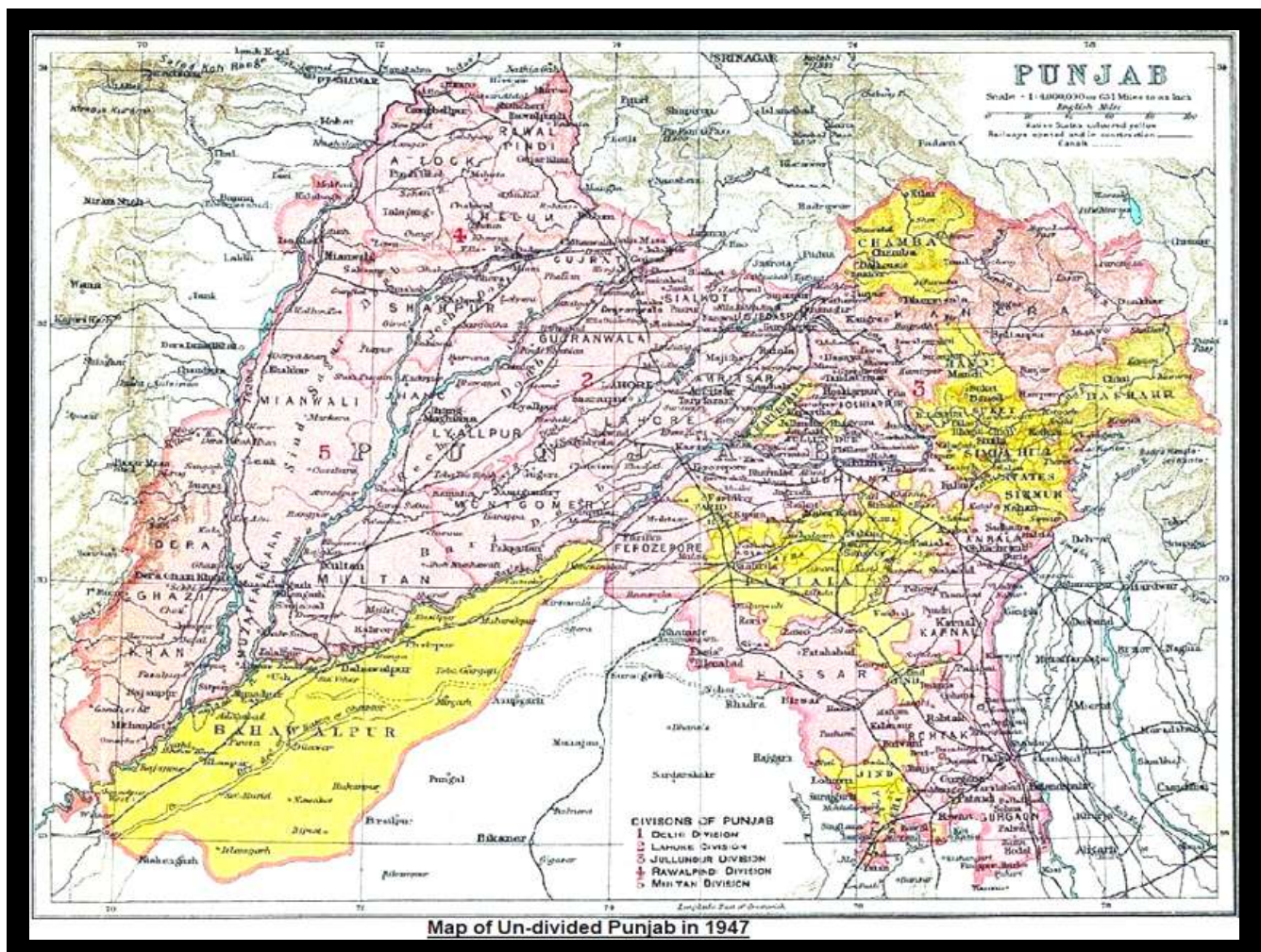
Sri Guru Granth Sahib makes invocations for other human rights like: Right to Association, Right to Assemble, democracy, Right to Justice and Right to Freedom from Slavery and Torture.

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3.5 Origin and emergence of Punjabi writers

Before talking about Punjabi language, its literature and its writers, it is necessary to share the meaning of Punjab, its area and population, as well as its unique geographical position as the northern border state of India. Punjab means a land of five rivers. A little more than two lakh and five thousand square kilometers make the Punjab province of Pakistan that inhabits about ten crore Punjabi people; who write Punjabi in Shahmukhi script. India's Punjab is about one fourth of Pakistani Punjab in area and is slightly more than fifty thousand square kilometers, in area. India's Punjab inhabits about three crore Punjabi speaking people, who use Gurmukhi script to write this language. Five Rivers of Punjab are: Satluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum. In Indian Punjab only Satluj, Beas and Ravi rivers flow – thus raises the ground water level of Punjab and makes it granary of India. Pakistani Punjab has Chenab (Jhana) and Jhelum rivers.



However, all these five rivers finally meet to make Sindh or Indus River, in Pakistan. Harappa, the famous Indus Valley archeological site is located in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Punjab was the north frontier state of India; hence most of the foreign invaders, including Alexander, Timur, Chagtai-Mongol and Babur attacked India through Punjab. Punjabi language developed as a distinct and separate language from Paishachi Prakrit, a spoken vernacular dialect of northern India. It also drew many words from degenerated form of Sankrit. It is believed that the Nath Yogis over three to four centuries, between 8th and 11th century developed the rudimentary Punjabi language and probably Landa script (a modified form of Sharda script which originated from Brahmi script) from which Gurmukhi script was developed by Guru Angad Dev between 1540 and 1550 AD.

Guru Granth Sahib (GGS), the first scripture of the Sikhs is a collection of sayings by the Sikh Gurus and some other renowned mediaeval poets like Shaikh Farid, Kabir, Ravidas, Namdev and others, has been written in Gurmukhi. The first manuscript of GGS was finalized by Guru Arjan Dev in 1604 AD and was called Adi Granth. However, Punjabi language was initially written in Persian script, much before the origin of Gurmukhi Script. Later poets like Bulleh Shah wrote in Shahmukhi script (like Urdu, Perso-Arabian).



The Hillock called Tilla Jogian, in district Jhelum, Pakistani Punjab, where the Yogi Nath sadhus lived from 8th century to 11th century and developed the first generation of spoken Punjabi and probably the Landa script, from which Gurmukhi script evolved.

Saikh Farid, also called Baba Farid Shakar Ganj (sweet like sugar), a renowned sufi-poet is acknowledged the first writer of Punjabi language. He wrote in Persian script. He was born in a village near Multan. He lived between 1173 and 1266 AD. Shaikh Farid later Shifted to Pak Pattan (now a district), near Sahiwal and made his head quarter there.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਜੇ ਤੂ ਅਕਲ ਲੀਤੀਫੁ ਕਾਲੇ ਲਿਖੁ ਨਾ ਲੇਖ
ਆਪਨਏ ਗਿਰੀਵਾਨ ਮਹਿ ਸਿਰ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਕਰ ਦੇਖੁ ।

*Farid says if you are a wise man with deep thoughts, you will not write about black deeds,
You will rather keep your head down and look deep inside your own heart.*

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਜੋ ਤੈ ਮਾਰਨਿ ਮੁਕਿਕੀਯਾँ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨ ਮਾਰੇ ਧੁਮ੍ਮਿ
ਆਪਨਏ ਘਰ ਜਾਇਏ ਪੈਰ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਦੇ ਚੁਮ੍ਮਿ

*Oh Farid, if you feel like punching, please don't counter punch them.
You rather kiss their feet and go back home peacefully.*

Farid says: ਬਿਰਹਾ ਬਿਰਹਾ ਆਖਿਏ, ਬਿਰਹਾ ਤੂ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ, ਜਿਸ ਤਨ ਬਿਰਹਾ ਨ ਉਪਜੇ ਸੋ ਤਨ ਜਾਨ ਮਸਾਨ

*Longing, longing, we sing of, longing- thou art king
The body without longing is, but a corpse*

After Shaikh Farid, came the towering figure of Guru Nanak He wrote extensively in his life time, which was between 1469 and 1539 AD. He did not write in Persian and Gurmukhi was yet not developed. Guru Nanak used the Landa script (precursor of Gurmukhi) to write.



Sheikh Farid



Guru Nanak

दुध बिनु धेनु पंख बिनु पंखी उतभुज कामि नाही
किआ सुलतानु सलाम विहूणा अंधी कोठी तेरा नामु नाही
की बिसरहि दुखु बहुता लागै, दुखु लागै तूं विसरु नाही।

*Cows without milk, birds without wings and frogs without water are worthless
What is the worth of a king without many men saluting him?
Similarly, if a man's heart does not have a place for HIM
This man can't have His support to forget his sorrows
And his sorrows are apt to never forget Him.*

चोरु सलाहे चीतू न भीजै, जे बदी करै ता तसु न छीजै
चोर की हामी भरे न कोई, चोरु किया चंगा क्यूं होई
सुणि मन अंधे कुत्ते कुड़ियार, बिणु बोलिये बुझीए सचियार

*A thief's admiration does not make one happy, if the thief denounces, nothing is lost
No body supports a thief , no deeds of a thief are good
Listen, oh dog-like blind and false mind,
the true-one knows what it is, even without telling Him.*

सहज भाए मिलियै सुखु हौवै
गुरुमुखि जागै नींद न सोवै
सुन सव्दु अपरिंपरै धारै
कहते मुक्तु सब्दि निस्तारै
गुरु की दिख्या से सचि राते
नानक आपू गवाये मिलन नहीं भ्राते।

*Guru's words of wisdom bring happiness to the soul readily. When you incessantly hear these
words of God's praise and get initiated by the Guru, your wanderings end and you find the
solace of the truth.*

Farid-Nanak Model

I D Gaur talks about the Farid-Nanak Model or Paradigm. Guru Nanak (1469-1539) who taught us in the sixteenth century the democratic and scholarly tradition of dialogue: **“As long as we are in this world, Nanak We should listen and speak to others. (Guru Granth Sahib”** [GGS]: 661) It was Baba Nanak who visited Pakpattan to collect the bani of the first Panjabi Sufi-poet, Baba Farid (1173-1265), and bequeathed to us the literary and philosophical legacy of Panjab. Farid had pronounced in the thirteenth century: **“O Farida! Don’t be too eager to revile the dust. For dust is simply beyond compare. Battered down under the feet of the living It rises to cover us all, when we’re dead and gone”** (GGS: 1378). The above cited saloks point out that both the eminent poet-philosophers of Punjab, Baba Farid and Baba Nanak were not in favour of a monologue. They preached the significance of one’s primordial cultural space (khaq or mitti) as well as of dialogue or exchange of ideas and opinions.

Farid and Nanak, as their above cited saloks indicate, inspire a historian to journey the domain of people’s literature and culture in order to be acquainted themselves with those signifiers and mileposts that remain subdued and fossilized under the shadow of a prosaic and linear history/discourse of literature and culture. In other words, Farid and Nanak offer a paradigm for understanding and writing the history of Panjab, the land of the five rivers that evolved its syncretic social, cultural, linguistic and devotional traditions. Farid-Nanak paradigm thus enables a historian to meet and hear the Panjab people and their poets telling their own story in their own words.

Next significant voice of Punjabi poetry was of Shah Hussain. Here is a kafi of Shah Husain (1539-1599), a Panjabi Sufi poet of Lahore whose life span coincides with the period which is considered as ‘the evolution of the Sikh panth’ under the patronage of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev. Guru Arjan Dev has been a very prolific and powerful poet and Guru Granth Sahib (GGS) has 2218 hymns written by him. However, here we are referring to Shah Hussein. Let us read his kafi:

*Wear the shawl (salu) of equanimity,
The shawl of equanimity.
My shawl is high-priced,
Many women have come to see it,
All have left with praise.
I hang my shawl on the peg,
The neighbour comes to borrow it, And it cannot be given.
The shawl has come direct from Kashmir,
Brought through the snows,
It will go its way, too.*

*The shawl has come direct from Gujarat,
 I am afraid of the first night,
 Afraid of how it passes.
 The shawl has come direct from Multan,
 The Lord knows the longing in my heart,
 As I sleep with my arms round His neck.
 The shawl has come direct from Karnal,
 Nobody knows my innermost feeling,
 To whom shall I go and tell.
 The shawl is coupled with the scarf;
 Shall happen what God wishes.
 It cannot be changed into something different.
 All wear shawls, like the branches of the tree,
 But none is equal to Thee.
 The shawl will lose its colour,
 That is not coming back to this world,
 Which we leave after much wandering.
 My shawl is of wool (unni da),
 I have heard of the Sham of Brindaban [Lord Krishna],
 the way to whom is hard.
 Says Husain, the mendicant,
 I am stranded in the wood for the night,
 So uncaring is the Lord (trans. Sekhon 1996: 163)*

It is said that the term 'Sufi' was first applied to Muslim ascetics who attired themselves in coarse garments of suf which is an Arabic word for wool. In the said kafi Shah Husain vernacularizes his tasawwuf (divinity). He communicates it in his mother tongue (Panjabi). He tells that the fabric of his shawl (salu) is of unn which also means wool in the Panjabi vernacular. Salu is a scarlet embroidered auspicious headgear (dyed in madder). Madder in Panjabi vernacular is called majeeth. It is worn by a Panjabi maiden on the occasion of her wedding day. Shah Husain was a virgin/celebate Sufi who throughout his life remained robed in red. Hence, he was popularly known as Lal (Red) Husain. The significance of Shah Husain's scarlet salu and of the latter part of his name, i.e. 'Husain', needs to be comprehended in order to characterize the above cited kafi as a literary archive of the cultural history of Panjab.

Shah Hussain also wrote one line Kafis like below, too:

माये नी माये किहनूं आखां, दर्द बिछोड़े दा हाल नी

*O mother O mother, who do I tell,
about this pain of separation or*

सूलां मार दिवानी कीती, बिरहों पिया साडे ख्याल नी

*Driven mad with spikes,
Pain of separation fills my thoughts*

After Shah Hussein, four major Punjabi poets wrote in Shahmukhi or Perso-Arabic script, akin to the one used for writing Urdu. These poets were: Sultan Bahu (1630-1691), Bulleh Shah (1680-1758), Waris Shah (1722-1799) and Shah Mohammad (1780-1862).

Sultan Bahu Writes:

*"Rise, O moon, And spread your light across the heavens;
The stars remember you in silent prayers, Their hearts glimmering with hope.*

*Now like beggars, We roam the alleyways of earthly life,
When once in our own Homeland, We were merchants of rubies.*

*O, may no one ever have to leave his own home,
For one is not worth a piece of straw In this alien land!*

*They need not clap their hands To startle us out of this world,
O Bahu; We are already disposed to fly back To our long-lost Home".*

Bahu also writes about city of Baghdad:

The City Of Baghdad

*The city of Baghdad is graced With tall,
elegant cypresses,
My fond memories of that fair city.
Tear my heart to shreds,
Like waste cloth in a tailor's shop.
Wearing a cloak made with these shreds,
I will join the beggars in the lanes of Baghdad
And beg for alms, calling out:
'O Meeran, Meeran, my beloved Master! '*

Shah Mohammad, in his long poem Jangnama, wrote in detail about the Anglo-Sikh War. Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) wrote his Dasham Granth (in Gurmukhi) in the last part of the 17th century and in the first decade of the 18th century, but it was completed by a follower of Guru Gobind Singh called Seva Das, in the year 1741, much after the former's death. Guru Gobind Singh also wrote a detailed letter to Aurangzeb in Persian verse called (Zafarnama – An Epistle of Victory, in 1705). Some of the quotes from Dasham Granth (the second scripture of the Sikhs) are:

- Be loyal to your spouse and do not look at or dream of another ever. Be vigilant and stay on the righteous path. Don't let passion and desires dictate your conduct in life.

- Everyone was falling at Ram Chander Ji's feet when he came back from banishment, but he fell at his mother's feet. Guru Gobind Singh Ji emphasizes that one can be the greatest and most respected person in the world, but a mother is greater still *Falling at the feet of someone or touching someone's feet is an act of giving that person the utmost respect.*

- Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji says it is the first and foremost duty of an offspring to serve their parents. It is the greatest deed possible for an individual to give up worldly possessions but even that is not equivalent to serving one's parents.

Presented below are two poems of Sultan Bahu and two stanzas by Shah Mohammad, from Jangnama :

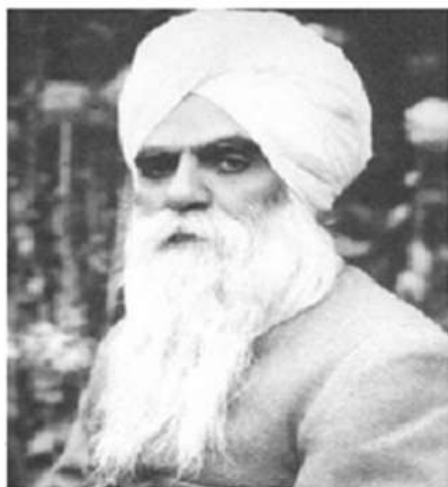
महांबली रणजीत सिंह होया पैदा
नाल जोर दे मुल्क हिलाय गया
मुल्तान, कश्मीर, पिशौर, चंबा
जम्मू, कांगड़ा कोट निवाय गया
तिब्बत देश, लद्दाख ते चीन तोड़ीं
सिक्का आपणे नाम चलाये गया
शाह मुहम्मदा जाण पचास बरसां
हच्छा रज्ज के राज कमाय गया।

शेर सिंह गद्दी उठे आन बैठा
राणी कैद करके किले विच पाई
घर बैठयां रब ने राज कीता
ओह तां मल्ल बैठा सारी पातशाही
बरस होया जद ओसनूं कैद होयां
राणी दिल दे विखे जो जिच्च आही
शाह मुहम्मदा मार के चंद कौरां
शेर सिंह ने गलों बलाय लाही।

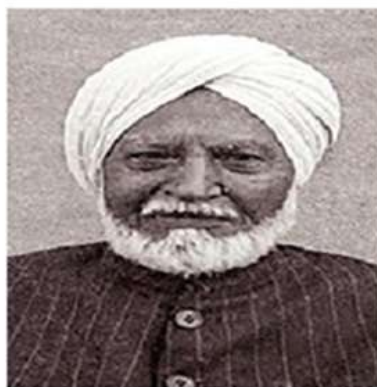
Bulleh Shah of 17th century, Waris Shah of 18th century and Shiv Kumar Batalvi of the 20th century are called three people's poets of Punjab.

Guru Granth Sahib is the first major book in Punjabi, written in Gurmukhi script. The tradition of writing poetry and prose in popular culture started in Gurmukhi very late. Bhai Vir Singh and Dhani Ram Chatrik were the two well-known first generation Punjabi writers (born before 1890) of Gurmukhi script. Bhai Vir Singh's (1872-1957) 'Sundari' is the first modern Punjabi novel written in Gurmukhi in 1898. Bhai Vir Singh wrote 6-7 novels before he started writing poetry in 1920. Dil Tarang was his first anthology of poems. Thereafter he wrote six more anthologies of poems. Dhani Ram Chatrik (1876-1954),

Vir Singh's friend and contemporary, is the second modern Punjabi writer who followed Vir Singh's tradition of writing in Gurmukhi. Chatrik published nine anthologies of poems. Fullan the Tokri (A Basket of Flowers) was his first book that got published in 1904. Prof. Puran Singh (1881-1931) was the third famous writer of this generation. He was a chemical engineer and a polyglot, who wrote in Hindi, Punjabi and English. He wrote more than 20 books, seven of which are in Punjabi. He wrote at least five poems extolling Punjab and its virtues.



Bhai Vir Singh (Wikipedia)



Dhani Ram Chatrik (Wikipedia)



Puran Singh (Wikipedia)

Famous writers of the second generation (born after 1890 and before 1930) of modern Punjabi (Gurmukhi) literature would number about a dozen. Professor Mohan Singh (1905-1978) and Amrita Pritam (1919-2005) were eminent poets. Dr. Harbhajan Singh (1920-2002) emerged a little later than these two poets. But Dr. Harbhajan Singh, with 19 anthologies of poems to his name, was a very prolific poet and was also a renowned critic under whom many stalwarts like Attar Singh and Satinder Singh Noor did Ph.D. in Punjabi literature from Delhi University. Gurbax Singh Preetlari (1895-1977) and Nanak Singh (1897-1971) were two reputed prose writers of the second generation. While, Gurbax Singh is famous for his literary magazine Preetlari and for starting a neighborhood for Punjabi writers' living – Preet Nagar, near Amritsar; Nanak Singh (1897-1971) became a famous novelist.

His novels 'Pavittar Paapi' and 'Chitta Lahu' were very popular. Other reputed fiction writers of the generation were: Sant Singh Sekhon (1908-1997), Sujan Singh (1909-1993), Kartar Singh Duggal (1917-2012), Surinder Singh Narula (1917-2007), Jaswant Singh Kanwal (1919-2020), Santokh Singh Dhir (1920-2010) and Kulwant Singh Virk (1921-1987). Besides, there were two reputed Punjabi playwrights of this generation. They were: Balwant Gargi (1916-2003) and Bhai Gursharan Singh (1929-2011).



Amrita Pritam

I asked Mohan Singh (1905-1978), when he was emeritus professor of Punjabi literature in Punjab Agricultural University in 1976, "How many people read his famous anthology of poems – Sawe Pattar or Green Leaves, when it got published in 1936?" He said, "Very few. But hundreds listened to my poems in mushairas." I asked him, "Why?" He answered, "Because Very few people could read gurmukhi then, but everybody understood Punjabi." However, by 1976, almost everybody in Punjab (India) could read gurmukhi, hence Shiv Kumar Batalvi was read by almost everybody, I knew.

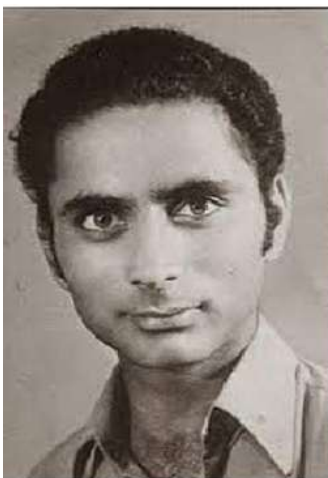


Prof. MOHAN Singh

Sant Singh Sekhon

The third generation of modern Punjabi (Gurmukhi) writers (born after 1930 and before 1962) would number around seventy. However, many of them migrated to UK, USA and Canada. But they still write in Punjabi. About 30 writers of this generation became very famous. Prem Prakash (born 1932), Gurdial Singh (1933-2016), Ajit Cour (born 1934), Gulzar Singh Sandhu (born 1935), Dalip Kaur Tiwana (1935-2020), Kirpal Kazak (born 1943), Waryam Singh Sandhu (born 1945), Prem Gorkhi (1947-2021) and Balbir Madhopuri (born 1955) - have been the most famous fiction writers of this generation.

Attar Singh, Tejwant Gill, Harjeet Singh Gill and Satinder Singh Noor have been reputed literary critics of this generation. Dr. Atamjit Singh (born 1934) and Dr. Sawarajbir (born 1958) have been two famous playwrights. This generation produced three pre-eminently famous poets, viz. Shiv Kumar Batalvi (1936-1973), Surjit Patar (born 1945) and Pash (1950-1988). Other well known poets of this generation are: Mohanjit (born 1938), Sant Ram Udasi (1939-1986), Jagtar (1935-2010), Sohan Singh Misha (1934-1986), Lal Singh Dil (1943-2007), Amarjit Chandan (born 1946), Manjit Tiwana (born 1947). Gurbhajan Gill (born 1953) and Sukhpal (born 1960) also became quite famous poets.



Pash



Surjit Patar



Shiv Kumar Batalvi

Children's stories were written by many writers of this generation. Joginder Kairon, Rama Rattan and Janmeja Johl are some of the children story writers. Meanwhile, some Punjabi Ghazal writers like Takht Singh, Ajaib Chitrakar and Randhir Singh Chand too became renowned.

3.6 Revolutionary Paighams of Bhagat Singh

भगत सिंह के पैगाम

पैगाम -1: इन्कलाब जरूर आयेगा

पैगाम -1: इन्कलाब जरूर आयेगा
मुझे कल फाँसी होगी
परन्तु मैं इन्कलाब जिन्दाबाद का नारा
अपने देश के कोने कोने से सुन रहा हूँ
मैं इस गुलाम देश के लिये
इन्कलाब का मूल मंत्र बन गया हूँ
मुझे मालूम है कि हमें फाँसी लगने के बीस-पच्चीस बरसों में ही
भारत से साम्राज्यवाद का अन्त हो जायेगा
और हमारे मुल्क में स्वराज आ जायेगा
फिर शायद शुरू होगा -
गदर पार्टी के कुछ नेताओं की सोच जैसा
अमरिकी बहु-पार्टी जैसा लोकतंत्र
जिसे देश के पूंजिपति चलायेंगे
मुनाफाखोरों और अरबपतियों की तादाद देश में लगातार बढ़ती रहेगी
और भारत प्रगतिशीलों की श्रेणी में आ पहुँचेगा
लेकिन देश से गरीबी नहीं खत्म होगी
क्योंकि पूंजि ओर मुनाफे की जड़ यानि मजदूरों का शोषण कायम रहेगा
वे कहेंगे -
खोज, तकनीकी और दिमाग की ताकत से
हमने पूंजि कमाई है
परन्तु वह एक कोरा झूठ होगा।

मुझे आज ही आवश्यकता है -
सुखदेव, चन्द्रशेखर, बटुक और राजगुरु जैसे हजारों स्वयंसेवकों की
जो देश के हर कोने में जा जाकर अलख जगायें क्रांति की
इन्कलाब के शुरूआती सिपाही चाहिये मुझे -हजारों में नहीं लाखों में
ये सभी लोग काम करेंगे और जागरूक करेंगे -
कामगारों, मजदूरों और छोटे किसानों को ।
मेरी पैदाईश से एक साल पहले ही
कलकत्ता के अधिवेशन में दादा भाई नारोजी ने स्वराज का नारा लगाया था

जिस साल मैं पैदा हुआ -
उसी साल मेरे पिता जी को नेपाल की जेल से रिहा कर दिया गया
और मेरे चाचा अजीत सिंह भी बर्मा की जलावतनी से छूट गये
मेरी दादी खुश थी -
कहती भागों वाला भगत सिंह हमारे घर में पैदा हुआ है
दादा जी ने -जब मैं केवल पाँच बरस का था
तो ब्राह्मणों के बच्चों की तरह मुझे जनेऊ पहनाया
और कहा - यह तेरी देश के लिये जिन्दगी कुर्बान करने की निशानी है
मेरी पैंट की बाईं जेब में सदा मिट्टी का वह छोटा सा टुकड़ा विद्वान रहता
जिसे मैं जनरल डायर के अत्याचार की निशानी के तौर पर
14 अप्रैल 1991 को जलियाँवाला बाग से उठा लाया था
इस तरह एक आम बच्चे से मेरी देश के जागरूक क्रांतिकारी बच्चा होने की नींव पड़ी।
मेरा निर्माण ही कुछ इस भाँति हुआ कि
मेरे भीतर का तमाम लहू का तत्त्व जल गया
और उस में डगमगाते सभी अणु-परमाणु
गर्म राख में तब्दील हो गये
और उस आग ने मुझे पागल बना दिया
जिसे जेलों में कैद कर के नहीं रखा जा सकता था।

मैं तेईस साल इन्कलाब के लिये जीवित रहा
कल से मैं नहीं रहूँगा
परन्तु मेरी कुर्बानी को हिन्दोस्तान
मेरे मरने के तेईस सदियों बाद भी याद रखेगा
मैं बार बार भारतीयों की रूहों को जागरूक करता रहूँगा
और उन्हें कहूँगा -
चाहे हजार साल ही क्यों न लग जायें
देश में इन्कलाब आना चाहिये
मुकम्मल, निरंतर और सम्पूर्ण इन्कलाब
वह जादू जिसे इन्कलाब कहते हैं
वह भारत में जरूर आयेगा।

(भगत सिंह और उनके साथियों के दस्तावेज, सम्पादक जगमोहन सिंह, चमन लाल, 1986, राजकमल प्रकाशन, कुल पृष्ठ 424,
पढ़ने के उपरान्त लिखी कविता)

पैगाम -2: सुखदेव, तुम आत्म-हत्या नहीं करोगे

सुखदेव, तुम्हारा खत कई बार पढ़ा। परन्तु तुमने आत्म-हत्या नहीं करनी, तुम्हें याद होगा एक शाम हमने शहनशाही कुटिया में खुदकुशी के मुद्दे पर लम्बी चर्चा की थी। तब तुमने कहा था कि आत्म-हत्या करना कायरता है और तुम कोई कायर व्यक्ति नहीं हो। लेकिन अब तुम्हें क्या हुआ है ? तुम्हें लगता है कि हमें मिली फाँसी की सजा टल जायेगी और हम चौदह बरस की लम्बी जेल काटेंगे। तुम उस उम्र कैद की जलालत से बचने हेतु अब आत्म-हत्या की बात करने लगे हो। अब समय आ गया है कि हम पूरे देश को अपनी नेतृत्व क्षमता को दिखायें, नाकि खुदकुशी करके अपनी पीठ दिखायें।

भाई, तुम भूल जाओ कि हमारी, तुम्हारी और मेरी फाँसी, कभी रुक सकती है। अंग्रेजों के मुताबिक मुलजिम्ओं और मुलजिम्ओं के मददगारों को एक ही सजा मिलती है। असेंबली बम धमाके के केस में मैं मुलजिम हूँ और तुम मेरे मददगार। इस केस में न कोई जख्मी हुआ और न ही कोई नुक्सान हुआ। अतः इस केस में हम दोनों को उम्र कैद की सजा मिल सकती है। लेकिन सांडर्स-कत्ल केस में भी मैं मुलजिम हूँ और तुम मेरे मददगार। सुखदेव, सांडर्स-कत्ल केस में हम दोनों को हर हालत में फाँसी की सजा ही मिलेगी।

भाई सुखदेव, हमने सोच समझ कर तथा योजना बना कर ही दोनों केसों को अंजाम दिया था। हम जब जेल गये तो हम सभी ने भारतीय जेलों में राजनैतिक कैदियों के ऊपर हो रहे जुल्मों के खिलाफ आवाज बुलंद करने हेतु इकट्ठे होकर, सामूहिक भूख हड़ताल आरंभ की। बड़े दुःख की बात है कि इस दौरान भाई जीतेन्द्र नाथ दास 63 दिनों की लम्बी भूख हड़ताल के पश्चात् स्वर्गवासी हो गये। तब मुझे भय लग रहा था कि कहीं हम सभी उस लंबी भूख हड़ताल की वजह से न मर जायें। परन्तु भाई जीतेन्द्र की शहादत के बाद पूरे देश में इतना हो-हल्ला मचा कि अंग्रेजों ने मजबूर होकर हम सभी राजनैतिक कैदियों की मांगे मान ली और हमें जेल के तमाम हक देने लगे। अंग्रेजों के डॉक्टरों और नर्सों के द्वारा हमारी शिराओं में और ट्यूबों के कृत्रिम तरीकों द्वारा हमारे पेट में भोजन पहुँचाने से हम बच गये। ऐसे हम लम्बा संघर्ष करके ही जेल में अपने अधिकार पाने में सफल हुए। यदि हमें उम्र-कैद हो भी गई तो ऐसे ही अपने हकों की खातिर हम आन्दोलन और करते रहेंगे। लेकिन हम तो पहले से ही जानते हैं कि अंग्रेजी साम्राज्यवाद हमें खास तौर पर मौत का तोहफा ही देने वाली है। हम बड़े धैर्य से उस फाँसी की सजा की प्रतीक्षा करेंगे।

भाई सुखदेव, वैसे उम्र में तो तुम मुझसे चार माह बड़े हो, पर बात बच्चों वाली करते हो। तुम कहते हो कि उम्र-कैद के जुल्म और जेल के संकीर्ण माहौल के पश्चात् तुम्हारे विचारों की मजबूती और दलेरी बहुत कमजोर पड़ जायेगी, तभी तुम आत्म-हत्या कर लेना चाहते हो। भाई मेरे, जब हम भारतीय नौजवान सभा में शामिल हुए थे, तब भी देश में माहौल क्रांतिकारी और आन्दोलनकारी नौजवानों के पक्ष में नहीं होता था। क्या तुम भूल गये हो कि कैसे जारशाही ने रूस में हजारों इन्कलाबियों को दर्जनों सालों तक कैद करके उनके ऊपर हजारों जुल्म ढाये? परन्तु वे सभी बहादुर थे। उन्होंने अपने ऊपर ढाये तमाम जुल्म सहें और आज वे सब जेल से बाहर निकल देश की अगवाई कर रहे हैं। परन्तु, इस बीच, एक बात सदा याद रखना कि हमें फाँसी की सजा मिलना अटल है। सिर्फ इन्कलाब आने के बाद ही सभी इन्कलाबियों को माफी मिल सकती है और हमारी फाँसी की तय हुई तिथि से पहले इन्कलाब आना संभव नहीं लगता।

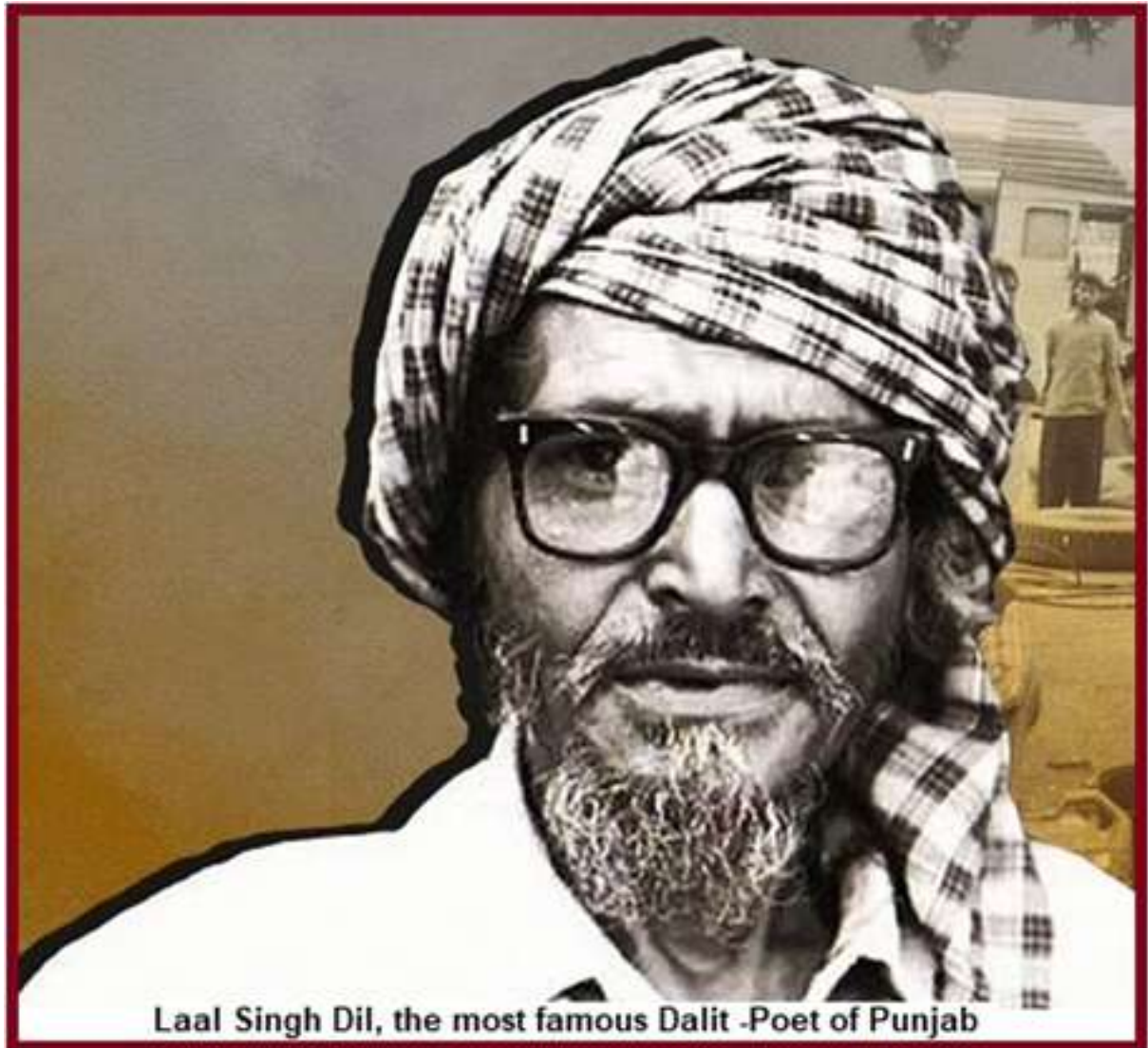
हम जब बमों के कारखाने में बम बना रहे थे तो हम में से कईयों के दिमाग में अचानक यह खयाल आया कि हम बमों के साथ साथ अपने पास तेज जहर की पुड़ियाँ भी रखें और बमों के धमाकों के बाद हम सभी जहर खा लें ताकि अंग्रेजों को केवल हमारी लाशें ही मिलें। तब तुमने ही इस बात की सबसे जोरदार खिलाफत की थी। अब तुम्हें क्या हो गया है? देख वीर सुखदेव, हम हैं भौतिकवादी विचारधारा के लोग। हम न ही ईश्वर को, न पुनर्जन्म को, न नर्क-स्वर्ग को, न ही दंड तथा इनाम वाले फलसफे पर यकीन करते हैं। यदि हमारा कोई धर्म है तो वह है अपने मकसद की पूर्ति - यानि देश की बढ-चढ कर सेवा करना। हमारे जैसे लोग कभी भी आत्म-हत्या के बारे में नहीं सोचते।

मेरी आखरी राय यह है कि हम तभी सजा-माफी का स्वागत करें , जब पूरा देश और पूरा विश्व हमारी फाँसी के खिलाफ एक जुबान में अंग्रेजों से माँग करे और हमारी देश की जनता के दिमाग में हमारी फाँसी के विषय में कभी भी न मिटने वाले निशान अंकित हों और अंग्रेजी साम्राज्यवाद घबराकर हमें फटाफट फाँसी पर चढ़ा दे । हम तभी अमर सूरमे कहलायेंगे।

(सरदार भगत सिंह पत्र और दस्तावेज, सम्पादक वीरेन्द्र सिन्धु, राजपाज ऐंड सन्ज, 2001, कुल 116 पृष्ठ, पर आधारित)



3.7 Two Punjabi Dalit Poets - Laal Singh Dil and Sant Ram Udasi



Lal Singh Dil was from Samrala, near Ludhiana. He was the most famous dalit-poet from Punjab. Two of his poems is quoted below:

The Women of Kudeli Village

*The women of Kudeli, wearing black,
Pass through the gardens green
To work in the fields
They know that Ravana's countrymen wore black
Even then they wear black
They know the Rakshasas wore black
Even then they wear black
They know the thieves wear black
Even then they wear black
When in the rainy season
The gardens turn green
Black shines through them
They know Kudeli is the name of a she-serpent
The most poisonous she-serpent
Even then they have named their village Kudeli
And they wear black
They know...*

Motherland

*Does love have any reason to be?
Does the fragrance of flowers have any roots?
Truth may, or may not have intent
But falsity is not without one
It is not because of your azure skies
Nor because of the blue waters
Even if these were deep gray
Like the color of my old mom's hair
Even then I would have loved you.
These treasure trove of riches
Are not meant for me.
Surely not. Love has no reason to be
Falsity is not without intent.
The snakes that slither
Around the treasure trove of your riches
Sing paeans
And proclaim you
"The Golden Bird"*

Sant Ram Udasi lived in a village near Barnala and was a school teacher. Like Laal Singh Dil, he too became quite famous as he was in 40s. There are some of his poems/excerpts given below:



Sant Ram Udasi was also a reputed Dalit-Poet

*You said,
"The shudra is born from the feet of Brahma
And the Brahmin from his Head
And they did not ask you
Where was Brahma born from?"
"Mother earth many moons play on your lap
But oh Sun, you keep shining where the laborers live
Where hair yearns for combs
Running noses, sunken eyes and pale teeth
Where people are helpless
Delhi is distanced from the hearts of the people
Where one is born as a bonded laborer
Where coins reign supreme
Where panjiri (food) has been under debt
Where sons inherit the debts of their fathers."*

4. How to deal with Nature?

बलिहारी कुदरत वस्या, तेरा अंत न जाय लख्या। (M1, page 469, SGGS) As Guru Nanak said:
I am indebted to this inhabited nature, for there is no end to your creativity, oh lord.
Guru Nanak's Arti is an ode to nature, it says:

गगन में थाल रवि चंद्र दीपक बने तारिका मंडल जनक मोती
In the sky's platter, the Sun and the Moon are the lamps and the stars with their
orbs, are the studded pearls

धूप मलआनलो पवण चवरो करे सगल बनराए फुलंत जोती
The fragrance of sandalwood makes the incense, wind fans it around and all the
vegetation, plus flowers; make it luminous

कैसी आरती होए भव खंडना तेरी आरती
What a beautiful worship with lamps is being performed, oh lord?

अनहता सबद वाजंत भेरी
Such is the celestial sound of the adoration.

4.1 Guru Har Rai- The Green Guru

Guru Har Rai was the seventh Sikh Guru. He is cited as the role model for environmentally minded Sikhs, and the date of his ascension to the Guruship (celebrated on 14 March) is observed as Sikh Environment Day. In a press release, Dr Rajwant Singh, President of EcoSikh, referred to Guru Har Rai as the 'Green Guru', and emphasized the Guru's connection with nature. Guru Har Rai (1630–1661) became Guru at the age of 14 after the somewhat turbulent Guruship of his grandfather, Guru Hargobind. Hargobind is chiefly remembered for his martial and kingly pursuits and as a hunter, and while Har Rai's Guruship retained many of these martial elements, he is generally thought of as gentler and more mildmannered than his grandfather. His life is very poorly documented, but a few key points are often emphasized and have become part of the popular understanding of his character. One popular legend recounts the development of environmental sensitivity in the young Har Rai. According to tradition, Har Rai (when he was probably 10-11 years old only) was walking in a garden, and his cloak brushed against a flower, breaking it from its stem.

The young Har Rai is said to have expressed remorse for the harm that he had inadvertently caused to the plant and to have carefully gathered his clothing around him while walking for the rest of his life. The details of this event vary according to telling, but the overarching message seems to be that the future Guru expressed compassion and regret at the needless harm to the beautiful plant. While the Guru went on hunting safaris like his grandfather, he is said to have never killed an animal, but saved them so that they did not die. In fact, he used to capture sick and injured animals and place them in a zoo that he had founded in Kiratpur. There the animals would be given due care and released in the wild after they had recovered.

Guru Har Rai established an Ayurvedic hospital and started an Ayurvedic Research Center. The second episode serves to tie the Guru to a feeling of sensitivity to the natural world, which has clearly contributed to him being evoked as the 'Green Guru' who cultivated a herbarium of his own at Kiratpur. It was called the Naulakha Bagh. It presumably had nine lakh trees (hence Naulakha) of and herbs of multiple species. Legend states that the Mughal Emperor's elder son, Dara Shikoh, had been poisoned (tradition indicates that the substance used was probably tiger whiskers), and was on the verge of death. After exhausting other options, the Emperor sought help from Guru Har Rai, who sent plants that cured his illness.

The Guru acted out of kindheartedness despite the clear enmity between the Emperor Shahjehan and the Sikh community, and this broad sense of compassion appears to be a significant aspect of Guru Har Rai's character in Sikh thinking.

The garden of Guru Har Rai is often referred to by Sikhs engaging in reforestation, and the garden in Kiratpur has recently been the focus of a sustained restoration project by EcoSikh together with the Shree Ganga Nursery and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), which supervises historic gurdwaras. Baba Sewa Singh of Khadur Sahib was involved in the preparatory work for this initiative, including researching which plants were in use historically (Nishan-e-Sikhi), and thus **the revival of Naulakha Bagh** represented the cooperation of a number of different agencies. Key to this project is an emphasis on plants traditionally used for medical purposes, and so its re-creation may also be useful for sustaining and reviving indigenous medical knowledge (Ayurveda).



4.2 EcoSikhs of today - Reformation: seva, langar and prashad

In the process of putting ecological awareness into action, a number of Sikhs or Sikh-led organizations have engaged in reformation, reinterpretation or expansion of well-established traditions. The Sikh concept of seva has been particularly important in this regard. There have also been efforts to limit the environmental impact of the Sikh community kitchen or langar and distribution of blessed food, prashad. Thus, seva, which is most commonly performed in the setting of the gurdwara through washing dishes, cleaning, or in some other way contributing to the smooth functioning of the gurdwara, is extended to the broader realm of service to the divine as present in the natural world. In the same way, the widespread distribution of tree saplings by several organizations often makes use of the term prashad and the conceptual structure of free distribution of something that is considered blessed by Waheguru. These examples are similar to Sikh humanitarian efforts such as United Sikhs' extension of the concept of langar into a food pantry that serves the larger community in Orange County, California. Reformation of pre-existing Sikh concepts to fit the modern context is thus established practice among Sikh activists.

Since 2013, EcoAmritsar has been arranging Green Nagar Kirtans. A Nagar Kirtan is a procession around a town (Nagar) with Sikhs following the Guru Granth Sahib and singing hymns (Kirtan). These are very common in Sikh areas, especially around the time of the Baisakhi holiday in mid-April. Green Nagar Kirtans use the framework of the Nagar Kirtan and combine it with cleaning up litter. Many participants carry placards with slogans urging environmental responsibility.

EcoSikh provides guidelines for Green Nagar Kirtans, including recommendations to use and collect biodegradable plates made from dry leaves and serve organic food for langar, the customary distribution of food. The organization specifically mentions the religious justification for this, saying, 'the reason for our concern for the environment is our Sikh spirit of Sarbat da bhala'. This phrase, which literally means the well-being of all, is drawn from the Ardas, the Sikh petitionary prayer, and lies in the background of much Sikh thinking around political and social activism.

Moreover, the most established environmental organization in Punjab is Pingalwara, based in the outskirts of Amritsar. Formally founded by Bhagat Puran Singh in 1957, but building on initiatives from the 1930s, Pingalwara focuses on caring for the destitute and has several branches throughout the Punjab. Although Pingalwara (it literally means an abode for physically challenged persons) is primarily known for its work with the poor and with individuals with physical and mental disabilities, Bhagat Puran Singh also had a strong environmental agenda. He wrote and distributed pamphlets advocating tree planting and voicing concern for soil degradation and erosion.

Pingalwara itself has become something of a model for sustainable living. It currently hosts a sustainable ('zero budget') farm, a sewage treatment plant and a biogas plant. The organization also claims to have planted 900,000 trees in India, a number presumably referencing the Naulakha Bagh (Garden of 900,000 Plants) of Guru Har Rai, discussed above. In 2010, Kheti Virasat Mission and other organizations campaigned to have Bhagat Puran Singh's birthday designated as Punjab Environment Day.

The Pingalwara Farm, in Dhirekot, practices what the organization calls 'Natural Farming', credited to Subhash Palekar of Maharashtra (Bhagat Puran Singh Natural Farming & Research Centre). The farm produces all of its fertilizer, and fungicide from mixtures of cow dung and urine and plants grown on the property. It provides instructions for producing these products free of charge and is actively encouraging local farmers to take up the practice, as overuse of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides have caused Punjab to be very heavily polluted. In addition, crops are interplanted so as to support each other.

In Punjab today, one of the highest profile Sikhs working on environmental issues is Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal of the Nirmala sect. Seechewal is best known for his work in cleaning up the Kali Bein, a tributary of the Sutlej River. Kali Bein River is near Sultantpur Lodhi, in Kapurthala district of Punjab where Guru Nanak lived in his sister Nanaki's house for many years. Guru Nanak is believed by Sikhs to have disappeared while bathing in the Kali Bein. His disappearance is understood as a transformative experience, as he is said to have ascended to the Divine Court. Upon reappearing, Guru Nanak began spreading his religious insights. Thus in some sense the Kali Bein is the site of the premier foundation of the Sikh tradition. The river was, like many rivers in Punjab, polluted with agricultural run-off, untreated sewage and an overgrowth of water hyacinth that clogged the waterway.

There had been ongoing governmental attempts to clean the river, but Seechewal's high-profile cleanup in 2000 brought the river to the attention of a larger percentage of the populace. This effort began with Seechewal dramatically entering the river and manually removing the water hyacinth and has continued through largely manual labor. This emphasis on working on the riverbank by hand is consistent with the Sikh tradition of kar seva, and gives a religious flavor to the hard work of cleaning up the river, although heavy machinery was also used. The project received significant funding from Sikhs abroad, and appears to be generally regarded as successful.

Seechewal has also sponsored the construction of bathing ghats along the riverside, which serve to emphasize the improved cleanliness of the Kali Bein. Since completing the cleanup of the Kali Bein, Seechewal has been named one of Time magazines 'Heroes of the Environment' for 2008. He has since expanded his river project to raise awareness about the Buddha Nallah, a highly polluted stream that flows into the Sutlej River after it passes through the city of Ludhiana. Historically the stream has been polluted by industrial and human waste from Ludhiana in addition to farm run-off, and the government has promised to do bioremediation, although this has been delayed. The 650 crores environment development project for Buddha Nallah started only in May, 2022.

Khadur Sahib, near Goindwal, is the site of a number of gurdwaras. Baba Sewa Singh, who directs the Nishan-e-Sikhi Charitable Trust at Khadur Sahib, has overseen the planting and distribution of hundreds of thousands of trees. The roads approaching Khadur Sahib are lined with a number of species of trees, mostly native, and there are also gardens planted with a wider variety of trees. Trees are planted with care and protected with metal frames. In some years, tree seedlings have been distributed as prashad, and Khadur Sahib has persuaded farmers in the area to plant orchards rather than less sustainable crops (Nishan-e-Sikhi's mission). The tree planting initiative has been expanded to Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as well as to a number of parts of Punjab (Nishan-e-Sikhi). Khadur Sahib has an impressive orchard on site and frequently distributes fruit as prashad.

EcoSikh is the most prominent Sikh organization working on environmental issues globally. It was founded in 2009 in partnership with the Sikh Council on Religion and Education (SCORE) in response to an initiative of the United Nations Development Program and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation. Although much of its work is in the Punjab, EcoSikh has an explicitly global emphasis and has done an impressive amount of work in building a worldwide network of environment-focused Sikh activities and gurdwaras. Projects include an attempt to 'green' gurdwaras, especially through reducing the usage of disposable plates during langar, and working toward the greening of the areas surrounding the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar as part of the global Pilgrim Cities initiative.

The organization is best known for Sikh Environment Day (Sikh Vatavaran Divas), celebrated on 14 March, the anniversary of Guru Har Rai's ascension to the Guruship. This Punjab-state's holiday, inaugurated in 2011, has grown rapidly in popularity both in India's Punjab and in the Sikh-diaspora. Gurdwaras ranging in size from the important Takht in Nanded to small local gurdwaras in Pittsburgh and Singapore have participated. The leaders of the Five Takhts recently formally endorsed Sikh Environment Day. The most popular activity appears to be tree planting, which was prescribed for this day by the Jathedar of Takht Hazur Sahib. Other activities listed on the EcoSikh website include general cleanup, the installation of solar panels and seminars, with more than 1500 activities. EcoSikh's mission thus takes in both smallscale changes to individual behavior and large-scale changes to the environments around Sikh pilgrimage sites.

EcoAmritsar, an offshoot of EcoSikh, has expanded the environmental goals beyond Harmandir Sahib to include the entire city of Amritsar, with the aim of making the entire city eco-friendly. EcoAmritsar, although Sikh-led, sees itself as an interfaith organization and has worked with Hindu and Muslim communities in Amritsar and on non-religiously oriented holidays. The organization has engaged extensively with reformation-type activities, including the Nagar Kirtans mentioned above, facilitating extensive street cleaning activities in the evenings and distributing environmentally friendly newspaper flowers for Valentine's Day.

The cleaning of Amritsar facilitated by EcoAmritsar and led by Baba Kulwant Singh of Ajnala is an excellent example of the place of seva in Sikh environmental activism. Initiated in response to a lack of trash pick-up by the Municipal Corporation, it has since become a nightly activity. Baba Kulwant Singh organizes busloads of Sikhs from 60 surrounding villages to come and manually sweep the streets of Amritsar, collecting litter which otherwise might be burned in situ. They begin this seva after the closing ceremonies at the Harmandir Sahib and work for several hours. There are efforts to expand this to other Punjabi cities, but the sacred status of Amritsar city serves as a particularly strong motivator for villagers to come and do seva.

The activists of EcoAmritsar stress particularly on the dignity of this particular seva, as this variety of work is presumed to be of the domain belonging to people from the lower caste and thus carries some stigma. Thus the activities, even though were environmental in nature, were clearly understood to be religiously motivated. EcoSikhs planted a million trees worldwide on 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in 2018-19. Most of these trees were though planted in India. They also opened a Guru Nanak Bagh in Moga the same year. (Based on article by Susan Prill and Wikipedia)

4.3 Rising area of Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR)

With 34% rise in direct sowing of rice this year, Punjab farmers save Rs 600 crores, 30% ground water

While bringing record 20 per cent of the total targeted rice area (27 lakh hectares) in the state under DSR, Punjab has increased its DSR area by 34 per cent compared to the cumulative area under the technique over the last decade -- 2010 to 2019.

Written by Anju Agnihotri Chaba



An increase of Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR) translates into 30 per cent saving of the state's ground water, and a saving about Rs 500 to 600 crore in input costs to Punjab's farmers collectively, every year.

The pandemic has pushed Punjab's paddy producing farmers to embrace 'Direct Seeding of Rice' (DSR) technique like never before.

While bringing record 20 per cent of the total targeted rice area (27 lakh hectares) in the state under DSR, Punjab has increased its DSR area by 34 per cent compared to the cumulative area under the technique over the last decade — 2010 to 2019.

The increase in DSR sowing area this year translates into 30 per cent saving of the state's ground water, and a saving about Rs 500 to 600 crore in input costs to Punjab's farmers collectively.

Data sourced from the Punjab Agriculture department revealed that till July 6, 5,19,300 hectares (12.82 lakh acres) area has been sown through DSR technique in Punjab in this Kharif season, while from 2010 to 2019 only around 3,87,000 hectares (9.55 lakh acres) could be brought under DSR. This year's area is more than 34 per cent higher as compared to the cumulative area of a decade.

2020 vs last 10 years

DSR was recommended in the state in 2010 and in the first two years — 2010 and 2011 — only a couple of 100 hectares in each year could be sown through this by progressive farmers and by the Department of Agriculture. Farmers started taking up this technique seriously in 2012 when for the first time 8,922 hectares area was brought under it. Then next three years were very good for the technique when 38,900 hectares, 1.15 lakh hectares, and 1.65 lakh hectares were brought under it in 2013, 2014, and 2015, respectively.

But then the popularity of DSR started decreasing among the farmers because proper technical know-how was not available to them. In the years 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 the area under DSR reduced to 19,660 hectares, 9,440 hectares, 6,200, and 23,300 hectares, respectively.

With this in the past one decade, only 3.87 lakh hectares could be brought under it while this year alone over 5.19 lakh hectares have been dedicated under DSR till July 6, which is 1.32 lakh hectares more than the cumulative data of all these years.

The shortage of migrant labourers across the state led farmers to go for this technique. Even Secretary, Agriculture Punjab, K S Pannu got 4,000 DSR machines sanctioned this year to help farmers.

Major savings for farmers

Experts said that if the farmers of Punjab had opted for transplanting paddy seedlings on area now under DSR this year, then at least 1.25 lakh labourers would have been required to cover this area in over a month's time. This year the labour charges had also increased from Rs 3000-Rs 3,600 last year to Rs 5,000-6,000 per acre. Apart from this around Rs 1,000 to 1,500 per acre are required for preparing paddy nursery, puddling of the field. However, the cost of sowing with DSR machine does not exceed Rs 2,000 to 2,500 per acre which includes DSR machine rent, seed, and herbicides spray and preparation of the field.

By these calculations with DSR sowing farmers managed to save around Rs 4000 to 5000 per acre, which adds up to roughly a saving between Rs 500 to 600 crores.

Also, there is around 30 per cent water saving on 5.19 lakh hectares paddy area.

Along with 4,000 new DSR machines, total 6,000 DSR machines were available in Punjab this year. One such machine covers 7-8 acres area in a day. So in 30 days, such machines could cover around 6 lakh hectares.

DSR is recommended in medium to heavy textured soil, like sandy loam, clay loam, silt loam, and loam, and Punjab has 87 per cent such soil type.

Bathinda tops DSR area list

In DSR sowing till date, Bathinda tops the list with 55,000 hectares followed by Mukatsar Sahib where 41,200 hectares area has been dedicated under DSR. Amritsar is at third place with 33,000 hectares, Faridkot has sown 30,000 hectares using DSR, while Kapurthala, Barnala, Ferozepur have sown 27,000 hectares each with DSR technique. Fazilka (26,600 hectares), Tarn Taran (24,000 hectares), Mansa (23,000 hectares), and Sangrur (21,000 hectares) too have high area under DSR. Ludhiana and Fatehgarh Sahib have 16,000 hectares and 14,000 hectares, respectively. There are only four districts in Punjab where less than 10,000 hectares were sown through DSR this year. But still they have increased from negligible area under DSR last year to a considerable area this year.

Ropar, Pathankot, Mohali, and Nawanshahr districts recorded 4,100 hectares, 4,400 hectares, 8,000 hectares, and 9,000 hectares under DSR, respectively.

Meanwhile, normal transplanting has taken place on 17.53 lakh acres till July 6. And total, paddy sowing has come to 22.73 lakh hectares, including 5.19 lakh hectares with DSR which is 11 per cent less than the last year's sowing area, which was 25.55 lakh hectares on the same corresponding date.

Every year in Punjab, 27 to 30 lakh hectares area is dedicated under paddy crop including Basmati for which around 6 to 6.5 lakh migrant labourers are required to transplant paddy nursery. But this year only around 10 per cent of the total migrant labour required was available to the farmers and around 15,000 to 20,000 more came to Punjab through special buses/vehicles arranged by the farmers and through special trains, which were started from June 1, in past one month. So, the DSR technique and local farm labourers of Punjab worked tirelessly this year.

Dr Sutrantra Airi, Director, Punjab Agriculture Department, said that only Basmati sowing is left as paddy sowing is almost complete thanks to the huge area under DSR. The sowing of Basmati always starts at least three weeks later than the paddy.

In normal transplanting farmers prepare nurseries where the paddy seeds are first sown and raised into young plants. These seedlings are then uprooted and replanted 25-35 days later in the main “puddled” field by 3-4 labourers. In the first 3-4 weeks after transplanting, the plants have to be irrigated almost daily (if there are no rains) to ensure water depth of 4-5 cm. Even for the next 4-5 weeks, when the crop is in the tillering (stem development) stage, farmers continue to irrigate every 2-3 days. Water prevents the growth of weeds by denying them oxygen in the submerged stage. Water, in other words, acts as an herbicide for paddy.

In DSR, there is no nursery preparation or transplantation. Paddy seeds are, instead, directly drilled into the field by a tractor-powered machine. In DSR, water is replaced by real chemical herbicides and it does not need flood irrigation, and the first irrigation is done 21 days after sowing, leading to huge water saving.



4.4 Other environment- Friendly ventures in Punjab

4.4.1 Organic farmers and farms in Punjab Kheti Virasat Mission (KVM)

Located at Jaitu, District Faridkot is the head-quarter of Kheti Virasat Mission (KVM). KVM is a not-for-profit, civil society action group working on organic farming issues since 1998. It was registered as a trust in March 2005. KVM enjoys the patronage and support of eminent experts and personalities from the field of environmental health, medicine, agriculture, ecology etc.

Its mission is to return Punjab to ecological stability through sustainable agricultural practices. KVM has a strong grassroots presence among the farmers of Punjab. Its outreach, training and awareness programmes have influenced the conversion of 20 farms to natural/organic farming, another 200 are under conversion process and over 500 have taken a step forward by growing organically for self consumption. KVM has two distinct functioning bodies: Vatavaran Panchayats and Environmental Health Action Group (EHAG). EHAG is a forum for physicians, medical professionals and experts of life sciences to take up issues of environmental health.

Over the last few years, KVM has set up several village-level participatory forums called Vatavaran Panchayats (comprised mostly of farmers) seeking local holistic ecological solutions. Model natural farms are being setup. These farms serve dual purposes; as research laboratories for experimenting with new techniques and refining existing natural farming techniques and as 'pathshalas' (schools) for farmers. Vatavaran Panchayat has its units in most districts in Punjab. It may be rightly called a peoples' initiative for grass root propagation of natural farming, conservation of natural resources and ecology through voluntary participation and contribution. For promoting the use of indigenous seeds, community seed banks have been set up at the village level. Each seed bank serves a cluster of villages. They undertake conservation, multiplication (both in-situ and ex-situ) and distribution of seeds. Construction of water harvesting structures is being initiated particularly in Malwa region.

The organic crops and processed products of the KVM farmers may be collectively listed as follows:

Rabi : Wheat, mustard, coriander, methi, metha , masoor, black gram, potato, radish, carrots, peas, barley, oats, onion, turnip, saunf, ajvaine, palak, sunflower, cauliflower (gobhi), cabbage, chukandar, garlic; horticulture produce: citrus family fruits - keenow and malta, and others - ber, avala; oil seeds - taramira, halon, alsi.

Kharif : Cotton, paddy, basmati, maize, green gram, arhar, urad, groundnut, soybean, bazra, castor , jawar, kaddu, okra, brinjal, cowpea, lauki, pettha (pumpkin), ram tori, tomato, kakdi, kheera, lobiya, brinjal, gawar, bhindi, chilli, turmeric , sugarcane, etc.

Fruits: jamun, guava, peach.

Organic Products: Biscuits, besan-gram flour, dalia, moth dal, bazra flour, bazra dalia, corn flour, wheat dalia, gulab jal, basmati rice, lady's finger seeds, mustard oil, gur, shakkar, desi ghee, sharbat, rice, wheat atta , desi moong dal, sewian-vermicilli. Quilts, razais and pillows from naturally grown cotton are made.

On farm participatory research by farmers is taken up under Vatavaran Panchayats. Studies on reproductive health crisis, health impacts of pesticides and environmental impacts of coal based thermal power plants are taken up by EHAG. KVM brings out a Punjabi journal, 'Kudrati Kheti' and has published several booklets for awareness and education. Umendra Dutt, the ED of KVM says: 'Though KVM is registered as a charitable trust, it is more of a farmer centric ecological movement. It is the only one totally devoted to establishing ecological agriculture in the Punjab.

The collective backing and mass support of farmers, farmers' groups, medical professionals, advocates, mainstream and (other) scientists, bureaucrats, academicians, etc., has given KVM the strength to earnestly present the case of ecological agriculture in Punjab. With a small fleet of full timers and a wide spectrum of voluntary supporters, KVM has established a strong, capable and penetrative civil society organizational structure. Over the years KVM has evolved. It propagated organic non-BT cotton throughout Punjab. Meanwhile, it promoted traditional cotton-based handloom weavers of Faridkot, Barnala and Ferozepur. They call it the Trinjhan project.

KVM started the project of agronomic crops' diversification project in 2010. Under this program KVM has been promoting millets and particularly small millets with farmers of Punjab. Mr. Jaspinder Grewal, M.Tech., Farm Machinery, looks after this project and they have promoted more than 2,000 millet farmers.

They have also gone out to Haryana's Jind and Sirsa districts. They promote five types of small millets, viz. Kodo, kutki, ragi, sama and hari kangani. Besides, they promote bajra and jowar also. Dr. Khadervali of Mysore is helping them professionally. Besides, they have arranged meeting with Millet food chefs, viz. Ram Babu from Hyderabad and Meghana Shukla from Indore. Dr. Surinder Dalal, an Entomologist and Manbir Redu helps in pest control in crops.

Working with the landless farmers, i.e. the large majority of scheduled caste households; was a big challenge. They started working with 2,000 landless households on kitchen gardening in 2016 which has now grown to 6,000 households. These households are in Faridkot and Barnala districts.

KVM started working on spreading the message of stopping stubble burning of paddy stems about five years ago. They are still working on this agenda.

Another agenda that KVM has been actively pursuing is that of helping the meeting between consumers of organic food with the organic food producers. They have been engaged in actively spreading the message of consuming organic food in the cities. Then they organize Kudrati Kheti Kisan Haats, where organic farmers market their produce in cities like Ludhiana, Patiala, Jalandhar and Faridkot.

KVM is now funded by Azim Premji Foundation, ONGC Foundation and KK Birla Foundation.

KVM, since its inception, has been working on all components of farming crisis in Punjab and were initially engaged in organising an assertive nationwide campaign against BT Brinjal.' Find the list of KVM's active members with their contact numbers, as well.

AASHISH AAHUJA: Vill & Post Khubban, Teh. Abohar, District Fazilka, Punjab. Cell: 09417096709, Email: haldighati@gmail.com. Aashish Aahuja comes from a farming family and has a 30 acre farm. He has been farming organically for the past three years using natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar. His farm is irrigated using canal and tube well sources. He has never been involved in chemical farming before. He grows wheat with companion crops, rice, vegetables, green gram, mustard, basmati rice, citrus fruits. Bajra is grown for animal fodder only. The farm inputs are biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrita and farmyard manure etc. He maintains a number of cows and buffaloes. His crops are protected using herbal repellants and trap crops etc. The only difficulty he faces on the farm is the reluctance of labour to do labourious farm activities. The surplus produced is directly marketed and sent to the local mandi. He gets a good premium price for his produce. His produce is also labeled organic.

Initially the yield on his farm was not very encouraging but with persistent use and full-fledged implantation of natural farming techniques the output is now satisfactory.

AMARJIT SHARMA: Vill & Post Chaina Teh. Jaitu, District Faridkot, Punjab. Cell: 09463550720. Amarjit belongs to a farming family and has been farming on 5 acres of land for 25 years. He switched to organic farming 4 years ago. His farm is irrigated by tube well. Failure of chemical farming and the adverse effects of pesticides and fertilizers on his farm made him switch over to organic practices. He grows wheat with companion crops, cotton for commercial purposes and vegetables for domestic use. Jowar and bajra are grown for animal fodder. He follows natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar and uses biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita and jeev amrita for inputs. He maintains two Indian hump cows, two buffaloes and one ox. He laments that labour is expensive and also unwilling to work on elaborate farming practices. To deal with pests he uses herbal repellants and trap crops. The farm surplus produced is sold to mandis and also through direct marketing. Initially when he shifted to organic farming there was a decrease in the yield. The yield has now stabilized back to the former level. His produce is not certified. A few of his neighbours also practice organic farming. He is happy to have switched over to organic farming because it has given him peace of mind.

GURTEJ SINGH: Village- Khurrampur, P.O. Shahpur (Mehatpur) District Jalandher, Cell: 09915241089. Gurtej belongs to a farming family and has been practicing farming for the past 10 years on his 9 acre farm. His farm is irrigated through canal and tube well. He switched to organic farming two years ago because he was in search of cheaper and better farming practices as compared to chemical farming. Gurtej grows wheat, maize with companion crops and rice. Jowar and bajra are grown as fodder crops. He follows the traditional farming methods as practised in Punjab and also natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar. He uses biogas slurry and farmyard manure as inputs and herbal repellants and trap crops for pest control. He maintains one Indian hump back cow, 8 buffaloes and one mixed breed cow and claims he has had no difficulties in switching to organic practices. Excess surplus produce is sold through direct marketing and mandi. His produce is not certified. He says that when he first switched to organic farming the output decreased, but it gradually stabilized to the initial level. None of his neighbours practise organic farming.

HARJANT SINGH S/O SH.GURDEV SINGH: Vill & Post Rai ke Kalan, Teh. & District Bathinda, Punjab. Cell: 09417620814

After practising chemical farming for 17 years Harjant Singh switched to organic farming 8 years ago because of the adverse effect of chemical farming and also for a sense of well-being and self worth. Harjant Singh has 37 acres of canal and tube well irrigated farm land and hails from a farming family. He grows wheat, maize, jowar, bajra and cotton. His farming practices have been influenced by natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar. He uses beej amrit, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrit and also does manual weeding. Biogas slurry is also used as organic input. He keeps sahiwal breed of Indian hump back cows and some buffaloes.

He has no difficulties in practicing organic farming. Herbal repellants and trap crops are used to deal with farm pests. Surplus is sold at a premium through direct marketing. He says the output decreased in the beginning but has now stabilized. None of his neighbours practise organic farming. Harjit has this to say regarding his experience in organic farming: 'If you go with nature and treat your field as your children there is no option but for farm yields to improve. Farming naturally is as peaceful as the eyes of a new born baby.'

HARTEJ SINGH MEHTA: Vill & Post Mehta, Teh. & District - Bathinda, Cell: 09417507771
Hartej Singh Mehta belongs to a farming family with 11 acres of farmland. The farm is irrigated through canal and tube well. He has been farming for the past 25 years and switched to organic techniques 5 years ago because of the failure of chemical farming and the adverse effects of pesticides. He cultivates wheat with companion crops, cotton for commercial purposes and jowar and bajra as animal fodder for his Indian hump back cow and one buffalo. Biogas slurry and farmyard manure go in as organic inputs. Herbal repellants and trap crops are used for controlling pests. The surplus is sold at a premium directly and also through the mandi. Initially his output decreased but it has now stabilized. There are no farmers in his neighbourhood practising organic methods. Greatly influenced by the natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar, Mehta says, 'Natural farming is pest free farming.'

JARNAIL SINGH: Vill & Post Majhi, Teh. & District Sangrur, Punjab. Cell: 09417146066
After farming chemically for 30 years Jarnail Singh switched to organic farming 5 years ago because of zero input costs in organic practices. He comes from a farming family that owns 8 acres of farmland. His farm is irrigated through canal and tube well. He grows wheat with companion crops. Basmati rice and vegetables are grown for home use. Jowar is cultivated for animal fodder. He keeps a number of cows and buffaloes and uses biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrita and farmyard manure as inputs. Crops are protected using herbal repellants and trap crops. Surplus produced is sold at a premium through direct marketing and also sent to the local mandi. Jarnail Singh says, "He has no problems at all in practicing natural farming and has been improving his yields continuously through innovations and developing techniques to this farmland. Initially his yield decreased but has stabilized within a couple of seasons and now increased. His neighbours too are practising organic agriculture".

MADAN LAL: Vill & Post Bullhowal, Teh. & District Hoshiarpur, Cell: 09872092162
Madan Lal hails from a farming family and farms on 3 acres of irrigated land. He switched to organic farming 2 years ago – after 8 years of chemical input agriculture – because he was informed about safe and healthy food and the environmental consequences of chemicals. He practises traditional farming methods of Punjab alongwith the natural farming techniques as proposed by Subhash Palekar. Wheat and maize are grown with companion crops, vegetables for domestic use and jowar and bajra for animal fodder. He maintains two buffaloes, one Indian hump back cow and its calf, one goat and its two kids.

Farm inputs are biogas slurry, farmyard inputs, jeev amrita, ghan jeev amrita and for pest control herbal repellants and trap crops. Surplus is sold at a premium through direct marketing and also sent to the mandi. The crop yield has stabilized after an initial setback. None of his neighbours practise organic farming. The problem he faces just now is lack of farm labour, weeds and pest control. He believes that natural farming is the farming of the future.

VINOD JYANI: Jyani Natural Farm, Vill & Post Katehra, Distt. Fazilka, Cell: 0941723325, Email: vinod-jyani@yahoo.co.in

Vinod Jyani is a big farmer with 130 acres of farmland. He comes from a farming family and has a farming experience of 20 years. He switched to organic farming 4 years ago. His farm is irrigated by canal. Continuous use of chemical sprays, increasing quantity of chemical inputs required and the ill effects on the health of his staff involved in spraying poisonous pesticides influenced his decision to switch to organic farming. His farming practices have been influenced by Subhash Palekar's methods. He uses jeev amrit, biogas slurry, farmyard manure etc. as inputs. Homemade-biopesticides and trap crops help in pest control. He maintains 40 Indian breed cows for supply of organic inputs. All his produce is sold at a premium through direct marketing. Initially his output decreased but focused and persistent personal involvement and the use of local seeds, trap crops, nitrogen fixing trees and plants and inter cropping has helped him to get premium yields. He says that interaction between farmers is crucial to the growth, spread and promotion of organic farming. He grows rice, wheat, maize, jowar, bajra, cotton, sugarcane and also maintains citrus (kinnow) orchards.

SWARAN SINGH: Village Karamgarh Satran, P.O. Sardargarh District Bathinda, Cell: 09814963883

Swaran Singh comes from a farming family with 6 acres of canal and tube well irrigated land. After farming chemically for 38 years he switched to organic farming four years ago because he was in search of a natural and earth friendly farming techniques. He grows wheat with companion crops, mustard, green gram, black gram, cotton, sugarcane. Jowar is grown for animal fodder and vegetables are cultivated for domestic use. He has been following traditional organic practices of Punjab and has incorporated some natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar into his practices. He keeps one Indian hump cow, one ox and one buffalo. Biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrita, FYM are the farm's inputs. Herbal repellants and trap crops keep away pests. His only woe is unwilling labour. Farm surplus is sold at a premium through direct marketing and the mandi. Swaran Singh says that the key to successful organic farming is hard work. Initial decrease yields were overcome by persisting with natural practices.

He says FYM does not make too much of a difference but it helps to slowly increase and stabilize the yields during the 3-4 years of conversion. To him natural farming is all about passion and a way forward and suggests that farmers should use farmyard manure in greater proportion during the conversion period and work towards increasing yields only through natural techniques.

TILAK RAJ: Vill & Post Khui Kherha, Distt. Fazilka, Cell: 9417338131

Tilak Raj switched to organic farming two years ago after practising chemical agriculture for many years. He hails from a farming family with 25 acres of canal and tube well irrigated farm land. His reason for switching to organic was that chemical farming is full of poison and is thus unethical. He grows wheat with companion crops of mustard and cotton. Vegetables are grown for domestic use, jowar and bajra for his animals. He keeps two Indian hump back cows. The farm is based on natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar. Biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrita and FYM are the farm's inputs. Herbal repellants and trap crops help to protect crop from pests. His farm faces hurdles in the form of unwilling labour, depleting soil fertility and insects. Surplus is sold at premium through direct marketing and mandis. He says his yields decreased initially but recovered with the use of farmyard manure. He says, "Natural farming is stress-free agriculture, but would appreciate if established natural farmers can extend assistance to farmers like him who have recently ventured into organic practices.

UPKAR SINGH Vill & Post Chakk Desh Raj, Teh. Philaur, District Jalandhar, Cell: 09463360294

Upkar Singh hails from a farming family. After 10 years of chemical farming he switched to organic farming four years ago because of the increasing demand for chemical-free farm produce. His 4 acres farm is irrigated by canal and tube well. He grows wheat, maize with companion crops, rice, sugarcane, green gram, mustard and basmati. Vegetables are grown for domestic use. Bajra and berseem are grown as animal fodder. On farm he has incorporated natural farming techniques of Subhash Palekar into the traditional farming wisdom of the Punjab. Biogas slurry, ghan jeev amrita, jeev amrita, FYM, vermicompost etc., are the farm's inputs. Herbal repellants and trap crops are used for pest control. He maintains two Indian hump back cows, two Holstein Friesian cows and a calf, one buffalo, one goat and its kids. Surplus is sold at a premium through direct marketing and the mandi. Initial decrease in production has now been recovered. His neighbours too practice organic farming. He says that organic farming means dedication and the willingness to work with one's own hands. He is convinced that natural farming is the best way one can protect nature, heritage, traditional wisdom, environment and mother-nature.

BHAKAR ORGANIC FARM Kalalwala, Teh. Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda,

4.4.2 This husband-wife duo from Punjab is selling organic produce through their brand Monsoon Harvest Farms!

Moishree



The online organic store, Monsoon Harvest Farms, gets all its products, including fruits, vegetables, and other eatables, from a farm based in Punjab, around 400 km from Delhi-NCR.

The growing concern of people to adapt to a healthier lifestyle has paved the way for various organic stores, especially after the COVID-induced pandemic hit the country, says Preetendra Singh, while driving his way to his farm based out of Abohar in Punjab. Singh, who is a farmer, owns an online organic grocery store called Monsoon Harvest Farms, along with his wife, Shalini Singh, who takes pride as she mentions that their farm produces more than 30 products.



From fruits and vegetables to crops like rice and wheat, the farm is also capable of producing sugarcane, which is among one of the farm's best sellers. Mr. Singh says they sell their produce locally in Punjab at a reduced price as the region cannot maintain to purchase the organic produces at the "comparatively high price", which is seen on their store's website.

The gift of ancestors



Being an ancestral property of Mr. Singh, the farm was previously managed by his father, who passed away a few years back. However, the land was being used for conventional farming till 2002. After that, Preetendra and Shalini converted it for organic farming and invested a few years in the techniques of cropping patterns while learning how to deal with “good monsoons” and “bad monsoons”. “The first few months were very bad for us. But as the time passed and people started taking a positive note towards staying healthy, our farm managed to sustain and suffice the needs, simultaneously,” Mr. Singh adds.



Their efforts turned out to be noticeable as they got their farm certified by ECOCERT under USDA and NPOP standards. Now, all their products are PGS-India organic certified and are sold through Monsoon Harvest Farms – a brainchild of Shalini, which was founded in 2013. “She was the force behind opening of the brand and the responsible head for the social media operations,” says Mr. Singh, adding that their four permanent members also work for the brand.



With the brand came the opportunity for the couple to introduce many produces and products, coming directly or indirectly from the farm, such as citrus, turmeric, mustard oil, rice, wheat, green gram, amla, malta, garlic, onion, potatoes, coriander seeds, green and red chilly, grapefruit, sugarcane, and jaggery products. Currently, their farm produce is also exported to Europe.



What also majestically worked for the brand was “word of mouth”, as it was founded before social media saw the boom for the local businesses. That could be one of the reasons why Mr. Singh never leaves the chance to focus on the consumers’ preferences and priorities. In his words, “We are answerable to our customers for our product quality and authenticity, and we make sure we stand on their expectations.”



Moreover, the brand has a policy through which the consumers can return the products and get the full money back when they are not satisfied with them. The policy applies to all the products sold by the farm where one is just required to send the picture of the product to either get it replaced or refunded without having to answer any question related to the return. “We believe that people have faith in our products,” adds Mr. Singh.

Apart from Delhi NCR, the brand also delivers to Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and Jodhpur, to which Mr. Singh says, “We can send our products wherever it can be transported from Punjab without having to let go of the quality.”

What we have to say is, don’t lose out on consuming the fresh produce that comes directly from their farm to your homes!

4.4.3

Industry: Challenges in Punjab: Needs new model

B S Ghuman,

Ex VC of Punjabi University, Patiala

CHANDIGARH: Industrial development in Punjab is dominated by micro, small and medium enterprises. Economic liberalisation, globalisation and especially cheaper Chinese goods have eroded their competitive edge. A number of units have moved out, mainly due to locational disadvantages and central government's tax holidays to neighbouring hill states.

Paradoxically, while Punjab is experiencing de-industrialisation, the world is reaping the benefits of the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) by applying advanced digital technologies like artificial intelligence, internet of things, 3D printing, robotics, cloud computing in the manufacturing processes.

Industrialisation of Punjab in the 21st century cannot be achieved by adopting an incremental model. It needs a new model altogether, in tune with the fourth industrial revolution, comparative advantages and job aspirations of educated youth. Keeping these factors in view, high-tech agro-based industries; and advanced digital technology and knowledge driven industries can provide foundations for the 21st century industrialisation of Punjab. In addition to industries of the future, the state needs a policy for the expansion of existing industries.

Promotion of high-tech agro-based industries

Punjab enjoyed economic supremacy in terms of high growth and per capita income among states between mid-1960s and early 1990s. The major engine of high growth was the commercialised agricultural sector. The initial engine of growth has exhausted as productivity of two major crops - wheat and paddy - have almost stagnated. The second engine, led by industry, unfortunately has not taken off in Punjab. The lack of alignment between two engines sums up the 'growth collapse' syndrome in the state.

Punjab exports most of the agricultural produce to the central pool. Similarly, most of the agricultural inputs are imported from other states. The existing composition of exports and imports needs a review. The right strategy is promotion of high-tech food processing industries and industries supply inputs to agriculture. This strategy of building a bridge between agriculture and industry would help in linking first and second engines and making it double-engine development model.

Major food processing industries suitable for Punjab are flour mills, porridge, noodles, bakery units, glucose, beer, wine, rice shellers, rice bran oil, paper mills, textiles, surgical cotton, cushions, mattresses, cattle feed, canned vegetables, juice processing, biomass based power generation and livestock based industry.

Industries supplying inputs to agriculture include chemical fertilizers, tractors, diesel engines, electric motors, harvest combines, happy seeders, paddy straw choppers,/shredder/mulcher, reversible mould board plough, zero till drill and so on. No doubt Punjab has agro-based industries, but these are mainly using old technologies and products are not cost effective. The high-tech industries will strengthen agriculture-industries will strengthen agricultural-industry linkages to stimulate growth and also generate employment for skilled and semi-skilled manpower.

Advanced digital technology & knowledge driven industries

Punjab missed the third industrial revolution led by IT. To become an industrial hub, it cannot afford to miss the fourth industrial revolution. For reaping benefits of Industry 4.0, it should incentivise digital technology and knowledge driven industries. These industries use very light raw materials but intensive human knowledge. These industries/services/smart technologies include artificial intelligence, internet of things, 3D printing, robotics, cloud computing, electronics, computers and peripherals, software development, tele-communication and information technology pharmaceuticals, optical instruments and lenses, biotechnology, surgical and medical instruments, engineering and scientific instruments, R&D firms; education and health services, consultancy and financial services tourism.

These industries are green industries which suit Punjab as agriculture has polluted environmental resources. Mostly these are cost-effective in terms of transportation and land requirements. These industries generate high quality jobs which would meet the aspirations of Punjabi youth. The industries may also attract back educated youth from abroad. These industries should be located in the vicinity of universities and research laboratories. The close proximity facilitates exchange of human resources, research, innovations and also utilisation of infrastructure. Punjab has a wide network of educational institutions. Based on their location five knowledge-industry corridors and start-up hubs can be set up. These include Chandigarh-Mohali-Patiala Corridor, Chandigarh-Mohali-Ludhiana Corridor, Mohali-Ropar Hoshiarpur Corridor, Ludhiana-Jalandhar-Kapurthala Corridor and Bathinda-Faridkot Corridor.

The success of corridors depends upon the degree of synergy between industry and educational institutions. By learning from the experience of industrialised countries, both should evolve an institutional framework for working together. The government of India has set up a centre for the fourth industrial revolution as a platform for technology governance and also to suggest policies to minimize the ill-effects of industry 4.0 on society. Punjab should also set up a centre on the same pattern.

4.5 The Tree - A Poem by Shiv Kumar Batalvi

*Some trees look like sons to me
Some like mothers
Some are daughters, brides
A few like brothers
Some are like my grandfather
Sparsely leafed
Some like my grandmother
Who used to throw choori to the
crows
Some trees are like the friends
I used to kiss and embrace
One is my beloved
Sweet, Painful*

*There are trees I would like
To throw on my shoulder playfully,
There are trees I would like
To kiss and then die
The trees sway together
when strong winds blow.
I wish I could render something
In their verdant, leafy language
I wish that I could
Return as a tree
And if you wanted to listen to my
song
I would sing it in the trees
These trees are like my mother
May their shade stay intact.*

(Translated by Suman Kashyap)

4.6 शहर के खिलाफ

प्रदीप बोस

आप शहर की बात न करें
शहर मेरे लिये
उस तेज दौड़ते चीते की तरह है
जो अपने पंजों से हर आदिवासी हवा को चीरता है
और अपने जबड़ों के बीच चीथ डालता है
शहर की हर ख्वाहिश के पीछे
एक लपलपाती जीभ है और कातिल दाँत।
शहर को मैंने जब भी झूठ बोलते पकड़ा
तो उसकी काल-कोठरियों में खुद को कैद पाया
फूलों के बगीचों में प्रस्फुटित होते मेरे ठंडे-ठार दिन
शहर के उबलते चक्कों के ऊपर चल
जब बाजार पहुँचे
तो मेरे बैलों ने खुदकशी कर ली
और मेरे दिन आज भी
किसी जरायम-पेशा नहर की तरह
अपनी छाती में ईंटे ठुकवाकर सोग मना रहे हैं।
शहर मेरे लिये वह बिंब है
जो चेतना के परे लुप्त होने के बाद भी
प्रकट होने के लिये सदा जद्दो जहद करता है
और मुझे खुदकुशी करने की ओर
धकेलता हुआ खूब कहकहे लगाता है।
शहर वह खत्म हुई सभ्यता है
जिस को जाहिर होने के लिये
मेरे वजूद को झूठा साबित करना
जैसे जरूरी हो।

शहर,
मेरी महबूब के ब्लाऊज के पीछे
छुपा हुआ वह सत्य है
जो मुझो अनेकों बार
खलनायक बनने के लिये
उकसाता है
इस खुशफहमी के साथ कि
बार बार की नां के पीछे
छुपी हुई कोई हाँ हो।

Sheher de khilaaf



Click the link to watch the video- <https://youtu.be/2QavnIR4p2c>



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