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THE TEXT AND MEANING OF THE ADI GRANTH

by

Pashaura Singh

**A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Toronto**

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Abstract:

THE TEXT AND MEANING OF THE ADI GRANTH

by

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This study seeks to reconstruct the history of the text of the Adi Granth. It provides textual analysis of certain portions of the Adi Granth and examines Guru Arjan's editorial policy, particularly his approach towards the inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in the Sikh scripture. It also examines various factors that first led to the emergence of three different traditions of the Adi Granth and then to the eventual standardization of its text.

Examination of early manuscripts has revealed that Guru Arjan worked over a number of drafts to produce the final text in 1604 CE. He prepared the scripture primarily in response to the process of crystallization of the Sikh tradition that was taking place during his period. One important outcome of this study is that the Kartarpur manuscript as compiled by Guru Arjan is confirmed through scrutiny of the manuscript evidence as the final text of the Adi Granth.

Until now the Kartarpur-Banno debate on the Adi Granth text has been misdirected. First, it misses the fact of three recensions of the Adi Granth, which becomes clear after a preliminary survey of seventeenth-century manuscripts. Second, it relies upon tradition and speculation rather than careful research. Third, the major weakness of this debate is that textual problems have been dealt with in isolation,

without any reference to Guru Arjan's editorial policy. These problems have been resolved in the present study.

Finally, this study examines different exegetical traditions of the Adi Granth and argues that the text has inexhaustible hermeneutic potential. Each generation of interpreters has drawn out its meaning from its particular angle. It also examines the unique role of the Adi Granth as Guru in the personal piety, liturgy and corporate life of the Sikh community. The Adi Granth has given the Sikhs a sacred focus upon which to reflect and in the process to discover the meaning of life as Sikhs. Hence it has always been a decisive factor for distinctive Sikh identity.

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owe the greatest debt to my parents, particularly my mother, who sowed the seed of
gurbāṇī within me in my childhood. I dedicate this study to the loving memory of my
parents.

To
the Loving Memory
of

Sardar Ishar Singh
Sardarni Dailp Kaur

PREFACE

In this study many terms and words from the Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi and Punjabi languages are used. Such terms as are common to Punjabi and other North Indian languages have almost all been transliterated in their Punjabi forms, that is, *śabad* instead of *śabda* ("divine Word"), *bāṇī* instead of *vāṇī* ("divine utterance"), *bhagat* instead of *bhakta* ("devotee"), *śalok* instead of *śloka* ("couplet" or "stanza"). The only exception to this rule are a few instances in which a Sanskrit or Hindi form has secured an established place in English usage, for example, *bhakti* ("loving devotion"), *karma* ("action"), and *raga* ("melodic organization"). These terms are given in their anglicized forms. All other terms are italicized and are presented with the appropriate diacritical marks. However, the use of diacritics has not been retained in the case of the names of modern authors and quotations from other works.

Except where otherwise indicated the translations of the scriptural quotations are my own, with editorial assistance received from my supervisor, Professor W.H. McLeod. In these translations I have also relied on three translated versions of the *Adi Granth* for assistance: Gopal Singh, *Sri Guru-Granth Sahib*, 4 vols. (Delhi: Gur Das Kapoor, 1962); Mansoian Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 8 vols. (Amritsar: Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, 1962-69); and Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 4 vols. (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1984-90). The most commonly used abbreviation in this study is AG, which refers to the *Adi Granth*. For all quotations from the *Adi Granth* I have used the text printed in *Śabadārath Śrī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī*, which follows the standard *Adi Granth* pagination of the 1430 page text.

Another abbreviation used in this study is CE, which stands for the "common era".

Except where otherwise mentioned all dates are CE.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Preface	vii
1. Chapter 1	
Introduction	1
2. Chapter 2	
Manuscripts of the Adi Granth	20
3. Chapter 3	
Origins of the Adi Granth Traditions	61
4. Chapter 4	
Textual Analysis	92
5. Chapter 5	
Editorial Policy of Guru Arjan	142
6. Chapter 6	
The Meaning of the Adi Granth	207
7. Chapter 7	
Conclusion	231
Bibliography	238

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The *Adi Granth* is the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. Literally the word *granth* means simply "book". To this an adjective *ādi*, or "first" has been appended to distinguish this Granth from the second of the sacred scriptures of the Sikhs, the *Dasam Granth*, which contains the works attributed to the Tenth (*dasam*) Guru, Gobind Singh. In Sikh usage, however, the *Adi Granth* is normally referred to as the "Guru Granth Sahib", which implies a confession of faith in the scripture as Guru. As the "manifest body of the Guru" it carries the same status and authority as did the ten personal Gurus from Guru Nanak (1469–1539 CE) through Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708 CE). It has become the symbol of ultimate sanctity for the Sikh community, and it is treated with the most profound respect when it is installed ceremonially in a gurdwara ("Guru's door"), the Sikh place of worship, or in private Sikh homes.

The contents of the *Adi Granth* are normally referred to as *bāṇī* ("utterance"), or as *gurbāṇī* ("the utterance of the Guru"). It is important to note that any individual hymn from the *Adi Granth* (*chaupad*, *aṣṭapadī*, or *chhant*)¹ is invariably called a *śabad* or "word". The usage evidently derives from the doctrine of the *Śabad*, or divine Word, enunciated by Guru Nanak and the succeeding Gurus. According to this doctrine, the divine Word (*Śabad*) is the

1. *Chaupad* refers to the hymns of the Gurus, each consisting of four short stanzas with refrain. *Aṣṭapadī* normally consists of eight stanzas (occasionally more) with refrain. *Chhant* refers to the hymns of the Gurus of variable length, commonly of four or six long stanzas. See W.H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 287.

vehicle of communication between Akal Purakh ("the Timeless Being") and an awakened individual. The *bānī* of the enlightened Guru or Bhagat embodies this divine Word, and the term used for the Word itself thus came to be applied to the composition that gave it expression.²

Compilation of the Adi Granth

The compilation of the Adi Granth was the culmination of a process that had already begun in Guru Nanak's lifetime during the period when he resided at Kartarpur, a religious-commune town that he founded on the right bank of the River Ravi in the Punjab. The community of disciples (Sikhs) that first grew around him at Kartarpur during the early decades of the sixteenth century received the message of liberation through religious hymns of unique genius and notable beauty.³ The earliest Sikh community had already begun to use these hymns in devotional singing (*kīrtan*) as a part of congregational worship. J.S. Grewal has aptly pointed out that the use of Guru Nanak's compositions in Sikh liturgy developed logically and historically into the compilation of the Adi Granth by Guru Arjan in 1604 CE.⁴

It would appear that Guru Nanak had a clear vision of preserving his own *bānī*, by committing it to memory in the first place and then possibly to writing during his own lifetime. He frequently regarded himself as the mouthpiece of Akal Purakh, proclaiming the glory of the

2. Ibid., p. 288. The word *śabad* has been given an anglicized form "shabad" in this study. Similarly, *śalok* has been rendered "shalok".

3. "Plainly there is much that is profoundly original in the hymns which we find recorded under his [Guru Nanak's] distinctive symbol in the Adi Granth. There is in them an integrated and coherent system which no other Sant has equalled; and there is a beauty which no other Sant has matched." See W.H. McLeod, *The Sikhs: History, Religion, and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 31.

4. J.S. Grewal, "A Perspective on Early Sikh History," in Mark Juergensmeyer and N.G. Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), p. 36.

divine Word: "As the Lord sends the *bāṇī* so do I deliver it, O Lalo!"⁵ Such a deep consciousness of divine inspiration must have created an urgency to preserve the *bāṇī* through oral as well as written media. It was quite natural for the first Sikhs to memorise the Guru's hymns and to express their faith by showing their allegiance to the revealed message of their Guru. As such, there came into being an oral tradition of transmitting the poetic compositions of Guru Nanak, which remains current among the Sikhs even today.⁶

There are certain references in the hymns of Guru Nanak that point towards the existence of a written tradition during his lifetime. He maintained that one might lose the divine Word through oral recitation alone, if one has not written it down to preserve it (ਲਿਖੇ ਬਾਝੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਬੋਲਿ ਬੋਲਿ ਗਵਾਈਐ).⁷ Indeed, his composition *Paṭṭī Likhī* ("thus was the slate written") formed the basis of the Gurmukhi characters, which were used in recording his works.⁸ In one of his shaloks Guru Nanak praises those scribes who devoted themselves to writing the divine Name:

5. M1, *Tilāṅg* 5, AG, p. 722. The reference here means that the passage is from the hymn numbering 5, in measure *Tilāṅg*, by Guru Nanak, on page 722 of the *Adi Granth*. The code-word *mahalā* with an appropriate number identifies the composition of each Guru. The works by Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur are indicated by "Mahalas" (or simply "M") 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9, respectively. All the Gurus sign their compositions "Nanak" in the *Adi Granth*.

6. Sikh parents make an effort that their children learn Guru Nanak's *Japjī* and other liturgical compositions by heart in childhood. The contribution of modern research in the area of oral tradition has now firmly established that scripture can be transmitted orally with relatively little change provided certain conventions are observed. These include specific memory training, mnemonic devices, control over the recital by certain members of the audience, and a normal preference for poetry rather than prose. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition*, p. 106. For an analysis of the oral aspect of scripture in Sikh tradition, see Harold Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), pp. 130-137.

7. M1, *Vaḍahaṅs Chhant* 1, AG, p. 566

8. M1, *Āsā Paṭṭī*, AG, p. 432. This poem is a kind of acrostic which Guru Nanak composed to match the letters of the alphabet. The Gurmukhī script in its present form was almost non-existent before Guru Nanak. A marginal note on page 216 of volume II of the *Goindval pothīs* indicates that it was Guru Angad who formulated the Gurmukhi characters under the supervision of Guru Nanak. The Gurmukhi script is a systematization of *lanḍel/mahājani* business shorthands, of the kind Guru Nanak doubtless used professionally as a young man. It was also known as *ṭakarī*. Also see G.B. Singh, *Gurmukhī lipī dā janam te vikās* (Chandigarh: Panjabi University, 1972).

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧

ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਕਾਗਦੁ ਕਲਮ ਧੰਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਭਾਤਾ ਧਨੁ ਮਸਾ ਧਨੁ ਲੇਖਾਰੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਨਾਮੁ
ਲਿਖਾਇਆ ਸਚੁ॥⁹

Shalok Mahala 1

Blessed is the paper, blessed the pen. Blessed is the pot which contains the
blessed ink. The scribe is blessed, O Nanak, who writes the true divine Name.

This verse clearly suggests that the written tradition of *gurbānī* must have begun during Guru Nanak's lifetime. Elsewhere, Guru Nanak even chastised those scribes who were making a living by copying the *bānī* to sell it as incantation.¹⁰

It is entirely possible that Guru Nanak may have himself written down his own compositions in his lifetime. Unlike many religious figures of his day he was not illiterate.¹¹ Bhai Gurdas records a tradition that Guru Nanak used to carry a book (*kitāb*) of his own compositions on his missionary tours.¹² Although the manuscript of this collection is no longer extant, its mention by Bhai Gurdas may indicate that Guru Nanak was the first person to begin a written collection of his own works. The Sodhi family of the village of Guru Har Sahai, in Ferozepur district, who are the direct descendants of Prithi Chand (Guru Arjan's elder brother), claimed to have in its possession this first written *pothī*, which unfortunately was reported to have been lost in a train theft in 1973.¹³ This tradition must be regarded with considerable

9. M1, *Vār Malār*, 1 (28), AG, p. 1291. Here the reference 1 (28) defines the position of the shalok in the *vār*, that is, the first shalok of twenty-eight stanza. The *vār* of the *Adi Granth* is a distinctive genre, which is constituted by a series of stanzas (*paūrīs*). Each *paūrī* is preceded by a number of subsidiary stanzas called shalok.

10. See, for example, M1, *Vār Sāraṅg*, 1 (20), AG, p. 1245: "A curse on those who write the divine Name and sell it [for profit]. See W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987), p. 155.

11. W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 227.

12. *Vārān Bhāī Gurdās* 1: 32.

13. Giani Gurdit Singh, *Itihās Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib: Bhagat bānī bhāg* (Chandigarh: Sikh Sahit Sansthan, 1990), pp. 559–561. The author gives three photo copies of some folios of Guru Har Sahai *pothī* in the book on pages 3, 10 and 14. He further claims to have examined the volume on different occasions before its loss. However, without sufficient information concerning the

scepticism because of its Mina origins.¹⁴ There exists no known manuscript of Guru Nanak's compositions written in his own hand or coming from his times.

Guru Angad composed only sixty-two shaloks of *bāṇī* during his period of Guruship (1539–1552). He himself provided the reason for the sparseness of his compositions in the most striking couplet: "What instruction can be given to those who had Nanak Dev as their Guru?" (ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ).¹⁵ These shaloks, however, throw considerable light on the historical situation of the Sikh Panth during Guru Angad's period and mark the doctrinal boundaries of the Sikh faith in strict conformity with Guru Nanak's message.¹⁶

Guru Angad employed the word *bāṇī* for the "nectar-like utterances" (*amrit bāṇī*) of Guru Nanak. In a particularly striking instance, he makes a comparison between the Vedas and the compositions of the Guru:

ਸਲੋਕ ਮ: ੨

ਕਥਾ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਬੋਦੀ ਆਣੀ ਪਾਪੁ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਦੇ ਦੇ ਲੈਣਾ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਦੇਣਾ ਨਰਕਿ
ਸੁਰਗਿ ਅਵਤਾਰੁ ਉਤਮ ਮਧਿਮ ਜਾਤੀ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਭਰਮਿ ਭਵੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਤਤੁ
ਵਖਾਣੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਈ। ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਾਤੀ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਕਰਮਿ
ਧਿਆਈ। ਹੁਕਮੁ ਸਾਜਿ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਖੇ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵੇਖੋ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗਹੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਤੁਟੈ
ਤਾ ਕੋ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੈ।¹⁷

Shalok M 2.

Discourses on the stories from the Vedas discuss sins and merits. People are recompensed according to their deeds and thereby they descend into hell or

contents of the volume, nothing much can be stated with certainty about it.

14. The Minas were the followers of Prithi Chand (1558–1619 CE), the eldest son of Guru Ram Das. Because of his unworthy behaviour Prithi Chand was passed over in favour of his younger brother, Arjan, when his father chose a successor. He disputed the succession and following Guru Arjan's execution in 1606 CE made further attempts to secure the title. At some point he and his followers were branded *miṇās* ("dissembling rogues who took care to conceal their evil intentions") and the name stuck. The Minas were a robber tribe of the Gurgaon area. For more details on the Mina sect, see W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, pp. 18–9, n. 4.

15. M2, *Vār Mājh*, 1 (27), AG, p. 150.

16. For more details, see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publications, 1988), pp. 42–48.

17. M2, *Vār Sāraṅg*, 1 (16), AG, p. 1243.

heaven. Caught up in notions of high and low castes, the world strays in delusion. The nectar-like *bāṇī* which expounds Reality comes through enlightenment and deep meditation. The one who is "turned towards the Guru" (*gurmukh*) has uttered it and has known it, and [only those] blessed with divine grace praise it and meditate on it. According to the divine Order (*hukam*) all is created; according to the divine Order all is preserved; and according to the divine Order its innermost parts are perceived. Only when one's self-centredness (*haumai*) is shattered, Nanak, is one recorded in divine reckoning. (1)

Here "Vedas" is probably used as a general term for Hindu religious texts, which stress the inexorable nature of the law of karma,¹⁸ the consequences of good and bad karma as heaven and hell, and the institutional discrimination on the basis of caste and gender. Guru Angad may be alluding here to the Vedic injunction that Shudras and women are prohibited from even hearing the Vedas.¹⁹ In contrast to the worldview of many Hindu texts, Guru Angad claims the exclusive status of *bāṇī* which delivers all people from the shackles of karma and from the discriminatory aspects of the caste system through divine grace.²⁰ He stresses the functioning of the divine Order (*hukam*) in human affairs, which overrides the law of karma. By stressing the inspired nature of *bāṇī* Guru Angad may have hinted at the desirability of the future

18. Karma is popularly understood in Indian thought as the principle of cause and effect. This principle of karma is logical and inexorable. But karma is also understood in the Hindu texts as a predisposition which safeguards the notion of free choice. See Harold Coward, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), pp. 95-107. For the Sikh Gurus, the law of karma is not inexorable. It is subject to the higher principle of *hukam* ("divine order"). For the definition of the divine Order in Guru Nanak's thought, see McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and Sikh Religion*, p. 203: "The divine Order, the *Hukam*, is accordingly an all-embracing principle, the sum total of all divinely instituted laws; and it is a revelation of the nature of God."

19. Thomas B. Coburn, "Scripture' in India: Towards a Typology of the World in Hindu Life," in Miriam Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), p. 107.

20. For more details, see Taran Singh, *Gurū Angad Dev Jī* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1975), pp. 34-38.

compilation of the *Adi Granth* parallel to the Vedas.²¹

The first large-scale contribution to the *bāṇī* came from the long-lived third Guru, Amar Das (1479–1574 CE), who composed 907 hymns, drawing his inspiration from the 974 hymns of Guru Nanak.²² He enveloped the *bāṇī* of the first Guru in his own, and thereby laid the foundation for its living survival.²³ He employed the word *bāṇī* far more frequently than Guru Nanak did, and in many more crucial contexts.²⁴ In the first place, he used it in its modern conventional sense of a composition by one of the Gurus: "Come, dear Sikhs of the true Guru, sing the true *bāṇī*! Sing the *bāṇī* of the Guru, the best *bāṇī* of all *bāṇīs*!"²⁵ Secondly, Guru Amar Das identified it with the "Formless Lord" (*nirāṅkār*) himself: "Hail, hail the *bāṇī*, which itself is the Formless Lord. There is nothing else its equal" (ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ).²⁶ Thus the *bāṇī* functions as the living "voice" of Akal Purakh which resounds throughout creation.

Finally, Guru Amar Das used the term *bāṇī* more frequently for the universal *bāṇī* which perpetually exists through all ages and in all places. It is itself held as an object of devotion: "Love the *bāṇī* of the Guru. It is our support in all places and it is bestowed by the Creator himself."²⁷ For Guru Amar Das, Guru Nanak's *bāṇī* was the pre-eminent example of the universal *bāṇī*, which exists through all ages. He explicitly stated:

21. Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, p. 48: "Guru Nanak's successor [Guru Angad] laid down doctrinally the requirement of compiling the *Adi Granth*."

22. Taran Singh, ed., *Guru Granth Ratnavali* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1975), p. 14.

23. C. Shackle, "The First Restatement of the Bani," *The Sikh Courier* (London: Sikh Cultural Society of Great Britain, Autumn–Winter 1985), p. 72.

24. *Ibid.*, 73. Guru Amar Das uses the word 170 times, as against 62 in Guru Nanak's larger number of hymns.

25. M3, *Rāmakālī Anandu* 23, AG, p. 920. Professor Shackle's translation is used here.

26. M3, *Vār Gūjarī*, 1 (18), AG, p. 515.

27. M3, *Prabhātī* 7, AG, p. 1335.

ਤਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਸਾਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ। ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗ ਪਸਰੀ
ਸਾਚੀ ਸੋਇ, ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤਾ ਜਨੁ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇ।²⁸

True is the *bāṇī* of that servant [of the Lord], which has pervaded the world
through the Word of the Guru. Its true report has resounded throughout the
four ages. Imbued in the divine Name, his servant stands revealed.²⁹

The divine Word (*śabad*) is the underlying inspiration of the universal *bāṇī*, which together
with the Guru is the instrument of liberation throughout the ages. In this context, Christopher
Shackle maintains that it is Guru Amar Das's formulation of the doctrine of the *bāṇī* to which
one should look for the first overt expression of reverence for the *bāṇī*'s physical form. This
tendency was ultimately to lead to the fusion of *bāṇī* and Guru, when, according to
well-founded tradition, Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed that both were to be exclusively
embodied in the Guru Granth Sahib.³⁰

It is worth noting that the first definite attempt by the Sikh tradition to record a
single collection of approved works was evidently made during Guru Amar Das's period. The
reason for this, in the first place, was that there were growing problems of access to and
authenticity of the *bāṇī* in the rapidly expanding Sikh community throughout India. Secondly,
there was a demand for copies of the *bāṇī* in various Sikh sangats ("congregations"). Bhai Gurdas
gives the names of Pandha and Bula as the singers and scribes of the third Guru who made
copies of the hymns of the Gurus for the distribution among the Sikhs.³¹ Thirdly, there are
indications that some schismatic groups were circulating hymns under the name of Nanak with

28. M3, *Basant* 7, AG, p. 1174.

29. Translation is adapted from the one given in Shackle, "The first Restatement of the Bani," p. 73.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Varān Bhāī Gurdās* 11: 16.

the intention of winning a following of loyal Sikhs.³² Guru Amar Das, for instance, voiced a general warning against the circulation of "false utterances" (*kachī bānī*): "Apart from the [compositions of the] true Guru all *bānī* is spurious. Those who recite it are spurious; likewise those who hear it and those who propagate it."³³

In response to the threat of spurious hymns becoming popular among the Sikhs and to provide authentic versions of the *bānī* for the community, Guru Amar Das undertook the task of collecting the sacred works of his own composition and of the previous Gurus, together with selections from compositions of some of the Bhagats. He prepared the so-called Goindval *pothīs*, at least two of which are still extant with the descendants of the third Guru.³⁴ These two *pothīs* are put on display for *darśan* by their custodians on the morning of the full-moon day (*punīā*) of each month.

Traditionally, the Goindval *pothīs* were written during the period 1570–72 CE by Baba Sahansram, a son of Bab. Mohan and grandson of Guru Amar Das. However, the actual date given on volume I, which is held at Jalandhar, is *sambat 1652 māgh vadī 1*, corresponding to January 1595 CE, which is the period of Guru Arjan. Thus there is a question of the authenticity of the Jalandhar *pothī* and of whether or not it is one of the original volumes prepared under the supervision of the third Guru or just a copy of the original. Giani Gurdit Singh, who has examined the two volumes very closely, has suggested that the date given on volume I was inserted later on when the volumes were procured by Guru Arjan for use in the

32. There exist some specimens of such hymns in an early manuscript. See Bhai Gurdas Library, Rare Books Section, GNDU, MS # 1245, ff. 101b–103b. A fifteen-verse composition *Srī Rāgu Mahal 3 Chhant* is attributed to Guru Amar Das, but it is not included in the standard version of the *Adi Granth*. It may have originated from the circles of schismatic groups.

33. M3, *Rāmakalī Anandu* 24, AG, p. 920. The translation is adapted from the one given in W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, p. 162, no. 129.

34. For details, see chapter 2, p. 24.

compilation of the *Adi Granth*.³⁵ The actual writing of the *Goindval pothi*s, he argues, took place prior to Guru Ram Das's assumption of guruship, which is indicated by his handwriting and the marginal note on folio 94 of volume II: *ḡulām mastān Jeth Chand* ("Jeth Chand the enraptured slave"). *Jeth Chand* was the original name of the fourth Guru.

Further, the evidence of the use of different pens at a number of places suggests that the hymns were written at different times, and that this process continued for a long time. A careful examination of the photocopy of the manuscript of volume I reveals that the date was inserted rather later in the text in a different hand. It stands out from the rest of the text, which was written by the scribe who recorded the Guru's blessing (*bar*) on the decorated folio of volume I:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ
 ਸਮਤੁ ੧੬੫੨ ਪੱਥੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਬਿ
 ਮਾਘ ਵਦੀ ੧
 ਰ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੀਕਾਰ
 ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸਭਉ॥੫
 ਏਹੁ ਬਰੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬੇ ਦੀਆ ਸੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦੈ ਆਰੀ ਦੀਆ ਸੈ ਤਿਹਾ ਪੀੜੀਆ ਦੀਆ
 ਸੈ ਜਿ ਕੋਟੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਲਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਏਗਾ ਸੋ ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤ ਹੋਗੁ ਤਿਸਦੇ ਦੋਵੈ ਥੋਕ
 ਸਵਰਨਿਗੇ ਸੁਖਲਾ ਹੋਵੈਗਾ ਕਿਤੇ ਗਲੈ ਬੁਝੀਅਗੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਹੋਵਗੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਸਿ ਜਾਵਗੁ
 ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਹੈ ਏ ਸੁਮਤ ਸਹਿਸਾ ਸੁਭਾ ਮੁਲਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਏਹ ਗਲ ਸਚਿ ਜਾਨਣੀ ਜੇ
 ਕੋਟੀ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਹੂੰਡੀ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਛਡਿ ਕੈ ਦੁਯੈ ਲਗੈਗਾ ਸੋ ਅਵਸਿ ਨਰਕਿ ਜਾਇਗੁ॥³⁶

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

Sambāt 1652 māgh vadī 1. The *pothī* was written for Guru Ambir (Amar) Baba. The [True] Name, the Creator, the Fearless One and the Formless One! Beyond birth and death, [He is] self-existent. (1)

35. Giani Gurdit Singh, *Itihās Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 563. On the authority of Baba Prem Singh of Hoti, Gursharan Kaur Jaggi argues that although the writing of these volumes started in *sambāt 1629* (1572 CE) at the instance of Guru Amar Das, it continued till *sambāt 1652* (1595 CE) when four hymns were added by Baba Sahansram. See Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (somp.), *Bābe Mohan vālīān pothīān* (Delhi: Arsi Publishers, 1987), p. 51.

36. For the photocopy of the text, see *ibid.*, p. 1.

The [following] blessing was given by Guru Baba [Nanak] to Guru Angad, who gave it [to the third Guru, that is,] three generations have given it. Whosoever contemplates the *bāṇī* with his inner being will be "liberated in life" (*jīvan-mukat*). Both of his ambitions [in this world and the next] will be achieved [and] he will find comfort [in this life]. He will not be wanting in anything. He will be liberated [and] will go to the presence of the Guru. The Supreme Lord is the One [who gives] this sound counsel. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Know this thing to be true. If any one deserts our rightful succession³⁷ to [the office of] the Guru and adheres to someone else he will certainly go to hell.

In the first place, this text explicitly states that the *pothī* was written at the instance of "Guru Ambir (Amar) Baba".³⁸ In Punjabi culture the word "Baba" is used for "grandfather" in family relationships and its present context suggests that the scribe was the grandson of the third Guru. In its religious sense it refers to a revered figure. Guru Nanak was generally known as "Baba Nanak" to his followers. The word "Baba" in the phrase *eh bar gurū bābe diā sai gurū āngadai* ("This blessing was given by Guru Baba [Nanak] to Guru Angad") specifically refers to Guru Nanak. More generally the word "Baba" is used as a term of address, such as "sir, father, master." In the Adi Granth the word "Baba" is mostly used for Akal Purakh.³⁹ In each usage the context is crucial to understand its meaning.

Secondly, the mention of the blessing (*bar*) by three generations (*tihā pīṛīān*) of Gurus in the past tense indicates that the text of the blessing was written after the death of Guru Amar Das to make the claim to the office of guruship. The use of the word *huṇḍī* is quite revealing because it suggests that the descendants of the third Guru were making a

37. The word *huṇḍī* literally means "cheque" or "bill of exchange". It is a legal document. Here it refers to the "the hereditary succession".

38. Like the Punjabi word "Amrit" for "Amrit", here "Ambir" stands for "Amar" in the village community.

39. M1, *Āsā Aṣṭapadiān* 11, AG, p. 417: "O Lord, to Thee we offer salutation" (*ādes bābā ādes*).

hereditary claim when they were offering a challenge to Guru Ram Das. In designating his son-in-law as Guru, Guru Amar Das had bypassed his own sons, Baba Mohan and Baba Mohri. Whereas Mohri accepted his father's decision and fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das (ਮੋਹਰੀ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਹੋਆ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ⁴⁰), Baba Mohan established his own guruship at Goindval. The text of the above blessing clearly points in this direction.

We are primarily concerned in this study with the contents of the two available volumes of the Goindval *pothīs*, which are very important for any understanding of the process of compilation of the Adi Granth. These two volumes are still the oldest manuscripts at our disposal. The style of the Gurmukhi script would place these documents in the second half of the sixteenth century, as is demonstrated by the fact that the vowel-signs were not fully developed when these volumes were written. The letters of the Gurmukhi script are still in their early *lande* or *ṭākari* forms.

It should be emphasized that these two volumes do not contain all the compositions of the first three Gurus. Presumably, Guru Arjan had access to more than two volumes. Giani Gian Singh reported in the *Tavārīkh Gurū Khālsā* about the Goindval *pothīs* that he had seen in Patiala in *sambat 1952* (1895 CE). The raga sequence of one volume beginning with the *rāmakalī* raga does match one of the available *pothīs*, but the second volume of Gian Singh's description, which begins with the *sirī* raga, is certainly different from the present volumes. It is believed to be no longer extant.⁴¹ There is, however, the possibility that private collectors still hold manuscripts that may yet produce additional volumes of the Goindval *pothīs* (perhaps the

40. Sundar, *Rāmakalī Sadu*, AG, p. 924. It is important to note that the line of guruship established by Guru Nanak was not hereditary in the first three successions. The hereditary pattern was asserted after Guru Ram Das. Nevertheless, the succession in each case went to the most suitable candidate, not automatically from father to eldest son.

41. Giani Gian Singh, *Tavārīkh Gurū Khālsā* (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 2nd edn., 1970), p. 394.

remaining two).

Although the Goindval volumes provided a substantial nucleus for formulating the scripture, there were other collections of the Gurus' hymns that were preserved by devout Sikhs and that must have been available to Guru Arjan for inclusion in the *Adi Granth*. The index of the Kartarpur manuscript of the *Adi Granth* clearly states that the text of the introductory *Japu* (of Guru Nanak) was copied from a manuscript written by Guru Ram.⁴² It seems that Guru Ram Das also used to make copies of collections of *bāṇī*. Moreover, among the Sikhs there was a professional class of scribes who copied the works of the Gurus: "Those hands are pure and holy, my soul, which are used in writing the praises of the Lord" (ਤੇ ਹਸਤ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੜੀਏ ਜੋ ਹਰਿਜਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਲੇਖਹਿ ਰਾਮ)।⁴³ Thus, by stressing the devotional and religious significance of the writing of the *bāṇī*, Guru Ram Das raised the status of the scribes, who were otherwise held in low esteem in India.

During his brief ministry of seven years (1574–1581 CE), Guru Ram Das contributed a total of 679 hymns⁴⁴ and expanded the range of the ragas (Indian musical modes) by adding eleven new ones, which were not used by the earlier Gurus. In his compositions the identification of the *bāṇī* with the "Guru" becomes quite explicit:

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ
ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ।⁴⁵

The *bāṇī* is the Guru and the Guru the *bāṇī*, and the nectar (*amrit*) permeates all the *bāṇī*. When the Guru utters *bāṇī* and the believer responds

42. Bhai Jodh Singh, *Sri Kartarpurī Bīṛ de Darāsan* (Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala, 1968), p. 4.

43. M4, *Bihāgarā Chhant* 4, AG, p. 540. Also see, McLeod, *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, p. 155.

44. *Guru Granth Ratnavali*, p. 14.

45. M4, *Naṭ Aṣṭapadiān* 4, AG, p. 982.

with faith, then shall it be seen that the Guru bears him to freedom.⁴⁶

This verse of Guru Ram Das clearly foreshadowed the doctrine of "Guru-Granth" which came to be fully developed when, according to well-established tradition, Guru Gobind Singh terminated the line of personal Gurus before he died in 1708 CE, and installed the Adi Granth as "Guru eternal for the Sikhs".⁴⁷ This acknowledgement of the scripture as Guru made *de jure* what was in a sense already true *de facto*.

Like his predecessor, Guru Ram Das also warned against apostasy and false teachings: "Those who in imitation of the true Guru make false utterances are fools, and they are destroyed by their lies" (ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਠੀਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੁ ਪਿਚੁ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਜੇ ਕੁੜਿਆਰ ਕੁੜੇ ਜੜਿ ਪੜੀਐ).⁴⁸ At least four such hymns may be seen in the available Goindval volumes, which are not included in the Adi Granth.⁴⁹ This continuing threat of spurious hymns must have hastened the process of the compilation of the Adi Granth under Guru Ram Das's successor.

Guru Arjan inherited a large body of sacred verse when he assumed the office of guruship in 1581 CE. He was filled with admiration when he examined the works of his predecessors from the *pothīs*, which he evidently obtained from various sources, including the Goindval volumes from Baba Mohan. In one of his compositions, he alludes to such an experience:

46. The translation is adapted from the one given in McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, p. 204.

47. Harbans Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Guru Eternal for the Sikhs* (Patiala: Academy of Sikh Religion and Culture, 1988).

48. M4, *Vār Gaurī*, (9), AG, p. 304.

49. For instance, the hymns under the headings *Parbhāī Gulāmu* and *Sūhī Gulāmu* on folios 108a (or 102a, second numbering) and 50b of volume I are not included in the Adi Granth. The text of the second hymn is crossed out with a pen. Giani Gurdit Singh argues that these hymns were composed by Guru Ram Das before the assumption of guruship and hence they were excluded from the scripture. See Giani Gurdit Singh, *Itihās Srī Granth Sāhib*, p. 420. This is questionable. These hymns were perhaps composed by a rival claimant to the guruship (Baba Mohan?) in the Bhalla family.

ਪੀਉਂ ਦਾਦੇ ਕਾ ਖੋਲਿ ਡਿਠਾ ਖਜਾਨਾ ਤਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨਿ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ⁵⁰

When I opened the treasure of my father and grandfather to see for myself,

then I realized the divine treasure in my *man* (heart-mind-soul).⁵¹

Here the reference to both his father's and grandfather's "treasure" may suggest that Guru Arjan received at least two sets of manuscripts of *gurbānī*, one belonging to his father and the other to his grandfather. The works of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad, together with the Bhagats, were grouped with his grandfather's *bānī* in the Goindval *pothīs*. Since his father, Guru Ram Das, was not represented in these volumes, Guru Arjan presumably had access to a second manuscript. Such documents containing the works of his predecessors must have been the main source of inspiration for Guru Arjan. During his twenty-five years of guruship he covered a wide span of human experience and composed 2218 hymns, which make him by far the largest contributor to the scripture.⁵²

The main issue of the creation of a scripture is, of course, linked with the question of why Guru Arjan made the decision to prepare an authorized volume. The traditional answer to this question is that he did so in response to the threat of the Minas (the descendants of his elder brother Prithi Chand, and their followers) who were circulating spurious hymns under the name of Nanak. However, this answer appears for the first time in several eighteenth-century sources, namely the *Bansāvalī-nāmā* (1769 CE), written by Kesar Singh Chhibbar, and the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (1765 CE), coming from the same Chhibbar tradition.⁵³ This tradition

50. M5, *Gaurī* 31, AG, p. 186.

51. There is no adequate translation available in English for the technical term *man*, which draws together the range of thought, emotion, and spiritual being which English variously distinguishes as "mind", "heart", and "soul". For a discussion of *man*, see W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, pp. 178-81, 220.

52. *Guru Granth Ratnavali*, p. 14.

53. Rattan Singh Jaggi, ed., "Bansavali Nama Dasan Patshahian Ka", *Parakh: Research Bulletin of Panjabi Language and Literature*, vol. II (Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1972), p. 51 and *The*

certainly reflects the eighteenth-century Sikh understanding of the compilation of the *Adi Granth*, which was carried into nineteenth-century Sikh sources. There is, however, no contemporary evidence to support the contention that Minas were involved in the propagation of spurious hymns. The *Miharban Janam-sakhi* and other literature from their circle appeared long after the compilation of the *Adi Granth* in 1604 CE.⁵⁴ Even the threat of the circulation of apocryphal writings, which was coming from certain groups within the Panth since the days of Guru Amar Das, does not appear to be the major factor in the compilation of the *Adi Granth*, though it may have prompted the process of compilation to a certain extent.

The main thrust of this study is to examine the preparation of the scripture as integral to the wider process of crystallization of the Sikh tradition, which had already begun in Guru Nanak's lifetime during the Kartarpur period.⁵⁵ It is worth noting that this process of crystallization reached another milestone in the history of the Panth during the period of the fifth Guru. As J.C. Archer puts it: "The bare fact of canon-making has significance in itself. The Sikhs were intent upon a book".⁵⁶ The primary intention of Guru Arjan was to create an authoritative text for the Sikh community whereby it could understand and assert its unique identity. By doing so he could affix a seal on the sacred word to preserve it for posterity, and also frustrate any attempts by schismatic groups to circulate spurious hymns for sectarian ends.

In his perceptive article on "Scripture as Form and Concept," Wilfred Cantwell Smith

Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā, pp. 92 and 173, nos. 248-9. Also see Surinder Singh Kohli, *A Critical Study of the Ādi Granth* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, repr., 1976; 1st edn., 1961), pp. 12-14.

54. For more details, see W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, pp. 18-21.

55. The use of the term "crystallization" to describe an emerging religious community comes from Wilfred Cantwell Smith's article, "The Crystallization of Religious Communities in Mughal India," *On Understanding Islam: Selected Studies* (The Hague, The Netherlands: Mouton Publishers, 1981), pp. 177-196.

56. John Clark Archer, *The Sikhs in relation to Hindus, Moslems, Christians, and Ahmadiyyas: A Study in Comparative Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 146.

refers to the general idea of a set of divinely inspired utterances in a fixed written form, but suitable for oral (recitation or song) presentation. He argues that scripture as a religious phenomenon gradually emerged and developed in the Near East in a process of crystallization whose virtually complete stage comes with the Qur'an. He then suggests that the creation of Sikh scripture was obviously influenced by the Qur'an:

When I say that the Qur'an culminates this process, I do not mean to suggest that the process altogether stops at that point. A thousand years later the Granth Śāhib, the scripture of the then emergent Sikh community in India, the form of it and the concept of it and its place in the personal piety and corporate polity of the Sikh community for the last three or so centuries, were manifestly influenced in turn by the Qur'an: by Scripture as a form and a concept in the religious life of the Muslims with which the Sikh movement emerged as continuous. (It was continuous also, in another way and I think less closely, with the Hindu.)⁵⁷

Smith's view may be accepted to some extent, but only if we limit ourselves to the general category of scripture as a form and a concept. This compositional influence may be seen among the early Sikh scribes, who were following the Qur'anic tradition of illuminating the margins and the opening folios of the manuscripts of the Adi Granth. It may also be seen in the place of the Adi Granth in the personal piety and corporate polity of the Sikh community. It is, however, quite evident from the compositions of the Gurus that they were self-consciously involved in the creation of a new scripture parallel to the Vedas in the first place and then possibly to the Qur'an.⁵⁸ Smith seems to put too much emphasis on the Muslim influence in the formation of the Adi Granth, both absolutely and relatively to the Vedic precedent. Moreover, there is no direct influence of the Qur'an on the structure or content of the Sikh scripture.

Guru Arjan had before him a considerable array of material gathered from reliable

57. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Scripture as Form and Concept: Their Emergence for the Western World," in *Rethinking Scripture*, p. 32.

58. Guru Nanak regarded both Hindu and Muslim texts as fundamentally wrong: "Neither the *Veda* nor the *Kateb* know the mystery" (M1, *Mārū Solahē* 2, AG, p. 1021). Also see, McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 161.

manuscripts when he started to codify the compositions of the Gurus and the Bhagats into an authorized volume. He called Bhai Gurdas to act as an amanuensis for him in the making of the scripture. Additionally, he had the help of Bhai Buddha, a surviving member of the Kartarpur community and, therefore, a valuable link with the living voice of Guru Nanak.⁵⁹ Bhai Buddha's personal witness to the authenticity of the *bāṇī* must have played an important role in discriminating between genuine and apocryphal writings. The canonical text was thus completed on August 1, 1604 CE. The manuscript bearing this date is still in existence at Kartarpur,⁶⁰ in Jalandhar District of the Punjab, in the possession of the Sodhi descendants of Dhir Mal. That is why it is popularly known as the Kartarpur manuscript of the Adi Granth.

Procedure of this Study

The procedure adopted in this study is as follows. In chapter 2, I examine the seventeenth-century manuscripts of the Adi Granth. A sampling method is applied to classify manuscripts and to organize them into their appropriate groups. In chapter 3, I offer an explanation of the origins of different recensions of the Adi Granth. In chapter 4, I offer textual analysis of certain hymns and individual works. In this context I stress the examination of those problematic texts that have been the main focus of scholarly debate till now. In chapter 5, I draw out what seem to have been basic principles guiding Guru Arjan's editorial policy, a policy by means of which he produced a final text of the Adi Granth. In chapter 6, I offer an analysis of the meaning of the Adi Granth in the personal piety and corporate life of the Sikh

59. Bhai Buddha's involvement in the project of preparing the scripture seems to be established by his handwriting on the decorated folio of GNDU MS # 1245. See chapter 2, p. 27, n. 12.

60. This is not the Kartarpur in which Guru Nanak spent his later years (which is now in Pakistan), but a town in Jalandhar District founded by Guru Arjan.

community. In this context I examine the oral and written dimensions of the Sikh exegetical traditions. In chapter 7, I identify those issues of significance that have been resolved or clarified in this study and those issues calling for further research and reflection.

Chapter 2

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE ADI GRANTH

Academic discussion on the text of the Adi Granth so far has been focused on the so-called Kartarpur-Banno debate. That debate started in 1944 when G.B. Singh set about marshalling evidence to challenge the authenticity of the Kartarpur manuscript as being the original text of the Adi Granth prepared under Guru Arjan's supervision and recorded by Bhai Gurdas. He suggested that the Banno recension represents the original text.¹ The debate originated in a polemical context (*khaṇḍan-maṇḍan*), which was the characteristic feature of those days, when Aryas and Sikhs frequently attacked each other's faith. G.B. Singh seemed to be serving the Arya Samaj interests as evidenced by his defence of Dayanand's arguments in his book.²

Since then much of the energy of Sikh scholars has been devoted to proving the authenticity of the Kartarpuri *bīṛ* or recension.³ A great deal of this energy is directed these days at the writings of W. H. McLeod, who has been raising questions about the Adi Granth and making a plea for a sustained campaign of textual analysis to establish a sure and certain

1. G.B. Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prāchīn Bīṛān* (Lahore: Modern Publishers, 1944). The author's view should be treated with caution because he never examined the Kartarpur manuscript himself. He was an ordinary official in the postal service with an avowed interest in the Punjabi language and old manuscripts. For a detailed analysis of the debate see Nripinder Singh, *The Sikh Moral Tradition* (New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1990), pp. 225-236.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

3. Bhai Jodh Singh, *Prāchīn Bīṛān Bāre: Bhullān dī Sodhan* (Lahore: Lahore Book Shop, 1947) and his *Srī Kartārpurī Bīṛ de Darāsan* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968); Sahib Singh, *Ādi Bīṛ Bāre* (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1970); Daljeet Singh, *Essays on the Authenticity of Kartarpuri Bir and the Integrated Logic and Unity of Sikhism* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1987), and his article entitled, "Authenticity of the Kartarpuri Bir," in Jasbir Singh Mann and Harbans Singh Saraon, eds., *Advanced Studies in Sikhism* (Irvine CA: Sikh Community of North America and Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, 1989), pp. 138-160.

text.⁴ Although McLeod combines sensitivity with meticulous care in his analysis of Sikh documents, his arguments on the Sikh scriptures have been received with caution within the Sikh community. It is a conspicuous feature of the modern Panth to perceive critical scholarship as an attack on the Sikh faith. That is perhaps why the organized response offered by a group of Sikh scholars (of whom the most notable include retired civil servants of the Government of India and doctors of medicine, as well as academics) appears to be so defensive that one can easily sense a feeling of insecurity in their approach.⁵ It appears to be a new phenomenon linked with post-1984 events. Thus there is need for a textual critic to proceed with extreme caution and circumspection.

The Kartarpur-Banno debate is, however, misdirected, for the following reasons. First, the most significant point—which is generally missed—in this debate is the fact that there were three, not just two, major recensions of the written text of the *Adi Granth*. This becomes clear after a preliminary survey of seventeenth-century manuscripts. Secondly, the debate largely relies upon tradition and loose speculation rather than careful research. Finally, the major weakness of this debate is that the textual problems are dealt with in isolation, without any reference to Guru Arjan's overall editorial policy, a policy by means of which he finally produced the text of the *Adi Granth*.

Here, it is my intention to discuss another issue which goes beyond the Kartarpur-Banno debate. I propose that it is more fruitful to focus first on the history of the

4. W. H. McLeod, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community* (Delhi: Oxford Press, 1975), pp. 59–82 and his paper entitled, "The Sikh Scriptures: Some Issues," in Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier, *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), pp. 97–105.

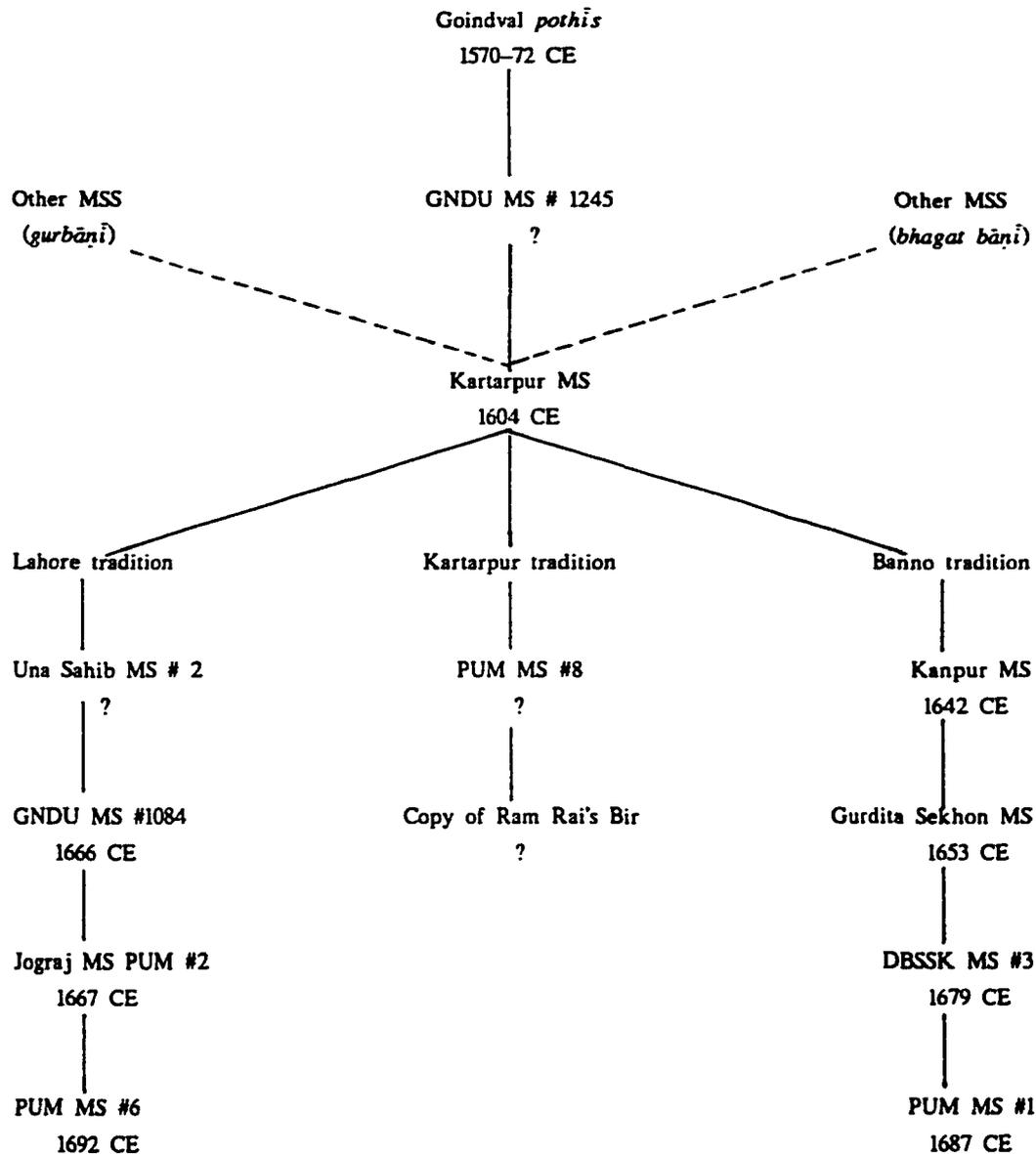
5. For instance, see the collection of review articles on W.H. McLeod's works in *Some Recent Publications on Sikhism: An Evaluation* (Chandigarh: Institute of Sikh Studies, 1990). Also see Gurdev Singh, ed., *Perspectives on the Sikh Tradition* (Patiala: Siddharth Publications for Academy of Sikh Religion and Culture, 1986).

text of the Adi Granth than to decide prematurely what the original reading was.⁶ The reconstruction of this history will help us to understand the redaction process that was at work behind the whole operation of formulating an authoritative text. It is also interesting and instructive to observe, from the examination of the old manuscripts, how the later scribes, who failed to understand that process, struggled with the problematic texts and how they responded by tampering with the text of the Adi Granth. These scribes (and their groups within the Granth) were primarily responsible for the different recensions of the Adi Granth.

It should also be emphasized at the outset that the process of compilation of the Adi Granth seems to have started much earlier than the tradition would have us believe, and it must have continued throughout Guru Arjan's period of guruship. This is the conclusion one draws from a comparative analysis of old manuscripts of the Adi Granth. Guru Arjan evidently worked over a number of drafts before he produced a "final" text in 1604 CE. Even during the last two years of his life he added to the scripture a number of his own hymns (which are not mentioned in the index of the Kartarpur MS) along with some hymns of the bhagats before he died in 1606 CE.⁷ In order to understand this process, we may begin with the genealogical tree of the text of the Adi Granth:

6. "One is interested in the history of the text not just to decide what the original reading was but to see how the tradition dealt with the same concerns that people have today." Edwards Hobbs, "An Introduction To Methods of Textual Criticism", in Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, ed., *The Critical Study of the Sacred Texts* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), p. 23.

7. For details, see *Sri Kartarpurī Bīr de Darāśan*, pp. 5-6.



Genealogical Figure 1.

(PUM = Punjabi University Museum, Patiala. GNDU = Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. DBSSK = Dr. Balbir Singh Sahitya Kendra, Dehra Dun. The 'Gurdita Sekhon MS' is in the possession of Mahant Gopal Singh of Tikana Sri Bhai Ramzishan, a Seva-panthi sect, Patiala. It was written by Gurdita Sekhon of Udovala for the sangat of Guru Har Rai. 'Una Sahib MS' is in the possession of Baba Sarabjot Singh Bedi, Una Sahib, Himachal Pradesh. Jograj was the writer of PUM MS #2, which contains the Mul Mantar written in Guru Tegh Bahadur's hand.)

At the top of the diagram stand the Goindval *pothīs*, which provided a principal source for the compilation of the scripture. Then comes a rare manuscript preserved at Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar, which may be regarded as one of the many drafts on which Guru Arjan seems to have worked to finally produce the text of the *Adi Granth*. It is highly likely that there were other such manuscripts of *gurbānī* as well as of *bhagat bānī* which have not survived. A detailed description of the location and the brief history of various manuscripts is given below.

Goindval pothīs:

Two volumes of Goindval *pothīs* are still extant and in the possession of the descendants of Guru Amar Dās: one volume is preserved with the Bhalla family of Jalandhar and the second one is in the possession of a collateral family living in Pinjore. A photocopy of the Jalandhar volume is held at the Punjabi University Library, Patiala.⁸ This is normally referred to as volume I. It begins with the *sūhī* raga followed by *prabhātī*, *dhanāsarī*, *basant*, *tilaṅg*, *gūjarī*, *bhairō*, *āsā*, *mārū* and *kedārā*. The Pinjore *pothī*, known as volume II, has four ragas, namely *rāmakālī*, *soraṭhi*, *malār* and *sāraṅg*. These two volumes consist of 300 and 224 folios respectively, some of which are totally blank.

The Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) MS # 1245:

The manuscript was purchased in 1987 by Guru Nanak Dev University from Harbhajan

8. I examined the incomplete photostat copy of Jalandhar volume at the Punjabi Reference Library, PUL, on May 10–11, 1990. For more details, see Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (smp.), *Babe Mohan valīān pothīān* (Delhi: Arsi Publishers, 1987). A doctoral student, Gurinder Singh Mann, is currently writing his dissertation on the Goindval *pothīs* at Columbia University, New York.

Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavla, Art and Manuscript Dealers, Bazar Mai Sevan, Amritsar. It was entered on the Catalogue of the Rare Collections of Bhai Gurdas Library on March 30, 1987. If the standard rule of textual criticism that "the shorter reading is to be preferred to the longer one" (*Brevior lectio praeferenda verbosiori*) is considered, the text of this manuscript comes out to be earlier than the famous Kartarpur manuscript. Another rule, that "the more difficult reading is generally preferable" (*Proclivi lectioni praestat ardua*), may be equally applied to the GNDU text since it contains archaic linguistic expressions which were standardized in the Kartarpur volume. Moreover, its reading explains the origins of variations, which will become clear as we proceed to examine certain texts and Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

Some of the major characteristic features of the GNDU MS # 1245 are as follows:

1. The manuscript has a total number of 1267 folios. It is in the form of a draft on which Guru Arjan still seemed to be working. In a number of places the layout of planning may be seen. For instance, in folios 482b, 483a and 483b there are blank spaces to be filled in with the shaloks for the *paurīs* numbering 18, 20 and 21 respectively in the *vār* of Guru Amar Das in the *gūjarī* mode. Other such instances can be seen in folios 207a-b, 769b-770a, 1066b, 1236a-1242a, 1245b-1246a, 1247a-1248a, 1254a-b and 1262b.
2. It has a different raga sequence, and the index of individual hymns of each raga-section is written separately at the beginning of that section. It begins with the *sirī* raga followed by the usual *mājh*, *gaurī*, *āsā*, *gūjarī* and *vaḍahaṅs* raga. Thereafter, it diverges from the standard pattern and follows its own sequence of *dhanāsarī*, *jaitasarī*, *soraḥi*, *kalayāṅ*, *naḥ-narāin*, *ṭoḍī*, *bairārī*, *tilaṅg*, *goṇḍ-bilāval*, *sūhī*, *bilāval*, *rāmakalī*, *mālī-gaurā*, *mārū*, *kedārā*, *tukhārī*, *bhairauṅ*, *basant*, *sāraṅg*, *malār*, *kanarā* and *prābhātī* raga.
3. There are a number of texts in this manuscript that were revised in the final draft. Even Guru Arjan modified his own hymns in a number of places. For instance, all of his hymns in the *tilaṅg* raga in folios 681b-682b were revised in the final draft. One of these hymns, numbering 5 in folio 682a (ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ

ਸਿਖੜਾ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ), is repeated in the *sūhī* mode in folio 729b with the addition of the first line appearing at the end as well. A marginal note appears in folio 682a to this effect saying that "it is taken to the *sūhī* mode" (ਸੁਹੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ). This hymn was further revised in the final draft with the addition of the word *jīu* at the end of each line to make it more musical.

4. It does not contain the *bhagat-bāṇī*, which suggests that Guru Arjan's primary concern was to fix the hymns of the Gurus first, and then to deal with the issue of the hymns of the Bhagats. This is perhaps the reason why the Kartarpur manuscript does not contain the index of the individual hymns of the *bhagat-bāṇī*. There is enough evidence that a number of hymns of the Bhagats were included in the Kartarpur manuscript after it was bound. For instance, Ravidas's hymn (ਬੇਗਮਪੁਰਾ ਸਰ ਕੇ ਨਾਉ) in the *gaurī* raga in folio 278/2 and Dhanna's hymn (ਗੋਪਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ ਆਰਤਾ) in the *dhanāsarī* mode in folio 519/2 were added much later on each page by keeping extended margin on the left side of the Kartarpur manuscript. Their inclusion in the scripture reflects a situation wherein the followers of those Bhagats (the Jats and the cobblers) were attracted into the Sikh fold in large numbers. The diversity that we find in the manuscripts of the Adi Granth produced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may be explained by the fact that later followers of particular Bhagats tried to interpolate the latter's hymns in the scripture, though they were originally turned down by Guru Arjan.
5. The panegyrics by the bards (*bhaṭṭān de savayye*) in praise of the Gurus are still in their earlier short form. By the time this manuscript was written some of them had not yet appeared in the court of the Guru. Even the *vār* by Satta and Balvand in the *rāmakalī* mode is not to be found in this manuscript. This was definitely incorporated in the later Kartarpur manuscript.
6. The titles of the epilogue of the volume appear in their earlier forms, which were standardized in the Kartarpur volume. For instance, the title of Gurus' shaloks surplus to the *vārs* is written as *śalok vārān te bāhari* (ਸਲੋਕ ਵਾਰਾ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ) in folio 1232a. In a similar manner, the title of the panegyrics by a bard named Kali in praise of Guru Angad appears as *savayye gurū āngad ke kālai bhaṭṭi kīte*

(ਸਵਈਏ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਕੇ ਕਾਲੇ ਭਟਿ ਕੀਤੇ).⁹

7. Guru Arjan's concluding shalok *terā kitā jāto nāhīn* (ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਤੋ ਨਾਹੀ...) is not to be found in this volume. Obviously this shalok was composed at a time when the final text of the Adi Granth was prepared. It comes after the *Mundāvānī* in the Kartarpur manuscript.
8. The Gurmukhi script of the manuscript is still in the process of development. To a large extent its style is very similar to the Gurmukhi script of the Kartarpur manuscript. The most distinctive difference, however, is in the formation of certain letters and the vowel signs. For instance, a dot is used for the vowel sign *kannā* instead of a half vertical stroke. The vowel *ūrā* (ਊ, u) is written with an open end, like the symbol of *oankār* (ੳ), whereas the consonant *chhachchhā* (ਛ, chh) is still written as ਞ in its earlier Sharda form.

The introductory note written in the beginning of the manuscript claims that "there is a benedictory autograph written in Guru Hargobind's blessed hand on the fourth leaf" (ਚੌਥੇ ਪੱਤਰ ਤੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦਸਤੇ ਮੁਬਾਰਕ ਨਾਲ ਨੀਸ਼ਾਟ ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਣ ਹੈ).¹⁰ This is not correct. The examination of the manuscript has revealed that a different piece of paper, containing the Mul Mantar written in Guru Tegh Bahadur's hand, was pasted much later on the fourth decorated page.¹¹

Further, it is claimed that the manuscript contains a hymn written in Bhai Buddha's hand on the third decorated page, which may show his involvement in the creation of the scripture.¹² It is quite possible that his descendants may have preserved the manuscript through

9. GNDU MS # 1245, f. 1263b. For other titles see fos. 1263a, 1264b, 1265b and 1266b.

10. Ibid. See the manuscript note by Harbhajan Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavala.

11. The handwriting of the Mul Mantar tallies exactly with the writing style of Guru Tegh Bahadur, given in Ganda Singh (samp.), *Hukam-nāme* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967), p. 75.

12. GNDU MS # 1245. The third decorated page contains the following hymn, believed to be written by Bhai Buddha:

[ਗੁ]ਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੇਵਹ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਚਾ [ਅ]ਨੰਦਿਨ ਸਹਜਿ ਪਿਆਗ ਸਦਾ ਅੰਨੰਦਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਚੇ ਅਰਥਿ ਉਰਿਥਿ
ਉਰਿਥਾਗਿ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮੁ ਵਸਿਆ ਸਾਚਾ ਧੁਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਗਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਆਪੇ
ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਗਿ

The attribution of this hymn to Bhai Buddha is based on the family tradition. See the

the process of handing it over to the next generation. Furthermore, folio 1255a of the manuscript contains the death-dates of the first five Gurus only, the last of which was written later on by the same scribe. The long eulogistic description of Guru Amar Das's death may indicate that the scribe was a close associate of the third Guru, possibly Bhai Gurdas, who may have further improved his handwriting by the time he wrote the final draft of the *Adi Granth*.¹³

The Kartarpur manuscript:

The Kartarpur manuscript is generally held to be the document actually inscribed by Bhai Gurdas at the dictation of Guru Arjan and that is why it has attracted so much scholarly attention for the last fifty years.¹⁴ The editorial comments in this manuscript, which are unique and quite revealing, are not to be found in any other manuscript.¹⁵ Some of its characteristic features are as follows:

1. The date of completion of the volume is recorded at the head of the table of contents as follows: "Having completed the *pothī*, [the scribe] has reached [to the indexing of it] on *sambat 1661 mitī bhādaū vadī ekam 1*" (ਸੰਬਤੁ ੧੬੬੧ ਮਿਤੀ

manuscript note by Harbhajan Singh and Harcharan Singh Chavla.
13. GNDU MS # 1245, f. 1255a:

ਸਮਤੁ ੧੬੬੧ ਵਰਖੇ ਮਾਹ ਭਾਦਉ ਸੁਦੀ ੧੫ ਪੂਰਨਮਾ ਕੇ ਦਿਨਿ ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਮਹਾ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪੁਰਤਿ ਆਦਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਸਾ ਕਲਜੁਗ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਕੇ ਅਮਰੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਉਸੁ ਜਿਨਾ ਜੰਤਾ ਭਿਠਾ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਸੇ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਰਹੇ ਅਮਰੁ ਹੋਏ ਅੰਤਿ ਅਮਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ

14. John Clark Archer, "The Bible of the Sikhs", *The Review of Religion* (London, January 1949), pp. 115–25; C.H. Loehlin, "A Westerner looks at the Kartarpur Granth", *Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference, First Session* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1966), pp. 93–96 and his paper entitled "Textual Criticism of the Kartarpur Granth" in Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies*, pp. 113–118.

15. I examined the Kartarpur manuscript on May 14, 1990, for four and a half hours along with the following persons: (1) Bhai Bakhshish Singh, Granthi, Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib, Nander, (2) Bhai Rantor Singh, a Nihang Singh of Harian Velan, Hoshiarpur, (3) Bhai Santokh Singh, a Nihang Singh of Harian Velan, Hoshiarpur, (4) Bhai Avtar Singh, Granthi, Gurdwara Shish Mahal, Kartarpur Sahib, and (5) Bhai Mohinder Singh, Manager, Kartarpur Estate, Kartarpur.

ਭਾਦਉ ਵਦੀ ਏਕਮ ੧ ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖਿ ਪਹੁਚੇ).¹⁶ This date corresponds to August 1, 1604 CE. It is worth noting here that the word used for the volume is *pothī*.

2. The manuscript has a total number of 974 folios. The system of folio numbering is quite unique. One should always keep in mind that the two pages at the time of opening the volume, one on the left and the other on the right, constitutes one leaf. The number of the leaf is given on the left page, which constitutes folio la or 1/1 (Jodh Singh's method) of the first folio and the right page becomes folio lb or 1/2. Jodh Singh has suggested that folios were numbered before the actual writing began, and that groups or clusters of folios (approximately 123 clusters, each cluster consisting of eight folios) were allocated in advance to particular raga sections and subdivisions within each section.¹⁷ This is quite evident from the recurrence of blank spaces (of which 226 folios are entirely blank and some of others are partly blank) in the manuscript, particularly those found at the conclusion of distinct sections of the volume.
3. There are explicit references to the autographs of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind in the index as follows:

(a) "The autograph of the fifth Guru is on folio 45" (ਖੜ ਨੀਸਾਣ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤ ਮ:੫).

(b) "The autograph of the sixth Guru is on folio 540" (੫੪੦ ਨੀਸਾਣ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤ ਮਹਲਾ ੬).

The actual recording of the Mul Mantar in Guru Arjan's hand is to be found on the decorated folio 29/1 which, according to Bhai Jodh Singh, was the result of new numbering done at the time of fixing the borders and binding the volume again. Similarly the autograph of Guru Hargobind in the form of the Mul Mantar is to be found on another decorated folio 541/1 in the middle of the volume. The reason for the discrepancy seems to be the fact that this leaf was fixed on the reverse side at the time of re-binding. Guru Hargobind's autograph in the Kartarpur volume clearly indicates, first, his involvement in the creation of the scripture, and secondly, his designation as the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan may have taken this step to ensure the succession in the wake of the

16. I have in my possession the photograph of this folio of the table of contents of the Kartarpur manuscript.

17. See *Srī Kartārpurī Bīṛ de Darāsan*, Introduction, p. h (Punjabi letter *hāhā*).

rivalry of his elder brother, Prithi Chand.¹⁸

4. A careful examination of the manuscript suggests that the whole operation of recording was conducted in a discontinuous manner, moving between sections, each of which was carefully read by Guru Arjan before he was able to pronounce it *śudh* ("pure", "correct"). The actual recording of *śudh* in the margins in a different hand can be seen in folios 161/1, 256/1, 259/1, 365/1, 402/2, 406/1, 434/2, 460/2, 496/1, 532/2, 648/2, 723/1, 728/2, 804/2, 884/1, 901/2, and 916/1 at the end of the *vār* which normally concludes the works of the Gurus in each section, that is, before the works by the Bhagats begin.¹⁹ It is worth noting that in later manuscripts the recording of *śudh* became part of the actual text instead of the margins. This is also the case in the modern printed editions of the *Adi Granth*.
5. In the *dhanāsari* mode there is one hymn of Guru Amar Das (ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਤਾ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਸਿਮਰਿਆ ਜਾਇ...) which is composed in response to Guru Nanak's hymn (ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਕਿਉ ਸਿਮਰੀ ਸਿਮਰਿਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਇ...) in folio 499/2. It is clearly indicated in the index in folio 10/2 that the fourth hymn in the section of Guru Nanak's hymns is that of the third Guru (ਚਉਥਾ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਲੇ ੩ ਕਾ). To reinforce this authorship there is another editorial comment in folio 10/2 in the margin facing the section of the hymns of the third Guru, saying that "this number 1 hymn [of the third Guru] is written among the hymns of the first Guru at fourth place" (ਇਹ ਨੰ: ੧ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਲੇ ੧ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਚਉਥੇ ਥਾਂ). Other such comments explaining the position of certain hymns can be seen in folios 16/1 (index numbering), 694/1, 778/1, 788/1, 804/2 and 805/1.
6. At a number of places Guru Arjan discards one version of one or other of his own hymns and points out that a better version of the same is to be found somewhere else. For instance, there is a marginal note in folio 836/1 referring to one of Guru Arjan's hymns: "This hymn is unnecessarily repeated here; its actual place is at [number] fifty-two" (ਇਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਦੁਹਰਾਗਤਿ ਚੜਿਆ ਹੈ ਬਾਵਜਹ ਹੈ).²⁰

18. Guru Arjan's intention to designate his only son as his successor may be seen in his hymn which he composed to celebrate the latter's birth (*vadhī veli bahu pīrī chālī*, "With the increase of the [family] tree the succession has become continuous"). See MS, *Āsā* 7, AG, p. 396.

19. I have actually examined the writing style of the word *śudh*, which tallies with the style of Guru Arjan's autograph. Jodh Singh has also explicitly stated so in his *Srī Kartarpurī Bīr de Darāsan*, Introduction, p. s (Punjābi letter *sasā*). Also see p. 87.

20. Kartarpur MS, f. 836/1. The hymn reads:

ਤੇਰੇ ਮਹਲ ਪਾ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਗ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਈ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪੁਰਨ ਧਾਮਾ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਦਰਸ ਬਾਣੈ
ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤੀ ਹੋਇ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਧਰਮਰਾਇ ਜਾਮਾ। ਤਉ ਕਉ ਤਉ ਪੜਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਗਲ ਬਿਆਇ

Other such notes can be seen in folios 96/2, 415/1, 483/1, 511/1, and 550/2.

7. There are four instances where Kabir's verses are either crossed out with a pen or obliterated with the use of *hartāl* (deletion). First, a shalok (ਸਲੋਕਾ ਧਰਿ ਅੰਬਰ ਵਿਚ ਬੋਲੜੀ ਤਿਹ ਲਾਲ ਸੁੰਗੀਧਾ ਫੂਲਾ ਅਖਰ ਓਹ ਲਖਿਓ ਨਹੀ ਟੋਜਾ ਕਰੇ ਕਬੂਲਾ) was incorporated in a different hand on the right hand corner just below the Mul Mantar in Kabir's *Vār Sat* ("Seven Days") in *gaūrī* raga in folio 275/1, but later on it was obliterated with the use of *hartāl*. This shalok can still be read under the deletion paste. Second, Kabir's hymn in folio 374/2 in *āsā* mode (ਦੇਖਹੁ ਲੋਗਾ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸਗਾਈ...) is crossed out with a pen. Third, only two lines of Kabir's hymn appear in folio 497/2 in *sorāḥī* raga (ਅਉਧੁ ਸੋ ਜੋਗੀ ਗੁਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਇਸ ਪਦ ਕਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਬੇਰਾਯਾ ਰਹਾਉ), which are obliterated with a pen. Fourth, a shalok (ਕਥੀਰ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਟੰਤਰੈ ਲੇਬੇ ਕਉ ਕਛ ਨਾਹਿ ਕਿਆਲੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਦੇਇ ਸਉਪ ਰਹੀ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ) was incorporated in folio 943/2 at the end of Kabir's shaloks with a different hand, but it was crossed out with a pen. An editorial comment explains that "this is just an ordinary shalok" (ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਐਸੇ ਹੈ), which may indicate that it was not approved by the Guru.²¹ In a similar manner, the *Mira Bai* hymn (ਮਨ ਹਮਾਰੋ ਬਾਧਿਓ ਮਾਈ ਕਵਲ ਨੈਣੁ...), which was written in a different hand in folio 810/2 at the end of *mārū* raga, was obliterated with a pen.
8. There are only two lines of Guru Arjan's *Rāmakālī* hymn (ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਰਟ ਝੁੰਝਨਤਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿਦਿਅਤਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ) in folio 703/1. Although the scribe has used a different pen, this couplet is in the same hand as the text which precedes it. It is followed by a

ਮਿਟੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਹੁ ਗੁਟ ਕੀ ਦਾਸ ਕੇ ਹੋਏ ਪੂਰਨ ਕਾਮਾਯਾ ਰਹਾਉ। ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਲੋਭ ਮਦ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਟਿਆ ਅਭਿਮਾਨਾ ਐਸੇ ਸੰਤ ਭੋਟਹਿ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨਕੈ ਸਦ ਕੁਰਬਾਨਾਕਸਪਾਯ।

The version that appears at number 52 on folio 834/1 slightly differs from the above hymn in terms of wording and sequence of lines. It reads:

ਭੈਰਉ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਭੈ ਕਉ ਭਉ ਪੜਿਆ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਗਲ ਬਿਆਧਿ ਮਿਟੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਹੁ ਗੁਟ ਕੀ ਦਾਸ ਕੇ ਹੋਏ ਪੂਰਨ ਕਾਮਾਯਾ ਰਹਾਉ। ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਗ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਟ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪੂਰਨ ਧਾਮਾ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਦਰਸ ਬਾਛੈ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤੀ ਹੋਇ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਧਰਮਰਾਇ ਜਾਮਾਯਾ ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਲੋਭ ਮਦ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਟਿਆ ਅਭਿਮਾਨਾ ਐਸੇ ਸੰਤ ਭੋਟਹਿ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨਕੈ ਸਦ ਕੁਰਬਾਨਾਕਸਪਾਯ।

21. Giani Gurdit Singh, *Itihās Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib: Bhagat Bānī Bhāg* (Chandigarh: Sikh Sahit Sansthan, 1990), p. 502. Bhai Jodh Singh has given a slightly different reading of the comment in his *Sri Kartārpurī Bīr de Darāsan* on page 119:

“ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਅਗੇ ਹੈ”

“This shalok lies ahead”. This does not seem to make any sense in the present context.

blank space which extends to more than two folios and there is no obliteration or deletion of any sort. The use of a different pen and the absence of its mention in the index clearly indicate that this couplet was added after the compilation of the scripture in 1604 and before Guru Arjan's death in 1606. Another such example is the recording of a single line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਸੰਗੁ) in the *sāraṅg* mode in folio 885/2. Here the scribe has used a different pen. The opening line of Sur Das's hymn is followed by four blank lines in the manuscript, which could accommodate the remainder of the hymn. Again, there has been no obliteration at this point. The single line is followed by Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das (ਮਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ੧ੳ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਕੋਕਲ) which is in response to the issue raised by the Bhagat in his hymn.

9. The letters and the vowel signs of the Gurmukhi script appear to have greatly developed by the time the Kartarpur volume was written in 1603–4 CE. A comparative analysis of the earlier manuscripts (Goindval *pothīs* and the GNDU MS # 1245) and the Kartarpur manuscript has revealed that Guru Arjan standardized the Gurmukhi script when he prepared the final text of the *Adi Granth*. For instance, a half vertical stroke is used for the vowel sign *kannā* instead of a dot. The vowel *airā* (ਅ, a) and the consonant *chhachchhā* (ਛ, Chh) are, however, still written in forms which resemble the corresponding Sharda letters.

Bhai Jodh Singh's work, *Srī Kartārpurī Bīr de Darāsan*, gives a scrupulously accurate description of the manuscript and it provides comprehensive and meticulous notes on the text. At one crucial point, however, he adds his own interpretation to his description to solve a textual problem.²²

22. For detail see chapter 4, p. 135.

It is important to note that this manuscript is variously known as the Kartarpur version, the Bhai Gurdas version, or the "Adi Bir" ("first or original version"). Before falling into the hands of Dhir Mal, who brought it to Kartarpur (hence its name "Kartarpur MS") for the purpose of establishing his own guruship after the death of Guru Harkrishan, it was known as "the Granth of the fifth Guru" (ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਮਹਲੇ ਕਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ), and it was held at Kiratpur by the seventh and the eighth Gurus.²³ There are some rare manuscripts preserved at Patna Sahib, the birth-place of Guru Gobind Singh, the text of which was corrected by comparing it with the text of this volume. For instance, the following note from a manuscript written by a Sikh named Ram Rai, son of a goldsmith named Utam Chand, in *sambat 1749* (1692 CE) illuminates the process of textual transmission:

ਏਹੁ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਫਤੇਚੰਦ ਕੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ, ਫਤੇਚੰਦ ਕਾ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਪੁਹਕਰ ਕੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ। ਪੁਹਕਰ ਦਾ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਵਡੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਲਿ ਸੋਧਿਆ ਹੈ, ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਮਹਲ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਭਲੇ ਪਾਸਹੁ ਲਿਖਵਾਇਆ ਸੀ ਜੋ ਓਸੁ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਲਿ ਸੋਧੈ ਸੋ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸੁਧ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੇ ਫੇਰਿ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸੋਧਿਆ ਲੋੜੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਜਗਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਦੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਲਿ ਸੁਧਿ ਕਰਿ ਲੈਇਓ। ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਗਿਰੰਥਾਂ ਨਾਲਹੁ ਜਗਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਦਾ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸੁਧ ਕੀਤਾ, ਪੁਹਕਰ ਦਾ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਜਗਨੇ ਦੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਲਿ ਸੁਧਿ ਕੀਆ ਹੈ²⁴

This Granth is the copy of the Granth of Fatch Chand, Fateh Chand's Granth is the copy of the Puhkar [or Pushkar] Granth. The Puhkar Granth is corrected by comparing it with the Great Granth, which was inscribed by Gurdas Bhalla at the dictation of the Fifth Guru. If someone corrects his Granth with the help of the [Great] Granth, his Granth will be correct. Even then if someone wants to correct his Granth, he should do so by comparing it

23. G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīrān*, pp. 169–70.

24. Piara Singh Padam, *Sri Gurū Granth Prakāś* (Patiala: Kalam Mandir, 2nd edn., 1990; 1st edn., 1977), p. 105. Padam has examined the manuscripts held at Patna Sahib. Although he does not provide any further details of their contents, this brief note is quite significant.

with the Granth of Jagana Brahman. As compared with other Granths, the Granth of Jagana Brahman has been corrected [with the Great Granth]. The Puhkar Granth is [also] corrected by comparing it with the Granth of Jagana Brahman.

The following points emerge from this text. First, the concern for the correctness of the copy of the *Adi Granth* seems to have been widespread in the Sikh community in the late seventeenth century. Second, the "Great Granth" (*vaḍā granth*), which was written by Gurdas Bhalla at the dictation of Guru Arjan, was evidently known to the scribes as the benchmark for authenticating their own copies of the *Adi Granth*.²⁵ Third, the note specifically mentions for the first time the name of Bhai Gurdas as being the amanuensis of the fifth Guru. Fourth, the copies of the *Adi Granth* were popularly known by the names of the scribes (like Fateh Chand and Jagana Brahman) as well as places (like Puhkar or Pushkar).

It may be stated that the concern for the authentic copy of the *Adi Granth* reflects a situation in which other versions of the text of the *Adi Granth* were also widely used by different groups within the Sikh community. The Lahore recension differs from the Kartarpur version only in its concluding section. It has a different order, sometimes ending with the shaloks of Kabir and Farid, and sometimes with the

25. Giani Gurdit Singh claims to have in his possession an old manuscript which carries a similar note:

ਇਹ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਨਾਲ ਸੋਧਿਆ ਹੈ, ਲਗ ਕੰਨਾ ਜਿਉਂ ਕਾ ਤਿਉਂ ਰਖਟਾ

"This Granth has been corrected by comparing it with the *Adi Granth*, so keep the spellings and the vowel signs intact." The "Adi Granth" here refers to the *Adi Bir*. See *Itihās Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 412.

panegyrics in praise of the Gurus. The Banno recension contains extra material which is not to be found in the other two versions.

1. Kartarpur Tradition

1.1 *The Punjabi University Museum (PUM) manuscript # 8:*

This manuscript is quite remarkable because it is the earliest extant copy of the Kartarpur tradition. Although there is no colophon which can be used to date it, there are certain indications that suggest that the volume was written after the compilation of the Kartarpur manuscript during Guru Arjan's lifetime. For instance, it does not contain Guru Tegh Bahadur's hymns. Further, it has the conventional entry in the index regarding the copying of the *Japu* directly from the manuscript written in Guru Ram Das's hands (ਖਤਿ ਜਪੁ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ).²⁶ There are other points which emerge from the actual examination of the volume.

The main characteristics of this volume may be described as follows:

1. The manuscript has a total number of 564 folios. Its recording was carried out strictly *seriatim* by copying from the Kartarpur manuscript. Like its predecessor, it contains the actual noting of *śudh* ("pure", "correct") in a different hand in the margins. The most important instance is the recording of *śudh kītā* ("corrections made") in the margin of folio 130a at the end of Guru Arjan's *Vār Gaurī* in contrast with the noting of *śudh kīchai* ("make corrections") in the Kartarpur text in the margin of folio 259a, which shows that it was a further revision of the

26. PUM MS # 8, folio 1a (index numbering). This entry seems to be the characteristic feature of all the manuscripts of the Kartarpur tradition, which challenges the bold claim made by Daljeet Singh that "no other Bir records these words." See *Essays*, p. 13.

Kartarpur manuscript. It also records the formula "by the grace of the True Guru" (ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ) at the conclusion of the liturgical text *Sodar* in folio 5a. The same formula can be found in the Kartarpur MS in folios 51/2 and 52/2. It clearly indicates that the copying of the *bānī* was regarded by the early Sikh community as a devotional activity, and its completion was normally marked by the scribal formula "by the grace of the True Guru" (ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ) at the end of the section.²⁷

2. It contains the liturgical text *So Purakh*, which is not to be found in the Kartarpur text, signifying that it was written at a time when the evening prayer, *Rahiras*, was further extended with the inclusion of *So Purakh* in Sikh worship.
3. Only two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* mode (ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਰਟ ਕੁੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਪਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ) are to be found in folios 373b–374a. There is no blank space or any sort of obliteration at this point.
4. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is not to be found in this volume.
5. The single line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ) is to be found in folio 509b. It is followed by Guru Arjan's commentary hymn on Sur Das (ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ਪ ਸੁਰਦਾਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕੁ).
6. The shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* forms part of Gurū Arjan's cluster of extra shaloks in the epilogue (*śalok vārān te vadhīk*) instead of coming after the *Mundāvāṇī*. This clearly indicates that this shalok gradually became a part of Sikh liturgy in the evening prayer, and then it acquired its usual place after the *Mundāvāṇī*. In this case, either the scribe has followed an earlier convention or he has consciously diverged from the Kartarpur text by keeping the *Mundāvāṇī* as the seal at the end. There is yet another possibility, that a new leaf containing these liturgical texts was added in the Kartarpur manuscript at a time when their sequence was fixed by Guru Arjan. This is indicated by the fact that a new pen was used while writing the *Mundāvāṇī* and the shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* in folio 973/1 of the Kartarpur volume. Further, the following leaf (fos. 973/2–974/1) does not have the usual lines indicating

27. Also see British Library (BL), MSS Or. 2748. In this volume the scribal formulas (*srī satgurū grīb nivāz* or *vāhigurū grīb nivāz* or simply *vāhigurū*) can be seen on folios 39b, 104a and 161a.

the margins on both sides.²⁸

7. It does not contain the controversial *Rāga-mālā*, which throws a new light on its inclusion in the Kartarpur manuscript. The *Rāga-mālā* text may have been included at the very end much later by the same scribe at the instance of Guru Arjan in the Kartarpur manuscript, which is quite evident from the way its entry has been made in the index. Some of the words of this entry have been written vertically in the margin, which is a clear case of later insertion.²⁹
8. The manuscript contains an apocryphal text *pārā rās rākhsū*, describing the indigenous process of preparing mercury oxide, a medicinal preparation from mercury, at the end of the volume on an extra blank folio after the numbered folio 574b. It is in the same hand, though written in slightly bolder letters. This medicinal prescription is also to be found in the Kartarpur manuscript in folios 21b–22a. Perhaps this was intended to follow a contemporary Muslim tradition of writing such medicinal formulae in the blank folios, which were inserted in the binding to preserve the manuscripts of the Qur'an.³⁰
9. The Gurmukhi script goes back to the early seventeenth century as evidenced by the use of the dot (or small circle 'o') for the vowel sign *kannā* most of the time. The writing is the same throughout the text except at the very end, when a different hand has inserted the apocryphal text *hakīkati rāh mukām rāje sivanābh kī* on the extra blank page. There is, however, no mention of it in the index, and it was definitely incorporated in the volume much later. In the Kartarpur volume the last entry in the index on folio 2/2 reads: "The *Rāga-mālā* and [an account of the way to the abode of] Raja Sivanabh in Sin(g)hla-dip in folio 974" (੯੭੪ ਰਾਗਮਾਲਾ ਤਕਾ ਸਿੰਘਲਦੀਪ ਕੀ ਸਿਵਨਾਭ ਰਾਜੇ ਕੀ ਬਿਧਿ). Some of the words of this entry (ਕੀ ਸਿਵਨਾਭ ਰਾਜੇ ਕੀ ਬਿਧਿ) are written vertically in the margin as there was no space for them in the next line, where a new heading of the index of indices (ਤਤਕਰਾ ਤਤਕਰੇ) of the ragas begin. There is, however, no such text

28. See *Srī Kartārpurī Bīṛ de Darāsan*, p. 122.

29. Piar Singh, *Bhāī Jodh Singh: Jīvan ate Rachanā* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1983), p. 84.

30. Bhai Jodh Singh, "A Note on Kartarpur Granth", *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference, First Session* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1966), p. 97.

sin(g)hla-dīp sivanābh rāje kī vidhī to be found after the *Rāga-mālā* in the Kartarpur manuscript. Two explanations may be offered here. First, the last words in the entry (ਤਥਾ ਸਿੰਘਲਦੀਪ ਕੀ ਸਿਵਨਾਭ ਰਾਜੇ ਕੀ ਚਿਠਿ) were added much later to make an attempt to include this apocryphal text in the scripture, but it was somehow turned down. Second, the inclusion of this text was not approved by Guru Arjan himself, although its mention had already been made in the index entry.³¹ Whatever the case may be, it is certain that the last words in the index entry were written unconventionally. The entry for the text *sin(g)hla-dīp sivanābh rāje kī vidhī* should have been distinguished from the *Rāga-mālā* entry, if it were to be included in the scripture.

The Punjabi University acquired this manuscript from Bhai Durga Singh of Patiala. The following words are inscribed in gold letters on the binding: "Presented with loving affection to the grandson Avtar Singh by Ghannaia Singh, the servant of servants [of the Guru]" (ਦਾਸਨਦਾਸ ਘਨੋਈਆ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਲੋਂ ਪਿਆਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੋਤਰੇ ਜੋਗ). Evidently the manuscript had remained in the family as a precious possession and was handed over to successive generations. Bhai Durga Singh's ancestry may be traced back to Bhai Dharam Singh Daddhiala, a devout Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh, who was a scribe as well as a singer.³²

1.2. Manuscript copy of Baba Ram Rai's Bir.

G.B. Singh examined Baba Ram Rai's Bir, written in *sambat 1716 varkhai mäh vaisākh vadī 1* (March 29, 1659 CE), and recorded his findings in his book in 1944. He

31. There is another such instance in the Kartarpur manuscript in folio 963/1 where a new heading *parān-sāngalī mahalā 1* is written in Persian script, but there is no such text to be found there. The folio is totally blank. Presumably the text was not approved by Guru Arjan due to the questions concerning its authorship.

32. Piara Singh Padam, *Sri Gurū Granth Prakāś*, p. 106.

cites three very important marginal notes from this manuscript to show that it was corrected by comparing it with the text of "the Granth of the fifth Guru" (*pañjaveñ mahale kã granth*).³³The followers of Baba Ram Rai made copies from this volume, one of which is preserved at Gurdwara Dasmesh Bhavan, Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Dehra Dun. This manuscript was hidden in a forest near Dehra Dun at the time of the episode of Nanakana Sahib in 1921 by the followers of Baba Ram Rai who feared that the Akalis might take over their establishment. In the meanwhile it came into the hands of Bhai Wazir Singh, who donated it to the Management of Gurdwara Dasmesh Bhavan.

Some of the characteristic features of the copy of Baba Ram Rai's Bir are as follows:

1. There is no colophon by which the manuscript can be dated. It is undoubtedly a copy of the Kartarpur version, and does not contain the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The first entry in the index reads: ਜਪੁ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ [ਰਾਮਦਾਸ] ਜੀ ਕਿਆ ਦਸਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲ ("The Japu is copied from the manuscript written in Sri Guru's [Ram Das's] hand"). This entry seems to have become a convention of the Kartarpur tradition.
2. The list of the death-dates of the Gurus includes Ram Rai as the eighth Guru, not Guru Harkrishan.³⁴ This reflects the situation of a parallel line of guruship based on the possession of a copy of the Adi Granth.

33. G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīṛān*, pp. 169–70. For instance, one of these notes is quite useful in understanding the textual problem of Mira Bai's hymn in the Adi Granth. The scribe had inserted the hymn in a small hand at the end of the *mārū* raga, but upon comparison with Guru Arjan's volume he makes the following comment:

ਮੀਰਾ ਬਾਈ ਕਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਮਹਲੇ ਕੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਹੀ

"Mira Bai's hymn is not to be found in the Granth of the fifth Guru."

34. Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Dehra Dun, MS Copy of Baba Ram Rai's Bir, f. 657b. The death date of Guru Har Rai is followed by the entry:

ਸੰਮਤ ੧੭੪੪ ਮਿਤੀ ਭਾਦੋਂ ਸੁਦੀ ੮ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਰਾਇ ਜੀ ਸਮਾਟੇ।

"Sri Guru Ram Rai Ji, the Creator Lord, died on eighth light day of the month of *bhādoṅ* in *sambat* 1744 (1687 CE)"

3. Only two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* mode (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਰੁਟ ਝੰਡਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ) in a slightly different order are to be found on the margin of folio 452a, written in a different hand. Presumably these were omitted consciously by the scribe in the first instance, appreciating the textual problem they presented because of their incomplete nature.
4. The Mira Bai hymn in the *mārū* raga is deleted with the use of *hartāl* on folio 530a.
5. Even the single line of Sur Das's hymn in the *sāraṅg* mode is omitted. Here, the scribe seems to have decided to leave out the incomplete hymn. Only the commentary hymn of Guru Arjan on Sur Das is to be found in folio 589b.
6. A single couplet of Kabir (ਧਰਿ ਅੰਬਰਿ ਵਿਚ ਚੋਲੜੀ...) in the beginning of his *Vār Sat* in the *gaūrī* mode on folio 185a and Trilochan's hymn in the *gūjari* raga (ਨਉਨਿਧਿ ਪਰਸੀ ਤਉ ਕਾਹਿ ਰੇ ਚਿਤਾ ਅਚਿਤ ਕਲਪਤਰੋ...) are deleted with the use of *hartāl*. These were deleted presumably because they are not to be found in the Kartarpur manuscript (the couplet of Kabir is deleted there, and the hymn of Trilochan, which may have been copied from some volume of the Lahore recension, does not appear in the Kartarpur manuscript at all).

The examination of this copy of the *Adi Granth* clearly indicates that its predecessor, *Baba Ram Rai's Bir*, must have been corrected by comparing with the "Granth of the fifth Guru". It seems to point to another fact, that the *Adi Bir* was at *Kiratpur* with *Guru Har Rai* when *Baba Ram Rai's Bir* was prepared.³⁵

2. Lahore Tradition

35. For another copy of *Ram Rai's Bir* written in *sambat 1742* (1695 CE), see G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīrān*, pp. 177-8.

The earliest textual example of this tradition was the manuscript written in *sambat 1667* (1610 CE) during Guru Hargobind's period. It was popularly known as Lahori *bīr* because it was prepared in Lahore.³⁶ W.H. McLeod has referred to this copy of the *Adi Granth* as "an *Adi Bir*" (Kartarpur version), which was not the case.³⁷ It was preserved at the Sikh Reference Library in Amritsar, which was destroyed in 1984 during Operation Bluestar. Fortunately, a detailed report concerning this manuscript had already been prepared in 1969.³⁸ This report describes the sequence of the concluding section of the manuscript after the text of *Chaubole* as follows:

1. Shaloks of the Gurus surplus to the *vārs* (*śalok vārān te vadhīk*)
2. Guru Arjan's *Mundāvānī* (*thāl vich tinn vastū paīo...*)
3. Guru Arjan's shalok (*terā kītā jāto nāhīn...*)
4. Panegyrics by the fifth Guru (*savayye sri mukhvāk mahalā 5*)
5. Panegyrics by the bards in praise of the Gurus (*savayye bhāṭṭān de*)
6. Kabir's shaloks
7. Farid's shaloks

Another distinguishing feature of this manuscript was that it contained an extra-canonical hymn of Trilochan in the *gūjarī* mode (ਨਉਨਿਧਿ ਪਰਸੀ ਤਉ ਕਾਹਿ ਰੇ ਚਿਤਾ ਅਚਿਤ ਕਲਪਤਰੇ...), which was probably interpolated by the followers of the Bhagat.

G.B. Singh examined another manuscript of this tradition, popularly known as "*Būre Sandhū vālī bīr*". Although his findings are very useful for understanding this recension, his dating of the manuscript in 1605 CE, based on the misleading colophon,

36. Piar Singh (comp.), *Ādi Sakhiān* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 3rd edn., 1983; 1st edn., 1969), p. 78.

37. W.H. McLeod, "Hakikat Rah Mukam Raje Sivanabh Ki", *Punjab History Conference*, Fourth Session (Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala, 1970), p. 102.

38. Swami Harnam Das, *Ādi Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī dīān purātan bīrān te vichār* (Kapurthala: Ramesh Chander Suri, 1969), pp. 106–108.

is mistaken. The colophon reads:

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੰਪੂਰਣ ਹੋਇਆ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਭਾਈ ਬੁੜੇ
ਸੰਧੂ ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਲਿਖਵਾਇਆ ਭਾਈ ਮਿਲਖੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਵਰ ਦੇ
ਵਾਸੀ ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨ ਕਰੇਗਾ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ ਦਾ ਦਰਸਨ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਭੁਲ ਚੁਕ ਬਖਸ਼ਨੀ। ਸ੍ਰੀ
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਸਤਿ ਜੀ। ਸੰਮਤ ੧੬੬੨ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਪੂਰਣ ਹੋਇਆ³⁹

The Granth Sahib was completed in the presence of Sri Guru Ji. It was written by Bhai Bura Sandhu in the presence of the fifth King, Bhai Milkhi, a resident of Peshawer, got this volume written [for himself]. Whosoever gets the opportunity to see (*darśan*) this Granth Sahib, will be blessed with a unique vision (*darśan*) of Guru Nanak Sahib Ji's body. Please forgive me for any mistakes. Sri Vahiguru Ji is the Eternal Truth. [The Granth Sahib] was completed in *sambat 1662* (1605 CE).

This colophon is definitely a forgery for the following reasons. First, it gives only the year of the writing of the volume, not the more precise dating that was customary in manuscripts of the period. Secondly, instead of writing the date at the beginning of the index it is written unconventionally at the end of the volume on a new leaf, which is a clear case of later interpolation. Thirdly, the word "Granth Sahib" came to be used for the Sikh scripture much later. Originally it was known only as the "Pothi", which is quite evident from the index of the Kartarpur manuscript.⁴⁰ The colophon, we may surmise, was intended to make a claim to an earlier period for the sake of collecting the offerings of the Sikhs.

Piara Singh Padam, who examined the same manuscript in the possession of Bawa Arjan Singh at Sharifpura in 1948, concluded that it was in fact written in

39. G.B. Singh, *Prachīn Bīrān*, pp. 110–111.

40. Kartarpur MS, f. 2/2. Also see, Bhai Jodh Singh, *Prachīn Bīrān Bāre*, pp. 97–98.

sambat 1711 (1654 CE).⁴¹ The Lahore tradition is also popularly known as the "Bura Sandhu tradition" of the *Adi Granth*. There follows an examination of some of the manuscripts of this tradition.

2.1. *Una Sahib manuscript # 2*

This manuscript is preserved by Baba Sarabjot Singh Bedi at Una Sahib, Himachal Pradesh. There is no colophon which can be used for dating purpose. Some of the important features of this manuscript are as follows:

1. In folio 15a two entries are made concerning the autographs of Guru Hargobind (ਨੀਸਾਨੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੬) and Guru Gobind Singh (ਨੀਸਾਨੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧੦), both of which, being on different pieces of paper, are pasted in folio 16a. The writing of the manuscript seems to have begun during the period of the sixth Guru (1606–1644 CE), and it was certainly completed before the death in 1675 CE of Guru Tegh Bahadur, whose complete works were added later on at the end of the volume in folios 562b–565a.
2. Only two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* mode (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰੁਟ ਕੁੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁ) are to be found in folio 359a.
3. The Mira Bai hymn in the *mārū* raga is not to be found in this volume.
4. The single line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਤਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ), which seems to have been consciously omitted in the first instance, was written in a different hand after Guru Arjan's commentary hymn on Sur Das (ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਚਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕੁ) in folio 493b.
5. There are no specified tunes (*dhunīān*) at the beginning of different ballads (*vārān*) except the *vār* in the *rāmakalī* mode in folio 367a.
6. The shalok *terā kītā jāto nāhīn* forms a part of Guru Arjan's cluster of extra shaloks (*vārān te vadhīk*), which is followed by the *Mundāvānī* on folio 543a. The concluding section ends at the panegyrics by the bards

41. Piara Singh Padam, *Sri Guru Granth Prakash*, p. 101. Also see Piar Singh, *Ādi Sakhiān*, p. 79.

(*bhattān de saṁgat*) in praise of the Gurus.

7. The entry of the dates of deaths of the Ten Gurus on folio 567b also contains two conspicuous names which may throw some light on the origin of the tradition. They are as follows:

(a) ਸੰਮਤੁ ੧੭੩੨ ਮਿਤੀ ਮਾਘ ਸੁਦੀ ੯ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਚ ਜੀ ਸਮਾਟੇ ਸੁਕਰਵਾਰ ("Sri Satguru Sach Ji died on Friday, the ninth light day of the month of *māgh* in *sāmbat* 1732 [1675 CE]).

(b) ਸੰਮਤੁ ੧੭੭੭ ਮਿਤੀ ਮੰਘਰ ਸੁਦੀ ੨ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਜਾਦਾ ਮਲ ਜੀ ਸਮਾਟੇ ਆਦਿਤਵਾਰ ("Sri Satguru Sajada Mal Ji died on Sunday, the second light day of the month of *maṅghar* in *sāmbat* 1777 [1720 CE]).

Evidently these two persons, Sach Ji and Sajada Mal Ji, were revered as Gurus by their followers, who constituted a sect within the Panth. Who were they? Were they Udasis or masands? The answers to these questions may provide the clue to the understanding of the origin of this tradition.

The possession of this copy of the *Adi Granth* by the Bedi family may suggest that it was used by the Udasis themselves or a sect associated with the Udasis, who seem to have come closer to the Panth as a result of Guru Hargobind's efforts of reconciliation. It is quite possible that the Udasis were responsible for this version of the *Adi Granth*.

22. *Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) manuscript # 1084:*

The manuscript was written in *sāmbat* 1723 (1666 CE), and at least two different handwritings can be discerned in this volume. The Gurmukhi script probably can be ascribed to the seventeenth century because a dot is used in place of the vowel-sign *kannā*. The following features are worth noting:

1. The text of *So Purakh* is missing in this volume.
2. There is an extra-canonical hymn of Namdev in the *dhanāsari* mode (ਸਾਤ ਸਮੁੰਦ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਰਟੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਜਾ ਕੋ ਢੋਟੋL) in folio 222b (or 208a, second numbering on right hand page), which may have been

interpolated by his followers.

3. The two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī raga* (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਰਣ ਝੰਡਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਖਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ [ਤੁਮ] ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁ), which are written in the margin in folio 293b (or 279a), were omitted consciously in the first instance. There is a marginal note above these lines which states that "this hymn has been written here by mistake" (ਏਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਪਾਸਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਭੁਲਿ), which clearly suggests that the scribe was puzzled by seeing just two lines of an incomplete hymn in the volume that he was using to make his own copy. Presumably he wrote the two lines in the margin, along with his comment, much later.
4. Although Mira Bai's hymn is to be found in this volume in folio 351b (or 337a), the single line of Sur Das's hymn has been omitted. Again, the scribe seems to have been puzzled by the incomplete hymn, which he decided to leave out. Here the scribe missed another significant point. Namely, he failed to acknowledge the authorship of Guru Arjan in his commentary hymn on Sur Das in folio 398b (or 384a). Rather he attributed that hymn to Sur Das (ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕੁ.). This also shows that he was puzzled to find Guru Arjan in the midst of the *bhagat bānī* ("Utterances of the Bhagats").
5. The sequence of the concluding section changes after the text of *Chaubole*. It runs as follows: (a) Shaloks of the Gurus, surplus to the *vārs* (*śalok vārān te vadhīk*); (b) Panegyrics by the fifth Guru (*savayye srī mukhvāk mahalā 5*); (c) Panegyrics by the bards (*savayye bhāṭṭān de*) in praise of the Gurus; (d) Kabir's shaloks; (e) Farid's shaloks and (f) *Rāga-mālā*.
The complete works of Guru Tegh Bahadur were incorporated much later between the panegyrics of the bards and the shaloks of Kabir by adding new folios.
6. The shalok of Guru Arjan (ਤੋਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਤੋ ਨਾਹੀ...) is written after the *Mundāvāṇī* in folio 441b (or 427a). There is a very significant marginal note here which states: "This shalok must be written after the *Mundāvāṇī*, it is the final one" (ਇਹੁ ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮੁੰਦਾਵਣੀ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਲਿਖਣਾ ਓੜਕ ਦਾ). The note clearly indicates that the earlier convention of including this shalok in Guru Arjan's cluster of extra shaloks must be replaced with this new convention, which may have its origin in the

Sikh liturgy of evening prayer.

It should be emphasized that there is no mention of *Rāga-mālā* in the index of the volume. It seems to have been added later on, probably at the time when the works of Guru Tegh Bahadur were added in the volume.

3.3. *Jograj manuscript, Punjabi University Museum (PUM) # 2*

The manuscript was completed in *sāmbat 1724 māgh vadī ekam 1* (1667 CE) by Jograj, who died in *sāmbat 1728 māgh vadī chauth 4* (1671 CE) on a Sunday. The scribe seems to have enjoyed a high reputation in the community because his death is mentioned along with the deaths of eight Gurus.⁴² In folio 2a a different piece of paper, containing the Mul Mantar written by Guru Tegh Bahadur, is pasted. There is another piece of information given in folio 3b, claimed to be a copy of Guru Har Rai's writing:

ਸਤਵੇਂ ਮਹਲ ਕਿਆ ਅਖਰਾ ਕੀ ਨਕਲ
ਸਲੋਕੁ ਧਰ ਜੀਅੜੇ ਇਕ ਟੋਕ ਤੂ ਲਾਹਿ ਵਿਭਾਟੀ ਆਸਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ
ਖਿਆਇ ਤੂ ਤੇਰੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਆਵਹਿ ਰਾਸਾਖਾ ਸਿਰਮੌਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਪਲ ਕੈ ਭੋਰੇ
ਤਖਤ ਉਤੇ ਬੈਠਿਆ ਇਕੁ ਪਹੁਰੁ ਦੁਇ ਘੜੀਆ ਦਿਨ ਚੜਿਆ ਸੀ ਤੀਸਰੀ
ਦੈ ਅਮਲ ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਪੌਹ ਮਾਹ ਦੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਪਖਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਵਾਚੇਗਾ ਸੁ
ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਉਸਕਾ ਜਮਣੁ ਮਰਣੁ ਕਟੀਐਗਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਵਾਕੁ ਹੈ।

The copy of the words written by the Seventh Guru:

Shalok: "Keep your hope of succour focussed only on the One Lord, my *man*, and discard all other hope. Meditate, Nanak, on the divine Name and all your tasks will be accomplished."

These words were proclaimed in writing by the Guru at the time of succession to the throne [of Guru Nanak] in the morning hours of Tuesday, in the month of the last days of *poḥ* (December/January), at

42. *Jograj MS, PUM # 2, f. 2b.*

Sirmor (state, that is, Kiratpur). He who reflects upon these words will be blessed. His cycle of birth and death will be broken. This is the Guru's *vāk* (commandment).

This note refers to an important moment in Sikh history when Guru Har Rai assumed the office of guruship and proclaimed his first teaching in the form of a *vāk* or commandment. It also throws a considerable light on the tradition of receiving a *vāk* from the Guru.⁴³ Jograj seems to have felt the need to record this for posterity in his volume of the *Adi Granth*.

The following important features concerning this manuscript may be noted:

1. The index of the manuscript on folio 4b shows that it concludes with Shaikh Farid's shaloks, and does not contain the *Rāga-mālā*. But this volume was later on converted into the Banno version by adding the apocryphal texts as well as the *Rāga-mālā* at the end.
2. The works of Guru Tegh Bahadur were incorporated in different raga sections, sometimes by adding new folios and sometimes by writing on the margins.
3. The extra-canonical hymn of Trilochan in the *gūjarī* mode (ਨਉਨਿਧਿ ਪਰਸੀ ਤਉ ਕਾਹਿ ਰੇ ਚਿਤਾ ਅਚਿਤ ਕਲਪਤਰੇ...) was interpolated in the margin of folio 234b much later in a different hand.
4. The two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* raga (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ਪਾ ਰਣ ਝੰਡਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ) are not to be found in folio 423b in this volume. Jograj seems to have consciously omitted them because of their incomplete nature.
5. No hymn of Mira Bai is to be found in the *mārū* raga in folios 525a–525b.
6. The scribe has consciously omitted the single line of Sur Das's hymn in the *sāraṅg* mode. Only the commentary hymn of Guru Arjan on Sur Das is to be found on folio 583a.

It seems that the manuscript was written in the Kiratpur area by a devout Sikh, Jograj, who was quite popular in the Sikh community. Evidently he deliberately omitted the problematic texts from the volume. The later addition of apocryphal texts at the end indicates

43. For more details, see chapter 6, pp. 214–17.

that the Lahore recension was declining and the Banno tradition was coming to the fore within the Panth.

2.4. *The Punjabi University Museum manuscript # 6:*

The manuscript was completed in *sāmbat 1749 sāvaṅ sudi ekam 1* (1692 CE) on a Tuesday during the days of Guru Goind Singh. It is very neatly written, has few corrections, and appears to be in a single hand throughout. All the texts in the volume are to be found on exactly the same folios as are given in the index. The death-dates of the Gurus contain the following important note on folio 27a after the entry of Guru Arjan's death:

ਮਹਲੇ ਅਠਵੇ ੮ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ ਕਲਮ ਆਪਣੀ ਹਥੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਰਤੈ ਪੁਰਖਿ

This is a copy of the writing of the eighth Guru, the Creator Lord, who wrote with his own special hand.

The note refers to the first recording of the entries of the death-dates of Baba Gurdita and Guru Hargobind, which was done by the eighth Guru himself in the original copy of the *Adi Granth*.⁴⁴

The manuscript is also remarkable because there is very little use of *hartāl* to be found in it, the one instance being the deletion of the *Mul Mantar* on folio 7b. Other characteristic features of the text of this volume are:

1. The most significant point concerning this volume is that the *bāṇī* of Guru Tegh Bahadur is to be found at the appropriate places in different raga sections, the only exception being the place of *jaijāvanti* raga which comes after *jaisiri* mode on folio 322a.

44. This entry in the Kartarpur manuscript is in a child-like hand, particularly the eulogistic description of Guru Hargobind's death which must have been written at the instance of Guru Har Rai. See Kartarpur MS, f. 25/2. I have a photograph of this folio in my possession.

2. Only two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* mode (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰੁਟ ਝੁੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਵਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁ) are to be found in folio 405a.
3. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is not to be found in folio 472a, where it should be, had it been included.
4. Guru Arjan's commentary hymn on Sur Das (ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੁਰਦਾਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕੁ) is written first in folio 525b, and then it is followed by the single line of Sur Das with a special new heading (ਸਾਰੰਗਾ ੧੯^੧ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੇ ਸੰਗੁ) at the end of the raga. It clearly indicates that the scribe was fully aware of the incomplete nature of Sur Das's hymn, but he faithfully copied the single line in his volume.
5. There are no specified tunes (*dhunīs*) at the beginning of different ballads (*vārs*) except the *vār* in the *malār* mode in folio 535a.
6. The shalok *terā kītā jāto nāhīn* forms a part of Guru Arjan's cluster of extra shaloks (*vārān te vadhīk*) in folio 575b. It is then followed by the shaloks of the ninth Guru, including one couplet attributed to Guru Gobind Singh (ਮਹਲਾ ਦਸਵਾ ੧੦ ਬਲੁ ਹੂਓ ਬੰਧਨ ਛੁਟੈ ਸਤੁ ਕਛੁ ਹੋਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਤ ਕਛੁ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਹਾਥ ਮੈ ਤੁਮਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ) in folio 576b. Thereafter comes the *Mundāvāṇī* in folio 576b, which is followed by Kabir's shaloks (ff. 577a–582ab), Farid's shaloks (ff. 582b–585b), Guru Arjan's Savayye (ff. 585b–586a) and the panegyrics by the bards (ff. 587a–596a) in praise of the Gurus. There is no *Rāga-mālā* at the end of this manuscript .

It appears that this volume that it was copied from the Kangarh manuscript, which was written in *sambat 1718* (1661 CE) at Kiratpur.⁴⁵ That is why this tradition is sometimes referred to as the Kiratpur recension of the Adi Granth.

3. Banno Tradition

3.1. Kanpur manuscript:

The manuscript held at Gurdwara Bhai Banno Sahib, Jawahar Nagar, Kanpur, is

45. For detailed analysis of the Kangarh manuscript, see G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīṛān*, pp. 178–195.

believed by its custodians to be the first copy of the *Adi Bir*, prepared by Bhai Banno. Pritam Singh examined this manuscript for a period of five days on three different occasions in 1981-82, and recorded his findings in his article "Bhai Banno's Copy of the Sikh Scripture".⁴⁶ The description of the contents of the manuscript in the second column of the table he devised for his analysis is very useful for our purpose. But his use of traditions as "identifiers" of the Banno version in the first column is quite misleading. It is, therefore, not possible to agree with him on all the conclusions he has drawn from his examination.

Pritam Singh points out that the date of writing of the manuscript was tampered with in such a way that the original year *sambat 1699* (1642 CE) was made to look like *sambat 1659* (1602 CE) for the purpose of having it appear to have been written in an earlier period.⁴⁷ A team of scholars from Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, who examined the Kanpur manuscript, concluded that the original date of its writing was *sambat 1699* (1642 CE).⁴⁸ The majority opinion, which is based on the examination of the Kanpur manuscript, accepts that date as the time of the preparation of the Banno *bīr*.⁴⁹

Some of the characteristic features of the Kanpur manuscript are as follows:

1. It does not contain the liturgical text *So Purakh*, which may indicate that it might have been copied from the *Adi Bir* prepared by Bhai Gurdas, now held at Kartarpur.
2. A close look at Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī raga* (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰਟ

46. Pritam Singh, "Bhai Banno's Copy of the Sikh Scripture", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, vol. xi, no. ii (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, August, 1984), pp. 98-115.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 104. Also see Piar Singh, *Ādi Sākhīān*, pp. 78-9. The author argues that the tampering with the date *sambat 1699* can be easily seen with the help of a magnifying glass.

48. See Appendix B, in Daljeet Singh, *Essays*, pp. 83-87.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-49. G.B. Singh claims that the original date that was tampered with was *sambat 1648* (1591 CE). See *Prāchīn Bīrān*, p. 147. This early date of the compilation of the Banno text cannot be accepted. Now we have an early draft of the *Adi Granth* (GNDU MS # 1245), which illuminates the process of the compilation of the Sikh scripture and which rules out any possibility that the Banno text was an earlier recension.

ਬੁੱਝਨਤਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅਤਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁ.) in folio 319a reveals that originally it contained only the first two lines, but later on the hymn was completed by adding twenty-two more lines in a smaller hand.

3. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is to be found in folio 369a.
4. Originally there was only the single line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਤਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ.) in folio 414a, but some other hand completed the hymn much later.
5. All of the works of Guru Tegh Bahadur were added at the end in a different hand and on a different type of paper. Some of these hymns, however, were incorporated in the appropriate raga sections wherever it was possible.
6. The *Mundāvāṇī* and the final shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* are in folio 464b in their proper sequence. After them come the following apocryphal texts:
 - (a) ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਜਿਤ ਦਰ ਲਖ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ...
 - (b) ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਬਾਇ ਆਤਸ ਆਬ ਖਾਕ...
 - (c) ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਰਤਨਮਾਲਾ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਆਸਟ ਸਾਧ ਨਿਰਾਲਮ ਰਹੈ...
 - (d) ਹਕੀਕਤਿ ਰਾਹ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ਸਿਵ ਨਾਭ ਕੀ
7. The Raga-mala is to be found after the apocryphal texts and before the traditional recipe for the preparation of the ink at the end of the volume. This is a normal feature of Banno texts.
8. The most significant instance of deletion in this volume is Guru Amar Das's *solhā* (ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੇ...) in folios 351b-352a, which is assigned a new position numbering 23 in serial order. In the Kartarpur volume the re-allocation of the same *solhā* is indicated by marginal notes in the index in folio 16/1 and in the text in folio 778/1. This fact alone makes the Kanpur volume a direct copy of the Adi Bir.⁵⁰

The Kanpur manuscript, I would argue, was copied from the Adi Bir during the period of Guru Hargobind. This is indicated by the index entry referring to his autograph (੩੪ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ

50. I could not examine the Kanpur MS because of the time constraints during my visit in India. The custodians of the manuscript show the volume on the first day of the month (*saṅgrānd*), a day when I was examining the Kartarpur manuscript. I have taken these eight points from Pritam Singh's article, pp. 102-112. These can be cross-checked from the detailed description of the Kanpur MS given in Rajinder Singh Bal, *Bhāi Banno Darpan ate Khāre vāli Bīr* (Jalandhar: 82/3-d Central Town, 1989), pp. 95-110. The latter work is in no way comparable to Bhai Jodh Singh's work *Kartārpuri Bīr de Darśan* in terms of meticulous care and accurate description. It seems to be more an attempt to exalt the Bhatia community.

ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤ ਮਹਲਾ ੬, "the benedictory autograph of the sixth Guru in folio 34"). The actual autograph in the form of the Mul Mantar, written on a different piece of paper, is pasted in the decorated folio 33b.⁵¹

The extra material found in this copy of the *Adi Granth* was clearly a later interpolation, which was done at a time when it was converted into the Banno text. This is an example of what Northrop Frye calls "devout faking".⁵² G.B. Singh has also made the point that in the old volumes of the Banno version, which had already been written prior to *sambat* 1732 (1675 CE), the apocryphal texts are to be found in the concluding folios in the handwriting of some other writer.⁵³

There is yet another convention which is to be found in the index of the Banno texts showing the position of the copy numbered in order from the *Adi Bir*, written by Bhai Gurdas at the dictation of Guru Arjan. For instance, the entry in the Kanpur manuscript reads: "The Japu is copied from the copy of the manuscript written in Guru Ram Das's hands" (ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਨਕਲ ਕਾ ਨਕਲ).⁵⁴ It clearly indicates that this volume is a direct copy of the *Adi Bir*. Perhaps this convention was created for the first time by a group within the Panth, which tried to promote the Banno version. In the same manner, the dates were also changed or rewritten to make the claim that that particular copy of the *Adi Granth* is much earlier.⁵⁵

51. There is another decorated folio 369a with the Mul Mantar in the centre. The custodians of the manuscript claim that this second autograph belongs to Guru Arjan, but there is no mention of it in the index or anywhere else in the text. See *ibid.*, pp. 102–103.

52. Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (San Diego: A Harvest/HBJ Book, 1983; 1st ed., 1981), p. 163.

53. G.B. Singh, *Prachīn Bīrān*, p. 350. His informant, Bishan Singh Bannoania, wrote to him about the position of the then Mangat MS (now Kanpur MS), stating that all the folios starting from the *kānarā* raga to the end of the volume at *Rāga-mālā* and the ink formula are in one hand (pp. 139–40). This means that the last folios were replaced and written in a single hand in order to convert the volume to the Banno text.

54. Giani Rajinder Singh Bal, *Khāre vālī bīr*, p. 119.

55. For instance, the date *sambat* 1649 *katak sudī* 5 (1592 CE) in the Bohat volume was rewritten unconventionally after the index as a later thought, and by removing the last 26 folios

32. *Gurdita Sekhon manuscript, Tikana Bhai Ramkishan, Patiala:*

The manuscript is preserved by Mahant Gopal Singh of Tikana Sri Bhai Ramkishan, a Seva-panthi sect of Patiala. It was written in *sambat 1710 misī hārḥ sudi 14* (1653 CE) by Gurdita Sekhon of Udhovala for the sangat of Guru Har Rai. This is evident from the following note that appears on folio 760a:

ਸਰਬਤ੍ਰ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਾਸੇ ਗੁਰਦਿਤੇ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਕਾ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਵਟਾ ਵਾਚਟਾ ਜੇਹੇ
ਅਖਰ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਹਾ ਤੇਹੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹੈਨਿ ਬਖਸਿ ਲੈਣਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ
ਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤਿ ਆਵੈ। ਗੁਰਦਿਤਾ ਜਟੋਣਾ ਵਸਨੀਕ ਉਧੋਵਾਲੇ ਕਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਸੇਖੋ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਕਰਟੀ
ਹਰਿ ਬਾਬਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤਿ ਆਵੈ। ਗਿਰੰਥ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਤਸਾਹੀ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ਜੀ
ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ।

Gurdita, the slave, falls at the feet of the whole sangat of the Guru. Accept my humble submissions. I have written only those words that I know. Forgive me [for any mistakes] for the sake of the Guru and the sangat. May I always remember the Guru. Gurdita the Jat, a resident of Udhovala, Sekhon by caste, seeks your benevolence. May the Guru dwell in our remembrance through every breath. I have written the Granth with the blessings of the sangat of Guru Har Rai.⁵⁶

The custodians of the manuscript trace their origin to Bhai Ghanayya, a devout Sikh of the ninth and the tenth Gurus and the originator of the sect of Seva-panthis, who is said to have devoted his entire life to the mission of serving his fellow-beings in the name of the Guru. There was indeed a tradition among the Seva-panthis of writing copies of the *Adi Granth*. Bhai Addhan Sahib (*addhan-sāhī* ink is named after him), the second successor of Bhai Ghanayya after Bhai Seva Ram, and Bhai Lorinda Sahib, were two Seva-panthi scribes who devoted their

the extra material was interpolated. See G.B. Singh, *Prachīn Bīṛān*, pp. 143–150.

56. The phrase *Gurū Har Rai jī kī sangat kā sadakā* may also mean "with the blessed company of Guru Har Rai." If this was the case Guru Har Rai must have given his autograph to the scribe. This did not happen for the reason that the copy was not written in the company of the Guru.

lives to making copies of the Adi Granth.

Some of the characteristic features of this recension of the Adi Granth are as follows:

1. The conventional entry in the index states that the present copy is fourth in order from the original (ਸਿਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ਥਾ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ਤਿਸ ਕੇ ਨਕਲੁ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ). There is also a reference in the index to the autograph of the Guru without specifying it (ਨੀਸਾਟੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਦਸਤਖਤ ਮਹਲਾ), which shows that Gurdita was not able to receive the autograph of Guru Har Rai as he claims in the above note. However, a piece of paper containing the Mul Mantar written by Guru Tegh Bahadur is pasted with decorated borders in folio 19a.⁵⁷ The list of the death-dates of the first six Gurus is given in folio 14b, which clearly indicates that the manuscript was definitely written during the period of the seventh Guru.
2. Neither the text of *So Purakh* nor the works of the ninth Guru are to be found in this volume.
3. The complete hymn of Guru Arjan in the *rāmakalī* raga (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰਟ ਝੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ) is to be found in folio 478a.
4. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is to be found in folio 581a.
5. There is only one line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ) in this volume on folio 665b. It is followed by Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das.
6. The *Mundāvānī* and the final shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* are in folio 756b, which are followed by the apocryphal texts in folios 756a–758a in a different sequence:
 - (a) ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਜਿਤ ਦਰ ਲਖ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ...
 - (b) ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਥਾਟਿ ਆਤਸ ਆਬ ਖਾਕ...
 - (c) ਹਕੀਕਤਿ ਰਾਹ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ਸਿਵ ਨਾਭ ਕੀ
 - (d) ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਰਤਨਮਾਲਾ ਮਹਲਾ੫ ਆਸਟ ਸਾਧ ਨਿਰਾਲਮ ਰਹੈ...

The title of (b) is given as ਗੋਸਟਿ ਮਾਲਾਰ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੋਈ ("Discourse with Malar") in the index entry, whereas the mention of ਹਕੀਕਤਿ ਰਾਹ ਮੁਕਾਮ is totally omitted,

57. Mahant Gopal Singh insists that the Mul Mantar was written by Guru Har Rai, which is not correct. It tallies exactly with the style of Guru Tegh Bahadur as given in the *Hukam-nāme*. Also see the report on this volume in Giani Maha Singh, ed., *Khalsa Samachar*, Vol. 60, No. 45 (Amritsar, October 8, 1959), pp. 1–2 and 7.

which may indicate that it was added much later in the text.⁵⁸

7. The *Rāga-mālā* is to be found on folio 759b, followed by the traditional recipe for the preparation of the ink at the end of the volume on folio 760a.

This volume of the *Adi Granth* has remained in the custody of the *Seva-panthis*, who brought it from Shahpur in Sargoda District of Pakistan at the time of partition. Bhai Ramkishan, who died in 1945 CE, enjoyed a high reputation among the Sikh community of that area, and his establishment was named after him as "Tikana Bhai Ramkishan, Shahpur". It clearly points towards an area closer to Gujrat District, where the Banno version was quite popular.

33. Dr. Balbir Singh *Sahitya Kendra manuscript # 3:*

The manuscript was written in *sambat 1736 varkhai mahi assu sudi 3* (1679 CE), only four years after Guru Tegh Bahadur's death in 1675 CE. Some of its characteristic features are noted below:

1. The conventional entry in the index clearly states that its position is third in order from the original volume of the *Adi Granth* (ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਨਕਲੁ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ਥਾ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ). Although there is a mention of the autograph of the Guru in the index (ਨੀਸਾਟ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਦਸਤਖਤ), the decorated folio at the beginning of the manuscript remains blank since the scribe was not able to get the autograph of Guru Gobind Singh.
2. The liturgical text *So Purakh* is to be found in folio 28b. This volume contains the works of Guru Tegh Bahadur at their appropriate places in different raga sections, which indicates that the decision to include them had already been taken by Guru Tegh Bahadur before he left for Delhi in 1675 CE, and it was

58. For detailed analysis of the text, see W.H. McLeod, *Hakikat Rah Mukam Raje Sivanabh Ki*, pp. 96-105.

implemented by Guru Gobind Singh immediately after his death.⁵⁹ In the light of this fact the Damdama tradition that he did so in 1705 CE for the first time becomes questionable.

3. There are the two extra hymns of Trilochan and Namdev, which are to be found in folios 242b and 312a. The Namdev hymn is written in the margin in a different hand, which is a clear case of later interpolation.
4. At the conclusion of the *jaisirī* raga the scribe had started to write the title of Guru Tegh Bahadur's *Jaijāvanti* raga in folio 319b, but he stopped there and wrote a note that it will be found in folio 589. This raga was then written before the *prabhātī* mode in folio 589b. The shift clearly indicates that the place of *jaijāvanti* raga was not fixed by that time.
5. The complete hymn of Guru Arjan in the *rāmakālī* raga (ਰਾਮਕਾਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰਟ ਝੁੰਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁL) is to be found in folio 412a.
6. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is to be found in folio 492a.
7. There is only one line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਖੁਨ ਕੇ ਸੰਗੁ) in this volume in folio 556a. It is followed by Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das.
8. There are some extra shaloks of Guru Tegh Bahadur found in this volume in folios 633a–634a, which are deleted with the use of *hartāl* but which can still be read under the deletion paste. These are as follows:
 - (a) ਸਾਗਰ ਮਾਹਿ ਤਰੰਗ ਜਿਉ ਜਗ ਫਰਕਤ ਜਿਹ ਮਾਹਿ ਸੋਹੰ ਹਉ ਯਹ ਤੇ ਜਾਨਿਓ ਦੀਨ ਜੁਪਾਵਤ ਕਾਹਿਯ। ("As the waves are to an ocean so is the world [to the divine]. How can he who attains identity with Brahman [*soham*, "I am That"], fight in the name of *dīn* or religion?")
 - (b) ਇਹ ਜਗ ਕਿਸਹੀ ਕੇ ਨਾਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਭਗਤ ਆਨੰਦ ਮੈ ਹਰਖ ਸੋਗ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹਿਯ। ("This world belongs to none. The devotees of the Lord are always in bliss, they are not under the influence of pain or pleasure.")
 - (c) ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਅਨੁਗੁਹੁ ਸਾਖ ਜੋ ਕਹਤ ਨੀਚ ਸਿਉ ਬਾਤਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਗਰੀਵਾ ਗਰਬ ਫੁਨਿ ਥੋਰੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਬਢ ਜਾਤਿਯ। ("If some one speaks with the lowly with kindness, it inflates the pride in their heart")⁶⁰

59. G.B. Singh describes another volume that was written in *sambat 1732 mitī agahan vadi 7*, and that was completed about seventeen days after Guru Tegh Bahadur's death. It contains his works at appropriate places in various ragas. G.B. Singh suggests that the ninth Guru himself gave instructions to include his *bānī* in the *Adi Granth* before he left for Delhi. See *Prachīn Bīṛān*, pp. 215–234.

60. For other instances of apocryphal shaloks attributed to Guru Tegh Bahadur, see IOL, MSS Panj D2, ff. 698a, 699a and 699b.

In the first place, these shaloks are not signed "Nanak", as Guru Tegh Bahadur would have done. Secondly, they appear to be the work of a Vedantin, who has employed the formula "I am That" (*soham*). Thirdly, the style of these couplets scarcely matches the authentic compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur. It appears that these shaloks were incorporated in the volume through the process of faking, but when they were detected by some Sikhs they were deleted. They may have their origin in the oral tradition.

9. The *Mundāvāṇī* and the final shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* are on folio 634b, which are followed by the apocryphal texts in folios 634b–637a.
10. The *Rāga-mālā* is to be found in folio 637b, followed by the traditional recipe for the preparation of the ink at the end of the volume in folio 638a.

This volume is another variation of the Banno recension, which includes extra-canonical hymns of Trilochan and Namdev. These hymns are generally found in the Lahore tradition. Some shaloks were also floating around in the oral tradition in the name of Guru Tegh Bahadur. This reflects a situation of some confusion in the Sikh community with respect to the status of certain hymns of the Bhagats and those of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

3.4. Punjabi University Museum manuscript # 1:

This manuscript was written in *sambat 1744 māgh vadī 1* (1687 CE), during the period of Guru Gobind Singh. The colophon points to the autograph of the tenth Guru, which is to be found on a piece of paper pasted on folio 26b. It reads:

ੴ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਤਿ

ਗਗਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਨ ਰਮਹੁ ਸਾਸ ਸਾਸ ਜਪ ਨੀਤਾ ਕਹਾ ਬਿਸਾਸਾ ਦੇਹ ਕਾ ਰਿਲਮ ਨ
ਕਰਿਹੋ ਮੀਤਾ

The Supreme Being is One. The Guru is True.

'G' signifies 'Gobind' (and conveys the message) that one should contemplate the divine qualities and remember Him with each breath. Friend! do not delay.

Who knows how long this body may last?

Did Guru Gobind Singh use the above shalok of Guru Arjan intentionally because it refers to

his name? Whatever the case may be, it appears that there was a tradition of getting the inaugural benedictory autograph from the Guru at the time of initiating the project of making a copy of the *Adi Granth*. Sometimes the scribes succeeded in getting the autograph, and sometimes they did not. The Guru's autograph cannot be regarded as giving his approval of the volume, however, because the Guru would not have read the whole volume before giving his autograph.

The examination of this volume reveals the following important features:

1. The colophon clearly indicates that this volume is third in order from the original volume of the *Adi Granth* (ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਨਕਲੁ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ ਨਕਲੁ).
2. The liturgical text *So Purakh* is to be found at folio 33a.
3. The extra hymn of Trilochan was entered in the volume in folios 269b-270a, but later on it was deleted with the use of *hartāl*. However, it can still be read. The deletion clearly indicates that there was a controversy in the Sikh community over the status of this hymn.
4. The works of Guru Tegh Bahadur are to be found at their proper places in the ragas. Some of these were incorporated in between the lines of the text. The *jaijāvanī* raga comes after the *jaisirī* mode in folio 350a.
5. The complete hymn of Guru Arjan in the *rāmakalī* raga (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਰਟ ਝੁਝਨਤਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ ਚਿੰਦਿਅਤਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ...) in a small hand on a different piece of paper was pasted in the text much later in folio 459a. Originally there were only the first two lines in bold letters. A photograph of the page clearly indicates how the later addition stands out from the rest of the text in folios 459a-459b.⁶¹ This process of conversion points to the fact that the Banno version was coming to the fore within a section of the Panth during the time of Guru Gobind Singh.
6. Mira Bai's hymn in the *mārū* raga is to be found in folio 545b.
7. Originally this volume had just a single line of Sur Das's hymn (ਛਾਤਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗ), but later on some other scribe completed it in a small hand. Still later it was deleted with the use of *hartāl* leaving only the first line in folio 615b.

61. I have in my possession a number of photographs of this manuscript which were taken with the permission of the University authorities at Patiala.

It is followed by Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das. It reinforces our assumption that the scribes, who failed to understand Guru Arjan's editorial policy, struggled with the problematic texts.

8. There is one shalok attributed to Guru Gobind Singh (ਮਹਲਾ ੧੦੧ ਬਲੁ ਰੂਚੈ ਚੰਧਨ ਵੁਟੈ ਸਭ ਕਵੁ ਹੋਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਭ ਕਵੁ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਹਾਥ ਮੈ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥੨੨॥) among the couplets of Guru Tegh Bahadur in folio 700b.
9. The *Mundāvāṇī* and the final shalok *terā kītā jāto nahīn* are in folio 700b. These are followed by the apocryphal texts in folios 700b–704a.
10. The *Rāga-mālā* is to be found on folios 704a–704b, followed by two blank pages. Then, at the end of the volume in folio 706a, comes the traditional recipe for the preparation of the ink.

This copy of the Adi Granth, which is yet another variation of the Banno text, throws forth light on the process of faking. It should be noted that once the reputation of the Banno version became widespread within some sections of the Panth, the copies of other versions were changed to bring them into line with it. This seems to have been the situation during the last quarter of seventeenth century.

Conclusion

The foregoing examination of the early manuscripts reveals that the GNDU MS # 1245 was one of the many drafts on which Guru Arjan seems to have worked to produce the final text of the Adi Granth in 1604. Another important outcome of this scrutiny is the confirmation of the Kartarpur manuscript as the final text of the Adi Granth as compiled by the fifth Guru. This "Great Granth" (*vaḍā granth*) of the fifth Guru was used by the scribes as the touchstone for authenticating their own copies of the Adi Granth in the seventeenth century.

This analysis also shows that there was no unity of the Adi Granth text to be found among its different versions during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Each group

within the Panth tried to legitimize its version of the Adi Granth by pasting an autograph of the Guru at the beginning of each copy of it. In many instances, the scribes (and their groups within the Panth) failed to understand the editorial policy of Guru Arjan and struggled with the problematic texts. They were primarily responsible for the different versions of the text of the Adi Granth. There is some evidence that Guru Gobind Singh made an attempt to standardize the text of the Adi Granth and thus to correct the problem of the circulation of three different versions of it during his period.⁶²

Of all the three competing versions of the text of the Adi Granth that were being used by different groups within the Panth, it appears that the Banno version was coming to the fore at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. There are, however, some basic questions that still remain to be addressed: how do we explain the origins of the Adi Granth traditions? What were the reasons for the predominance of the Banno version of the Adi Granth in the late seventeenth-century or eighteenth-century Sikh community? Answers to these questions will be proposed in the next chapter.

62. For details, see chapter 3, pp. 78–81.

Chapter 3

ORIGINS OF THE ADI GRANTH TRADITIONS

The creation of an authoritative text by Guru Arjan involved sustained labour and rigorous intellectual discipline over a considerable period of time. In spite of his remarkable editorial achievement in establishing a final text in 1604 CE, there emerged three different recensions of the Adi Granth in the course of time. Was this due to scribal errors committed in the process of copying by later scribes, or to intentional tampering with the text by some groups within the Panth? The issue of the origins of the Adi Granth traditions, therefore, needs to be examined thoroughly in the light of the situation of the Sikh Panth in the seventeenth century.

In the first place, examination of early manuscripts has revealed that in certain instances later scribes simply failed to understand Guru Arjan's editorial policy. That is why they diverged from the text of the Adi Bir. Secondly, the more significant textual variations may reflect the diversity of the Sikh Panth, which might be due either to factional divisions or to external interference in the affairs of the Panth. Guru Arjan's death in Mughal custody, which was celebrated by the Muslim revivalists,¹ was the turning point in the history of the

1 For instance, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, leader of the Naqshbandi movement in the Punjab, rejoiced at the execution in 1606 CE of Guru Arjan. In a letter to, Shaykh Farid Bukhari (Mir Murtaza Khan), the most influential Mughal official of Jahangir and the persecutor of Guru Arjan, he wrote: "These days the accursed infidel of Goindwāl was very fortunately killed. It is a cause of great defeat for the reprobate Hindūs. With whatever intention, and purpose they are killed—the humiliation of infidels is for Muslims life itself." See Friedman Yohanan, "Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi: An outline of his image in the eyes of Posterity" (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1966), p. III.

Sikh Panth. It changed the course of the Sikh movement. Although the Sikhs' sense of identity was heightened as an immediate result of the crisis, it soon created a situation which was conducive to sectarian tendencies within the Panth. J.S. Grewal has suggested that during the century following the death of Guru Arjan the Sikh Panth underwent a considerable degree of transformation, which was due largely to external interference in the affairs of the Gurus and their followers by the Mughal officials. This interference, he argues, introduced a strong element of disunity in the Sikh Panth.² The issues of external interference by the Mughal officials and factional divisions, therefore, must be addressed here to discover their possible impact on various groups within the Panth that were seeking to promote their versions of the Adi Granth.

1. Lahore Recension

The traditional Sikh sources are quite silent about the origin of the Lahore recension of the Adi Granth. It was prepared in Lahore in 1610 CE when Guru Hargobind was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior by the order of Emperor Jahangir.³ He was evidently arrested because of the shift in the role of the Guru in the direction of increasing political and military involvement. Guru Hargobind traditionally donned two swords symbolizing the spiritual (*pīrī*) as

2. J.S. Grewal, "Legacies of the Sikh Past for the Twentieth Century" in Joseph T. O'Connell et al., *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1988), p. 23.

3. The author of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* writes: "The late Emperor (Jahangir) sent Hargobind to the fort of Gwalior on account of the balance of the dues of fine that he had imposed on Arjan Mal. He remained for twelve years in that place, where they did not allow that he might eat salty food. During this time the Masands and the Sikhs used to go and bow down to the wall of the fort. At last the late Emperor, by way of kindness, gave freedom to the Guru." See Ganda Singh, "Nanak Panthis," *The Panjab Past and Present*, vol. 1, part 1 (April 1967), p. 62.

well as the temporal (*mīrī*) investiture. He also built the Akal Takhat ("Throne of the Immortal Lord") facing the Harimandir (the Golden Temple of Amritsar), which represented the newly-assumed role of temporal authority. From the Sikh perspective this new development was not at the cost of abandoning the original spiritual base. Rather, it was meant to achieve a balance between temporal and spiritual concerns.⁴ From the Mughal perspective, however, Guru Hargobind's life-style posed a danger to the state.⁵

One of the most significant features of the Lahore recension is the omission of specified heroic tunes (*dhunīs*, that is, instructions with regard to the musical style in which the particular *vārs* were to be sung) at the beginning of the *vārs* (ballads) in different raga sections of the Adi Granth.⁶ Traditionally, the recording of these tunes is associated with Guru Hargobind, who is generally credited with introducing the practice of singing the ballads of the Adi Granth to the popular heroic tunes in order to infuse a martial spirit in his followers. For instance, the following passage from the *Gurbilās Chhevīn Pataśāhī* ("Pleasure of the Guru, the sixth King") clearly points to the inclusion of the *dhunīs* in the Adi Granth by the sixth Guru:

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦਿਖ ਲਗੋ ਦਿਵਾਨਾ ਬੁੱਢੇ ਆਦਿਕ ਸਭ ਇਕ ਠਾਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੇ
ਕਹਾ ਸੁਨਾਈ। ਆਗਿਆ ਮੋਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਈ। ਸਾਹਿਬ ਬੁੱਢੇ ਬਚਨ ਬਖਾਨਾ ਤੁਮ
ਕਰਨੇ ਜੁਧ ਮਹਾਂ ਭਇਆਨਾ ਗੁੰਥ ਬੀਚ ਹਮ ਜੋਇ ਲਖਾਈ। ਬਾਈ ਬਾਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮਨ

4. For the evidence of the change which took place under the sixth Guru, see *Vārān Bhāi Gurdās* 26: 24. Also see, Anil Chandra Bannerjee, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1983), pp. 221–23 and Satbir Singh, *Guru Hargobind* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968), p. 39.

5. See *Nanak-Panthis*, p. 62: "Many hardships confronted him. One of them is that he (Guru Hargobind) adopted the form of soldiers, girded sword against the practice of his father, kept servants and took to hunting"

6. The MS copies of the Adi Granth that do not contain the heroic tunes are: *Būre Sandhū vālī bīr* (1654 CE), *Kānagarh vālī bīr* (1661 CE), *Sāranake vālī bīr* (1671 CE) and *Burhānpur vālī bīr* (Guru Gobind Singh's period). See G.B. Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prāchīn Bīrān* (Lahore: Modern Publications, 1944), pp. 115, 183–187, 205 and 327–330. Also see chapter 2 of this study.

ਲਾਈ ਮਨ ਪਸੰਦ ਸੁਨ ਵਾਰ ਜੋ ਪਾਵੋ ਤਥੈ ਧੁਨਾਂ ਤੁਮ ਤਾਹਿ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਵੋ⁷

When the true Guru (Arjan) saw in the court all the prominent Sikhs including [Bhai] Buddha, sitting there in one place, he addressed Hargobind with his words of advice: "Listen to my commandment attentively." Then the Master repeated [Bhai] Buddha's words [which he had traditionally spoken as a prophecy at the birth of Hargobind]: "You have to fight fierce battles. Pay attention with single mind to the singing of the twenty-two ballads (*vārs*), which we have recorded in the Granth. You should include heroic tunes at the beginning of those *vārs*, which you like most."

Although this *Gurbilās* is attributed to an eighteenth-century poet Sohan, the various references to Maharaja Ranjit Singh demolishing Nurdin's *sarāi* ("inn") in order to construct the pool of Tarn Taran and mentioning Harimandir as being "golden", clearly place the document in the period of early nineteenth century.⁸ The Sikh community of that period seems to have created the tradition of the inclusion of the heroic tunes in the Adi Granth as the result of the decision taken by Guru Hargobind.

The tradition of the inclusion of the *dhunīs* in the Adi Granth by the sixth Guru does not explain the fact that these heroic tunes had already been entered alongside the *vārs* in the Kartarpur manuscript in the same hand. In two instances, that of *Vār Āsā* and *Vār Mājh*, the writing appears somewhat finer because the specified tunes were written down with a different pen by the same scribe. Even in the GNDU MS # 1245, an earlier draft of the Adi Granth, it is specifically stated that Guru Ram Das's *vār* in the *vadhūnīs* raga is to be sung to the tune of a ballad of Lal and Bahlim (ਲਾਲ ਬਹਲੀਮ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਓਪਰਿ ਗਾਵਟੀ).⁹

On the whole the *dhunīs* are to be found in the beginning of the following nine

7. Giani Inder Singh Gill (somp.), *Sri Gurbilās Pātasāhī 6* (Amritsar: Vazir Hind Press, 1977), p. 90.

8. Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publications, 1988), p. 270.

9. GNDU MS # 1245, f. 551a.

vārs in the *Adi Granth*:

1. Guru Nanak's *Vār Mājh* is to be sung to the tune of a popular ballad of Malik Murid and Chandarhara of the Sohian clan, two brave chiefs of Emperor Akbar who died fighting against each other (ਮਲਕ ਮੁਰੀਦ ਤਥਾ ਚੰਦਰਹਰਾ ਸੋਹੀਆ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਗਾਵਟੀ).
2. Guru Arjan's *Vār Gāurī* is to be sung to the tune of Rai Kamaldi and Maujādi, a well-known ballad of the time, which narrates the story of a fight between two Muslim Rajput chiefs, who were related to each other as uncle and nephew (ਰਾਇ ਕਮਾਲਦੀ ਮੌਜਦੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਉਪਰਿ ਗਾਵਟੀ).
3. The *vār* in the *āsā* raga by Guru Nanak is to be sung to the tune of a popular ballad of the stump-armed (*tundā*) Asraj, the son of a king named Sarang, who fought a battle against his step brothers to win the throne of his father (ਟੁੰਡੇ ਅਸਰਾਜੇ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ).
4. Guru Amar Das's *vār* in the *gūjarī* mode is to be sung to the tune of a popular ballad of Sikander and Birahim, which narrates the story of a fight between two local chieftains (ਸਿਕੰਦਰ ਬਿਰਾਹਿਮ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਗਾਵਟੀ).
5. Guru Ram Das's *vār* in the *vaḍahaṅs* raga is to be sung to the tune of a ballad of Lallan and Bahliman, two Rajput farmers of Kangara who fought on the issue of sharing water during times of famine (ਲਲਾ ਬਹਲੀਮਾ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਗਾਵਟੀ).
6. Guru Amar Das's *vār* in the *rāmakalī* mode is to be sung to the tune of a popular ballad about Jodha and Vira of the Purban clan, two Rajput brothers who fought valiantly against the forces of Emperor Akbar (ਜੋਧੈ ਵੀਰੈ ਪੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ).
7. Guru Ram Das's *vār* in the *sāraṅg* raga is to be sung to the tune of a ballad about Mahima and Hasna, which narrates the story of a fight between two Muslim Rajput chiefs (ਮਹਿਮੇ ਹਸਨੇ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ).
8. Guru Nanak's *vār* in the *malār* raga is to be sung to the tune of a popular ballad about Rana Kailash and Maldeo, two brothers who ruled over Jammu and Kashmir respectively and fought against each other at the instigation of the Mughal Emperor (ਰਾਣੇ ਕੈਲਾਸ ਤਥਾ ਮਾਲਦੇ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ).
9. Guru Ram Das's *vār* in the *kānarā* raga is to be sung to the tune of a ballad about Musa, a brave man who fought against a King who had married his fiancée

(ਝੰਮੇ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਕੀ ਪੁਨੀ).¹⁰

These *vārs* must have been quite popular in the Punjab during the period of Guru Arjan or even before. The minstrels (*dhādhīs*) used to sing them among the rural people, particularly the Jats, to amuse them with the heroic stories. It was a favourite pastime of the people of the Punjab to listen to the singing of these ballads.¹¹

Guru Arjan probably selected the heroic tunes for the singing of the *vārs* of the Adi Granth in order to reach out to the rural audience. That is why these tunes (*dhunīs*) became a part of the text of the Kartarpur manuscript. Presumably the tradition of singing the *vārs* to the heroic tunes may have begun during Guru Arjan's period or even before with the specific purpose of attracting the rural people, especially the Jats, into the Sikh fold. It should, however, be emphasized that the *dhunīs* were selected only for their musical directions, and not for the purpose of propagating the heroic stories behind them. There are other such poetic genres (*ghorīān*, *alāhanīān*, *birahare* and *pahare*) which are modelled on the folk tunes in the Adi Granth.

The spirit of militancy was heightened within the Sikh community after Guru Arjan was killed in 1606 CE in Lahore. This resulted in the consolidation of the community against the Mughal authorities who were responsible for the death of the Guru. This growing militancy must have alarmed the Mughal officials, who wanted to tone down this spirit by creating dissensions within the ranks of the Panth. This they would have done through indirectly influencing certain groups to remove these *dhunīs* from the text of the Adi Granth. The origin

10. This brief description of the nine heroic tunes is taken from the four-volume *Śabadārath Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī*, (Amritsar: SGPC, fifth ed., 1979), pp. 137, 318, 462, 508, 585, 947, 1237, 1278 and 1312.

11. Sohan Singh, *The Ballad of God and Man* (Amritsar: Department of Guru Nanak Studies, GNDU, 1982), p. 10, n. 1.

of the first *bīr* of this (Lahore) recension in the city of Lahore may further lend support to this theory. An alternate explanation may be proposed: namely, that some groups within the Panth thought it unwise to be provocative and hence decided to remove these tunes. Presumably these groups were still holding Sant beliefs and did not approve the shift towards militancy in the affairs of the Panth. Whatever the reasons may have been, it is certain that the *dhunīs* were removed from the text of the Lahore recension.

Other distinguishing features of the Lahore tradition are related to the concluding section of its text and the two extra hymns by Trilochan and Namdev. Should the scripture end with the message of Guru Arjan in the *Mundāvānī* and the concluding shalok? Or with the praise of the Gurus in the panegyrics by the bards? Or with the shaloks of the Bhagats? These were the concerns of the scribes who diverged from the text created by Guru Arjan. Moreover, the presence of two extra hymns by Namdev and Trilochan strongly suggests that their followers were responsible for the insertion of these hymns into the scripture. These hymns were originally turned down by Guru Arjan.

The examination of the manuscripts of the Lahore tradition has revealed that a significant number of them originated in the Kiratpur area during the period of Guru Har Rai (1644–1661 CE). This tradition continued to be popular in some sections of the Panth right up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. For instance, a copy of the Lahore tradition that was written in the early nineteenth century is held at the British Library in London.¹² This is perhaps the only copy of the Adi Granth which contains a solitary couplet attributed to Guru Har Rai. It comes after the *Mundāvānī* as follows:

12. British Library, MS Or. 2748.

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ
 ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੭ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਬੋਲਟਾ
 ਜਿਨਿ ਕਉ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਨ ਰਖੇ ਚਰਨੀ ਲਾਇ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੈ
 ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਡਿਠਾ ਜਾਇ।¹³

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

Shalok Mahala 7: "the voice of Sri Guru Har Rai"

Those on whom the True Guru bestows his benevolence, they are kept in his refuge. I am devoted to those, Nanak, who go to have a glimpse of the Guru.

The introductory formula used in the beginning of this couplet ("the voice of Sri Guru Har Rai") clearly places it in the context of hagiographic material produced by the Sikh community. It is, therefore, a later incorporation in the text of the *Adi Granth*. The couplet may have its origin in the oral tradition popular in the Kiratpur area where the people had been converted to the Sikh faith by Guru Har Rai. The scribe must have intended to have Guru Har Rai represented in the Sikh scripture.

2. Banno Recension

The origin of the Banno recension of the *Adi Granth* is explained by at least two traditions. According to one, Bhai Banno got permission from Guru Arjan to borrow the original volume for one night and to take it to his village, Mangat in Gujrat District, to show it to the Sikh congregation there. The lengthy journey afforded him the opportunity to make another copy. Another tradition states that Bhai Banno was entrusted with the responsibility of taking the original volume to Lahore for binding and he made his copy with the help of a number of

13. *Ibid.*, f. 746a.

scribes while on this mission.¹⁴ A passage from the *Mahimā Prakāś (kavitā)*, written in *sambāt 1833* (1776 CE), contains the following observation on the origin of the Banno text:

ਬਹੁਤ ਹਾਥਨ ਕਰ ਲਿਖਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਕੋਢੀ ਸਬਦ ਮਿਸਲ ਬੇਮਿਸਲ ਹੋ ਗਇਆ ਇਹ ਖਾਰੇ
ਕੀ ਮਿਸਲ ਕਹਾਵੇ। ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਮਿਸਲ ਸੋ ਭੇਦ ਜਨਾਵੇ।¹⁵

It so happened that many hands wrote the volume. Some hymns were dislocated from their proper places. This volume is known as the "Khara missal". It is different from the "Gurdas missal".

The name "Khara missal" or *Khāre vālī bīṛ*, derives from Khara, which is said to be an earlier name of Mangat village.¹⁶ The above passage reflects the late eighteenth-century understanding of the Sikh community concerning the origin of the Banno text. It also reveals the existence of an ongoing debate within the community on the issue of its differences from the text of the *Adi Granth* inscribed by Bhai Gurdas at the dictation of Guru Arjan. The tradition that "many hands" wrote the Banno text cannot be sustained in the light of the actual examination of the manuscript held at Kanpur.¹⁷

The traditional explanations must be set aside at the outset in order to examine critically the origin of the Banno text. The primary issue is who was responsible for that text? The apocryphal texts inserted at the end of it may provide some help in answering this question. Sahib Singh has discussed this issue in detail in his book *Ādi Bīṛ bāre*. He adopted the method of comparing the parallel phrases, passages, and other linguistic expressions occurring in the apocryphal texts at the end of the Banno text and the *Bala Janam-sakhis*, especially *sakhi*

14. Giani Rajinder Singh Bal, *Bhāī Banno Darpan ate Khāre vālī Bīṛ* (Jalandhar: 82/3-D Central Town, 1989), pp. 60–67.

15. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahimā Prakāś* (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1971), p. 373.

16. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, *Bhāī Banno jī te Khāre vālī bīṛ*, in *Khaj Patrikā*, no. 4, (Patiala: Punjabi University, May 1970), pp. 36–7.

17. Pritam Singh states that "the internal physiognomy of the MS does not support the story that different copyists had combined to prepare a quick copy." See his article, "Bhai Banno's Copy of the Sikh Scripture", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, vol. xi, no. ii (Amritsar: GNDU, 1984), p. III.

125 concerning the "discourse with Vira Nau Malar" (ਸਾਖੀ ਵੀਰਾ ਨਾਉ ਮਲਾਰ ਨਾਲ) and sakhi 36 concerning Baba Nanak's visit to Mecca. He argues that in the old manuscripts of the Banno text the apocryphal shaloks attributed to Guru Nanak are sometimes entitled *goṣṭ malār nāli hoī* (ਗੋਸਟਿ ਮਲਾਰ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੋਈ),¹⁸ which is the same title as that of sakhi 125. Further, there is an actual verbal correspondence between them and the passages of the Bala Janam-sakhi.¹⁹ For instance, the following apocryphal shaloks of the Banno text are actually cited in the sakhi 125:

ਜਿਤ ਦਰ ਲਖ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਲਖ ਬੁਹਮੇ ਰਿਸਨ ਮਹੇਸਾ ਲਖ ਲਖ ਰਾਮ ਵਡੀਰੀਅਹਿ ਲਖ
ਰਾਹੀ ਲਖ ਵੇਸਾ ਲਖ ਲਖ ਓਥੇ ਜਤੀ ਹੈ ਸਤੀਅਹਿ ਤੇ ਸੰਨਿਆਸਾ ਲਖ ਲਖ ਓਥੇ
ਗੋਰਖਾ ਲਖ ਲਖ ਨਾਥਾ ਨਾਥ।

At whose (Akāl Purakh's) Door there are a hundred thousand Muhammads and a hundred thousand Brahmas, Vishnus and Shivas. There are hundreds of thousands of Ramas, who claim to be the greatest of all, and there are hundreds of thousands of "ways" [religions] and hundreds of thousands of sectarian garbs. There are hundreds of thousands of celibates, philanthropists and ascetics. There are hundreds of thousands of Gorakhs and hundreds of thousands of Masters of the Master-Jogis.

These shaloks presumably had their origin in the hagiographic literature (janam-sakhis) produced by the Sikh community. They were primarily intended to exalt the image of Baba Nanak over the religious leaders of both Muslim and Hindu traditions. They are not to be found either in the Goindval volumes or in the earlier draft of the Adi Granth (GNDU MS # 1245). Moreover, the style of these shaloks does not match the authentic sayings of Guru Nanak.

Again, there are verbal as well as thematic similarities between the second set of

18. See Gurdita Sekhon MS, Index entry.

19. See the following parallels in the Banno text and the earliest manuscript of Bala Janam-sakhi (1658 CE) as given in Kirpal Singh, *Janam-sakhi Pramparā* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1969), p. 318:

ਯਾਰ ਸਲਾਮਾਲੇਖ ਬਰਾ ਖੁਦਾਈ ਸਚੁ ਚਉੀ...(Bala text)

ਵੀਰ ਸਲਾਮਾਲੇਖਾ ਬਰਾਇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਸਚੁ ਚਉੀ...(Banno text)

apocryphal shaloks attributed to Guru Nanak in the Banno text and the sakhi 36 concerning

Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca:

1. Shalok M1 (Banno text):

ਬਾਇ ਆਤਸ ਆਬ ਖਾਕ ਇਨਾ ਜਾਤੀ ਬੁਝਸੀ। ਉਮਤਿ ਪੈਦੇ ਪੰਜਿ ਟੋਲ ਹਦਰਥ ਪਾਕ
ਖੁਦਾਇ।

The air, the fire, the water and the soil are four elements which are used in the making of the human body. The fifth element is added by the spirit of "Pure God" (*pāk Khudā'i*) to create people.

2. Bala Janam-sakhi # 36:

ਅਵਲ ਬਾਦੀ ਰੂਹ ਹੈ ਨਾਮ ਫਰਿਸਤਾ ਜਾਨਾ ਦੁਜੀ ਆਤਸ ਰੂਹ ਹੈ ਜਿੰਨ ਕਹਾਏ ਨਾਮ।
ਆਬੀ ਤੀਜਾ ਰੂਹ ਹੈ ਮਾਨਹੁ ਸੁਰਤ ਦੋਉ। ਖਾਕੀ ਚਉਥਾ ਰੂਹ ਹੈ ਭਏ ਖਵੀਸ ਅਭੋਉ।
ਪੰਜਵਾ ਰੂਹ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਹੈ ਮਿਲ ਚਹੁ ਰੰਗੇ ਹੋਇ। ਕੁਲ ਬਰਕਤੀ ਰਬ ਦੀ ਚਾਰੋ ਕਾਇਮ
ਹੋਇ।

The first *rūh* or spirit is the air, which is known as an angel (*farishtā*). The second one is the fire, which is called by the name of a *jinn* or demon. The third spirit is the water, which is likened with the godly form. The fourth spirit is the soil, which is the secret evil spirit. The fifth spirit is God himself, who keeps the four filled with love. The four [elements] are thus established (in making the human body) by the total grace of God.

Clearly, these passages reflect discussions with a Muslim audience about creation. On the basis of his analysis of verbal and thematic similarities, Sahib Singh concluded that the responsibility for the composition of the Banno text rests on the shoulders of the Hindalis, the authors of the Bala Janam-sakhis, who inserted the extra material in the text of the *Adi Granth*.²⁰

The Hindalis formed a schismatic group which evidently regarded itself as Sikh but which accepted the leadership of a rival claimant, Bidhi Chand, son of Baba Hindal of Jandiala, in opposition to Guru Hargobind. Bidhi Chand had married a Muslim woman and evidently

20. Sahib Singh, *Ādi Bīr bāre* (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, fourth ed., 1987; first ed., 1970), pp. 176-183.

responded to the reproaches of the Sikhs by turning apostate.²¹ In this context, J.S. Grewal has suggested that the Hindalis occasionally aligned themselves with the Mughal administrators.²² If this is correct, Sahib Singh's theory that extra material was inserted in the Banno text by the Hindalis makes the most sense, because they (Hindalis) served the purpose of the Mughal officials of creating dissension within the ranks of the Panth.

Sahib Singh's theory about the origin of the Banno version seems to be too simplistic a view of what was probably a complex phenomenon. It should be emphasized that he reached his conclusion about the Banno text by comparing the apocryphal shaloks attributed to Guru Nanak with the text of the *Bala Janam-sakhi*, which is the work of the heretical Hindalis. However, when the apocryphal *Ratan-mala*, a composition of twenty-five stanzas in *rāmakalī* raga, is examined, the conclusion seems to point in another direction. Consider, for instance, the following passage from the *Ratan-mala*:

ਪਾਚਉ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਦਿਤੁ ਕਟਿ ਰਾਖੈ ਜਿਹਠਾ ਅਸਤੁ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਭਾਖੈ ਕੋਟਿ ਕੁਟੰਤਰ ਤਤ ਕਾ
ਬੋਤਾਗ ਗਗਨ ਮੰਡਲ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਖੈ ਚੇਤਾਗ ਸਿੰਚ ਆਇਆਲ ਗਗਨ ਸਰਿ ਭਰੈ ਜਾਇ
ਤ੍ਰਿਬੇਟੀ ਮਜਨ ਕਰੈ ਸਤਿ ਪੰਜ ਨਉ ਲਗਾ ਰਖਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹੈ ਜੋਗੁ ਕੇ ਲਖਣਾਖਾ
ਪੁਰਬ ਚੜੈ ਪਸਰਮ ਆਵੈ ਰਵਿ ਸਸਿ ਦੁਹਾ ਟਿਕਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਵੈ ਅਉਹਟ ਪਟਟ ਕੀ ਚੀਨੈ
ਬਾਟਿ ਤਾ ਪਰਿ ਚੁੜੈ ਅਉਘਟਿ ਘਾਟਾ ਨਉਖੰਡ ਦੇਖੈ ਪੁਰਬ ਪਛਮ ਉਤਰ ਦਖਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ
ਕਹੈ ਜੋਗ ਕੇ ਲਖਣਾਖ

The five senses should be kept under complete control. The tongue should never utter untruth. Thus one knows the secret of millions and millions of wisdoms. The mind should be focused in the realm of the sky or "the Tenth Door." One should water the lower regions (of the body) and fill the pool of the sky or "the Tenth Door" (with the vital energy or *kundalini-sakti* through

21. W.H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 17 and his *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 23.

22. J.S. Grewal, "A Perspective on Early Sikh History", in Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), p. 37.

the practice of *haṭha yogā*). Then one should bathe at the Triveni.²³ The seven (*man, budh ate pañj giān-indre*, that is, mind, intellect and five senses of knowledge),²⁴ the five (*pañj karam-indre*, that is, five senses of action) and the nine (*nāu duār*, nine bodily orifices) should be kept under control. Nanak thus describes the signs or attributes of Yoga. (4)

The (vital energy) rises in the east and then comes to the west. Both the sun (considered in Yoga to control the right-hand channel of the body) and the moon (considered in Yoga to control the left-hand channel of the body) should be mingled together within oneself (in the *sahaja* state). In the city of the heart one should realize the way. There one should understand the mystery of the difficult way (of *haṭha yoga*). One should thus see all the sides of east, west, north and south of the nine climes of the earth (within oneself). Nanak says [these are] the signs or attributes of the Yoga.²⁵ (5)

Evidently the Ratan-mala is an exposition of *haṭha yoga* technique, which obviously cannot be the work of Guru Nanak. It is definitely an Udasi account, which was edited out of the earlier draft when Guru Arjan produced the final text of the Adi Granth.²⁶

It is quite possible that Guru Arjan's policy of frequently revising the received texts caused some resentment among the Udasi Sikhs, who followed ascetic ideals and practiced *haṭha*

23. Triveni, or "the confluence of the Ganga, Jamuna and Sarasvati," is the most auspicious Hindu bathing-place at Prayag, Allahabad. In yogic terminology it represents the meeting-place of three important channels of vital "winds" or "breaths" (*prāṇas*): the *sūsumnā-nāḍī* or the innermost channel situated within the spinal chord, the *idā-nāḍī* and the *piṅgalā-nāḍī*, respectively located on the left and the right of the spinal chord. The vital energy in the yogi's body is conceived as a female serpent, the *kundalinī-śaktī*, resting at the *mūladhāra chakra*, the base of the spine between the anus and the genitals. She is awakened by various techniques of *haṭha-yoga* and passes to the Triveni or the "tenth door" (*dasam duār*) via the various *chakras* (lotuses) in the spinal channel (*sūsumnā-nāḍī*), where she unites with the *Param-śiva* (the primal teacher or the Adi Nath of the yogis). This merging of *Śiva* and *śaktī* within one's own body is the final goal of *Kundalinī-yoga*, when the yogi experiences supreme bliss (*mahāsukha*) and enters the mysterious *sahaja* state. For an analysis of the *Kundalinī yoga*, see Harold Coward, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1985), pp. 109-124. Also see, M. Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (London: McClelland, 1958).

24. *Śabadārath Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib jī*, Vol. IV, p. 1332, n. 33.

25. The meaning of the terms used in this passage has been taken from C. Shackle, *A Gurū Nānak Glossary* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1981), pp. 7, 30, 105, 164, 179 and 252.

26. The Ratan-mala text is already to be found in the GNDU MS # 1245, f. 1257a.

yoga techniques. They may have joined forces with the Hindalis and the members of the Bhatra community to insert the extra material in the Banno text.²⁷ This they would have done originally in Khara Mangat in Gujrat District, which ultimately became a fertile area for the proliferation of the Banno version. The first Banno *bīr* was prepared in 1642 CE when the centre of Sikh activities had already shifted under Guru Chargobind from Amritsar to Kiratpur in the Shivalik hills. This theory of the origin of the Banno tradition, therefore, represents the union of Hindali, Udasi and Bhatra interests. It supplements the factor of external interference by the Mughal officials with the internal pressure created within the Sikh community as a result of disagreements over Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

The Banno version came to the fore during the second half of the seventeenth century as a result of political disturbance which promoted Hindali influence. During the eighteenth century the situation of the manuscripts of the *Adi Granth* changed dramatically with the Banno version assuming predominance. W.H. McLeod has used the argument of the predominance of the Banno version amongst early manuscripts to support the possibility that the Banno recension may actually represent the original text.²⁸ This theory, however, cannot be sustained in the light of the oldest manuscripts.²⁹

The real reason for the predominance of the Banno version during the eighteenth

27. The text of *Hakikat rāh mukām Rāje Sivanābh kī* has references to the Bhatra community. For a detailed analysis of the text, see W.H. McLeod, "Hakikat Rah Mukām Rāje Sivanābh Kī," *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Fourth Session (March 14-15, 1969), pp. 96-105. Also, there is a tradition in the Udasi text *Sri Chandarāyan* that Bhuta Ram, Bhai Banno's father, had received the *pothī* of Ratan-mala from Dharam Chand, Guru Nanak's grandson. See *Bhāī Banno Darpan ate Khāre vālī Bīr*, p. 14.

28. W.H. McLeod, "The Sikh Scriptures: Some Issues", in Juergensmeyer and Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies*, p. 101.

29. Edwards Hobbs offers two arguments against the textual theory based on the majority of manuscripts. First, they are always the ones that are of recent origin than the older ones. Second, they are the ones that have gone through more copyings. See Edwards Hobbs, "An Introduction To Methods of Textual Criticism", in Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, ed., *The Critical Study of the Sacred Texts* (Berkeley: Religious Studies Series and Theological Union, 1979), pp. 8-9.

century is that that was a period of turmoil for the Sikh community. This provided ample opportunity for the Banno group, particularly the Hindalis, to exert their influence with the help of the Mughal officials. In those circumstances the Khalsa had no time to bother with the issue of an authentic text of the Adi Granth for they were mainly preoccupied with fighting for survival. It was, therefore, the Banno version which was widely used in the Panth during the eighteenth century, although other versions were also to be found occasionally.

The following list gives the date of writing and the location of Banno manuscripts:

1. John Rylands University of Manchester Library: Panj. MS # 5, claimed in the manuscript note to be written about 1650 CE, but the presence of the works of the ninth Guru at appropriate places makes it a late seventeenth-century or early eighteenth-century document.³⁰
2. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Trust, Coventry (U.K.): MS # 504, written in *sambat 1768 savaṅ vadi 14* (1711 CE). Another copy of the Adi Granth (MS # 506) of early eighteenth-century origin, which is owned by Chanan Singh Chan of Coventry, is also held at this Trust.
3. India Office Library, London: Panj. MSS C5 (1727 CE), C1 (1738 CE), F1 (1758 CE), D3 (1764 CE) and D2 (eighteenth century).³¹
4. British Library, London: MS Or. 2155, written in *sambat 1802 māgh sudi 5* (1745 CE). There is one nineteenth-century MS (Or. 1125), which was found by an officer in the British army, named Henry Erskine, in one of the Sikh tents following the battle of Gujrat in 1849.³²
5. Trinity College, Cambridge: MS R.15.153, written during the period from 1743 to 1843 CE. It was found by Colonel Wallace King of British army in one of the

30. The introductory note in the manuscript says: "The fine manuscript of its kind was wrested out of the hands of a Sikh Priest at the battle of Guzerat by an officer of the 52nd Bengal Native Infantry, who was offered a very large sum in India for it, but he preferred bringing it home as a trophy."

31. A complete description of these eighteenth-century manuscripts can be seen in C. Shackle, *Catalogue of the Panjabi and Sindhi Manuscripts in the India Office Library* (London: India Office Library and Records, 1977), pp. 1-6.

32. See J.F. Blumhardt, *Catalogue of the Hindi, Panjabi and Hindustani Manuscript in the Library of the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1899), pp. 5-7.

Sikh tents following the Anglo-Sikh war in 1849.³³

6. There are two manuscripts of the Adi Granth, written in 1740 and 1744 CE respectively, in the private collection of Sardar Tarlok Singh Choudhary, 49 Brook Drive, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 4RT (UK).
7. Punjabi University Library, Patiala, Special Collections: MSS 115594 and 115464, written in 1755 and 1768 CE respectively.

The examination of these manuscripts has revealed that there was no single text of the Banno version during the eighteenth century, since all of them varied from one another to some degree.

There were other versions that appeared during the eighteenth century as a result of interaction between the scribes of the Banno text and those of the Lahore text. For instance, a manuscript written in *sambat 1787 manghar vadi 5* (1730 CE) and held at Dr. Balbir Singh Sahitya Kendra in Dehra Dun, follows the usual concluding sequence of the Lahore tradition, but it also includes the extra material of the Banno version.³⁴ G.B. Singh has given a detailed analysis of a manuscript, written in *sambat 1826* (1769 CE) and used by the Dhaka Sangat (*Nathā sāhib kī saṅgat Dhākā*), founded by the missionary activities of a Sikh named Bhai Natha, which represents another variation of the union of the Banno and Lahore traditions.³⁵ In Dina and Kangar, another such version was used by the Sikh community of the Malwa area of the Punjab.³⁶

Tradition records that Bhai Mani Singh prepared a new Granth in the early eighteenth

33. See Th. Aufrecht, *A Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, & Co., n.d.), pp. 88–91.

34. Also see MS Add. 25,680, held at the British Library. It was written in the nineteenth century and provides another example of the combination of the Banno and Lahore traditions.

35. G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīrān*, pp. 292–297.

36. PUM, MS # 4. This manuscript was presented to Punjabi University by Sardar Jagmit Singh Brar, the son of the late Sardar Gurmit Singh Brar, a former Minister in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. It is a beautiful manuscript representing the union of the Lahore and Banno traditions, with the whole of Japji in coloured paintings. It is claimed to be a late eighteenth-century document in the manuscript note. Its artistic style, however, reveals that it was written in the early nineteenth century.

century by adding the *bānī* of the Dasam Granth to the Adi Granth. He changed the sequence of the contents by arranging all the hymns according to their authors instead of the ragas. For instance, all the works of Guru Nanak are placed collectively at the beginning of the volume and are followed by the works of other Gurus in the order of their succession. As a result of this new scheme, the bhagat *bānī* was separated from the works of the Gurus, which appeared at the end of the volume after the works of the tenth Guru. It was followed by the *vār* by Satta and Balwand, the *sadu* or dirge by Sunder, the panegyrics in praise of the Gurus by the Bhattas, and the apocryphal texts of the Banno version.³⁷

According to tradition, the Sikh community of that period did not approve Bhai Mani Singh's innovation and they placed on him a curse that he be cut limb by limb in the same manner as he had broken the sequence of the Adi Granth.³⁸ This story may well be an attempt to subvert the understanding of the contemporary Sikh community concerning the death of Bhai Mani Singh, according to which the actual blame for his death was placed on his own conduct rather than on the Mughal officials, who were primarily responsible for his death.

The tradition of Bhai Mani Singh's involvement in the creation of the new version of the Sikh scripture thus appears to be well founded. Moreover, the existence of a manuscript, which combined the Adi Granth and the Dasam Granth into one volume, clearly points out that during his period a new version appeared in the Sikh community. Obviously there were several

37. A manuscript bearing the date *sambat* 1770 (1713 CE) is still extant and it is preserved by the family of Raja Gulab Singh Sethi, 47 Hanuman Road, New Delhi. It is believed to be the copy written by Bhai Mani Singh, although its date is given unconventionally at the end in a different hand. Rattan Singh Jaggi, who examined this manuscript in 1980s, considers this volume to be 250 years old, dating from Bhai Mani Singh's period. A detailed description of this manuscript is given in Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Bhāī Manī Singh: Jīvanī te Rachanā* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1983), pp. 39–43.

38. See Rattan Singh Jaggi (*samp.*), "Kesar Singh Chhibber da Bansaivali-nama Dasan Patshahian ka", *Parakh*, vol. ii (Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1972), pp. 135–36.

different versions of the *Adi Granth*, all of them differing to some degree, which were being used by various Sikh *sangats* in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

3. Damdama Recension

The origin of the Damdama version of the *Adi Granth* is explained traditionally in the *Gur-bilas* ("pleasure of the Guru") literature. According to this explanation, Guru Gobind Singh prepared the final recension of the *Adi Granth* at Damdama Sahib, Talvandi Sabo in Bhatinda District, in *sambat 1762* (1705 CE), when he added the works of the ninth Guru for the first time. For instance, the following passage from the *Gurbilās Chhevīñ Patasāhī*, written in early nineteenth century, says:

ਪੁਨ ਮਾਲਵ ਧਰ ਜਾਇ ਕੈ ਕਾਂਸ਼ੀ ਤਹਾਂ ਬਨਾਇ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਿਓ ਤਿੰਹ ਦਮਦਮਾ ਮੁਕਤਿ
 ਭੁਗਤਿ ਫਲਦਾਇ ਤਦੀ ਚੋਪਈ ਤਹਾਂ ਆਇ ਗੁਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਉਚਾਰੋ ਨਵਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਨੀ
 ਸੰਗਿ ਧਾਰੋ ਉਟਸਠ ਸਬਦ ਸਲੋਕ ਸਤਵੰਜਾ ਪਤੈ ਵੈਰਾਗ ਲਹੈ ਹਤ ਭੰਜਾਤਯਾ ਦਮਦਮਾ
 ਕਾਂਸੀ ਸਮ ਦੁਖ ਖੋਵੈ ਬਹੁ ਬੁਧ ਸੁਧ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੀੜ ਦਮਦਮੀ ਜਗ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਵੈ ਪਤੈ
 ਲਿਖੇ ਸੋ ਜਨਮ ਨ ਆਵੈ੩੮੯³⁹

Having gone to the Malwa land [the Guru] then established there the Kanshi [the centre of learning]. He named it Damdama, the provider of liberation and sustenance. (386) There he dictated the *Adi Granth*, and included the *bāñī* of the ninth Guru in it. There are fifty-nine shabads and fifty-seven shaloks [of the ninth Guru]. Anyone who reads them with a spirit of detachment from the world rises above the desire to kill. (387) Like Kanshi, Damdama removes sufferings. The people there become scribes, perfect in every way. The Damdama *bīṛ* was manifest for the whole world. Anyone who learns to read and write there will not be born again. (388)

It is claimed here that Guru Gobind Singh prepared the final recension of the *Adi Granth* at

39. Giani Inder Singh Gill (*samp.*), *Srī Gurbilās Patasāhī* 6, p. 170.

Damdama by adding a collection of the works by the ninth Guru to the original compilation. This is not correct, since the *bānī* of Guru Tegh Bahadur had already been incorporated in a number of manuscripts immediately after his death. The point to be noted is that a single couplet, attributed to Guru Gobind Singh in earlier manuscripts, became part of the fifty-seven shaloks of the ninth Guru.⁴⁰

Giani Gian Singh records a similar tradition in his *Srī Gurū Panth Prakāś*, written in 1870 CE, that Guru Gobind Singh dictated the whole of the *Adi Granth* from memory to Bhai Mani Singh:

ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋ ਲਿਖਨ ਬਿਠਾਯੋ ਨਿਤ ਦੁਇ ਪਹਿਰ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਠਰਾਯੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਗਏ
ਉਚਾਰਤ ਜੈਸੋ ਬਾਨੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਸਿਖ ਤਿਹ ਤੈਸੋਪਪਾ ਪੁਰਨ ਝੂਰ ਕਈ ਮਾਸ ਮੈ ਆਦਿ
ਗੁੰਥ ਕਿਯ ਤਿਆਰ ਤਾਸ ਮੋਪਛੀ ਦੋਹਰਾ ਬੀੜ ਆਦਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁੰਥ ਕੀ ਨਯੀ ਕਰੀ ਯੋ
ਤਿਆਗ ਯਾਹੀ ਤੇ ਕਹਿਲਾਤ ਵਹਿ ਬੀੜ ਦਮਦਮੇ ਵਾਰਮੁ⁴¹

Mani Singh was appointed amanuensis. Every day two watches of time were fixed for the purpose [of creating the scripture]. As the True Guru kept dictating, so the Sikh kept recording the *bānī*. (55) The project was completed in several months. Thus was prepared the *Adi Granth*. (56) Dohra: A new volume of the original *Guru Granth* was prepared in this way. This is how that volume came to be known as the *Damdama bīr* or recension.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The author further claims that he had learned this story from oral tradition. This final version or the *Damdama bīr*, he says, was lost to the Sikhs during their war with the Afghans in 1762 CE.⁴² The lack of any documentary or manuscript evidence from the eighteenth century,

40. The following shalok (no. 54) is attributed to Guru Gobind Singh in PUM MS # 6, written in 1692 CE:

ਮਹਲਾ ਦਸਵਾ ੧੦ ਬਲੁ ਹੁੰਦ ਬੰਧਨ ਛੁਟੈ ਸਤੁ ਕਛੁ ਹੋਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਤ ਕਿਛੁ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਹਾਥ ਮੇ ਤੁਮਹੀ ਹੋਇ
ਸਹਾਇ

Mahala 10: "Strength has come, the bondage is broken and all the resources are there. Lord! everything is in your power, You are my only refuge."

41. Giani Kirpal Singh (*samp.*), *Srī Gur Panth Prakāś*, vol. 3 (Amritsar: Manmohan Singh Brar, 1973), pp. 1678–80.

however, makes this tradition questionable.

There is some evidence that Guru Gobind Singh made an attempt to standardize the text of the Adi Granth and thus correct the problem of the circulation of three different versions of the Adi Granth during his period. Although he approached Dhir Mal's descendants at Kartarpur to obtain the Adi Bir, he did not succeed in persuading them to part with the volume.⁴³ A number of copies of the Kartarpur text, however, were available at that time, along with two other versions of the Adi Granth. It was these that he used to prepare the Damdama version of the Adi Granth at a resting-place (*damdama*) in Anandpur Sahib in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Further, the *bāṇī* of Guru Tegh Bahadur had also become part of all the different recensions of the Adi Granth immediately after his death.

Harbhajan Singh briefly mentions two manuscripts of the Adi Granth, written in *sāmbat* 1739 (1682 CE) and *sāmbat* 1748 (1691 CE), which contained the works of the ninth Guru at appropriate places with raga *jaijāvanti* following the *prabhāṭī* mode in the standard way. He calls them Damdama versions because they were written at a place called "Damdama" in Anandpur Sahib.⁴⁴ These two volumes did not contain the extra material of the Banno text. These copies (nos. 97 and 14) were housed in the Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar, and were destroyed in 1984 during Operation Blue Star.

However, we have other testimony concerning the manuscript written in *sāmbat* 1748 (1691 CE) that comes from Udasi Harnam Das, who examined the manuscript held at the Sikh Reference Library in 1969. He writes the following brief notes:

42. Ibid., verses 61-2.

43. W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1987), p. 210.

44. Harbhajan Singh, *Gurbāṇī sāmpādan nirṇai* (Chandigarh: Satnam Prakashan, 1982), pp. 121-22.

1. The Japu [of Guru Nanak] is copied from the manuscript written in Guru Ram Das's hand (ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕਿਆ ਦਸਤਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲ).
2. The works of the ninth Guru are available in the volume (ਮਹਲਾ ੯ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ).
3. The volume follows the sequence of the Damdama version (ਬੀੜ ਦਮਦਮੀ ਯਥਾਕ੍ਰਮ ਦੀ ਹੈ).⁴⁵

Clearly, the first point refers to the convention that is generally followed in the copies of the Kartarpur tradition. When the works of the ninth Guru were added to this volume it became the so-called Damdama *biṛ* of the Adi Granth. It is quite evident from these brief reports that the copies of the Damdama version, the manuscripts of which existed before Operation Blue Star in 1984, were current during the period of Guru Gobind Singh along with other versions of the Adi Granth.

4. The Standard Version of the Adi Granth

A careful survey of the early manuscripts reveals that there was no one version of the Adi Granth that was accepted by all the Sikhs in the eighteenth century. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Sikhs were using more than four different versions of the Adi Granth. The advent of Maharaja Ranjīt Singh's rule (1799–1839 CE) brought settled conditions for the Sikh community. Its further expansion brought people from different backgrounds into the fold of the Sikh faith. It also created a situation where different groups within the Panth began to dispute over the text of the Adi Granth. This development provided an opportunity for the standardization of the written text. Moreover, in order to consolidate his power Maharaja Ranjīt

45. Swami Harnam Das Udasi, *Ādi Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī dīān Purātan Bīṛān te Vichār*, Part II (Kapurthala: Kantesh Ayurvedic Pharmesi, 1970), p. 74.

Singh abolished the institution of *gurmattā* ("intention of the Guru" as expressed in the collective decision of the Sikh community) and tried to downplay the doctrine of Guru-Panth, a doctrine that affirms the mystical presence of the Guru within the corporate body of the Sikhs.⁴⁶ He also made efforts to bring forward the doctrine of Guru-Granth, a doctrine that affirms the religious authority of a scriptural Guru, and therefore he needed a standard version for this purpose.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh patronized the Sodhis and Bedis, the direct descendants of the Gurus, who received veneration because of their distinguished origins. He was able to procure the original volume of the Adi Granth from Sodhi Sadhu Singh of Kartarpur by using his political influence for the purpose of having a sole authorized canon prepared. This is quite evident from the testimony of a contemporary source, *Sūraj Prakāś*, written in 1843 CE by Kavi Santokh Singh:

ਤਬ ਤੇ ਧੀਰਮਲ ਕੇ ਧਾਮਾ ਰਹਯੋ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਭਿਰਾਮਾ ਤਿਸਕੀ ਕੁਲ ਕੇ ਲੇਤ ਅਕੋਗ
ਅਬਹਿ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੋਗਪਯਾ ਆਦਿ ਸੁਧਾਸਰ ਲਵਪੁਰ ਮਾਹੀ ਰਾਖਹਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸੁ ਅਪਨੇ
ਪਾਹੀ ਧਨ ਆਦਿਕ ਭੇਟਾ ਜੋ ਦੇਯਾ ਧੀਰਮਲ ਕੇ ਸਗਰੀ ਲੇਯਾ ਕਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਨਹਿ ਲੀਨ
ਸੁ ਛੀਨਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਕੋ ਜਾਨ ਪੁਬੀਨਾ ਪੁਨਹਿ ਭਵਿਖਤ ਕੀ ਸੁਧ ਨਾਹੀ ਲੈਹਿ
ਪੰਥ ਕੇ ਰਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਪਾਹੀ⁴⁷

From that day onwards the most beautiful Granth Sahib has remained with Dhirmal's establishment. His descendants have been receiving offerings [from the devotees]. Now the Khalsa (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) has brought this original Granth, the pool of nectar [of the divine Word], to Lahore by force to keep it with him. Whatever offerings of money and other gifts are made by him, all of these are received by the descendants of Dhirmal. He has shown compassion in that he did not grab it [from them]. He is prudent and knows the teachings

46. Teja Singh maintains that Maharaja Ranjit Singh abolished the custom of holding a *gurmattā* for political purposes after the last *gurmattā* was held in 1809 CE. See Teja Singh, *Sikhism: Its Ideals and Institutions* (Amritsar: Khalsa Brothers, reprinted 1978; 1st ed., 1938), p. 44.

47. Cited in G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīrān*, pp. 250-51.

of the True Guru. I do not know what will happen [to the Adi Granth] in the future, whether the Panth takes possession of it or it still remains with them.

Here Santokh Singh's claim that Maharaja Ranjit Singh received the Adi Granth from the descendants of Dhirmal by using force may indicate that they might have been adamant at first in refusing to part with the original volume. He has further expressed uncertainty about the issue of ownership and custody of the Kartarpur manuscript, which was being debated in the Sikh community at that time.

The Kartarpur volume, which Maharaja Ranjit Singh had acquired in 1818 CE, was daily installed ceremonially in the Moti Mandir of his palace in Lahore.⁴⁸ It was used there for the purpose of the standardization the Adi Granth text, which apparently took place during 1820s. Other testimony on this matter, which comes from the Gazetteer of Jalandhar District, published under the authority of the Punjab Government during the British rule, states as follows:

Sodhi Sadhu Singh took the volume to Lahore at Ranjit Singh's request in 1830, and received the highest honours as its guardian. A daily offering of Rs. 86/- was made, and a special dole of Rs. 600/- at each Anawas and Sankrant, while once a year a valuable Shawl and a horse were presented in Maharaja's name.⁴⁹

The date given here appears to be based on some other event that took place in 1830 CE concerning Sodhi Sadhu Singh. As the guardian of the original Adi Granth Sadhu Singh evidently made his fortunes and increased his influence to a great extent in the Maharaja's court. Even his family tree (*bañsāvalī-nāmā*) appears on a golden page in the Persian chronical *Iqbāl-nāmā*, which gives eye-witness reports of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's court along with the Sikh history starting from the period of the Gurus. It was written by Raja Ram Tota and is still

48. Shamsher Singh Ashok, "Maharaja Ranjit Singh da Pustakalia," in C.S. Chan Sandhu, ed., *The Sikh Heritage* (Southall: Sri Guru Singh Sabha, 1984), p. 63.

49. Cited in G.B. Singh, *Prāchīn Bīrān*, p. 262.

in manuscript form.⁵⁰

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had also acquired the Banno *bīṛ* from Bhai Ram Singh and Bhai Nidhan Singh of Khara Mangat, the descendants of Bhai Banno, in 1820 CE.⁵¹ This was obviously done for the purpose of consulting it during the process of preparing a standard version of the Adi Granth. This was also intended to resolve the Kartarpur–Banno debate that must have been going on in the Sikh community during that period. It is quite possible that the date of writing of the manuscript of the Banno text was tampered with at that time for the purpose of making a claim to an earlier origin. Although the descendants of Bhai Banno lost such a claim, they won a *jāgīr* ("grant") of Rs. 7500/- per annum from the generous Maharaja.⁵²

It is quite possible that Maharaja Ranjit Singh appointed a council of prominent Sikh scholars to prepare an authorized version of the Adi Granth. The following characteristic features of this canonical text may be noted:

1. A standard convention was employed to introduce the text of the Adi Granth with the words *japu nīśānu* (ਜਪੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ) signifying that the Japu of Guru Nanak has become the autograph of the Guru. It clearly signals a new emphasis on the doctrine of Word as Guru.

50. The first part of this Persian MS, written by Raja Ram Tota, covers the events up to 1849. The second part, written by his son Kaul of Kashmir, covers the British rule up to 1868. It was recently bought from a dealer in Pakistan and is held by C.S. Chan Sandhu at Sri Guru Granth Sahib Trust, Coventry (U.K.). I have a photograph of the golden page *bañsāvalī-nāmā* of Sodhi Sadhu Singh in my possession.

51. See *Bhāī Banno Darpan ate Khāre vālī Bīṛ*, p. 27.

52. Ibid.

2. The new version was based solely on the original Kartarpur *bīṛ* with the addition of the works of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Kartarpur *bīṛ* thus became the touchstone for correcting the copies of the *Adi Granth*.⁵³ Sodhi Sadhu Singh even presented a direct copy of the original *bīṛ* to Queen Victoria in 1859 CE.⁵⁴ This manuscript (MSS Panj. E 2), held at the India Office Library (London), has coloured margins throughout, and folios 1b-2a of the text are written in alternate lines of gold and black, with finely illuminated margins. The examination of this manuscript reveals that it is, in fact, a copy of the Damdama version, since it includes the works of the ninth Guru in the usual places. The following two points, however, make it a copy of the original *bīṛ*. First, some folios (545a-b and 567a-b) in the *mārū* raga were replaced with new ones to bring the texts (ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਰਨੈਹਾਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ and ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਰੋ) into line with the original *bīṛ*, although the marginal comments of the Kartarpur volume, explaining the position of these texts, were not written down. Second, on folio 730b a shalok of Guru Amar Das (ਤੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਤੁ ਆਕਾਰੁ ਹੈ ਨਿਰਤਉ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਸੋਇ...), which is obliterated with a pen in the Kartarpur volume, is written here in the margin. The most significant point is that the total number of letters in this volume is given at the end in another hand: "There are nine lakhs ninety one thousand and thirty-two letters in this volume, all of which are the limbs of the *Guru Granth Sahib Ji*" (ਨੌ ਲਖੁ ਇਕਾਨਵੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਬਤੀ ਅਖਰ ਸਤੁ ਅੰਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਹਨ).⁵⁵ This note clearly suggests the self-understanding of the contemporary Sikh community, how it perceived the *Guru Granth Sahib* as the "living embodiment of the Guru".
3. The new version was, in fact, a revival of the earlier Damdama version, compiled during the period of Guru Gobind Singh in the late

53. "The original *granth* is in the possession of Guru Jawahir Singh, of Kartarpur, in Jullundur district, and this is often referred to for correcting of copies or erasure of interpolations; this book is most carefully guarded." See *Gazetteer of the Lahore District 1883-4*, compiled and published under the authority of the Punjab Government (Calcutta: Calcutta Central Press Company limited, 1884), p. 58.

54. IOL: MSS Panj. E 2. The manuscript note by the D[eputy] Com[missione]r of Lahore reads: "Transcribed from the original copy, said to bear the signatures of one or more of the five Gurus themselves, in the possession of Guru Sadhu Singh of Kartarpur and by him presented." Another note by G.B. Singh reads: "A copy made by Sodhi Sadhu Singh Ji (Guru of the Gaddi at Kartarpur) and presented to Queen Victoria in 1859. It is a copy of the volume at Kartarpur (Jullundhar)."

55. IOL, MSS Panj. E 2, f. 735b.

seventeenth century, which went out of circulation due to the period of turmoil during the eighteenth century. However, in this version the place of *jaijāvanti* raga and the sequence of the shaloks of the ninth Guru were fixed. In certain instances, the language of the shaloks was modified. The solitary couplet that was attributed to the tenth Guru in early manuscripts lost its authorship and became the part of Guru Tegh Bahadur's shaloks. This may have been intentionally done to keep Guru Gobind Singh's authorship limited to the *bānī* in the Dasam Granth. It may also reflect the contemporary debate over the issue of Sikh identity: that is, whether one follows the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors contained in the Adi Granth, or one joins the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh.

4. Neither was the table of the death-dates of the Gurus included in the volume, nor was its date of writing mentioned anywhere. Perhaps this was intentionally done to create the impression that this particular version represents the everlasting Guru of the Sikhs. Further, this would also help to promote the Damdama version among the Sikhs as coming directly from the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The later Damdama tradition was actually intended for that purpose.
5. Maharaja Ranjit Singh patronized the scribes who made beautiful copies of this new version, which were sent as gifts to all the Sikh Takhts ("thrones", the centres of temporal authority) and other major gurdwaras. He presented a most beautiful copy of the Adi Granth, with two coloured illustrations and finely decorated margins with art work, to Baba Sahib Singh Bedi, which is held now by Baba Serabjot Singh Bedi of Una Sahib.⁵⁶

There is no doubt that Maharaja Ranjit Singh promoted the copying and distribution of the Damdama version of the Adi Granth in the Sikh community. In response to his initiative some people converted their copies of the Danno version by obliterating the extra material in order to

56. This is indeed the most beautiful of the manuscripts of the Adi Granth that I have ever seen. I have a number of photographs of it in my possession. One manuscript (MS # 503) with coloured margins is preserved at Sri Guru Granth Sahib Trust, Coventry, and another is held by Sardar Tarlok Singh Choudhary of Harrow (U.K.). Other manuscripts of the Damdama version are: Punjabi University Library, MS # 115460; MS PUM # 7; MS # 115466; MS # 115593; MS # 115463 and a manuscript held at Gurdwara Sahib Kuthala, Malerkotala.

bring them into line with the new Damdama version. For instance, a manuscript of the Banno version written in *sambat 1847* (1790 CE) was later converted into the Damdama version through the use of *hartāl* (deletion) and replacing the folios containing extra-canonical material.⁵⁷

Evidently the Damdama version was coming to the fore in the Sikh community in the early nineteenth century. At least two contemporary Sikh sources (the *Gurbilās Chhevīñ Pātasāhi* and the *Sūraj Prakās*), which were written after the standardization of the text of the Adi Granth, provide detailed accounts of the compilation of the Adi Granth by Guru Arjan, which in fact reflects the contemporary Sikh situation.⁵⁸ They specifically record the number of bhagats included in the Adi Granth as fifteen (ਪੰਦਰਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਏ ਕਹੇ, "these are the names of the fifteen bhagats", and ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੁੜ ਪੰਦਰਿ ਕਹੀਐ, "by adding Surdas they become fifteen")⁵⁹ without mentioning Mira Bai of the Banno version. This fact alone indicates that they were written after the canonical text was prepared. It is quite possible that their authors were members of the Sikh council responsible for the project undertaken with the specific approval of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Some sections of the Sikh community, especially in the area of Gujrat District, still chose to continue to use the Banno version in spite of the standardization of the text of the Adi Granth. This is quite evident from the fact that a number of such manuscripts coming from that period still survive.⁶⁰ Indeed, a copy of the Banno text, claimed to be an immediate

57. Punjabi University Library (Patiala), Special Collections: MS # 11565.

58. Giani Inder Singh Gill (samp.), *Srī Gurbilās Pātasāhi* 6, pp. 52-91; and Bhai Vir Singh (samp.), *Srī Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth*, Volume VI, *rāsi 3 āṁsu 32-50* (Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 4th ed., 1963), pp. 2038-2145.

59. See *Srī Gurbilās Pātasāhi* 6, p. 76 and *Srī Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth*, p. 2087. Compare it with the account given in the *Mahimā Prakās (kavitā)*, written in 1776 CE, where Mira Bai is included in the list of the bhagats. See *Mahimā Prakās*, p. 371.

60. I have in my possession a manuscript of the Banno version (the second half of a two-volume copy) which was written in *sambat 1889* (1832 CE). I received it from the Managing Committee of Gurdwara Sahib Lachane, Montreal (Canada), who had acquired it from a dealer in

copy from the original and written by Ram Mrigi in *sambat 1905* (1848 CE), was sent to the Imperial Exhibition at Paris in 1855 CE for works of Art and Industry by the Punjab committee at Lahore.⁶¹ This may be an effort on the part of the protagonists of the Banno text to regain their lost prestige at a time when the Sikh Kingdom of Lahore had come under British rule.

The coming of the printing press in the Punjab provided another impetus for the Damdama version to be universally accepted by the Sikh community. The first printed edition of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (28 by 32 cms in size, with a total of 1574 pages of the text and 64 extra pages of the index) was published by Matbai Aftab Press in *sambat 1925* (1868 CE) at Lahore.⁶² It is clearly a standard Damdama version with a beautiful illustration of Guru Nanak, with Guru Angad sitting by his side, which appears in the text of *Japji* (p. 3). Another printed edition of "Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Adi" of the Damdama version (with 1775 pages of text and an extra 47 pages of index) was published by Yantralya Press in *sambat 1942* (1885 CE) at Lahore.⁶³ A second edition appeared in *sambat 1949* (1892 CE).⁶⁴

Bhai Sankar Singh Ragi of Gujranwala, however, made an effort to revive the Banno text by getting a copy of the "Sri Adi Giranth Sahib Ji" printed at Gian Press by Brij Lal in *sambat 1938* (1881 CE) at Gujranwala. The writing that appears on its title page as well as at the end is worth repeating here:

1. ਓ ਨਾਰਾਇਨ

ਪਰੰਬੁਰਮ ਪਰਮਈਸਰ ਕੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਸੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਯਤੇ

Pakistan.

61. IOL, MSS Panj. D 1. Christopher Shackle notes: "It is interesting that the Banno text should be, even at this relatively late date, still considered a standard version, suitable for exhibition overseas." See *Catalogue*, p. 6.

62. IOL, Panj. H 26.

63. IOL, Panj. H 25.

64. IOL, Panj. H 12.

Aum Narayan

By the grace of Parmbraham, who is the Supreme Lord, the volume of Sri Adi Giranth Sahib Ji is written.

2. ਦਸਖਤ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਕਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਗੀ ਰਹਿਟੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਗੁਜਰਾਨਵਾਲੇ ਵਾਲਾ

[The volume] is authorized under the signatures of Bhai Sankar Singh Ragi, a resident of Gujranwala.⁶⁵

Clearly, the Sikhs of Gujranwala were under brahmanical influence, and they continued using the Banno text. Incidentally this volume contains only the first two lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in the *rāmakalī* raga on page 754. It does, however, contain Mira Bai's hymn (p. 895) and Sur Das's complete hymn (p. 1017), along with other apocryphal texts (pp. 1161–1167).

The Banno *bīṛ* had already been branded as *khāri* ("brackish" or "bitter"), which means in this context "spurious" or "apocryphal". This usage appears to have come into vogue after the standardization of the written text of the Adi Granth. The Singh Sabha reformers picked up the term and excluded the use of the Banno version for good. They were mainly responsible for sanctifying the standard Damdama version, setting aside all other versions that were used in earlier centuries.

Conclusion

This analysis has revealed that different recensions of the Adi Granth originated as a result of factional divisions in the Panth and external interference in its affairs. The murder of Guru Arjan led to the heightening of the spirit of militancy and resulted in the consolidation of

65. IOL, Panj. H. 21.

the Sikh community against the Mughal authorities. The growing militancy alarmed the Mughal officials, who wanted to tone down this spirit by creating dissensions within the ranks of the Panth. This they appear to have done through indirectly influencing certain groups to tamper with the text of the Adi Granth. There were other groups who were still holding Sant beliefs and who did not approve the shift towards militancy in the affairs of the Panth. They created an internal pressure within the Panth.

This analysis offers the following theories of the origins of different versions of the Adi Granth. The Lahore recension was prepared in 1610 CE, when Guru Hargobind was imprisoned in the Gwalior fort by the orders of Emperor Jahangir. The followers of the Sants must have played a role in the creation of this recension. The Banno recension originated in the area of Khara Mangat in Gujrat District in 1642 CE, when the centre of Sikh activities shifted from Amritsar to Kiratpur in the Shivalik hills under Guru Hargobind. This provided ample opportunity to the Banno Group—which included Hindalis, Udasis, Bhatras and Brahmans⁶⁶—to insert extraneous material in the text of the Adi Granth. Apart from reflecting internal pressure within the Sikh community, the Banno group was also reacting to external pressures by the Mughals on the Sikhs.

Although the Damdama version of the Adi Granth was prepared by Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, different versions of the Adi Granth were used by the Sikh community in the eighteenth century. The Banno recension was predominant. The standardization of the text of the Adi Granth—based on the Damdama version—took place during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who was able to procure the

66. See chapter 4, pp. 173–74.

Kartarpur volume for this purpose. The first printed edition of the standard Damdama version appeared in 1868 CE, which gave a fillip for its universal acceptance. The Singh Sabha reformers sanctified this standard version and set aside all other versions used in earlier centuries.

Chapter 4

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

In the 1940s, two Western scholars, J.C. Archer and C.H. Loehlin, had an opportunity to take a look at the Kartarpur *bīr*. Although their comments are mainly concerned with the internal physiognomy of the manuscript, they have, nevertheless, stressed the need for textual and historical criticism of the Adi Granth. To quote Dr Loehlin: "The Sikhs will hold a unique position among the religions of the world if they prove through careful textual criticism the widely accepted belief that the Kartarpur Granth is the MS dictated by Guru Arjan."¹ The discussion in this chapter is, therefore, devoted to the textual criticism of certain hymns and individual works in order to reconstruct the history of the text of the Adi Granth. The textual variations in some of the hymns as they appear in the Goindval *pothīs* and in the early manuscripts of the Adi Granth are quite illuminating. We will try to examine them by comparing the relevant texts and manuscripts to understand the process of the compilation of the Adi Granth.

1. Mul Mantar

The Mul Mantar, or "root formula" with which the Adi Granth opens, is the basic

1. C. Loehlin, "The Need for Textual and Historical Criticism", *The Sikh Courier* (Spring-Summer, 1987), p. 18. Originally, this paper was read at the Punjab History Conference and published in its Proceedings, 1966. Archer's comments may be seen in "The Bible of the Sikhs", *The Review of Religion* (January 1949), pp. 115-25.

theological statement of the Sikh faith. It consists of different epithets, all of which are traditionally understood as characterizations of Ultimate Reality, or Akal Purakh ("the Timeless Being"). It appears in volume I of the Goindval *pothīs* as follows:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਸਾਦੁ

ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੀਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੰਭਉ॥²

'1' *Oaṅkār* ("There is one Supreme Being"). He is the True Guru who reveals himself through grace. The True Name, the Creator, the Fearless One and the Formless One! He is the Timeless One, who is beyond birth and death. He is self-existent. (1)

Sometimes there is an additional phrase *gurū pūre ke parsādi* (ਗੁਰੂ ਪੂਰੇ ਕੇ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ "by the grace of the Perfect Guru") at the end of this text,³ but nowhere does this form of the Mul Mantar correspond to the standard version given in the *Adi Granth*. Evidently this was the form that was current during the period of Guru Amar Das.

The origin of the major components of the earlier form of the Mul Mantar as given in the Goindval *pothīs* can be traced directly from the works of Guru Nanak:

1. The numeral "1" at the beginning of the Mul Mantar represents the unity of Ultimate Reality, a concept which Guru Nanak interprets in monotheistic terms. It affirms that the Supreme Being is One without a second. This is quite evident from the following statement: "My Master is the One. He is the One, brother, and He alone exists" (ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ)⁴ Similarly, the symbol *Oaṅkār* has its origin in Guru Nanak's lengthy work *Oaṅkār* in the measure *rāmakalī dakhāṇī*, which gives particular meaning to it.⁵ Accordingly, *Oaṅkār* is the foundational Word (*śabad*), which is the basis of the whole creation and which represents in seed form all scriptural revelation.

2. PUL, Photocopy of Goindval volume I.

3. Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (somp.), *Bāb Mohan vālīān pothīān* (Delhi: Arsi Publishers, 1987), pp. 9 and 17.

4. MI, *Āsā* 5, AG, p. 350.

5. MI, *Rāg Rāmakalī Dakhāṇī Oaṅkārū*, AG, pp. 929–38.

2. The most important word used by Guru Nanak to express the nature of divine revelation in its totality is *nām* ("the Name"), frequently linked with *sati* (or *sachu*, "Truth") to give the compound form *satināmu* (or *sachunāmu*).⁶ It is understandable that the compound *satinām* (or *sachunāmu*, "the True Name"), which indicates the Eternal Reality, should have become the part of the basic theological statement of the Sikh faith. Guru Nanak himself identifies the Mul Mantar with the divine Name.⁷
3. Guru Nanak frequently employs such terms as *kartār* ("Creator"), *akāl* ("Timeless") and *nirāṅkār* ("Formless") for the Supreme Being in his works. The following statements may provide the basis for the expression *sachu nāmu kartāru nirbhau nirīkāru akāl mūrati ajūnī sambhu* (ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੀਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੰਭਉ) in the earlier form of the Mul Mantar:
 - (a) "The Fearless One, the Formless One, the True Name—the whole world is His creation!" (ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੀਕਾਰੁ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਾਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨੁ).⁸
 - (b) "There is one Supreme Being, the True Name—with Him is determined true justice!" (ਏਕਾ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਿਬੜੈ ਸਾਚੁ ਨਿਆਉ).⁹
 - (c) "He is the Fearless One who is beyond all reckoning [lit. "who has nothing written on His head"]. He Himself is beyond comprehending, but He reveals Himself in His creation. He Himself is totally detached [from the *māyā* which He has created]. He is beyond birth and death. He is self-existent. Says Nanak, He is attained only through the Guru's teachings" (ਨਿਰਭਉ ਸੋ ਸਿਰਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਲੇਖਾ ਆਪਿ ਅਲੋਪੁ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਦੇਖਾ ਆਪਿ ਅਤੀਤੁ ਅਜੋਨੀ ਸੰਭਉ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੋ ਪਾਇਆ).¹⁰
4. In Guru Nanak's usage the "Guru" is the "voice" of the Supreme Being, mystically uttered within the human *man* (heart-mind-soul).¹¹ The phrase *satgur parsādi*, therefore, conveys the meaning that the "True Guru" reveals himself through grace. By the time of Guru Nanak's successors, however, the range covered by the term "Guru" extended from the personal Guru through the concept of an eternal Guru to identification with the Supreme Being himself. Thus the additional phrase

6. W.H. McLeod, *The Sikhs: History, Religion, and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 50.

7. M1, *Mārū Soliḥ* 20, AG, p. 1040.

8. M1, *Vār Āsā*, 2 (5), AG, p. 465.

9. M1, *Basant Aṣṭ*, 3, AG, p. 1188.

10. M1, *Mārū Solaḥ* 21, AG, p. 1042.

11. For more details, see W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, reprint, 1976; 1st edn., Clarendon, 1968), p. 199: "The *Gurū* accordingly is the voice of God; and the *Gurū* is the Word, the Truth of God. Gurū Nānak uses the term in all three senses."

gurū pūre ke prasādi ("by the grace of the Perfect Guru") may refer more specifically to the personal Guru than to the divine Guru. This appears to be the understanding of the Sikh community during the period of the third Guru.

The basic elements of the earlier form of the Mul Mantar come from the works of Guru Nanak. Presumably he himself formulated it during the Kartarpur period, when the first Sikh community started using it in worship. The most significant point about its meaning is that it lays emphasis upon the formless (*nirāṅkār*) aspect of Ultimate Reality. For Guru Nanak the word *nirāṅkār* is of utmost importance, which is quite evident from its occurrence in his description of the *sach khaṇḍ* ("the Realm of Truth"), the fifth and the final stage in the soul's spiritual ascent.¹²

Guru Ram Das invoked the divine attributes of the Mul Mantar in one of his compositions. The original verse resembles the text of the Mul Mantar and, similarly, it is free of any metrical or rhyme scheme. It reads as follows:

ਜਪਿ ਮਨ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਤਿ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੁਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੰਭਉ
ਮੋਰੇ ਮਨ ਅਨਦਿਨਿ ਧਿਆਇ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਾਹਾਰੀ¹³

Contemplate the Fearless One, my *man*, [He who is] true, true and always true. He is without enmity, the Timeless One. He is beyond birth and death. He is self-existent. Meditate day and night on the Formless One, my *man*, He who is above any need of sustenance.

The comparison of this text with the earlier form of the Mul Mantar given above clearly indicates the addition of the word *nirvairu* ("without enmity"), which Guru Ram Das employs to

12. M1, *Japujī*, AG, p. 8. Also see *ibid.*, pp. 172, 223-24.

13. M4, *Sārang* 11, AG, p. 1201.

put emphasis on the divine attribute of benevolence.¹⁴ This may reflect his firm resolve to counteract the situation of hostility in real life, created by the animosity of his rivals, with the spirit of love and friendliness.¹⁵ Thus a new theological dimension is added to the Sikh understanding of Ultimate Reality.

Guru Arjan worked over the text of the Mul Mantar in successive drafts to give it its final form. The Guru Nanak Dev University manuscript, which is an early draft of the Adi Granth, gives the form of the Mul Mantar before its standardization:

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ
ਪਰਸਾਦਿ।¹⁶

"I" *Oaṅkār* ("There is one Supreme Being"). His Name is the eternal Truth. He is the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity. He is the Timeless One, who is beyond birth and death. He is self-existent. He is the True Guru who reveals himself through grace.

In his final version, Guru Arjan replaced the phrase *satgurū parsādi* (ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ, "by the grace of the True Guru") with *gur prasādi* (ਗੁਰ ਪੁਸਾਦਿ, "by the grace of the Guru"), presumably to provide a more coherent structure to the text of the Mul Mantar. Also, he seems to have indicated that the word *gur* ("principle" or "technique") in the final phrase stands for the "divine principle", functioning behind the free and sovereign act of grace. Thus the word "Guru" acquires a new meaning in the sense of a "divine principle".

Another significant point is that Guru Arjan added the word *purakh* to the received text of the Mul Mantar. It clearly indicates that by his time the personal (*purakh*) aspect of the

14. Although Guru Nanak has also employed the word *nirvairu* for the Supreme Being in his *Rāmkalī Dakhaṇī Oaṅkāru* (AG, p. 931), the frequency of its usage is greater in the compositions of Guru Ramdas. See Gurcharan Singh, *Ādi Granth śabad-anukramanikā*, vol. 2 (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1971), pp. 1526–27.

15. Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publication, 1988), pp. 106–110.

16. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 27b.

Supreme Being acquired prominence as compared with Guru Nanak's emphasis on the formless (*nirāṅkār*) nature of Ultimate Reality.¹⁷ This may provide an adequate explanation of the subsequent development that took place in Sikh doctrine as well as within the Panth since the days of Guru Nanak. This will, however, challenge the traditional understanding of the Mul Mantar as being created in its present form by Guru Nanak himself.¹⁸

Five different forms of the Mul Mantar are used as invocations at the beginning of various sections and sub-sections of the Adi Granth. These are as follows:

1. ੴ ("1" *Oaṅkār*, "There is one Supreme Being"). This mystic formula contains in seed form all other revelation. There is only one occasion when it is used independently as an invocation in the text of Guru Nanak's *sahaskritī* shaloks. This is to be found in the Kartarpur MS on folio 934/1.¹⁹ The later scribes, however, seem to have dropped this usage because of their failure to acknowledge the fact that it distinguishes Guru Nanak's first shalok from the cluster of the remaining three shaloks, which are repeated elsewhere under the symbol of Guru Angad.²⁰ Thus the usage of this form of invocation is not to be found in the modern printed version of the Adi Granth.²¹
2. ੴ ਸਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ("There is one Supreme Being, known by grace through the True Guru"). The maximum use of this abbreviated form of invocation is made in the Adi Granth. It is used 519 times at the beginning of various headings and

17. Guru Nanak employed both phrases, "Karta Purakh" and "Akal Purakhu" for the Supreme Being in the first stanza of *Vār Mājh* (AG, 138) and in *Mārū Solhe* 18 (AG, p. 1038) respectively. He also speaks of a personal God, a God of grace to whom one responds in love. See McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 165. The point that is being made here is that a new emphasis was placed on the concept by Guru Arjan, when he included the word in the Mul Mantar.

18. Pritam Singh, ed., *Sikh Concept of The Divine* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 1985), p. VII: "In the Sacred Book of the Sikhs also, one may come across any number of divine attributes, but those which must have struck the founder, Guru Nanak, as the most prominent and essential, were woven by him in a short rhythmic composition, called the *mūl mantra*, the seminal formula, consisting of 14 basic structural units."

19. Also see Gurdita Sekhon MS, f. 717b.

20. The second *sahaskritī* shalok appears in *Vār Mājh* (2 [23], AG, 148) as Guru Angad's. Similarly the two remaining shaloks are repeated in *Vār Āsā* (2-3 [12], AG, p. 469) under the symbol of the second Guru.

21. Cf. Harbhajan Singh, *Gurbāṇī sāmpādan nirṇai* (Chandigarh: Satnam Prakashan, 1982), pp. 82 and 161.

sub-headings in different sections of the scripture.²²

3. **ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ** ("There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality, known by grace through the Guru"). There are only two occasions, one in *Sirī Rāgu* (AG, p. 81) and the second in *Bihāgarā* mode (AG, p. 544), when this form of invocation is used in the *Adi Granth*.
4. **ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ** ("There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality. He is the Creator, known by grace through the Guru"). There are nine such instances where this form of invocation is used in the *Adi Granth*.²³
5. **ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ** ("There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality. He is the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity. He is the Timeless One, who is beyond birth and death. He is self-existent, and is known by grace through the Guru"). This is the final and complete version of the *Mul Mantar*, the Basic Creedal Statement of the Sikh faith. It has been used thirty-three times in the *Adi Granth*, normally at the beginning of a new raga section and some of the liturgical texts.²⁴

It has been suggested that these different forms of invocations are used in the *Adi Granth* in order to break organizational "monotony" and to add colourful diversity to the structure of the Sikh scripture.²⁵ A careful look at this diversity, however, reveals the developmental aspect of the text of the *Mul Mantar*. The short versions were most conveniently employed for various sub-headings within the raga sections. Moreover, having different versions (as well as using any version in Sikh liturgy) constituted a departure from a certain classical doctrine of *mantra*, which holds that a *mantra* becomes inefficacious if its syllables are changed in any way (or if it is spoken in public).²⁶

22. For more details, see Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Gurū Granth Sāhib dī sampādan-kalā* (Amritsar: New Age Book Centre, 2nd edn., 1982; 1st edn., 1974), p. 50.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

24. For details, see *ibid.*, p. 53.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

26. K.L. Sharma, "The Classical Concept of Mantra", in Pritam Singh, *Sikh Concept of The Divine*, p. 27: "Thus, it is believed that the mantras acquire the same creative power as existed at the time of the creation of the universe. This mystic efficacy is not present in any and every sound...Every time the vibration is sought, the same mantra has to be recited." Mohan Singh Diwana, among others, raises the following question: "Is the full *mantra* on the same level of potency as the shorter ones...or the potency increases with the short wave-length?" See his article

It is important to note that an invocation at the beginning of a new section or sub-section is always written on the right-hand side of the text in the Kartarpur manuscript. This practice, which is mostly followed in the seventeenth-century manuscripts, was meant to accord a special place of honour to the Mul Mantar in the scripture. However, later scribes abandoned that practice and did not pay much attention to the correct order of invocation and raga title. The issue was hotly debated among the Singh Sabha scholars and various sections of the Sikh community led by prominent Sikh sants in the 1950s, and a decision was reached in 1964 to follow the guidelines available from the Kartarpur manuscript. It was further decided that the Damdama version was to be consulted if there was some ambiguity with respect to the position of the invocation in the Kartarpur volume.²⁷ The decision, however, reflected the dominance within the Panth of a group of Sikh sants, who followed a canonical mode of interpretation, which takes the linguistic form and arrangement of words of the scripture as literally true. For them, any change in the sequence of the invocation and the raga title would amount to violation of the integrity of the text of the Adi Granth. On the other hand, the Sikh scholars who followed the Singh Sabha mode of interpretation, based on the consistent structure of the Adi Granth, continued to maintain their position that the Mul Mantar should always come before the raga title.²⁸ These Singh Sabha scholars, nevertheless, accepted the decision in

"Discoveries in Sikh Cultures (III)," *Journal of Sikh Studies*, vol. II, no. 1 (Feb., 1975), p. 67. Also see, Harold G. Coward, *Sphota Theory of Language* (Columbia: South Asia Books, 1980), pp. 66, 72-125.

27. Harbhajan Singh, *Gurbānī sampādan nirṇai*, p. 157. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sant Chanan Singh (President, S.G.P.C.) at Gurdwara Sri Karamsar, Rara Sahib, on 4 April 1964. Other signatories to the unanimous decision were: Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh (Head Granthi, Darbar Sahib), Singh Sahib Giani Sharam Singh (Jathedar, Takhat Sri Kesgarh, Anandpur), Satbir Singh, Sant Niranjan Singh, Arjan Singh Muni (Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib, Nander), Gian Singh Nihang, Sant Balbir Singh, Sant Ishar Singh of Rarevale, and Sant Gurbachan Singh Khalsa of Bhindran Kalan.

28. For instance, see Sahib Singh, "Mul Mantar ate Sirlekh", *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Darapān*, Vol. X (Jalandhar: Raj Publishers, 3rd ed., 1971; 1st ed., 1964), pp. 711-730.

good faith and did not try to challenge the authority of the Panth.²⁹

2. Liturgical Texts

2.1 *Japjī: The Early Morning Prayer*

The introductory section of the *Adi Granth* consists of liturgical texts. It opens with the celebrated *Japjī* of Guru Nanak, a work which is regarded as the quintessence of the whole Sikh scripture. The devout Sikh recites it from memory every morning during the "ambrosial time" (*amrit velā*, the last watch of the night) immediately after rising and bathing. According to the testimony of Bhai Gurdas, this devotional practice originated during the final period of Guru Nanak's life when he settled down at Kartarpur as the head of a newly-emerging religious community.³⁰

The two available *Goindval* volumes do not contain the text of *Japjī*. It is believed that there were two other volumes, which have not survived, one of which contained the liturgical texts including the *Japjī*.³¹ The Guru Nanak Dev University manuscript (GNDU MS # 1245) provides an earlier version of the Morning Prayer before its standardization. It begins as follows:

ੴ

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 729-30.

30. *Vārāñ Bhāī Gurdas* 1:38. The relevant verse reads:

ਸੋਦਰੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾਪੁ ਉਚਾਰਾ

"The *Sodar* and *Ārtī* were sung [in the evening], while the *Jāpu* was recited early in the morning during the 'ambrosial time'."

31. *Diwana* claims to have seen the text of *Japjī* in one of the *Goindval pothīs* in 1933 at *Goindval Sahib*, but the description of his "discover," appears to be uncertain: "If I recall correctly, *Jap(u)* was followed by *Sidh Goṣṭ(i)*." See "Discoveries in Sikh Culture (III)," p. 60.

ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ
 ਜਪੁ ਮਹਲਾ੧
 ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖਵਾਰਗ ਭੁਪੇ ਰੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇਇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ
 ਲਿਵਤਾਰਗ ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਜੇ ਬਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਗ ਸਹੰਸ ਸਿਆਟਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਨਿ
 ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਕਿਉ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਉ ਭੁਝੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ਹੁਕਮ
 ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਟਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥³²

There is One Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality. He is the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity. He is immortal, never incarnated, self-existent, known by grace through the True Guru.

Japu Mahalu 1.

Through ritual purity he can never be known though one cleanse oneself a hundred thousand times. Silent reflection will never reveal him though one dwell absorbed in the deepest meditation. Though one gather vast riches, the hunger remains, no cunning will help in the hereafter. How is Truth to be attained, how the veil of falsehood torn aside? Nanak, thus it is written: Submit to God's Order (*hukam*), walk in its way. (1)³³

A comparative analysis of this text with the standard version of Japī reveals the following important differences, which illuminate different stages in the process of its development.

First, the Mul Mantar is given in its earlier form, which is discussed in detail in the preceding section. Second, the title of the composition is mentioned as *japu mahalu 1* (ਜਪੁ ਮਹਲਾ੧), indicating specifically the authorship of Guru Nanak. In the standard version, however, the symbol *mahala 1* is omitted, perhaps consciously to assign divine authorship to the text. Guru Arjan seems to have indicated that the ultimate source of all the *bāṇī* is the Eternal Guru, who revealed himself through Guru Nanak and his successors. It would be understandable for this fundamental belief to be acknowledged right in the beginning.

The entry in the index of the Kartarpur manuscript, however, reads: "The Japu is

32. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 27b.

33. W.H. McLeod, trans. and ed., *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism [TSSS]* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 86.

copied from the manuscript written in Guru Ram Das's hand" (ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕਿਆ ਦਸਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ).³⁴ In Guru Ram Das's *bāṇī* we find a number of stanzas of *Japjī* interpreted for his own audience.³⁵ This is an example of interpretation of the meaning of scripture by means of scripture.³⁶ Evidently Guru Ram Das was the first Guru to attempt to clarify and expound the meaning of certain words, phrases and stanzas of the *Japjī* in his own works. He must have made a copy of the *Japjī* in his own hand, which Guru Arjan used at the time of the compilation of the *Adi Granth*.

Third, the most distinctive difference is that the introductory couplet of the *Japjī* is missing in the earlier text. In the standard version it reads: "The Eternal One, from the beginning, through all time, present now, the Everlasting Reality"³⁷ (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ). Evidently this shalok was added by Guru Arjan much later when he produced the final text of the *Japjī*. It is also repeated with a slight difference as an introductory shalok (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਭਿ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭਿ ਸਚੁ) to the seventeenth *aṣṭapadī* or octave of the *Sukhmanī*.³⁸ This fact alone apparently makes it the composition of Guru Arjan, who would have expressed Guru Nanak's intention and teachings in his own words. Guru Arjan's inspiration may well have been based on such sayings of Guru Nanak as the following:

1. "He ever is, ever shall be; Never shall he not be. He has made the creation!" (ਹੈ ਭੀ ਹੋਸੀ ਜਾਇ ਨ ਜਾਸੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਾਈ).³⁹

34. Kartarpur MS, f. 2/2.

35. M4, *Vār Sāraṅg*, pauris 5-12, AG, pp. 1239-1242. Also see *Bhairaṅ* 3, AG, p. 1134 and *Kānarā* 8, AG, pp. 1296-97.

36. For details, see chapter 6, pp. 218-9.

37. TSSS, p. 86.

38. M5, *Gaurī Sukhmanī* (17), AG, p. 285.

39. M1, *Japjī* 27, AG, p. 6.

2. "He is from ancient time, the ageless Truth. He ever is, ever shall be. Know all else to be transient!" (ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੀ ਹੋਸੀ ਅਵਰ ਝੁਠਾ ਸਭ ਮਾਨੋ).⁴⁰
3. "The True One is from ages. He ever is, ever shall be!" (ਜੁਗ ਜੁਗ ਸਾਚਾ ਹੈ ਤੀ ਹੋਸੀ).⁴¹

One of the unique features of the Kartarpur manuscript is that the Mul Mantar and the introductory shalok at the beginning of the *Japjī* are written in a different hand, possibly by Guru Arjan himself.⁴² This was perhaps intended to follow a contemporary Muslim tradition to get the Qur'anic *fatiha* written by a revered figure at the time of writing of a new copy of the Qur'an. It appears that Guru Arjan put the Mul Mantar and the introductory couplet together, with the intention of emphasizing the unity of guruship. This may be another reason why he did not write the symbol *mahalā 1* with the title of the *Japjī*. In contrast to the Singh Sabha version of orthodoxy, there is still a tradition among certain sections of the Panth led by Sikh sants and Nihangs to regard this combined text as the complete Mul Mantar.⁴³

Finally, the first stanza of the *Japjī* that appears here has some linguistic variations. Evidently Guru Arjan modified the language of certain words (ਜੇਇ/ਜੇ, ਉਤਰੇ/ਉਤਰੀ, ਬਨਾ/ਬੰਨਾ, ਸਹੰਸ/ਸਹਸ, ਹੋਨਿ/ਹੋਹਿ, ਕਿਉ/ਕਿਵ) and replaced them with more grammatically and metrically sound constructions in order to standardize the text. For instance, the use of the verb *utarī* (ਉਤਰੀ, "be removed") fits well with the feminine noun *bhukh* (ਭੁਖ, "hunger"), whereas the use of its synonymous variant *utarai* (ਉਤਰੈ) in this case would be grammatically wrong. Similarly

40. M1, *Āsā chhant* 3, AG, p. 437.

41. M1, *Mūrū Solihe* 2, AG, p. 1022.

42. Kartarpur MS, f. 45/2. G.S. Talib has, however, given the facsimile of the Mul Mantar only as Guru Arjan's "Nishan Sahib", omitting the introductory shalok, in the beginning of his four-volume English translation of the Sikh scripture, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1984-1990). Also see, Kahn Singh Nabha, *Guruśabad ratanākar mahān koś* (1st edn. 4 vols., Patiala, 1931; 4th edn., 1 vol., Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 1981), p. 436.

43. For instance, see Giani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa, *Gurbānī pāth darāsan* (Amritsar: Bhai Mehar Singh and Sons, 6th edn., 1985; 1st edn., 1973), p. 58.

the word *jei* (ਜੇਇ, "even if") with a long syllable was replaced with its short synonym *je* (ਜੇ) to fit the metre. It should, however, be emphasized that the meaning of the text remains the same in spite of this revision.

There are numerous such examples throughout the text of the *Japji* where Guru Arjan refined the language of certain passages and polished the metre. Note the following examples:

1. ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਾ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਾ ਵਿਟੁ ਭਾਟੇ ਕਿਆ ਨਾਇ ਕਰੀ ਜੇਤੀ ਸਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਦੇਖਾ ਵਿਟੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਕਿਆ ਮਿਲੈ ਲਈ। ਮਿਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਤਨ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਟਕ ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਇਕ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਟੀ⁴⁴ ("I would bathe at a place of pilgrimage if that would please God, but without his blessing nothing is gained. Throughout all creation nothing can be gained except by means of his grace. He who accepts but a single word from the Guru shall find within himself a treasure trove of jewels").⁴⁵

In this case of the first two lines of the sixth stanza of the *Japji*, the one common word with long syllable *kiā* (ਕਿਆ) was replaced with the short one *ki* (ਕਿ) in the standard text (ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਾ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਾ ਵਿਟੁ ਭਾਟੇ ਕਿ ਨਾਇ ਕਰੀ।) to fit the metre. The words in the third line were rearranged (ਮਿਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਤਨ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਟਕ ਜੇ ਇਕ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਟੀ), and one word *miti* (ਮਿਤਿ) was replaced with *mati* (ਮਤਿ, "intellect"), which makes more sense in the present context.

2. ਜਿਉ ਜਿਉ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਉ ਕਾਰ⁴⁶ ("AS the *hukam* [God's Order] so too the deed!"). In the sixteenth line of the thirty-seventh stanza of the *Japji*, the adverbs *jiu* (ਜਿਉ, "as") and *tiu* (ਤਿਉ, "so") were replaced with their synonymous forms *jiv* (ਜਿਵ) and *tiv* (ਤਿਵ). The same kind of revision may be seen in the fifth line of the first stanza (ਕਿਉ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਉ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ, "how is Truth to be attained, how the veil of falsehood torn aside?"), where *kiu* (ਕਿਉ, "how?") is replaced with *kiv* (ਕਿਵ, "how?").

44. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 28a.

45. *TSSS*, p. 87.

46. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 32b.

3. ਤਾੜੈ ਤਾਉ ਅੰਝਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ⁴⁷ ("Love the crucible wherein nectar is poured").

The word *ambritu* (ਅੰਝਿਤੁ, "nectar") is still a part of the spoken language of the people of the Punjab, particularly among the villagers in the rural areas. Guru Arjan employed this word in the refrain of the earlier draft of his *Sukhmani*, the epitome of his works: ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਅੰਝਿਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਬਿਸਰਾਮੁ⁴⁸ ("The divine Name is sweet nectar, source of all inner peace and joy. It brings blissful peace to the hearts of Your true devotees"). In both cases, however, he substituted the synonym *ammritu* (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ) for *ambritu* (ਅੰਝਿਤੁ, "nectar") in the standard text.

All these examples clearly indicate that certain linguistic revisions were made at the time of standardization of the text of the *Japji*. In this context, christopher Shackle has aptly pointed out that the language of the *Adi Granth* allows for greater freedom conferred by the availability of many synonymous variant forms with long and short syllables which may be used to fit the metre and the rhyme.⁴⁹

Traditionally, the concluding shalok of the *Japji* is understood to be Guru Nanak's own composition. There are, however, scholars who regard Guru Angad as its real author.⁵⁰ In order to discuss the issue in detail, we must begin with its scriptural position in the earlier version of the *Adi Granth*. In the GNDU MS # 1245 the epilogue of the *Japji* is stated as follows:

ਸਲੋਕੁ

ਪਉਟੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਟੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ
ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਤੁ। ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਰੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਫੂਗਿ ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ
ਆਪਟੀ ਕੇ ਨੇਤੋ ਕੇ ਦੂਗਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ

47. Ibid., f. 33a.

48. Ibid., f. 273a.

49. C. Shackle, *An Introduction of the Sacred Language of the Sikhs* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1983), p. 160.

50. See, for instance, W.H. McLeod, *TSSS*, p. 4.

ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਹੋਰ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿਅ⁵¹

Shalok.

Air is the Guru, water the Father, and earth the mighty Mother of all. Day and night are the caring guardians, fondly nurturing all creation. In the court of God all stands revealed, the record of deeds both good and evil. As we have acted, we are recompensed, the devout brought near to the presence divine, the sinners banished afar. They who have faithfully followed the Name have run their course, their labours done. Freed are they and [many] others with them. Radiantly, Nanak, they go to glory.⁵²

It is quite evident that this text has minor linguistic variations from the standard version of the concluding shalok of the *Japji*. These can be seen in the construction of the following words in both versions: "air" (ਪਉਟ/ਪਵਟ), "day" (ਦਿਨਸੁ/ਦਿਵਸੁ) and "near" (ਨੇੜੋ/ਨੇੜੇ). Further, there is an extra word ਹੋਰ ("many") in this earlier text. In *Vār Mājh*, however, this shalok appears in exactly the same form under the symbol of Guru Angad as it is given above.⁵³ Obviously Guru Arjan revised this shalok in the final version of the *Japji*, but he retained its earlier form in *Vār Mājh*.

The inclusion of this shalok in the earlier manuscript clearly indicates that it had already acquired a distinctive liturgical function, perhaps during the Kartarpur period, and that is why it became a part of Guru Nanak's *Japji*. Its addition to the Morning Prayer was perhaps intentionally done to stress the continuity and unity of guruship. The origin of this shalok, however, may be traced back to the following verse of Guru Nanak:

ਪਉਟੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਟੀ ਖਿਤ ਜਾਤਾ ਉਦਰ ਸੰਜੋਗੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਮਾਤਾ ਰੈਟਿ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਦੁਇ

51. GNDU MS # 1245, f. 33a.

52. TSSS, p. 93.

53. M2, *Vār Mājh*, 2 (18), AG, p. 146.

ਦਾਦੀ ਦਾਇਆ ਜਗੁ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲਾਈ ਗੋਰਾ⁵⁴

[I have] realized that air is the Guru and that water is the Father. The earth is the mighty Mother of all, who has kept us in her womb. Day and night are the caring guardians fondly nurturing the whole world.

Clearly, the theme of this verse is reflected in the epilogue of the *Japjī*, and a considerable degree of verbal correspondence is also to be found in the two texts. Three possible explanations may be offered here for this similarity of language and theme. First, Guru Nanak must be regarded as the author of the concluding shalok of the *Japjī*.⁵⁵ Presumably it was introduced in Sikh worship as part of the *Japjī* by his successor, Guru Angad, who may have made it obligatory that the shalok be recited at the conclusion of all Sikh ceremonies.⁵⁶ Thus with the passage of time the shalok became popular under the symbol of Guru Angad. There are other such instances in the *Adi Granth*, when a composition is repeated at two different places under the symbols of two succeeding Gurus.⁵⁷

Second, Guru Nanak may have initiated his successor, Bhai Lehna, into the poetic skill of verse composition in the literary form of a shalok, and this training may have been a part of his designation to the office of guruship.⁵⁸ The two Gurus may have worked together on the

54. M1, *Mārū Solihē* 1, AG, p. 1021.

55. The *Puratan Janam-sakhi* version claims that this shalok was recited by Guru Nanak just before he died at Kartarpur. See Central Public Library, Patiala, *Photozincograph Facsimile of Colebrooke's manuscript of Puratan Janam-sakhi*, # 1618, pp. 437-61. Also see W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and Sikh Religion*, p. 51.

56. Traditionally this shalok is recited at the conclusion of all Sikh ceremonies in the gurdwaras. Also see, W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987), pp. 76 and 163, n. 141.

57. For instance, Guru Amar Das's shalok # 2 (11) in *Vār Srī Rāga* (AG, p. 86) is repeated under the symbol of Guru Ram Das as shalok # 28 in *śalok vārān te vadhīk* (AG, p. 1424). Similarly, Guru Ram Das's *paurī* # 12 in *Vār Gaurī* (AG, p. 306) appears in the same *vār* under the symbol of Guru Arjan as *paurī* # 31 (AG, pp. 316-17).

58. Cole has suggested that Guru Nanak may have trained his successor in verse composition at Kartarpur. See, W. Owen Cole, *Sikhism and its Indian Context 1469-1708* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984), p. 224.

text of the epilogue of the *Japji* and, accordingly, both may be regarded as its joint authors.⁵⁹

It might have been Guru Nanak's own instruction to include the shalok in the Morning Prayer. Perhaps his intention was to transfer his spiritual authority to Guru Angad through the imprimatur of the *bānī* and to institutionalize the office of Guruship to insure its survival and permanence.⁶⁰

Third, Guru Angad may have drawn inspiration from Guru Nanak's verse when he composed the concluding shalok of the *Japji*.⁶¹ The original context of its utterance may very well have been the time when Guru Angad assumed the office of guruship. Being his first utterance in the form of a *vāk* or commandment, it may have acquired its present scriptural position as a part of the Morning Prayer. Thus Guru Angad may have affixed the seal on the text of the *Japji* by including his own shalok at the end. By doing so he also could have made the point that he carried the spiritual authority of his predecessor.

It should be emphasized that it was Guru Arjan who was mainly responsible for the fixing of the text of the *Japji*. In the case of thirty-eight stanzas of Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan made some linguistic refinements through the substitution of synonyms for certain words. The basic text and its meaning, however, remain the same in spite of his revision. The earlier reading of the text points towards a strong tradition of oral transmission.

59. According to the *Miharban janam-sakhi*, it was Guru Angad who arranged the stanzas of the *Japji* in their present form at the instance of Guru Nanak at Kartarpur. Further, Guru Nanak uttered the concluding shalok of *Japji* while addressing Guru Angad. See *Janam Sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji (Pothi Harji and Pothi Chaturbhuj)*, vol. II (Amritsar: Khalsa College, 1969), p. 136.

60. A detailed analysis of the process of transferring of guruship is given by Gurudharam Singh Khalsa, "Guru Ram Das Remembered: The Fourth Guru in the Sikh Tradition" (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, 1990), pp. 49-50.

61. For other instances of similarities between the compositions of the first two Gurus, see Taran Singh, *Guru Angad Dev Ji* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1975), pp. 25-32.

2.2. *Sodar Rahiras: The Evening Prayer*

The Evening Prayer of the Sikhs, normally referred to as "Sodar Rahiras" or simply "Rahiras", is recited at sunset. The specific title *Sodar* (literally "that Door") derives its name from the first word of Guru Nanak's first hymn in *Āsā* raga: ਸੌ ਦਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੌ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੋ⁶² ("Where, O Lord, is the place where you dwell, with its door where you sit keeping watch over all"). The other title *Rahirās* (literally "Straight Path") stands for "Supplicatory Prayer", which takes its name from the fourth line of the fourth hymn of the fourth Guru:

ਰਾਗੁ ਗੁਜਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪
 ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਜਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਤਪੁਰਖਾ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰਉ ਗੁਰ ਪਾਸਿ ਹਮ ਕੀਰੇ ਕਿਰਮ
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਕਰਿ ਦਇਆ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ। ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਮੋਕਉ ਰਾਮ
 ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ। ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਸਖਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ
 ਰਹਗਾਸਿ। ਰਹਾਉ⁶³

Raga Gujari Mahala 4.

Hear my petition, true Guru and Lord, great and most wondrously wise. Grant that this worm may receive your protection, the light of your glorious Name.
Refrain. Guru and friend, grant the light of your Name, the guidance which prompts us to sing to your praise.⁶⁴

Clearly, the verse is in the form of a petitionary prayer (*binau*, "humble submission"), which is common to the North Indian devotional literary tradition. Thus the combined title "Sodar Rahiras" provides us with the meaning of a "Supplicatory Prayer offered at that Door."

In the Kartarpur manuscript the entry of the title of the Evening Order reads *sodarū*

62. M1, *Sodar Āsā* 1, AG, pp. 8–9, 347–48.

63. M4, *Gūjarī* 4/1, AG, pp. 10, 492.

64. TSSS, p. 97.

pañch śabad,⁶⁵ signifying that the title *Sodar* heads a cluster of five shabads (three of them by Guru Nanak and one each by the fourth and the fifth Gurus),⁶⁶ which constituted a liturgical order by the time the scripture was compiled in 1604 CE. It is important to note here that the Kartarpur volume does not contain the *So Purakh* text (a collection of four hymns, the first two of them by Guru Ramdas and one each by Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan respectively)⁶⁷ in its introductory section. This clearly indicates that it became part of the Evening Order after the compilation of the scripture. Commenting on its intended usage, W.H. McLeod observes:

The fact that the *So Purakh* group is distinguished in the *Adi Granth* text from the *Sodar* sequence may conceivably indicate that a separate usage was envisaged by Guru Arjan when he compiled the scripture. If so, there is no indication of what this intention might have been, nor of actual fulfilment of any such intention.⁶⁸

The element of uncertainty with respect to the intended usage of *So Purakh*, as noted by McLeod, becomes clear when we take into account its gradual introduction into Sikh liturgy. For this reason it was incorporated only later into the Sikh scripture. Guru Arjan's decision to include the *So Purakh* text in the introductory section of the *Adi Granth* would seem to reflect his stress on the personal aspect of the Supreme Being.⁶⁹ That could account for why he diverged from the normal pattern of arranging hymns of the Gurus according to the chronological sequence of their authors. He placed the two hymns of Guru Ram Das before Guru Nanak's third hymn to bring forward the title of the *So Purakh* text. Moreover, the

65. Kartarpur MS, f. 2/2.

66. The *Sodar* cluster has the following five shabads in the *Adi Granth*: (1)–(3) M1, *Āsā* 1/2/1 and 3/2, AG, pp. 8–10, 347–49; (4) M4, *Gūjarī* 4/1, AG, pp. 10, 492; and (5) M5, *Gūjarī* 5/1, AG, pp. 10, 495.

67. The *So Purakh* group has the following hymns in the *Adi Granth*: (1) M4, *Āsā* 1/2, AG, pp. 10–11, 348; (2) M4, *Āsā* 2/53, AG, pp. 11–12, 365; (3) M1, *Āsā* 3/29, AG, pp. 12, 357; and (4) M5, *Āsā* 4/29, AG, pp. 12, 378.

68. W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, p. 209, n. 18.

69. The PUM MS # 8, which is the earliest copy of the Kartarpur manuscript, does contain the liturgical text *So Purakh*. See ff. 5b–6a. It was written at a time when *So Purakh* had become part of the Evening Order, possibly during Guru Arjan's last two years of life.

sequence of the two liturgical texts does have a theological coherence, for if the *Sodar* ("That Door") is intended for petitionary prayers, then the *So Purakh* ("That Being") reveals the nature of the Supreme Being who answers those prayers.

Thus the original form of the *Rahirās* order contained only the *Sodar* text, which was popular in the Sikh community at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Bhai Gurdas testifies to the tradition of its singing (ਸੌ ਦਰੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਗਾਵੀਐ...) in Sikh worship, which originated during the Kartarpur period.⁷⁰ The later addition of the *So Purakh* text to the Evening Order was done at the instance of Guru Arjan, perhaps during the last days of his life. Traditionally, the oral recitation of *Sodar Rahirās* was followed by the singing of the first five and the last stanzas of the *Anandu* in *rāmakalī* mode, which commands a particular prominence in Sikh ritual and liturgy.⁷¹ Here it is important to note that the last stanza is Guru Arjan's contribution to Guru Amar Das's composition, which he intentionally added to the original text at the time of its standardization, thereby reinforcing the recurring theme of the unity of guruship.⁷² This portion of the *Anandu* (comprising the first five stanzas and the last) also became a part of the Evening Prayer. In the same manner Guru Arjan's *Mundāvāṇī* and his shalok *terā kītā jāto nāhīn*, with which the *Adi Granth* concludes, gradually became part of Sikh liturgy and acquired their place at the end of the *Rahirās* order.

There are other features of *Sodar Rahirās* that developed in response of the needs of the Sikh community in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. For instance, the

70. *Vārān Bhāī Gurdās* 1:38.

71. W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, p. 238, n. 359.

72. The second volume of the *Goindval pothī's* contains only thirty-eight stanzas of *Anandu*, which clearly indicates that Guru Amar Das was following the pattern of Guru Nanak's *Japjī*. The second-last stanza is believed to be Guru Ram Das's composition, whereas the last one is certainly the composition of Guru Arjan. See Gursharan Kaur Jaggi, *Bābe Mohan vālīān pothīān*, pp. 16–17. Also see Fauja Singh, *Guru Amar Das: Life and Teachings* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1979), p. 85, n. 45.

inclusion of the *Benatī Chaupai* (ਹਮਰੀ ਕਰੋ ਹਾਥ ਦੇ ਰਛਾ_ਹਮਰੇ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭੇ ਤੁਮ ਘਾਵਹੁ ਆਪੁ ਹਾਥ ਦੇ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਚਾਵਹੁ, "Extend to me your guiding hand—Let all my foes be overcome, your hand my sure defence")⁷³ and other compositions of the Dasam Granth (*Savayyā* and *Doharā*)⁷⁴ may well have been intended to boost the morale of the community in the face of adverse circumstances, when the Sikhs were fighting battles for survival against the Mughal authorities. The same concern for "protection" (*rakh* or *tek*) may be seen in the addition of Guru Arjan's *paurī* from *Vār Rāmakalī* (ਤਿਥੈ ਤੂ ਸਮਰਥੁ ਜਿਥੈ ਕੋਇ ਨਾਹਿ ਓਥੈ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਖ ਅਗਨੀ ਉਦਰ ਮਾਹਿ, "You are the mighty One, there where no other is. Even [the unborn child] is under your protection in the fire of the womb") and from his two shaloks from *Vār Gūjarī* at the end of the extended form of the *Rahirās* order.⁷⁵

It may be stated that the lengthy version of the Evening Prayer, which includes some extra material that is not to be found in the modern order, appeared in the eighteenth century. This version is still current among the followers of Sikh sants and the Nihang order of the Khalsa.⁷⁶ It is, however, important to note that the Singh Sabha scholars were mainly responsible for the fixing of a modern standard form of the *Rahirās* order.⁷⁷

3. Guru Nanak's Sūhi Hymn

One of Guru Nanak's hymns in the *Sūhī* mode, beginning with the line *kaun tarājī*

73. DG, pp. 1386–88. Translation from TSSS, p. 99.

74. DG, p. 254.

75. M5, *Vār Rāmakalī*, (9), AG, pp. 961–62 and *Vār Gūjarī*, 1–2 (1), AG, p. 517.

76. For more details on the two different versions of the Evening Prayer, see McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, pp. 208–9, n. 18.

77. See *Sikh Rahit Maryādā* (Amritsar: S.G.P.C., 15th edn., 1982), p. 8.

kavan tulā terā kavan sarāf bulāvā ("Which is the scale, which the weight-measure? Which gold-tester may I call in to test You?"), has become part of the liturgical text *Śabad Hazāre*, which is normally recited as the part of the Morning Order. It appears in volume I of the *Goindval pothīs* in a different musical mode, *parbhātī lalat*, as follows:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਸਾਦੁ

ਰਾਗ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਲਲਤ

ਕਵਟੁ ਤਰਾਜੀ ਕਵਟੁ ਤੋਲਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਟੁ ਸਰਾਫ ਬੁਲਾਵਾ ਕਵਟੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੈ ਪਹਿ
ਦੀਖਿਆ ਲੇਵਾ ਕੈ ਪਹਿ ਮੁਲੁ ਕਰਾਵਾਗਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾਗੁ ਤੂ ਜਲਿ ਬਨਿ
ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਭਰਿਪੁਰ ਲੀਟਾ ਤੂ ਆਪੇ ਸਰਬਿ ਸਮਾਣਾਗਾ ਰਹਾਉ ਮਨ ਤਰਾਜੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਤੋਲਾ
ਤੇਰੀ ਸੇਵ ਸਰਾਫ ਕਮਾਵਾਗ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਸੋ ਸਹੁ ਤੋਲੀ ਇਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਚਿਤ ਰਹਾਵਾਗ
ਆਪੇ ਕੰਡਾ ਤੋਲ ਤਰਾਜੀ ਆਪੇ ਤੋਲਣਹਾਰਾਗ ਆਪੇ ਵੇਖੇ ਆਪੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਆਪੇ ਹੈ
ਵਣਜਾਰਾਗੁ ਅੰਧੁਲਾ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਖਿਨ ਆਵੈ ਤਿਲੁ ਜਾਵੈ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ
ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕਿ ਰਹਤਾ ਕਿਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਮੁੜਾ ਪਾਵੈ॥੭੮॥⁷⁸

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

Raga Parbhati Lalat.

Which is the scale, which the weight-measure? Which gold-tester may I call
in to test You? Who is the Guru from whom I may receive instruction?
Whom do I approach to evaluate You? (1)

O Baba! I cannot know your extent. You are all-pervasive on water, land, and
on the entire surface of the earth. You are immanent in all creation. (1) *rahāu*.

I will make my *man* as the scale, my consciousness as the weights and my
dedication to your service as the gold-tester. Thus will I weigh the Lord in
my heart and restrain my mind. (2)

He himself is the scale-pointer, himself the weight-measure and the scale, and
himself the weighman. He himself is the viewer, himself the evaluator and
himself the gold-dealer. (3)

My mind, which is fluctuating at each moment, is blind, lowly and alienated.
Baba Nanak continuously abides in its company. How may this foolish mind
attain enlightenment? (4.1)

78. P.J.L. photocopy of the Jalandhar Volume, f. 83b.

A comparison of this text with the standard version of Guru Nanak's hymn in the *Adi Granth*⁷⁹ reveals certain linguistic variations. The most significant points that emerge are discussed below.

First, the symbol *mahalā* 1 is missing from the title of the hymn. This conventional symbol is not to be found at the beginning of every hymn in the *Goindval* volumes, as is the case in the *Adi Granth*. Rather, a cluster of hymns by Guru Nanak is marked together with three bars and a numeral '1' underneath them at the conclusion of the last hymn.⁸⁰ Sometimes there is a special heading, such as *Rāga Sūhī Gurū Bābe kī* (ਰਾਗ ਸੁਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬੇ ਕੀ),⁸¹ which signifies that the hymn in the *sūhī* mode is by Guru Baba (Nanak). Elsewhere, we also encounter other titles, such as *Rāga Tilāṅ Bābe Pātisāh kā* (ਰਾਗ ਤਿਲੰਗ ਬਾਬੇ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਕਾ),⁸² which suggest the use of the term *pātisāh* ("King") for the Gurus. It is, however, important to note that the use of the symbol *mahalā* had also come into vogue by the time the extant *Goindval* volumes were written.⁸³ This symbol appears to have been chosen from its contemporary usage in the Mughal empire of Akbar, where the term *mahal* was employed for a principality held by a chieftain.⁸⁴ The term *mahalā* could thus have been adapted in the spiritual domain to refer to the Sikh Gurus, who held the office of guruship. It should also be

79. M1, *Sūhī* 2, AG, pp. 730–31.

80. Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (somp.), *Bābe Mohan vālīān pothīān*, p. 15.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

82. Jalandhar MS, volume I (of *Goindval pothīs*), f. 182a. Also see Gursharan Kaur Jaggi, *Bābe Mohan vālīān pothīān*, p. 39 and Dharam Singh, "Guru Granth Sahib vich aian Sampadaki Suchanavan," *Punjabi Duniān*, vol. 39, no. 12 (Jan.–Feb.–Mar., 1988), p. 154.

83. The word *mahalā* defies a single meaning. "In its literal sense it means either 'woman' (from the Skt. *mahilā*) or 'place of alighting' (from the Arabic *mahal*). The meaning of the latter has been extended to cover 'abode', 'residence', 'mansion', 'place', and 'queen' (i.e., the occupant of the *mahal*); also *mahallā*, 'section of the town'. None of these, however, seems appropriate and the reason why the word was chosen accordingly remains a mystery." W.H. McLeod, *The B40 Janam-Sakhi* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1980), p. 3, n. 2.

84. See the list of *mahals* in tabular form, given in *Ain-i Akbari*, the manuscripts of which are held at the British Library, MSS Additional 7652 and 6552. Also see, Ahsan Raza Khan, *Chieftains in the Mughal Empire: During the Reign of Akbar* (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1977), pp. 8 and 16 and his recent paper, "Peripheral Zones in Sixteenth-Century Mughal India: A Decentric View", read at 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies, held at University of Toronto on August 19–25, 1990.

noted that the Gurus were being looked upon as "True Kings" (*sachā pātīśāh*) by the Sikh community, since by that time the status of Guru was supplemented by the attributes of royalty. The Sikhs started to venerate the Gurus in a most dignified way, a way which was marked by the symbols of royalty such as the use of a canopy, a throne and the waving of a whisk over their heads.⁸⁵ The conventional use of the symbol *mahalā* in the title of Gurus' hymns, therefore, may even signal a new development in Sikh self-understanding with respect to the status of the Guru.

Secondly, the hymn was originally meant to be sung in the measure *parbhāī lalā* in the worship context. But Guru Arjan placed this hymn under the *sūhī* mode, which suggests that he had a more pressing thematic concern in mind. What could that concern be? It is noteworthy that a great deal of marital imagery and themes are to be found in the *sūhī* raga. This raga in particular places much emphasis on the themes of "husband-wife" relationship, where "husband" (*sahu* or *pir*) stands for the Supreme Being and "wife" (*dhanu* or *suhāganu*) for soul in the spiritual sense.⁸⁶ Guru Ram Das's wedding hymn (*lāvānī*) is also to be found in the *sūhī* mode in the *Adi Granth*.⁸⁷ The central theme in Guru Nanak's hymn is also focused on the word *sahu* [used here in the general sense of "Lord", also usable in the more specific sense of "Husband"] (ਘਟ ਹੀ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਸੋ ਸਹੁ ਤੋਲੀ... "Thus will I weigh the Lord in my heart..."), which fits very well in the total context of *sūhī* raga.

Thirdly, there are certain linguistic variations in the hymn which are different from

85. See, for instance, panegyrics by the bards in praise of Gurus, particularly by bard Haribans, *Savayye Mahale Pañjaveñ Ke* 1-2, AG, p. 1409. The later usage of *Pātīśāhī 10* for the compositions of Guru Gobind Singh in the *Dasam Granth* confirms our interpretation.

86. Taran Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī dā Sāhitak Itihās* (Amritsar: Fakir Singh and Sons, 1963), pp. 264-66.

87. M4, *Sūhī Chhant* 2, AG, pp. 773-74.

their synonymous counterpart in the standard text. For instance, the word *kaun* is written as *kavanu* (ਕਉਣ/ਕਵਣ, "which"), *tulā* as *tolā* (ਤੁਲਾ/ਤੋਲਾ, "weight-measure"), *dekhai* as *vekhai* (ਦੇਖੇ/ਵੇਖੇ, "to view") and *kiukari* as *kin bidhi* (ਕਿਉਕਰਿ/ਕਿਨ ਬਿਧਿ, "how or by which means?"). Similarly the first line in the refrain of the standard version, *mere lāl jiu terā antu nā jānā* (ਮੇਰੇ ਲਾਲ ਜੀਉ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ, "I cannot know your extent, my Dear Beloved!) is written in the earlier version as *terā bābā antu nā jānā* (ਤੇਰਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ, "O Baba! I cannot know your extent"). The replacement of the word *bābā* ("Father") with *mere lāl* ("My Dear Beloved") is quite significant since its tone fits very well in the context of the *sūhī* mode. The use of honorific particle *jiu* in referring to the divine Beloved (ਮੇਰੇ ਲਾਲ ਜੀਉ, "My Dear Beloved") acts as a singing device, which makes the hymn more musical. Evidently Guru Arjan's literary talent was at work behind this whole process of refinement.

Finally, the signature line of the earlier version of the hymn contains the personal name "Baba Nanak". The title "Baba" ("Father") is suggestive of a most revered figure in the Punjabi society of the time. Because of his piety and humility, Guru Nanak was known as "Baba Nanak" during his lifetime, and the same epithet is widely used in the *janam-sakhis*. In the standard text, however, Guru Arjan omitted the personal title "Baba" and retained the name "Nanak" [perhaps for the sake of uniformity]. By his time the name "Nanak" had become a symbol of authority in the compositions of all Sikh Gurus. This point may be further elaborated with the help of the following citation:

When one looks at the Sikh scriptures one finds that the name Nanak denotes not just one man but a class: all the gurus in his lineage who composed poetry that was collected in the *Adi Granth*. They all sign their poems, as is characteristic in the *pad* genre that is the backbone of the *Adi Granth* and most medieval north Indian devotional poetry, and remarkably, they all sign their poems with a single name—Nanak's. (Divisions in the text indicate which "Nanak" is which.) So Nanak, the guru, is not just a person but a principle.⁸⁸

Thus the name "Nanak" stands for a "principle" rather than a "person". Throughout the *Adi Granth* it serves as a symbol of authority rather than an indicator of an individual Guru's personal identity. The latter is marked by the symbol *mahalā* in the title of the composition. The symbol "Nanak" also implies the continuity of the mission as well as the supreme position of Guru Nanak in Sikh self-understanding.⁸⁹

4. Guru Arjan's Tilang Hymns

It has been suggested that the *tilang* raga has a special appropriateness for the hymns associated with Islam. A great deal of Persian and Islamic loan-words are to be found in this raga.⁹⁰ It appears that the *tilang* raga was quite popular among the Muslim singers (particularly the Sufis or *dervishes*) of the Punjab in the sixteenth century.⁹¹ There are only five hymns of

88. John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 75. Also see John Hawley, "Author and Authority in Bhakti Poetry," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 47.2 (1988), pp. 275-76 and 287-88: "The author's name is no mere footnote. It anchors the poem to life, a personality, even a divinity that gives the poem its proper weight and tone. By providing this tie, the signatures in bhakti poems communicate more than authorship. They lend these poems authority and conviction, and they establish an aura in which the act of listening can be as intense as the speech."

89. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History* (Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1969), p. 290: "The use of the epithet Nanak by the successors of Guru Nanak in their compositions is no mere imitation of the founder. The continuity of the mission as well as the supreme position of Guru Nanak is implied in a most effective way in the use of this epithet."

90. C. Shackle, "Approaches to Persian Loans in the *Ādi Granth*", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1978), 41(1): 81-83.

91. Piara Singh Padam, *Sri Gurū Granth Prakāś* (Patiala: Kalam Mandir, 2nd ed, 1990; 1st ed, 1977), p. 278.

Guru Arjan in this mode in the standard version of the *Adi Granth*.⁹² It is interesting to note that the Guru Nanak Dev University manuscript (GNDU MS # 1245) provides earlier forms of these hymns, all of which were revised in the final version of the Kartarpur volume. They illuminate both the original context of their first utterance and their subsequent standardization in the final text. The following concerns are noteworthy in the redaction process at work in the revision of these hymns.

4.1. Fixing of the sequence of verses in a hymn

In the standard version of the *Adi Granth*, the second shabad of Guru Arjan in the *tilang* mode begins with the line: "There is no other apart from You" (ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੁਜਾ ਨਾਗੀ ਕੋਇ).⁹³ In its earlier form, however, the hymn begins as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਸਭ ਉਪਰਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੇਕ ਤੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੁ ਰਹਾਉ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੁਜਾ
ਨਾਗੀ ਕੋਇ ਤੂ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ ਤੇਰਾ ਜੋਰੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਮਨਿ ਟੇਕ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ
ਜਪਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੁ॥⁹⁴

Tilang Mahala 5

Surpassing all, O Supreme Lord, is your support and succour. *rahāu*.

There is no other apart from You. Whatever You will, O Creator Lord, comes to pass. Your power is the *man's* only support. Contemplate ever and ever, Nanak, the One [and the only Lord] (I)–

The comparison of this text with its standard form clearly indicates that Guru Arjan changed the order of the verse in the *rahāu* (literally "pause" or "stop"), which normally represents the central idea of the hymn and which is used as a refrain (or *sathāi*) in a musical performance.

92. MS, *Tilang* 1–5, AG, pp. 723–24.

93. MS, *Tilang* 2, AG, pp. 723–24.

94. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 681b.

In this instance, he fixed it after the first verse (or *antarā*) of the hymn. It may also indicate that each verse of a hymn must be understood as an independent unit in itself. This seems to be the case especially in instances where there is no thematic development of an idea over the different verses of a hymn.⁹⁵ It should also be emphasized here that this earlier form of Guru Arjan's *tilaṅg* hymn confirms an important fact concerning the oral transmission of *bāṇī* in the Sikh community. The hymns of the Gurus were primarily intended to be sung in a congregational setting. Thus this earlier text was certainly popular in the *kirtan* ("devotional singing") sessions during Sikh worship.

Although the *rahāu*-verse normally comes after the first verse of a hymn, this convention is not followed universally in the *Adi Granth*. For instance, the opening verse of Guru Arjan's fifth hymn in *tilaṅg* mode reads: "O wise Master! [let each] contemplate in his heart how [You], the True King, are the Liberator, who comes to abide in the *mon* and body through love" (ਮੀਰਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਦਿਲ ਸੋਚਾ ਮੁਹਬਤੋ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਬਸੈ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹ ਬੰਦੀ ਮੋਚਾ ਰਹਾਉ).⁹⁶ Guru Arjan fixed this *rahāu*-verse right at the beginning in the standard text. It had been written after the first verse in the earlier draft. The following is the earlier reading:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਦੀਦਨੇ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਇਸਕਾ ਮੋਚਾ ਪਾਕ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰੁ ਤੂ ਖੁਦੁ ਖਸਮੁ
ਵਡਾ ਅਤੋਲਾਖਾ ਮੀਰਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਦਿਲ ਸੋਚਾ ਮੁਹਬਤੋ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਬਸੈ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਬੰਦੀ
ਮੋਚਾ ਰਹਾਉ⁹⁷

Tilang Mahala 5.

There can be no price on beholding the Lord. You yourself are the holy
Nourisher, vastly beyond all measuring. (1)

95. Mukund Lath, "Bhajan as Song: Towards an Oral Stemma of Nāmdev's *padas*", in Monika Thiel-Horstmann, ed., *Bhakti in Current Research, 1979-1982* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1983), pp. 231-32.

96. MS, *Tilāṅg 5*, AG, p. 724.

97. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 682b.

O wise Master! (let each) contemplate in his heart how (You), the True Lord,
are the liberator, who comes to abide in the *man* and body through love.
rahāu

The hymn appears to have been addressed to a Muslim nobleman, probably the Nawab of Lahore,⁹⁸ who was invited to follow the path of love as enunciated by the Guru. Apart from the position of the *rahāu*-verse, this text contains the word *sāhibu* ("Lord") instead of *śāh* ("King") of the final form, which was introduced by Guru Arjan for metrical purposes. These minor textual variations, which do not alter the original meaning at all, can best be explained as the result of liberty taken by the Sikh musicians in singing.⁹⁹

42. Linguistic modifications of certain words in a hymn

In the standard version, Guru Arjan's third hymn in *tilāṅg* raga begins with the *rahāu*-verse: "Gracious, gracious is the Lord. My Lord is gracious indeed. He bestows bounties on all creatures" (ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਜੀਅ ਸਗਲ ਕਉ ਦੇਇ ਦਾਨੁ ਰਹਾਉ).¹⁰⁰ Its earlier form, however, reads as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਹੰਉ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੁ ਸਗਲ ਜੀਆ ਕੰਉ ਦੇਹਿਗਾ ਦਾਨੁ
ਰਹਾਉ। ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਭੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀਆ ਤਓ ਨਓ ਰਾਖੇਗਾ ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਪੇਦਾਇਸ ਤੂ
ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਸੋਈ ਕਰੈਗਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ
ਮਾਲਕੁ ਦਿਲਾ ਕਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰਾ॥¹⁰¹

Gracious, gracious is the [divine] Beloved. I sacrifice myself to him who bestows bounties on all creatures. *rahāu*.

O creature of God! why do you waver? The Protector shall protect you. He who has created you, shall preserve you too. (1)

98. See *Śabadārth*, vol. II, p. 724.

99. M. Lath, "Bhajan as Song", p. 230.

100. M5, *Tilāṅg* 3, AG, p. 724.

101. GNDU, MS # 1245, ff. 681b-682a.

He who has created the whole world, looks after it as well. Present in every heart, the Lord is the heart's [only] true Guardian. (2).

The comparative examination of this text with its standard version reveals certain linguistic variations. For instance, the first line in the standard version, *miharvānu sāhibu miharvānu*, is written in the earlier text here as *miharvānu piārā miharvānu*; that is, in the final text the word *sāhibu* ("Lord") replaces *piārā* ("Beloved"). The phrase *haun kurbānu* ("I sacrifice myself") was dropped from the second line. In its stead a new line, *sāhibu merā miharvānu* ("My Lord is Gracious"), was added, putting emphasis upon the divine nature of graciousness. The remainder of the *rahāu*-verse was recast as *jīa sagal kau dehi dānu* ("He bestows bounties on all creatures") to create better metrical and rhyming effect.

The language of the first verse of the hymn was modified in the final text (ੜੁ ਕਾਹੇ ਭੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਰਾਖੇਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਖੇਦਾਇਸ ਤੁ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ॥) without changing the original meaning. In the first place, the musical filler *re* (ਰੇ, "O") is replaced with the personal pronoun *tūn* (ਤੂੰ, "you") in order to establish personal contact with the audience. Secondly, the short phrase *tau nau* (ਤਓ ਨਓ, "to you") is replaced by a singular oblique pronoun *tudhu* (ਤੁਧੁ, "you") to shorten the syllables for metrical purposes. Thirdly, the word *rākhanahārā* (ਰਾਖਨਹਾਰਾ, "Protector") is replaced with *sirjanhāru* (ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ, "Creator") to change the end-rhyme. Similarly, minor linguistic modifications were made in other verses of the hymn to standardize the text. It should, however, be emphasized here that this revision is in keeping with both the rhythm and the meaning of the hymn.

The fourth hymn of Guru Arjan in the *tilāṅg* raga begins with the line: "O Creator! [I

am] yearning [for You] through [my love for your] creation" (ਕਰਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਮੁਸਤਾਕੁ).¹⁰² The complete hymn in its earlier form reads as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਕਰਤਾ ਕੁਦਰਤੇ ਮੁਸਤਾਕੁ ਦੀਨ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਏਕੁ ਤੂ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਖਲਕ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਪਾਕੁ ਰਹਾਉ।
 ਖਿਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਥਾਪਿ ਉਥਾਪਦਾ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਰੂਪੁ। ਕਵਟੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਚਲਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੇ
 ਮਹਿ ਦੀਪਾਯ। ਖੁਦੁ ਖਸਮ ਖਲਕ ਜਹਾਨੁ ਅਲਹੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਖੁਦਾਇ। ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਤੂਝੈ
 ਅਰਾਧਤੇ ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਜਾਗਿਗ। ਅਜਰਾਈਅਈਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ ਜਿਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਧਾਗੁ। ਗੁਨਹ
 ਓਨ ਕੇ ਅਫੂ ਜੋ ਜਨ ਦੇਖਤੇ ਦੀਦਾਰੁਗੁ। ਦੁਨੀਆ ਚੀਜ ਫਲਹਾਲ ਸਗਲੀ ਸਚੁ ਸੁਖ
 ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ। ਮਿਲਿ ਪੀਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਸਦਾ ਏਕਸੁ ਗਾਉ॥੧॥¹⁰³

Tilang Mahala 5.

Creator! [I am] yearning [for You] through [my love for your] creation. You are the only One [who is my true support] in both this world and the next, [even though] You remain apart from all your creation. *rahāku*.

You have the power to create and destroy in an instant! Wondrous is your form! Who can know your wonders? You are like a Lamp in the darkness. (1)

You yourself are the Master of creation, the gracious Allah, the Lord (*khudā'i*). How can they who remember You day and night go to hell? (2)

The people who take shelter with You shall find the angel of death ("Azrael") friendly. Those servants who crave for your vision (*dīdār*) will have their sins forgiven. (3)

All the objects of the world are short-lived. Your Name [brings] to all true joy. By meeting with the Pir, Nanak, this realization has come: that one should ever sing [the glory of] the One Lord. (4)

Evidently, Guru Arjan made an exceptionally free use of Persian and Islamic loan-words in this hymn. Particularly the use of such poetic items as *musatāku* (<*muṣṭāq*, "yearning") and *dīdār* ("vision of the beloved") reminds one of the typical vocabulary of Muslim lyrical poetry.

102. MS, *Tilang* 4, AG, p. 724.

103. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 682a.

with its extensive debt to the language of the courtly (and mystical) *ghazal*.¹⁰⁴ The major points that emerge from the discussion of this hymn are as follows:

First, Guru Arjan modified the language of the *rahāu*-verse through the substitution of the words *karate* ("O Creator!") and *kudartī* ("with the creation") for *karatā* ("Creator") and *kudarate* ("creation"), in order to make grammatically sound constructions. For instance, the Punjabi word *karate* (ਕਰਤੇ, "O Creator!") is used as a noun in the vocative case when addressing Akal Purakh directly, which shows an intimate relationship with the divine. Similarly the word *kudartī* (ਕੁਦਰਤੀ, "with the creation") is employed to express an intimate relationship with the creation. The phrase *acharaju terā rūpu* ("wondrous is your form") in the first verse is replaced with *acharaj tere rūp* ("wondrous are your forms") to get the plural expression for stressing the nature of divine immanence. The interrogative pronoun *kavanu* ("who?") is replaced by *kaunu* to fit the metre. Similarly, the phrase *dinu raini tujhai arādete* ("[they who] remember You day and night") is replaced with *dinasu raini ji tudhu arādhe* ("[he who] remembers You day and night") to create a singular form of the expression.

Second, Guru Arjan employed the Islamic words for the Supreme Being, such as the Arabic *alahu* (<*allāh*) and Persian *khudāi* (<*khudā'i*) to address his Muslim audience. He also refers to *ajarāīlu* ("Azrael"), the angel of death from the Islamic celestial hierarchy. The obscure phrase *ajarāīairu bande* (ਅਜਰਾਈਅਈਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ)¹⁰⁵ in the early text, which must have been popular in the village communities, was replaced by *ajarāīlu yāru bande* (ਅਜਰਾਈਲੁ ਯਾਰੁ ਬੰਦੇ, "Azrael is that person's friend"), which makes more sense in the present context. Further, the use of such

104. C. Shackle, "Approaches to Persian Loans in the *Ādi Granth*," pp. 86–87.

105. If the canon of unusual readings (*lectiones arduae*) is applied to determine the age of the document, then GNDU MS # 1245, will certainly come out to be much older than the Kartarpur manuscript.

words as *aphū* (<*afū*, "be forgiven"), *gunaha* (<*gunāh*, "sins") and *dojaki* (<*dozakh*, "hell") reflect the concern of contemporary Islam with hell-fire eschatology. Guru Arjan addressed this theme because his Muslim audience must have been deeply concerned with the forgiveness of "sins" to escape the punishment of hell. He offered them a way out of their predicament in the prescription of *nām-simaran* (ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਟਿ ਜਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਅਰਾਧੇ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਜਾਇ, "How can he who remembers You day and night go to hell?"). In fact, he was inviting them to follow the path of the Guru by addressing them in their own terms.

Third, the Persian loan-word *philahāl* (<*fil-hāl*, "transitory") links the meaning of the hymn to the *memento mori* theme of the Punjabi Sufi literature, which stresses the transitoriness of worldly things.¹⁰⁶ The most significant point in Guru Arjan's revision of this hymn, however, can be seen in substituting in the final text the phrase *gur mili nānak būjhiā* (ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਿਆ, "By meeting with the Guru, Nanak, this realization has come") for *mili pīr nānak būjhiā* (ਮਿਲਿ ਪੀਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਿਆ, "By meeting with the Pir, Nanak, this realization has come"). It suggests that the hymn was originally directed at a Muslim audience, for which the role of the "Pir" would be a relevant feature of spiritual development. It also provides the most revealing clue to Guru Arjan's understanding that ultimately it is not the "Pir" but the "Guru" who is the real source of all spiritual knowledge. Here one can see an explicit claim made for the supremacy of the way of the Guru.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan frequently employed Persian and Islamic loan-words to reach out to his Muslim audience, but the truth which he wished to express was his own. The content of all the *tilaṅg* hymns that we have examined in this section is entirely Sikh. This

106. For more details, see C. Shackle, "Approaches to the Persian Loans in the *Ādi Granth*", pp. 83 and 89.

point is well elaborated in Christopher Shackle's analysis of various linguistic usages in the *Adi Granth*:

It would, in fact, be more appropriate to speak of Guru Arjan absorbing a particular style of local Muslim poetry, in order to express his own ideas, and thereby quite properly annexing its implicit claim to be the unchallengeable local medium for the expression of a uniquely valid universal revelation.¹⁰⁷

Guru Arjan's employment of the local style of Muslim poetry and his usage of Islamic words in some of his hymns were clearly intended to make a universal claim for the spiritual authority of the guruship which would embrace the Muslim audience of the countryside.¹⁰⁸ Further, the most important finding that emerges from this analysis is that Guru Arjan was self-consciously involved in highlighting the distinctive identity of Sikhism. It was certainly the case that during his tenure in the office of guruship the Sikh Panth was undergoing a process of crystallization.¹⁰⁹

43. *Change of the musical mode of a hymn*

The Guru Nanak Dev University manuscript (GNDU MS # 1245) contains a hymn in the *tilāṅ* raga, the revised text of which is to be found in the *sūhī* mode in the standard

107. C. Shackle, "The South-Western Style in the *Guru Granth Sahib*", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. V, No. 1 (1978), p. 83. Also see, "Approaches to the Persian Loans in the *Ādi Granth*," pp. 87-96.

108. Christopher Shackle mentions a class of Muslim poets (*shā'ir*), drawn from the Sufi circles, which constituted the elite of the countryside. The Guru's appeal was naturally directed at the Muslim audience of the *shā'ir*. See C. Shackle, "Early Muslim vernacular poetry in the Indus valley: its contexts and its character," (a paper presented in the seminar on Regional Varieties of Islam in Premodern India [prior to 1750], University of Heidelberg, 1989), p. 13.

109. This thesis is advanced in Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Crystallization of Religious Communities in Mughul India", *On Understanding Islam: Selected Studies* (The Hague, The Netherlands: Mouton Publishers, 1981), p. 181: "Nānak could well have lived the life he did and preached the message that he preached, with yet nothing for us to call Sikhism emerging in Indian history, if later generations had not produced an Arjan to crystallize his teaching and his followers into a formal structure, and had not produced many thousands of Panjābis choosing to respond to Arjan's move, and choosing to respond to Nānak's voice in the particular way that Arjan proposed, rather than in some other way."

version of the *Adi Granth*.¹¹⁰The earlier reading is as follows:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫।

ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ। ਆਖਾ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜੀਅ ਕੀ ਗੁਰੁ
ਸਜਣੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ। ਸੋਈ ਦਸਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੜਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਅਨਤ ਨ ਕਤਹੂ ਜਾਇ। ਹਉ
ਏਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੈ ਕੂੰ ਡੇਵਸਾ ਮੈ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਦੇਇ ਬਤਾਇ। ਹਉ ਆਇਆ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਚਲਿ ਕੈ ਮੈ
ਤਕੀ ਤਉ ਸਰਨਾਇ। ਮੈ ਆਸਾ ਰਖੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਮੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਭੋ ਦੁਖੁ ਗੰਵਾਇ। ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ
ਚਲੇ ਭਾਈਏ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ। ਤਿਆਗਿ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਦੂਜਾ
ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸੜਾ ਨੰਗ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ। ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ
ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ। ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਖਜਾਨਾ ਬਖਸਿਆ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀਆ
ਪਸਾਉ। ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਤਿਸਨਾ ਭੁਖੜੀ ਹਉ ਰਜਾ ਤਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਇ।¹¹¹

Tilang Mahala 5.

Whichever disciple of the Guru I meet I bow low to touch his feet. I state my heart's agony to him so that he may help me meet my Guru and friend. I seek instructions from him to control my endlessly straying mind. I will sacrifice my *man* to you, if you show me the true path. I have come from far to seek your protection. I cherish the hope in my heart that you will remove all my sufferings. Follow this true path, my brother, and do the bidding of the Guru. Renounce the [evil] inclinations of your mind and refrain from loving the other. In this way you will have the holy vision of the Lord, and no calamity will come to you. I myself do not know how to speak, I have only conveyed the order [of the Lord]. The Lord has blessed me with the treasure of devotion and it is this which the slave Nanak celebrates. I am now completely satiated and my craving no longer exists.

The comparative analysis of this text with its standard form in the *sūhī* mode reveals a number of interesting points. First, there is a marginal note in a different hand on folio 682a of the GNDU manuscript (ਸੁਹੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ, "It is taken to :he *sūhī* mode") to clarify that this hymn is repeated in the *sūhī* mode on folio 729b, with the addition of the first line appearing at the end as well. This editorial comment clearly indicates that the decision to put this hymn in the *sūhī* raga was taken by the time of the composition of the earlier draft of the *Adi*

110. M5, *Sūhī* 3, AG, p. 763.

111. GNDU, MS # 1245, ff. 682a-682b.

Granth.

Second, the reason for fixing this hymn in the *sūhī* raga is based on thematic consideration. Even in the GNDU manuscript its second appearance is entitled *guṇavanti* ("virtuous woman"), which fits very well in the sequence of the preceding two hymns of Guru Nanak entitled *kuchajjī* ("slovenly or uncultured woman") and *suchajjī* ("skilful or cultured woman") respectively.¹¹² Here, one can easily discern the stepwise progression of the theme of spiritual development of a woman-soul yearning for the union with her divine Husband, which is the characteristic feature of the *sūhī* raga. In the first hymn Guru Nanak describes poignantly the state of human stubbornness through the traditional image of the improvident girl (*kuchajjī*), who is totally involved in her material possessions (*suinā rupā raṅgulā...*, "gold, silver and things of pleasure...") and who makes no provision for her future happiness. He then describes the faithful human response to the divine Beloved in his second hymn through the symbol of a careful and loving bride (*suchajjī*), who is fully devoted to her husband by submitting to his will (*bhāṇā*, a key-word of the whole hymn). In the third hymn Guru Arjan carries this theme of loving devotion further by stressing the qualities of sweetness and humility (*nivi nivi lāgauṅ pāi jīu*, "I bow low to touch his feet") through the symbol of a virtuous bride (*guṇavanti*), who is endowed with all the virtues.

Third, the linguistic examination of the cluster of three hymns (that is, two hymns by Guru Nanak and one by Guru Arjan in this context) clearly suggests that Guru Arjan had very carefully reworked the poetic genre of *kāfī* and the South-Western style (*ḍakkhanī*), which was

112. GNDU, MS # 1245, ff. 728b-729b. Also see AG, pp. 762-763.

given definitive form by Guru Nanak himself.¹¹³ The expression *hauñ ehū manu tai kīñ devasā* (ਹੰਉ ਏਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੈ ਕੁੰ ਡੇਵਸਾ, "I will sacrifice my *man* to you") clearly points towards the *ḍakkhaṇī* style, although the language is not always maintained throughout Guru Arjan's hymn. It is quite possible that the hymn was originally intended for a South-Western audience of Multan area.

Fourth, the first line of the final reading is as follows: ਜੋ ਦੀਸੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ ("Whichever disciple of the Guru I meet I bow to him to touch his feet"). Here one can easily see the addition of an oblique pronoun *tisu* ("him"), and an honorific particle *jīu* (which may refer to a highly respected person in this context) at the end, which is intended as a musical device. There is also the repositioning of individual words in the phrase *jo gur dīsai sikkharā* (ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ). Similarly, there are some minor linguistic improvisations to be found in other lines of the final reading. For instance, the following three stages may be discerned in this process of linguistic revision:

1. ਤਿਆਗੇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ¹¹⁴
2. ਤਿਆਗੇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਾਵੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ¹¹⁵
3. ਤਿਆਗੇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਜੀਉ। ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਾਵੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ ਜੀਉ¹¹⁶

113. The label *ḍakkhaṇā* (in place of the usual *shalok*) in the *Adi Granth* is not a separate metrical category, but rather an indication that the verse is written in a language intended to reflect that of the south, as defined from the Amritsar area, particularly the Multan area. It is therefore quite appropriate to call this idiom the *ḍakkhaṇī* style. See C. Shackle, "Early Muslim vernacular poetry in the Indus valley," p. 13. For more details on this style, see his "The South-Western Style in the *Guru Granth Sahib*", pp. 69–87.

114. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 682b.

115. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 729b.

116. *Śabadārath*, vol. III, p. 763.

Clearly, these linguistic modifications at different stages of textual transmission are meant to provide grammatically sound constructions and to create better metrical and rhythmic effects. For instance, the addition of *jīu* in the final text increases the singability of the hymn and adds "sweetness" to its tonal effect.¹¹⁷ It should, however, be emphasized that the original meaning of the text remains intact in spite of this linguistic revision.

Finally, the most significant point about the standard version is that the first line is repeated at the end as well. This is clearly intended to put emphasis on the veneration of the worthy "Sikh of the Guru" (*gur sikhara*), who must have been responsible for bringing people into the Sikh fold.¹¹⁸ In particular, the original form of the line (ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਦੀਸੈ ਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ) is retained in this case to show the identity of the role of the Guru and that of a Sikh. There is another such instance in the *Bāvan Akharī* of Guru Arjan, where the opening shalok is also repeated at the end of the composition.¹¹⁹ An editorial note by Guru Arjan, which is found in the final version of the *Adi Granth*, instructs the reader to recite specifically the opening shalok at the end of the composition as well, since it is recorded in both places.¹²⁰ G.S. Talib has suggested that the opening shalok is repeated at the close of the

117. The word *jīu* was also added to Guru Nanak's preceding two hymns in order to achieve uniformity in rhyme and metre. Earlier readings of these hymns do not contain this word in the end-rhyme. See GNDU, MS # 1245, ff. 729a–729b.

118. See Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature*, p. 145: "In the compositions of Guru Arjan, we come across the figure of worshipable Sikh who converted men to Sikhism."

119. M5, *Gaurī Bāvan Akharī*, AG, pp. 250–262. It is a composition on "Fifty-two Letters," the traditional number of Sanskrit vowels, single consonants and diphthongs.

120. *Ibid.*, pp. 250 and 262. The editorial note reads:

ਦੇਹੁ ਸਲੋਕੁ ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਪੜਟਾਹੁ

"Read this shalok at the beginning and at the end." In the earlier draft of the *Adi Granth*, however, the opening shalok is not repeated at the end. See GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 272b. Obviously the decision to repeat the first shalok at the end of the composition was taken by Guru Arjan at the time of preparing the final text of the *Adi Granth*.

composition because "it has an incantatory quality as a mantra".¹²¹ The thematic analysis of this shalok in the total context of the *Bāvan Akhari*, however, reveals that by repeating it Guru Arjan put emphasis on the reality of the divine Guru (*gurdev*, the key-word of the opening shalok), in contrast with the unreality of worldly relations such as father, mother, friends and so on.¹²²

In concluding the discussion of this section, it should be emphasized that Guru Arjan even revised his own compositions in the final text of the *Adi Granth*. The language and the style of the *tilang* hymns clearly presuppose Muslim audiences, and it is quite possible that a significant number of Muslims were attracted to the Sikh faith due to its universal appeal and significance.¹²³ Further, the organization of the hymns in the final text was primarily based on thematic considerations rather than strictly on musical mode.

5. Guru Arjan's Ramakali Hymn

One of the textual problems of the *Adi Granth* that has drawn a great deal of scholarly attention in the Kartarpur-Banno debate is related to a hymn by Guru Arjan in *the*

121. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, vol. I, p. 508, n.**.

122. Traditionally, the *Bāvan Akhari* is recited at the time of the death of a dear one to console the bereaved family members. The repetition of the opening shalok awakens people to the reality that the Eternal Guru is the only true support at the beginning as well as at the end of life.

123. The conversion of Muslims to the Sikh faith was one of the charges laid against Guru Arjan by Emperor Jahangir in his *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*. See Ganda Singh, *Guru Arjan's Martyrdom: Re-interpreted* (Patiala: Guru Nanak Mission, 1969), pp. 10-15.

rāmakalī mode.¹²⁴ As mentioned in the second chapter of this study, only two lines of the hymn are to be found in the manuscripts of both the Kartarpur and the Lahore traditions.¹²⁵ Even in the Kanpur manuscript (1642 CE), which is claimed to be the first copy of the *Adi Bir* prepared by Bhai Banno, the additional twenty-two lines of the hymn were added later on in a smaller hand.¹²⁶ This was intentionally done at a time when the volume was converted into the Banno text.

In order to understand the problem of the Banno recension, we must examine Guru Arjan's *Rāmakalī* hymn in its original context. On folio 703/1 of the Kartarpur MS the two lines read as follows:

ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫
 ਰਟ ਝੁੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਖਿਆਵਗੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ
 ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਗੁ

Raga Ramakali Mahala 5.

Sing the trilling tunes in the [dance]-field, my sister-friends, by meditating on the One Lord. Accomplish your heart's desires, my sister-friends, by serving the True Guru.

The opening words, *raṅ jhūñjjhanarā* ("trilling tunes [sung in the dance]-field"), indicate the setting of a wedding scene at which Punjabi girls were accustomed to gather together in a circle to sing wedding songs. Guru Arjan may have uttered these aphoristic sayings on the happy occasion of a marriage, intending them to be developed into a complete hymn later on. As the opportunity for its completion never came, only the two lines, followed by a blank space, stand recorded in the Kartarpur manuscript. Because there is no mention of this hymn in the index

124. M5, *Rāga Rāmakalī*, AG, p. 927. A single couplet stands recorded in the standard version of the *Adi Granth* after *Chhant* 4 and before Guru Arjan's composition on the six seasons (*Ruti*) of the Indian calendar.

125. See chapter 2, pp. 31, 36, 40, 43, 45 and 49.

126. See chapter 2, pp. 50-1.

of this volume, and because the entry of the couplet (though made by the same scribe) was done with a different pen, we may conclude that the couplet was introduced at some time after the compilation of the *Adi Granth* in 1604 CE and before Guru Arjan's death in 1606 CE. This is also confirmed by the fact that this couplet (or the complete hymn) is not to be found in the earlier draft of the *Adi Granth*.¹²⁷

The complete hymn, along with the additional lines, is to be found in the *Banno* version of the *Adi Granth*. It reads as follows:

ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਰਟ ਝੁੰਝਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ
ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਅਨੁਪੁ ਬਾਲਕੁ ਜੰਮਿਆ
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਭੋਜਿ ਦੀਆ ਚਰ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਡ ਪੁੰਨਿਆ ਮਹਾ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਦਾ
ਮੰਗਲ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਹੋ ਜਨੁ ਕਰੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਫਲ ਜਾਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਧਿਆਵਹੋ॥
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਇਕੜ ਕਰੇ ਪਰਵਾਰੁ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਵੰਡਿਅਹੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰੇ ਜਿਤੁ ਸਭੁ
ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਇਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਹਿ ਕੈ ਵੰਡ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਗਲ ਭਾਉ ਦਿਵਾਇਆ ਕਰਮਾ ਉਪਰਿ
ਵੰਡ ਹੋਈ ਖਾਲੀ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਇਆ ਸਭ ਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਭਈ ਇਕੜਾ ਮਹਾ ਅਨੰਦ
ਸਮਾਇਆ ਬਿਨਵੰਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਮ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆਗਾ ਗੀਤੀ ਸਗਲ
ਕਰਾਈਆ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ ਭਦਟ ਉਟੇਤੁ ਕਰਾਇਆ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਜਪਾਈ।
ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਜਪਿਆ ਸੁਖ ਦਾਤਾ ਚਟਸਾਲ ਬਾਲਕ ਪਾਇਆ ਸਗਲ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ
ਪੜਿਆ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਮਨਾਇਆ ਜੇਵਟਵਾਰੁ ਨਾਮੁਕਰਟ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਈ।
ਬਿਨਵੰਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੁਤੁ ਅੰਤਿ ਸਖਾਈਯਾ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਤ ਇਕੜ ਕਰੇ
ਬਾਲਕ ਕਰਹੁ ਮੰਗੇਵਾ ਲਧੇ ਸੁਜਨ ਜਨ ਕੁੜਮ ਭਲੇ ਵੰਡਿਅਹੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਮੇਵਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ
ਪਾਇਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਸਗਲ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਿਟਾਇਆ ਸਗਟੁ ਲਿਖਾਇਆ ਧੁਰਹੁ
ਆਇਆ ਵੀਆਹੁ ਕੁੜਮਿ ਦਿਵਾਇਆ ਅਚਰਜ ਜੇਵ ਬਟਾਈ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨ ਚੁਕੇ
ਸਭ ਦੇਵ ਸੁਰਾ ਜਨ ਕਰੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਾਜੁ ਹੋਆ ਵਾਜੇ ਅਨਹਦ ਤੁਰਾ॥¹²⁸

Raga Ramakali Mahala 5.

Sing the trilling tunes in the [dance]-field, my sister-friends, by meditating on
the One Lord. Accomplish your heart's desires, my sister-friends, by serving

127. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 861a. The last line of the *Rāmakalī Chhant* 4 (*bali jāe nānak sadā karate sabh mahi rahiā samāi jīu* 4.4) is followed by Guru Arjan's composition on the six seasons (*Rutī Chhia*). There is no blank space here.

128. Gurdita Sekhon MS, f. 478a.

the True Guru. Through the contemplation of the True Guru, a unique son is born by destiny. The True Guru has sent the long-lived child to enjoy great fortune. Immense joy abounds by singing blissful songs of praise to the Lord. Says Nanak, the journey [of life] has borne fruit through the contemplation of the person of the True Guru. (1)

By collecting the nectar-like food the whole family was called [into the Guru's presence]. Let the immortal divine Name be distributed to all so that everyone is completely satisfied. The True Guru made the distribution [of the divine Name] to everyone while sitting [on the throne] and all were blessed with the gift of love. Everyone received a share according to one's destiny, and no one went empty handed [from the house of the Guru]. The whole Sikh sangat gathered together [in the Guru's presence] and each person was absorbed in great joy. Says Nanak, "By seeking the Lord's protection I have attained all comforts." (2)

All the rites were performed by meditating deeply on the Lord. The tonsure ceremony was conducted by repeating the divine knowledge of the Guru. Repeating the Guru's knowledge provided all comforts, and thus the boy was sent to school. The child received a perfect education by obeying the Lord in his heart. All were feasted lavishly at the time of the name-giving ceremony [of the child], and no one went empty-handed [away]. Nanak, the humble servant of God, pleads: "My Lord is [my] friend at death." (3)

The saintly people who gathered together [in the Guru's presence] suggested that the boy should now be betrothed. By good fortune, those of rectitude and wisdom were found as parents of the bride. Let the gift of *amrit* (divine Name) be distributed among all. The mystical state of immortality was attained when the Guru established the divine knowledge (in the *man*) and removed all kinds of suffering. The auspicious moment, which was written [by destiny] from the beginning, came and the marriage was affirmed by the parents of the bride. The Lord arranged the marriage-party so that all kinds of sages, devotees and godly men participated in it. Says Nanak, the task [of marriage] was accomplished and the unstruck music sounded forth. (4)

The hymn describes the life-cycle rituals of the Punjabi society in the seventeenth century, which included the birth of a male child, the name-giving ceremony, the puberty rite, the first admission in a school, the betrothal rite and the marriage ceremony. A further symbolic

meaning is given to all of them in the sense that they are used as occasions for the distribution of the gift of *amrit* (the divine Name) among the devotees of the Guru.

The real issue, however, is the authorship of the Banno hymn. Did Guru Arjan compose that hymn? If he did not do so, who else could have been responsible for completing this hymn, and why? To find the answers to these questions, we must examine the poem's style and other linguistic expressions with reference to other works of Guru Arjan. This method of enquiry reveals the following significant points. First, the fourth line of the first stanza (ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਭੋਜਿ ਦੀਆ ਚਰ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਡ ਪੁੰਨਿਆ) alludes to the opening lines of Guru Arjan's hymn in *āsā* raga, which he composed to celebrate the birth of his only child, Hargobind, the sixth Guru: "The True Guru has sent the child. The long-lived child has been born by destiny" (ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਦੀਆ ਭੋਜਿ ਚਿਰਜੀਵਨੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਸੰਜੋਗਿ).¹²⁹ This allusion has been largely responsible for the misconceived notion that the Banno hymn concerns the life-cycle rituals relating to Guru Hargobind's early life.¹³⁰ Apart from this indirect association, there is no explicit reference to the sixth Guru in the text itself. Rather, the author employs the metaphor of a "unique son" (*anūp bālak*) as a poetic convention to describe the life-cycle rituals of Punjabi society in general.¹³¹

Secondly, there are certain linguistic expressions in the hymn which cannot be the work of Guru Arjan. For instance, for him to have used the phrase *satgur bahi kai vand kīnī* for himself (ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬਹਿ ਕੈ ਵੰਡ ਕੀਨੀ, "The True Guru made the distribution while

129. MS, *Āsā* 7, AG, p. 396.

130. India Office Library, MSS Panj. Fl. The manuscript note 4.(d) by G.B. Singh reads: "The hymn (Chhant) about the early life of the sixth Guru is given complete[ly] (24 lines); and not only the first two lines." Also see W.H. McLeod, *Evolution of the Sikh Community* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 77.

131. See *Śabadārāth*, vol. III, p. 927.

sitting") is totally alien to the humble nature of Guru Arjan.¹³² He never directly refers to himself as the Guru in his compositions. The hymn was definitely composed by a Sikh who was highly motivated with the sense of completing the incomplete text in the name of the Guru. A recent example of a somewhat similar sort may be seen in Jodh Singh's addition of his own interpretation to his description of the Kartarpur manuscript to solve the textual problem of this hymn. His note on the description of folio 703/1 reads as follows:

ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸਲੋਕਾ
 ਰਣ ਬੁੰਡਨੜਾ ਗਾਉ ਸਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਏਕ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੁਮ ਸੇਵਿ ਸਖੀ ਮਨਿ
 ਚਿੰਦਿਅੜਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ॥¹³³

Raga Ramakali Mahala 5 Shalok.

Sing the trilling tunes in the [dance]-field, my sister-friends, by meditating on the One Lord. Accomplish your heart's desires, my sister-friends, by serving the True Guru. (1).

The word "shalok" in the title and the numeral "1" at the end of the couplet do not occur in the original text of the Kartarpur volume. This is an example of making an incomplete text look like a complete text. Further, there are other examples in the Adi Granth where the Gurus employ single lines for shaloks in the form of aphoristic sayings. These single lines may be seen in the section assigned to Gurus' shaloks surplus to the *vārs* (*śalok varān te vadhik*).¹³⁴

Thirdly, the most significant point is that Guru Arjan never employed such words as *vanḍ* (ਵੰਡ, "distribution") or *vanḍiahu* (ਵੰਡਿਆਹੁ, "to distribute") throughout his compositions in the Adi Granth.¹³⁵ These words did not form part of his usual lexicon. This fact alone makes

132. G.B. Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prāchīn Bīṛān* (Lahore: Modern Publications, 1944), p. 200.

133. Bhai Jodh Singh, *Srī Kartārpurī Bīṛ de Daraśan* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968), p. 97.

134. For instance, see MI, *Śalok Varān te Vadhik*, nos. 12, 27 and 28, AG, pp. 141-12. Shalok no. 28 is by Guru Amar Das, who responded to Guru Nanak's reflection on the city of Lahore.

135. For instance, see Gurcharan Singh, *Adi Granth śabad-anukramanikā*, vol. II, pp. 2290, 2293, 2294 and 2296.

improbable his authorship of the additional material of the hymn. Similarly, other words such as *rīti* (ਰੀਤੀ, "rites"), *bhaddhaṅ unetu* (ਭਦਠ ਉਟੇਤੁ, "the tonsure rite"), *jevaṇavāru* (ਜੇਵਟਵਾਰੁ, "the ritual feast" associated with the sacred thread ceremony), *nāmukaraṅ* (ਨਾਮੁਕਰਟ, "the name-giving ceremony") and *maṅgevā* (ਮੰਗੇਵਾ, "the betrothal rite") make their sole "appearance" in the Banno version of the Ad: Granth in this disputed hymn.¹³⁶ I would argue that they were intentionally employed to give legitimacy to Brahmanical rituals in Sikh society, which were otherwise strongly repudiated by the Sikh Gurus, particularly by Guru Arjan himself. On a number of occasions Guru Nanak criticized the the sacred thread ceremony (*janeū*), and other rituals associated with the death ceremony (like *piṅḍ*, *patal*, *kiriā* and *dīvā*).¹³⁷ Guru Arjan referred to the celebration of Guru Hargobind's birth by the sangat in the form of the singing of *gurbāṇī*, particularly the *Rāmakalī Anandu* of Guru Amar Das (*gurabāṇī sakhī anandu gāvai*).¹³⁸ Evidently this latter tradition was the one in vogue among Sikhs at that time.

Fourthly, it is the fifth Guru who, like Guru Nanak, makes a critical judgement on both Hindu and Muslim beliefs, practices and texts.¹³⁹ Although there is no direct reference to the life-cycle rituals as such, this is implied in the general category of Hindu practices. On the face of it, one can easily raise the question: How could Guru Arjan have been the author of

136. In another context, however, Guru Nanak employs the word *bhaddu* ("shaving the head") to criticize the Jains "who pluck their heads with their hands, refusing to use a razor." See M1, *Vā- Malār*, pauri 16, AG, p. 1285.

137. M1, *Vār Āsā*, 1 (15), AG, p. 471 and *Āsā* 32, AG, p. 358. Also see Sundar's *Rāmakalī Sadu*, AG, pp. 923-24.

138. M5, *Āsā* 7, AG, p. 396.

139. R.W. Neufeldt observes: "It is Arjan who states that he is neither Hindu or Muslim, that he has settled the difference between Hindu and Muslim, not by working out some kind of synthesis of the two, nor by keeping the observances of both such as fasts, pilgrimages, prayers and worship, but by cultivating the remembrance of God within and serving that God." See R.W. Neufeldt, "The Sikh Response," in Harold G. Coward, ed., *Modern Indian Responses to Religious Pluralism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 275. Here Neufeldt is paraphrasing Guru Arjan's own hymn (M5, *Bhairaun* 3, AG, p. 1136), which is a comment on Kabir.

such a hymn, which sanctifies Hindu rituals, when he himself was a strong critic of them? It is much more likely that the real author of the extra material in the *Rāmakalī* hymn is a Sikh who must have been under a strong Brahmanical influence.¹⁴⁰

Fifthly, the poetic style of the hymn is flattering and plodding, unlike what we encounter in the authentic *bāṇī* of Guru Arjan. In the first two lines following the original couplet, for instance, one can easily sense how the author is at pains to create a tortured rhyme (*jammīā/puniā*, ਜੰਮਿਆ/ਪੁੰਨਿਆ), and similar is the case with the last two lines of the hymn (*surāltūrā*, ਸੁਰਾ/ਤੁਰਾ). The use of the clumsy phrase *char jīvan* (ਚਰ ਜੀਵਨ) in contrast with Guru Arjan's *chir jīvan* (ਚਿਰ ਜੀਵਨ) is another indication that the author of the additional part was not a good poet. More importantly, it is lacking in the structural unity that is usually achieved by Guru Arjan in his hymns. The overall tone of the reading in the original scarcely matches the rhythmic beauty of Guru Arjan's poetic style.

Finally, the theory of the origin of the Banno recension, which is offered in the third chapter, needs to be further qualified in view of the above analysis. The issue of Brahmanical influence must be included in the union of Hindali, Udasi and Bhatra interests. The Banno group had, it seems, a hidden agenda to arrest the process of crystallization of the Sikh tradition. Whereas the élite group of the Panth had developed a strong sense of distinctive identity, a large body of believers was still following Brahmanical traditions.¹⁴¹ The Banno group had started to exert its influence within the Panth in the area of Khara Mangat in Gujrat District, while the main centre of Sikh activities under Guru Hargobind had already shifted to Kiratpur. Even the Amritsar area was under the control of Minas, Prithichand's descendants and

140. For the accretion of the material relating to Brahmanical rituals in the *janam-sakhia*, see Piar Singh (somp.), *Ādi Sākhīānī* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 3rd edn., 1983; 1st edn., 1969), p. 54.

141. W.H. McLeod, *Who is a Sikh?* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 18.

their followers. This was a time when apocryphal literature was proliferating under Brahmanical influence.¹⁴² The Banno *bīṛ* was copied from the original volume in 1642 CE, although the additional material was interpolated into it some time later. This was an intentional tampering with the Adi Granth text, which was done to legitimize the Hindu life-cycle rituals in the Sikh community by putting words into the mouth of Guru Arjan.¹⁴³

In the light of the textual analysis of the *Rāmakalī* hymn, let us examine W.H. McLeod's views on the Kartarpur-Banno debate. The following excerpts from his article may prove useful in our analysis:

The nature of these portions as recorded in the Banno version suggests an obvious reason for their deletion from the Kartarpur manuscript. They incorporate concepts which would be unacceptable in the light of later ideals. This particularly applies to a *Rāmakalī* hymn attributed to Guru Arjan which, in its Banno form, refers to the shaving of the child Hargobind's head.

If the additional portions supplied by the Banno version correspond to deletions in the Kartarpur manuscript there could conceivably be justification for concluding that Banno represents an earlier recension than Kartarpur.

Let it not be supposed that at this stage I am arguing this case as one which I am personally prepared to affirm. This I am certainly not prepared to do.

There is thus no suggestion that the Kartarpur claims are on the brink of refutation. The point which I am endeavouring to make is simply that we need a sustained campaign of textual analysis if we are to establish a sure and certain text.¹⁴⁴

142. See PUL, MS # 115600. This manuscript contains the text *Sukhamanī Sahānsarnāmā* written by Mihārvan's successor under the symbol of *mahalu 8* in *sāmbat 1703 māṅghar sudī 1* (1646 CE). The composition is cast on the model of Guru Arjan's *Sukhamanī* and praises the Vaishnava *avatārs* and other figures from Hindu mythology. It clearly indicates that the process of Hinduization of the Sikh tradition had already begun.

143. Harjot Oberoi's thesis that the Sikh life-cycle rituals were introduced in the Sikh community for the first time as a result of Tat Khalsa reforms in the late nineteenth century, is debatable. Although it reflects the nineteenth-century Sikh situation, since it is based on the data of that period, it does not take into account the Sikh Gurus' attitude towards Hindu rituals as found in the Adi Granth. See Harjot S. Oberoi, "From Ritual to Counter-Ritual: Rethinking the Hindu-Sikh Question, 1884-1915," in Joseph T. O'Connell et al., *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 136-158.

144. W.H. McLeod, "The Sikh Scriptures: Some Issues," in Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), pp. 101-03.

Here McLeod argues that later Khalsa ideals could have provided the motive for the deletion (though upon close examination we now know that there is no actual deletion¹⁴⁵) of the additional portions of the *Rāmakalī* hymn in the Kartarpur manuscript. If there were such a deletion, it would support the claim that the Banno text may actually represent an earlier recension than the Kartarpur text. This is a clear case of retrospective interpretation which cannot be applied convincingly to explain the early seventeenth-century Sikh situation. The question of later deletion in this instance cannot be taken seriously since there are a number of seventeenth-century manuscripts of the *Adi Granth* that do not contain the extra material of the Banno version. Also, the assumption that the hymn is somehow related to the puberty rites of Guru Hargobind cannot be sustained. It should, however, be emphasized here that McLeod suspends his final judgement on the Kartarpur-Banno issue and, instead, urges that there be a sustained campaign of textual analysis to establish a sure and certain text.

In concluding the argument of this section it may be stated that the *Rāmakalī* hymn as found in the Kartarpur manuscript was never more than two aphoristic sayings, which may have been uttered by Guru Arjan on the happy occasion of a marriage. These sayings, which stand recorded in the Kartarpur volume, were perhaps intended to be developed into a complete hymn later on. There is another such instance provided by *Vār Basant* in the *Adi Granth*, which, unlike other *vārs*, has only three stanzas.¹⁴⁶ This incomplete composition was recorded in the Kartarpur manuscript much later. Unfortunately Guru Arjan was killed by the Mughal

145. I have personally examined folio 703/1 of the Kartarpur manuscript and therefore I can affirm that while there is a blank space of more than two folios after the opening verse of the *Rāmakalī* hymn, there is no evidence of any erasure or any other kind of deletion.

146. M5, *Vār Basant*, AG, p. 1193. According to tradition, when Guru Arjan had just completed three stanzas of this *vār*, he was informed by a Sikh that langar ("communal meal") was ready. He left the work unfinished and joined the congregation for meals. See *Śabadārath*, vol. IV, p. 1193.

authorities in 1606 CE before he could complete these compositions. It is my contention that it was the Banno group that completed the *Rāmakālī* hymn in their version of the *Adi Granth* in order to legitimize the Brahmanical life-cycle rituals in the Sikh community.

Conclusion

It is quite evident from the occasional textual variations in some of the hymns as they are recorded in the *Goindval pothīs* and in the manuscripts of the *Adi Granth* that Guru Arjan frequently revised the received texts in the interest of establishing a canonical scripture.¹⁴⁷ The use of the word *śudhu* ("pure", "correct") in the margins of the *Kartarpur manuscript* in a different hand acquires a new significance in the light of the findings of the present study. Clearly, Guru Arjan would employ it only when he had approved the content, form and organization of the *bāṇī* in a particular raga section in the final text.

During the editorial process, Guru Arjan achieved linguistic refinement through the substitution of synonyms for certain words, and other minor modification of the text. With a few interesting exceptions, he took extraordinary care to maintain the original meaning and rhythm of those hymns, which were revised in the final text. It is, however, important to note that many variants in the earlier manuscripts must not be regarded simply as scribal "errors" in the usual sense, but rather as examples of regional or dialectical forms used in the oral

147. Cf. Bill Readings, "Canon and On: From concept to Figure", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, LVII/1 (Spring 1989), p. 159.

transmission of a singing tradition.¹⁴⁸ This point is generally missed in some of the studies of the manuscripts of the *Adi Granth*.¹⁴⁹

Guru Arjan's editorial achievement can be seen from the remarkably consistent structure of the *Adi Granth*. It should, however, be added here that there are certain instances where the fifth Guru seems to have consciously diverged from consistency. Further, the creation of an authoritative text reveals the process of crystallization of the Sikh tradition that took place during his period. This process provided a framework for the shaping of the Sikh community and hence it was a decisive factor for Sikh self-definition. There were, of course, certain groups within the Panth who were busy trying to reverse this process by tampering with the *Adi Granth* text. In order to understand the phenomenon of Sikh self-definition thoroughly, we need to explore further the editorial policy of Guru Arjan. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

148. Cf. K.E. Bryant, "Toward a Critical Edition of the *Sūrasāgar*," in Winand M. Callewaert, ed., *Early Hindī Devotional Literature in Current Research* (Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit, 1980), p. 12. Also see, Winand M. Callewaert, "Text-Analysis with Computer in Devanāgarī," in *Bhakti in Current Research*, p. 65.

149. Harinam Singh Udasi, *Ādi Śrī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī dīān Purātan Bīṛān te Vichār* (Kapurthala: Ramesh Chander Suri, 1969); and G.B. Singh, *Śrī Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prachīn Bīṛān*, pp. 80-88. These authors failed to understand properly the issue of variant readings.

Chapter 5

EDITORIAL POLICY OF GURU ARJAN

The argument of this thesis is centred upon the editorial policy of Guru Arjan, a policy by means of which he was able to produce a final text of the Adi Granth in 1604 CE. Even a lay reader of the Sikh scripture cannot fail to acknowledge that it is a masterpiece of organization. Harbans Singh, a distinguished interpreter of Sikh history and tradition, makes the following observation on Guru Arjan's achievement: "A genius unique in spiritual insight and not unconcerned with methodological design had created a scripture with an exalted mystical tone and a high degree of organization."¹ In this section, therefore, we will make an attempt to discern various principles that were at work in the creation of a new scripture at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

An examination of early manuscripts reveals that Guru Arjan worked over a number of drafts of the Adi Granth before he finally produced an authoritative text. It is quite evident from the systematic arrangement of the Adi Granth that he followed a well-defined pattern of organization which was seldom breached.² The Adi Granth is basically divided into three major

1. Harbans Singh, "Installation of Holy Granth Sahib in the Harimandir at Amritsar," in Fauja Singh, ed., *The City of Amritsar* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1977), pp. 46-47; and his booklet, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Guru Eternal for the Sikhs* (Patiala: Academy of Sikh Religion and Culture, 1988), pp. 5-6.

2. For more details on the structure of the Adi Granth, see W.H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 286-88; and W. Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, *The Sikhs: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 189-195. For an earlier treatment of the subject, see Frederic Pincott, "The Arrangement of the Hymns of the Adi Granth," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XVIII (Calcutta, 1885), pp. 437-461. This article was a rebuttal of Trumpp's assertion: "By thus jumbling together [of] whatever came to hand, without any judicious selection, the Granth has become an exceedingly incoherent and wearisome book." See Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth* (New Delhi, reprint, 1970; 1st edn., London, 1877), p. CXX.

sections. It begins with an introductory section containing the liturgical texts, and concludes with an epilogue comprising a group of miscellaneous works which could not be accommodated in the middle section. The bulk of the material is, however, arranged in the middle section of the *Adi Granth*, the distinctive structure of which is our main concern here.

The primary division of the middle section is based on ragas or musical modes of which there is a total of thirty-one in the standard version of the *Adi Granth*. Each raga has further sub-divisions based on the length of the compositions, beginning with the shorter *pad* genre, followed by other poetic forms (*aṣṭapadī*, *chhant*, and other longer works such as Guru Nanak's *Siddh Goṣṭ*, Guru Amar Das's *Anandu* and Guru Arjan's *Sukhmanī*), and ending with the longer *vār* or ballad. The hymns in each of these classifications are arranged in such a way that the works of Guru Nanak are placed first and are followed by those of the later Gurus in the order of their succession. Similarly the *bhagat bāṇī* ("utterances of the bhagats", such as Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas, Shaikh Farid and various other medieval Indian poets of Sant, Sufi and Bhakti origin) is arranged at the end of each raga. In order to understand the structure of the *Adi Granth* more fully we must try to find certain clues to Guru Arjan's primary concerns with respect to his editorial policy.

1. Doctrinal Consistency

The compilation of the *Adi Granth* is based on a single, consistent doctrinal pattern that we encounter in the works of the Gurus. It must be regarded as one of the fundamental criteria for the creation of the scripture, which owes much to the enormous energies of Guru Arjan. On this issue of fundamental importance W.H. McLeod makes the following observation:

"The Adi Granth is both one and many. On the one hand there is little that fails to fit a single, consistent doctrinal pattern. On the other there is a variety which serves to stress and illuminate different aspects of the pattern."³ In the light of this statement, we may examine the issue of doctrinal consistency behind the diversity of styles offered by Guru Nanak's successors as it appears in the actual process of compilation of the Adi Granth. It may be discussed under the following sub-headings.

11. Unity of Guruship

In order to stress the theme of the unity of guruship, Guru Arjan intentionally incorporated in certain instances his own shaloks in the works of Guru Nanak. In doing so he was following a convention that had originated with Guru Angad, a direct disciple as well as the immediate successor of Guru Nanak.⁴ In an earlier draft of the Adi Granth, for instance, the *mārū* raga begins as follows:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ
 ਰਾਗ ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਚਉਪਦੇ।
 ਪਿਛਹੁ ਰਾਤੀ ਸਦੜਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਖਸਮ ਕਾ ਲੋਗੁ ਖੇਮੇ ਫਤ ਸਰਾਇਚੇ ਦਿਸਨਿ ਰਥ ਪੀਤੋ।
 ਜਿਨੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਤਿਨੁ ਕੰਉ ਸਦਿ ਮਿਲੇ। ਬਾਬਾ ਮੇ ਕਰਮਹੀਣ ਕੁਤੀਆਰੁ
 ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਧਾ ਤਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾ ਮਨੁ ਮੇਰਾ। ਰਹਾਉ⁵

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

3. W.H. McLeod, *The Sikhs: History, Religion, and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 87. On variety of styles, McLeod adds: "The diverse styles offered by Nanak's successors range from Guru Angad's pithy couplets and the eminently simple declarations of Guru Amar Das to the music of Guru Ram Das. Most prolific of all the Gurus, Arjan covers a wide span of human experience and related doctrine."

4. For instance, three shaloks of Guru Angad, which appear under his distinctive symbol in *Vār Āsā* (M2, 2-3 (12), AG, p. 469) and *Vār Mājh* (M2, 2 (23), AG, p. 148), are repeated in *sahaskritī* shaloks under the symbol of Guru Nanak (M1, *śalok sahaskritī* 1-4, AG, p. 1353). In this case, there is a certain blurring of boundaries between the compositions attributed to the first two Gurus, which poses important textual problems. The issue will receive further treatment in the third part of this section.

5. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 922a.

Raga Maru Mahala 1 *chaupade*.

Those [devotees] who listen to the [divine] call in the later part of the night, repeat the Name of the Lord. They are provided with the symbols of royal authority and dignity such as pavilions, canopies, tents and equipped chariots at their disposal. [Such devotees] who have meditated on Your Name, receive direct communication from You [that is, the divine Word] (1)

Baba! Devoid of good actions I am untruthful at heart. I have not yet attained Your Name. My *man* is blind and lost in illusion. (1) *rahāu*.

This passage explicitly states that the practice of meditation on the divine Name in the last watch of the night is the inevitable result of divine grace, which functions in the form of a "call" (*sadarā*). Those devotees who listen to the divine summons and who act accordingly, receive the highest honours in the world. They are the ones to whom Akal Purakh reveals himself through direct communication. All others who have not yet realized the divine Name remain deluded in falsehood. This is a clear statement of Guru Nanak's understanding of divine revelation.

In the final text, Guru Arjan replaced the abbreviated form of invocation with the complete Mul Mantar, added his own shalok in the beginning and gave a new title *Śabad* ("Word") to Guru Nanak's hymn for the first time in the *Adi Granth*.⁶ He has repeated this title in a second instance in the *mārū* raga only.⁷ Thus the final reading of the first *Mārū* hymn with certain linguistic modifications appears as follows:

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਤਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ

6. Mohan Singh Diwana is baffled by this unique instance in the *Adi Granth*: "Where in the world is this tradition-pattern of two-line four stanzas, each stanza with its separate rhyme, but prefaced by a *salok*, three lines before *rahāu* (very significant in this case), long and short, or almost equal, with language differences and interesting *qāfiās* and rhyme-schemes and strange measures and flows and no superfluous vowel signs *(i)* or *(u)*." See his article, "Discoveries in Sikh Culture (III)," *Journal of Sikh Studies*, vol. ii, no. 1 (Amritsar: GNDU, Feb., 1975), p. 87.

7. M1, *Mārū* 5, AG, p. 990. Here Guru Nanak's *śabad* is preceded by Guru Arjan's shalok, which appears under his symbol in *Vār Gūjarī* (M5, 2 (4), AG, p. 518).

ਰਾਗੁ ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਘਰੁ ੧ ਚਉਪਦੇ

ਸਲੋਕਾ

ਸਾਜਨ ਤੇਰੇ ਚਰਨ ਕੀ ਹੋਇ ਰਹਾ ਸਦ ਧੁਗਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਟਿ ਤੁਹਾਰੀਆ ਪੇਖਉ ਸਦਾ
ਹਜੁਗਿਆ⁸

ਸਬਦਾ

ਪਿਛਹੁ ਰਾਤੀ ਸਦਤਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਖਸਮ ਕਾ ਲੋਗਿ ਖੇਮੇ ਛਤੁ ਸਰਾਇਚੇ ਦਿਸਨਿ ਰਥ ਪੀੜੇ
ਜਿਨੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਤਿਨੁ ਕਉ ਸਦਿ ਮਿਲੇਆ ਬਾਬਾ ਮੈ ਕਰਮਗੀਟ ਕੁਤਿਆਗ
ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਧਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਕੂਲਾ ਮਨੁ ਮੇਰਾਯ ਰਹਾਉ⁹

There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality. He is the Creator, without
fear and devoid of enmity. He is immortal, never incarnated, self-existent,
known by grace through the Guru.

Raga Maru Mahala 1 *gharu* 1 *chaupade*

Shalok.

Divine Friend, may I ever live as the dust of Your feet! Seeking Your shelter,
Nanak, may I ever behold You present by my side. (1)

Shabad.

Those [devotees] who listen to the [divine] call in the later part of the night,
repeat the Name of the Lord. They are provided with the symbols of royal
authority and dignity such as pavilions, canopies, tents and equipped chariots at
their disposal. [Such devotees] who have meditated on Your Name, receive
direct communication from You [that is, the divine Word] (1)

Baba! Devoid of good actions I am untruthful at heart. I have not yet attained
Your Name. My *man* is blind and lost in illusion. (1) *rahāu*...

Here the opening shalok indicates the reflective and mystical setting of Guru Nanak's hymn. By
assigning a new title to the hymn Guru Arjan evidently intended to define that any individual
hymn from the *Adi Granth* (*chaupadā*, *aṣṭapadī*, *chhant* and so on) must be invariably
understood as a *Śabad* ("Word"). The meaning of the passage itself points out that the *Śabad*, or

8. This shalok appears under Guru Arjan's distinctive symbol in *Vār Gūjarī* (M5, 1 (4), AG, p. 518). Another such instance is Guru Nanak's *Japjī* where Guru Arjan's shalok is placed at the beginning of the composition (AG, p. 1).

9. M1, *Mārū* 1, AG, p. 989.

divine Word, is the vehicle of communication between Akal Purakh and an individual.¹⁰ This unique title in the *mārū* raga, therefore, reflects a new awareness in Sikh self-understanding with respect to the divine status of the Gurus' compositions (*gurbānī*). It appears that the tradition of conferring royal honour upon the volume containing *gurbānī* must have come into vogue by this time.¹¹

The addition of Guru Arjan's shalok at the beginning of Guru Nanak's hymn further highlights the issue of doctrinal consistency in guruship. It serves to underline Guru Arjan's claim that he carries the spiritual authority of Guru Nanak. The meaning of the shalok conveys the idea that when one awakens to the reality of the divine Name through humble submission, one feels the presence of the Lord within and all around (*pekhaun sadā hajūri*, "I ever behold You present by my side"). Thus the fundamental message of all the Gurus remains consistently the same: that liberation can be achieved only through meditation on the divine Name.¹² The declaration of this message is made in the *mārū* raga, which is traditionally associated with the setting of goals at the time of "blowing of a bugle" (*jab vājje dhun mārū*) in the wake of some undertaking.¹³

There is another such instance in *Vār Malār* where Guru Arjan has added his own *paurī* to Guru Nanak's stanzas in order to stress the theme of doctrinal consistency. In the

10. W.H. McLeod defines the *Śabad* as follows: "The Word embraces all that is Truth, all that expresses the nature of God and the means of attaining Him, and this may be perceived in divine laws governing the universe as well as in the ineffable mystical experience." See W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 193.

11. The installation of the Adi Granth in the newly-built Harimandir was under way when Guru Arjan declared: "The scripture is the Lord's dwelling-place" (*pothī paramesar kā thānu*). See M5, *Sārang* 90, AG, p. 1226. For the contemporary practice of installation of the Guru Granth Sahib ceremonially each morning in the Golden Temple, see Patwant Singh, *The Golden Temple* (New Delhi: Time Books International, 1988), pp. 145-164.

12. W.H. McLeod, *The Sikhs*, p. 87.

13. Satbir Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib dā sār-visthār*, vol. I (Jalandhar: New Book Company, 1985), pp. 71-75.

earlier draft of the *Adi Granth*, for example, Guru Arjan had written an editorial note after the twenty-seventh stanza of Guru Nanak, which reads: "This stanza is [actually] number twenty-eight" (ਏਹ ਪਉੜੀ ਅਠਾਈਹਵੀ ਐਸੈ).¹⁴ This note clearly indicates that the last stanza numbering twenty-eight (ਸਤੋ ਵਰਤੈ ਚਲਤੁ ਚਲਤੁ ਵਖਾਟਿਆ), which was added by Guru Arjan himself to the *Vār Malār*, should change places with Guru Nanak's stanza numbering twenty-seven (ਤੁ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਆਪਿ ਬਟਤ ਬਟਾਈ) in the final text. In the final version of the *Adi Granth*, the title of the stanza numbering twenty-seven reads *paūrī navīn mahalā 5* (ਪਉੜੀ ਨਵੀ ਮ: ੫, "New stanza by the fifth Guru") and the position of the above stanza by Guru Nanak is fixed at the end.¹⁵ This editorial process also proves another significant point, namely that there is a close correspondence between the earlier draft (GNDU, MS # 1245) and the final text (Kartarpur MS) and that Guru Arjan was working on this earlier draft to standardize the text of the *Adi Granth*.

1.2. *The continuity of a theme*

The most significant factor in deciding the proper place of certain hymns in various sections of the *Adi Granth* was based on the continuity of a particular theme. For instance, a careful reader of the *Adi Granth* will be struck by the closeness with which the compositions of Guru Amar Das are modeled in language, style and form on those of Guru Nanak.¹⁶ There is a particularly striking example in the *mājh* raga where Guru Nanak's single *aṣṭapadī*, which

14. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 1182a.

15. M1, *Vār Malār*, (27/28), AG, p. 1291.

16. Guru Amar Das composed all his *bānī* in seventeen of the nineteen ragas employed by Guru Nanak, and his hymns follow those of Guru Nanak even section by section. For instance, both wrote their *Paṭṭīs* in *Āsā* mode (AG, pp. 432-435), their *Alāhanīān* in *Vaḍahānsu* raga (AG, pp. 578-585) and their *Solahe* in *Mārū* raga (AG, pp. 1020-1069). Evidently Guru Amar Das had a particular composition in mind when writing his own *bānī*.

stresses the theme of the meditative exaltation of the *śabad* (ਹਉ ਵਾਰੀ ਜੀਉ ਵਾਰੀ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਵਣਿਆ, "I devote myself to the glorious Word"), is followed by Guru Amar Das's thirty-two octaves (*aṣṭapadīān*) on the same theme.¹⁷ Evidently Guru Amar Das was so inspired by the meaning of this particular *aṣṭapadī* of Guru Nanak that he was impelled to produce a cycle of octaves around it in the same metrical pattern and rhyme-scheme. Even Guru Nanak's phrase *hau vārī jīu vārī* ("I devote myself") is repeated in all the refrains of Guru Amar Das's hymns.¹⁸ Christopher Shackle has aptly remarked that "there is a triangle of forces underlying the *bani* of Guru Amar Das: the *bani* of Guru Nanak, his own Guruship, and the established existence of the community of the Sikhs."¹⁹

There is another striking instance in the *dhanāsari* mode, where Guru Nanak's hymn inspired a response from Guru Amar Das. The hymn by the first Guru reflects the theme of human forgetfulness of the divine Name. It reads:

ਧਨਾਸਰੰ ਮਹਲਾ ੧

ਕਿਉ ਸਿਮਰੀ ਸਿਵਰਿਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਇ ਤਪੇ ਹਿਆਉ ਜੀਅਤਾ ਬਿਲਲਾਇ ਸਿਰਜਿ ਸਵਾਰੇ
ਸਾਚਾ ਸੋਇ ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਸਰਿਐ ਚੰਗਾ ਕਿਉ ਹੋਇ। ਹਿਕਮਤਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਇ
ਕਿਉਕਰਿ ਸਾਚਿ ਮਿਲਉ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਇ। ਰਹਾਉ॥²⁰

Dhanasari Mahala 1

How can I remember [the Lord]? It is hard to achieve remembrance [through cunning]. The heart burns [inside] and the spirit wails. The True One Himself creates and exalts in His creation. Forgetting Him how can one be good? (1)

17. M1, *Aṣṭapadī* 1, AG, p. 109 and M3, *Aṣṭapadīān* 1-32, AG, pp. 110-129. For more details, see C. Shackle, "The First Restatement of the Bani," *The Sikh Courier* (Sikh Cultural Society of Great Britain, Autumn-Winter, 1985): 72-73.

18. This phrase may have been adapted from the folklore of Punjabi girls, who still sing such songs with a constant refrain *hauṁ vārī ve bībā vārī* ("I devote myself to you, O beloved!") on the happy occasions of betrothal, marriage and other such events. To mark the celebration of the forthcoming marriage they usually start the singing of these songs during the night at least one or two weeks before the actual event. The Gurus also used this phrase in the hymns of *mājh* raga, which is associated with the *Majha* region of the Punjab.

19. Shackle, "First Restatement of the Bani," p. 73.

20. M1, *Dhanasari* 3, AG, p. 661.

He is not attained by clever device or command. My mother! How can I attain the Truth? (I) *rahāu*.

Clearly, this hymn is the direct product of Guru Nanak's deep understanding of human nature based on what Shackle calls "the dialectic between the most profound inward experience and a life rich in outward adventure".²¹ Guru Nanak raises important issues related to the condition of separation from the divine Truth: How can one remember the divine Name when one is burning inside with the fire of anguish? How can one attain the divine Truth?

In order to respond to the questions raised by Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das composed a hymn in the same raga as well as metrical pattern.²² He carried forward the theme of divine grace, which was the only solution offered for the human predicament in the last line of Guru Nanak's hymn (ਜੈਸੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤੈਸਾ ਹੋਇ, "As is the [Lord's] glance [of grace], so is the state [of the creature]"). In the Kartarpur manuscript the hymn reads:

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੩

ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਸਿਮਰਿਆ ਜਾਇਆ ਆਤਮਾ ਝੁਵੈ ਰਹੈ ਲਿਵਲਾਇਆ ਆਤਮਾ ਪਰਾਤਮਾ ਏਕੋ ਕਰੈ। ਅੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮਰੈ। ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਗੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਕਾਲੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ। ਰਹਾਉ।²³

Dhanasari Mahala 3

By the gracious glance comes remembrance of Him. Then [the hardness of the] soul is melted and [the heart] absorbed in meditation. Thus one attains identity between self and Supreme Self. The duality [of the self] is effaced within. (I) By the Guru's grace is [He] attained. Death cannot destroy, should the mind be absorbed in the Lord. (I) *rahāu*.

Obviously Guru Amar Das draws his inspiration from the hymn of Guru Nanak, which he uses in consciously re-creating his style and theme while keeping in mind the needs of the growing

21. Shackle, "First Restatement of the Bani," p. 72.

22. For other such instances of Guru Amar Das's direct responses to Guru Nanak's shaloks, see *Vār Mājh*, 1-2 (16), AG, p. 145 and *Śalok Vārān te vadhik*, 27-28, AG, p. 1412.

23. Kartarpur MS, ff. 499/2-500/1.

Sikh community. He is offering to his own audience a path of divine grace which can be attained through the Guru.

In order to match the continuity of this theme, Guru Arjan consciously diverged in this instance from the sequence according to author. He fixed Guru Amar Das's hymn in the section marked for the hymns of Guru Nanak in the *dhanāsari* mode. He even entered two editorial notes in the index on folio 10/2 of the Kartarpur manuscript to state explicitly the authorship of Guru Amar Das's hymn, which was assigned a place in the section devoted to Guru Nanak's hymns.²⁴ Guru Arjan was in fact following the editorial direction of Guru Amar Das, who had already entered his own hymn alongside Guru Nanak's hymn in the Goindval *pothis*.²⁵

In spite of Guru Arjan's clear editorial directions later scribes failed to recognize that Guru Amar Das authored this hymn, and hence replaced the symbol *Mahalā 3* with *Mahalā 1* in their copies of the Adi Granth.²⁶ They asked themselves the question: How could a hymn of the third Guru enter the section assigned to Guru Nanak's hymns? This confusion lasted throughout the eighteenth-century manuscript tradition. Even in the modern standard printed edition of the Sikh scripture, which purports to be an exact copy of the Kartarpur volume, the hymn is attributed to Guru Nanak.²⁷

24. For details, see chapter 2, p. 30.

25. PUL, photocopy of volume I, ff. 122b-123a. In the GNDU MS # 1245, the title of Guru Amar Das's hymn reads: *Dhanāsari Mahalā 1. 3*, which indicates that the hymn of the third Guru is in response to Guru Nanak's. See f. 565b. Other seventeenth-century manuscripts, which rightly attribute the hymn to Guru Amar Das, are: (1) PUM # 8, f. 263b; (2) Gurdita Sekhon MS, 360b (folio numbering on left-hand side); (3) Jograj MS PUM # 2, f. 291a (folio numbering on left-hand side); (4) DBSSK MS # 3, f. 299a.

26. The seventeenth-century manuscripts that do not attribute the hymn to Guru Amar Das are: (1) PUM MS # 6, f. 301a; (2) Una Sahib MS # 2, f. 255a (folio numbering on left-hand side); (3) PUM MS # 1, f. 327b (number "3" of M3 is deleted and "1" is written in its place); (4) MS copy of Ram Rai's *bir*, f. 338b.

27. M1, *Dhanāsari* 4, AG, P. 661. Harbans Singh, for instance, interprets lines from this hymn in his description of the teachings of Guru Nanak: "Living thus 'in the midst of wife and children

There is another particularly striking example in the *bāṇī* of Guru Tegh Bahadur. In marked contrast to the compositions of the first five Gurus, the dominant theme in his hymns is related to suffering and the imminence of death. For instance, one of his shaloks has the following reading in an earlier manuscript:

ਦੋਹਰਾ

ਬਲੁ ਟੁਟਿਓ ਬੰਧਨ ਪਰਿਓ ਰਹਿਓ ਨ ਕਛੁ ਉਪਾਇ ਕਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਬ ਓਟ ਹਰਿ ਗਜ
ਜਿਉ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥੨੮

Dohra.

All strength is broken; there are bonds [of slavery] all around; no effort seems to avail. Says Nanak, the only support at this moment [of extremity] is the Lord's, who can succour as He once did the Elephant.

Here the sense of a mounting crisis is vividly portrayed in existential terms of the "loss of strength" (*balu tūio*) and the "bonds of slavery" (*bandhan pario*). By employing the Puranic story of Gajendra the elephant, who was in a dire situation, Guru Tegh Bahadur alluded to the contemporary challenge to the Sikh movement coming from the Mughal state of Emperor Aurangzeb.²⁹ It seems that this shalok was composed by the ninth Guru in anticipation of his own death at Anandpur, not in the prison of Aurangzeb in Delhi as the traditional explanation might suggest.³⁰

The above shalok of Guru Tegh Bahadur inspired a response from his only son, Guru

one would,' said the Guru, 'gain emancipation.'" See his *Guru Nanak and Origins of the Sikh Faith* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), p. 211.

28. Jograj MS PUM # 2, f. 682b (folio numbering at left-hand side). Also see PUM MS # 1, f. 700b (folio numbering at left-hand side) and PUM MS # 6, f. 576b.

29. The Puranic story goes: a crocodile had grabbed hold of an elephant's toe and was pulling him steadily beneath the water. He bellowed out for the Lord, who arrived in split-second haste and saved him from death and his deadliest foe. See John Stratton Hawley, *Sūr Dās: Poet, Singer, Saint* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984), p. 132.

30. Guru Tegh Bahadur's shaloks (AG, pp. 1426-29) can be taken as a long poem "Waiting for Martyrdom." See Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publications, 1988), p. 226.

Gobind Singh, who was barely nine years old at that time. His response is recorded under his distinctive symbol in the early manuscripts. It reads:

ਮਹਲਾ ੧੦।

ਬਲੁ ਹੁਓ ਬੰਧਨ ਛੁਟੇ ਸਤੁ ਕਛੁ ਹੋਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਤੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਹਾਥ ਮੈ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਹੋਇ
ਸਹਾਇ॥੩੧

The strength has come; the bonds are broken; all efforts begin to avail. All is in your hands, [Lord:] may You [alone] be my support!

Clearly, this shalok expresses resolute determination to fight the oppressive forces with strength (*bal*) and faith in the divine power. It is quite possible that it was Guru Gobind Singh's first utterance in the form of a *vāk* after assuming the office of guruship. It certainly marks the dawn of a new era of political and social awareness in the affairs of the Panth.

Having inspired a deep faith and confidence in the heart of his son, Guru Tegh Bahadur ends his anticipatory experience with an optimistic note:

ਨਾਮੁ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਾਧੁ ਰਹਿਓ ਰਹਿਓ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਜਗਤ ਮੈ ਕਿਨ
ਜਪਿਓ ਗੁਰ ਮੰਤ੍ਰਾ॥੩੨

The divine Name (*nāmu*), the saintly people (*sādhū*) and Guru Gobind would stay. In this world there are very few, says Nanak, who devote themselves to the recitation of the Guru's Word.

Here the use of the phrase "Guru Gobind" (*gur gobind*) is quite significant that it could refer to both Akal Purakh, the eternal Guru, and to Guru Gobind Singh. It may suggest that the original context of these utterances may very well be the time when Guru Tegh Bahadur transferred the office of guruship to his son, Gobind Rai (at that time), before he left for Delhi to face the Mughal challenge. Also, this was the time when he appears to have instructed his son to add his

31. Jograj MS PUM # 2, f. 682b (folio numbering at left-hand side). Also see PUM MS # 1, f. 700b (folio numbering at left-hand side) and PUM MS # 6, f. 576b (here the title is *mahalā dasavān 10*). All these manuscripts belong to Guru Gobind Singh's lifetime.

32. M9, Shalik 56, AG, p. 1428.

own *bānī* to the Adi Granth for the sake of preparing the final text.³³

The language of the two shaloks was modified when the standard version of the Adi Granth was prepared in the early nineteenth century. The single couplet of Guru Gobind Singh lost its authorship in the same manner as Guru Amar Das's hymn, mentioned earlier. Modern Singh Sabha scholars thus treat Guru Tegh Bahadur as the sole author of the two shaloks in their exposition of the *bānī* of the ninth Guru.³⁴

13. Dual authorship of identical compositions

There is a particularly illuminating instance in the *Vār Gaurī*, where a stanza of Guru Ram Das is repeated by Guru Arjan with a slight variation under his own distinctive symbol. It reads:

ਪਉੜੀ ਮ: ੫

ਨਾਨਕ ਵੀਚਾਰਹਿ ਸੰਤ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨਾਂ ਚਾਰਿ ਵੇਦ ਕਹੰਦੇ। ਭਗਤ ਮੁਖੇ ਤੇ ਚੋਲਦੇ ਸੇ
ਵਚਨ ਹੋਵੰਦੇ। ਪਰਗਟ ਪਾਹਾਰੈ ਜਾਪਦੇ ਸਭਿ ਲੋਕ ਸੁਣੰਦੇ। ਸੁਖੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਨਿ ਮੁਗਧ ਨਰ
ਸੰਤ ਨਾਲਿ ਖਹੰਦੇ। ਓਇ ਲੋਚਨਿ ਓਨਾ ਗੁਣਾ ਨੋ ਓਇ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਿ ਸੁਣੰਦੇ। ਓਇ ਵੇਚਾਰੇ
ਕਿਆ ਕਰਹਿ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਗ ਧੁਰਿ ਮੰਦੇ। ਜੋ ਮਾਰੇ ਤਿਨਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਸੇ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਸੰਦੇ। ਵੈਰੁ
ਕਰਨਿ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਨਾਲਿ ਧਰਮਿ ਨਿਆਇ ਪਚੰਦੇ। ਜੋ ਜੋ ਸੰਤਿ ਸਰਾਪਿਆ ਸੇ ਫਿਰਹਿ
ਭਵੰਦੇ। ਪੇੜੁ ਮੁੰਢਾਹੂ ਕਟਿਆ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਲ ਸੁਕੰਦੋੜਾ।³⁵

Pauri M5

The four Vedas declare, Nanak, what the sants and sages contemplate. Those words which the devotees (*bhagats*) [of Akal Purakh] utter from their lips,

33. G.B. Singh provides the details of a copy of the Adi Granth, written in *sambat 1732 mīī agahan vadi 7* (28/29 November 1675 CE), which was completed about seventeen days after Guru Tegh Bahadur's death on 11 November 1675 CE. This volume contains the works of the ninth Guru at their appropriate places in different ragas. See G.B. Singh, *Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prachīn Bīrān* (Lahore: Modern Publishers, 1944), pp. 215–234.

34. See the collection of research articles by various scholars in Gurbachan Singh Talib, ed., *Guru Tegh Bahadur: Background and the Supreme Sacrifice* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1976), pp. 18, 131, 140–41, 172, 199. Also see, Taran Singh (somp.), *Gurū Tegh Bahadur: Jīvan, Sandeś te Shahādat* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1976), pp. XVI, 79, 191, 251–52, 272.

35. M4, *Vār Gaurī*, pauri M5 (31), pp. 316–17.

find fulfilment. Theirs are open and luminously clear statements, heard by all the people. The foolish ones, who enter into strife with sants, shall find no joy in life. They [the sants] long for virtues, while they [the foolish ones] burn [in the fire of] pride. What can these poor wretches do when they are cursed with misfortune from the beginning? They who are cursed by Akal Purakh, do no good to any one. They show malice towards the one who is free from malice (*nirvair*), [and hence] they are destroyed by the law of dharam. Those who are cursed by sants, wander about in agony. The tree which is cut off from the roots, shall only bear withered branches. (31)

This stanza appears at number twelve as Guru Ram Das's, since the actual *vār* belongs to him.³⁶

Here one may raise the following questions: Why would Guru Arjan use his father's composition under his own symbol? What is so significant about this stanza that he repeated it?

Guru Ram Das's *Vār Gaurī* is focused on the issue of dealing with the problems created by "detractors." In fact, those detractors were rival claimants to the office of guruship. Their rivalry was heightened when Guru Arjan was designated for the *gaddī* ("throne") of Guru Nanak in preference to his elder brother, Prithi Chand.³⁷ One strategy that Guru Arjan adopted to support his position was to claim that he carried the spiritual authority of his father in every sense, including using his composition under his own distinctive symbol. Further, by repeating the stanza he could also make the point that he intended to deal with the detractors in the manner of his father.³⁸

It is quite possible that Guru Ram Das transferred his spiritual authority to his son through the imprimatur of this *paūrī* containing the piece of advice on how to deal with the

36. Ibid., p. 306. For another instance, see Guru Amar Das's shalok 2 (!1) in *Vār Sri Rāga* (AG, p. 86), which is repeated under the symbol of Guru Ram Das as shalok 28 in *Śalok varān te vadhik* (AG, p. 1424).

37. Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, pp. 106-108, 137-141.

38. G.B. Singh failed to understand Guru Arjan's intention to repeat this stanza. See *Prāchīn Bīrān*, p. 87.

detractors. After assuming the office of guruship, Guru Arjan may have then proclaimed this stanza in the form of a *vāk* or commandment.³⁹ The dominant theme of this stanza is certainly related, firstly, to the proclamation of the divine Word by the saintly people; and secondly, to the condemnation of those who do not accept their authority. The last line in particular provides a warning against the threat to the central authority of guruship.

It is worth noting that the second appearance of the *paūrī* has some minor linguistic variations (ਨਾਨਕ ਵੀਚਾਰਹਿ ਸੰਤ ਜਨ/ਨਾਨਕ ਵੀਚਾਰਹਿ ਸੰਤ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨਾਂ, ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਜਾਪਦਾ/ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਪਾਹਾਰੈ ਜਾਪਦੇ, ਵੈਰੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਨਾਲਿ/ਵੈਰੁ ਕਰਨਿ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਨਾਲਿ), which were deliberately done by Guru Arjan to avoid repeating the exact wording of the hymn.⁴⁰ This point explains a great deal about the meticulous care with which the scripture was compiled by the Guru. There are a number of marginal notes in the Kartarpur volume where he directs the scribe to delete particular hymns, which are unnecessarily repeated at two different places (ਦੁਰਾਗਤ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਏਹ ਨਹੀ ਲਿਖਣਾ).⁴¹ Thus whenever a composition is repeated in the *Adi Granth*, we may assume that there is always a significant reason behind it.

2. The Ideal of the Balanced Life

The second major concern reflected in Guru Arjan's editorial policy appears to be linked with the ideal of the "balanced life." This ideal is well reflected in his scheme of arrangement, where Guru Arjan clearly indicates that faith should produce a balanced outlook.

39. Cf. chapter 4, p. 135, n. 57.

40. The most illuminating instance is the appearance of the *Sodar* in three different versions (M1, AG, pp. 6, 8-9, 347-8).

41. Kartarpur MS, ff. 511/1, 550/2, 836/1. Also see, chapter 2, pp. 38-9.

tempering both happiness and sadness. Throughout the lyrical *bāñī* of the Gurus the sad and the joyous are subtly interwoven with moods of yearning and rejoicing.⁴² In this context Niharranjan Ray makes the following observation:

To maintain a harmonized balance between attachment and detachment, between worldliness and other-worldliness, between the temporal and the spiritual, has never been very easy in human society; yet this was the task which Guru Nanak set himself to, and as one goes through the life and activities of the Gurus and the history of Sikh society one feels that they carried out this task admirably and well.⁴³

The ideal of the balanced life was the main reason why Guru Arjan changed the sequence of certain longer works in the *rāmakalī* raga, given in the earlier manuscripts. For instance, Guru Amar Das's liturgical text *Anandu* follows the longer works of Guru Nanak and comes after the *Siddh Goṣṭ* in the second volume of Goindval *pothīs*.⁴⁴ The same sequence is followed in the earlier draft of the Adi Granth, where the *Anandu* is located after the *Siddh Goṣṭ* of Guru Nanak and before *Vār Rāmakalī* of the third Guru.⁴⁵ In the final text, however, Guru Arjan juxtaposed the *Anandu*, Guru Amar Das's hymn of joy, and the *Sadu*, Sunder's dirge on that Guru's death. Another such example is the inclusion of the *ghoṛiāñ* (songs sung by women at wedding parties in Punjabi culture) and the *alāhañiāñ* (laments) put on adjacent pages under *vadahānsu* raga.⁴⁶ These two are the most striking examples of Guru Arjan's editorial stance that one should accept joys and sorrows with equanimity.

The concern for a "balanced approach" towards sinners is revealed in Guru Arjan's comments on Kabir. Kabir repeatedly stressed the value of associating with righteous and saintly

42. Patwant Singh, *The Golden Temple*, p. 47. Also see, Cole and Sambhi, *The Sikhs*, p. 49.

43. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharial, 1975), p. 45.

44. Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (*samp.*), *Bābe Mohan vāliāñ pothiāñ* (Delhi: Arsi Publishers, 1987), p. 20.

45. GNDU, MS # 1245, f. 881a. The close correspondence suggests that the preparation of this earlier draft was based upon the Goindval volumes.

46. M4, *Vadahānsu Ghoṛiāñ*, AG, p. 575 and M1, *Alāhañiāñ*, AG, p. 578.

people for the cultivation of proper devotional conduct.⁴⁷ This is in line with the Sikh concept of spiritual fellowship (*sādh saṅgat*), in which the Eternal Guru is mystically present.⁴⁸ However, Kabir is strongly opposed to any kind of association with sinners. He describes them in what will have seemed dreadful terms as the meat-eating, liquor-drinking, Devi-worshipping *sāktas*: "Do not associate with sinners (*sāktas*), flee from them. By touching a blackened vessel, one is sure to get stained!"⁴⁹ For Kabir, sinners are totally lost and for them the door of liberation is closed. Hence one must stay away from the bad moral influence of sinners.

On the issue of dealing with sinners Guru Arjan makes two comments on Kabir, which are inserted in his *Vār Rāmakalī* and which are repeated in Kabir's shaloks in the epilogue of the *Adi Granth*:

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਕਬੀਰ ਧਰਤੀ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਤਸਕਰ ਥੈਸਹਿ ਗਾਹਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਭਾਰਿ ਨ ਬਿਆਪਈ ਉਨ ਕਉ
ਲਾਹੁ ਲਾਹਿਯ।

ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਕਬੀਰ ਚਾਵਲ ਕਾਰਟੇ ਤੁਖ ਕਉ ਮੁਹਲੀ ਲਾਇ। ਸੰਗਿ ਕੁਸੰਗੀ ਥੈਸਤੋ ਤਥ ਪੁਛੇ
ਧਰਮਰਾਇ।

ਪਉੜੀ।

ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਵਡ ਪਰਵਾਰੁ ਆਪਿ ਇਕਾਤੀਆ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਆਪਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਜਾਤੀਆ
ਸਤੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਆਪਿ ਉਪੰਨਿਆ ਆਪਣਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਆਪਿ ਵਰੰਨਿਆ ਧੰਨੁ
ਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਥਾਨੁ ਜਿਥੈ ਤੂ ਵੁਠਾ ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਤੇਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਜਿਨੀ ਸਚੁ ਤੂੰ ਡਿਠਾ ਜਿਸਨੇ
ਤੇਰੀ ਦਇਆ ਸਲਾਹੇ ਸੋਇ ਤੁਧੁ ਜਿਸੁ ਗੁਰ ਭੇਟੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸੋਈ ਸੁਖਾਯ⁵⁰

47. Kabir, Shalok 130, AG, p. 1371: "Do not leave the way of the saints, follow in their path. Just seeing them one is purified. Meeting them one invokes the divine Name."

48. The concept of *sādh saṅgat* is fundamental to the teachings of the Gurus. Guru Arjan spells it out in detail in the seventh octave of *Sukhmani*. For details, see W.H. McLeod, trans and ed., *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1984), p. 112.

49. Kabir, Shalok 131, AG, p. 1371.

50. M5, *Vār Rāmakalī*, 1-2 (20), AG, p. 965-66. These two shaloks are also incorporated in Kabir's shaloks (nos. 210-11, AG, p. 1375) along with other comments on the bhagat. They are examined in detail in my "Sikh Self-Definition and the Bhagat Bānī" (unpub. M.A. Thesis, University of Calgary, 1987), fols. 94-98.

Shalok Mahala 5.

Kabir, though the earth belongs to the sants thieves have taken possession of it. Yet the earth feels not their weight, and for them (the thieves) it is all gain! (1)

Mahala 5.

Kabir, on account of the husk rice is beaten with a pestle. If one sits in the company of the wicked the god of death (*dharamrāi*) will take one to task! (2)⁵¹

Pauri.

He Himself is the great family [of the world's saintly people], although He Himself remains aloof. He Himself alone knows His own worth. He Himself is all in all [in the creation] which He Himself has created. He Himself has the power to expound His own doings. Blessed is the place where You dwell! Blessed are the devotees who have beheld You, O True Lord! Only the one who has Your grace praises You. He who has the company of the Guru, Nanak, becomes pure and holy.

In the first shalok Guru Arjan is suggesting that the presence of sinners (*tasakar*, "thieves") in the company of the holy can in no way affect the saintly people (*sādh*), for they look on all things with "equanimity." Moreover, the company of the holy is all gain for the sinners because they may turn towards Akal Purakh by accepting the sound moral influence of the sants.

In contrast with Kabir, Guru Arjan seems to keep the company of the sants open for sinners. This serves to underline the optimistic Sikh view that it is never too late to turn towards Akal Purakh and that every sinner is a potential sant. Kabir remains a solitary spiritual seeker who does not seem to have a sense of social mission or the idea of an organized religious

51. The translations are adapted from the ones given in Charlotte Vaudeville, *Kabir*, vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 322.

community.⁵² By contrast, the Sikh Gurus have a strong sense of mission which compels them to proclaim their message for the ultimate benefit of their audience and to promote socially responsible living. While as a mystic Kabir can afford to stay away from the sinners (*sāktas*) the Sikh Gurus cannot do so, and they keep their doors open for them principally because of their sense of mission.

However, in his second comment Guru Arjan seems to warn against the dangers of keeping bad company. He employs the symbol of edible rice (*chāvala*) to make the point. The edible rice is obtained by beating the unhusked grains with a long pestle. The husk (*tukh*) here symbolizes the wicked. On account of its association with the husk, "good" rice undergoes the punishment of being pounded with the pestle.⁵³ Guru Arjan does accept Kabir's view to the extent that one must stay away from the evil moral influence of sinners. He clearly implies that when one starts to accept evil moral influence in the company of the wicked, one is sure to suffer the consequences of such association. He shows himself concerned to apprise his audience that one should keep company with discernment and should associate with saintly people in order to cultivate virtues in life. In his comments on Kabir, Guru Arjan seems to move toward a "balanced approach" with regard to the company of sinners. That is, one should neither flee from them nor indulge excessively in their company.

In the *paūrī*, Guru Arjan adds a further note on his own comments regarding Kabir. It is that ultimately this spiritual fellowship represents the mystical presence of the Eternal Guru. All the saintly people become part of a big divine family (*badd parvāru*), each glowing with the

52. Karine Schomer, "Kabir in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*: An Exploratory Essay," in Mark Juergensmeyer and N. Gerald Barrier, eds., *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspective on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Graduate Theological Union, 1979), pp. 75-86.

53. Vaudeville, *Kabir*, p. 328.

spirit of holiness. By stressing the spiritual power of the holy congregation Guru Arjan was inviting people from all walks of life (including, it seems, sinners) to join his fast-growing religious movement. Bhai Gurdas testified to the ever-growing strength of the Sikh sangat at the court of Guru Arjan (ਚਾਰੇ ਚਕ ਨਿਵਾਇਓਨੁ ਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਆਵੇ ਅਟਗਤਾ,⁵⁴ "Innumerable Sikhs come to the sangat from four directions to pay their homage [to the Guru]).

There are other such instances of the Gurus' comments on Shaikh Farid, which are intended to stress the ideal of the "balanced life." In one of his shaloks, for example, Shaikh Farid stresses that one must adopt the sectarian Sufi dress (*kambalarī*, "blanket") and renounce the world to follow the mystic path of love.⁵⁵ In his comment Guru Amar Das provides a corrective to Shaikh Farid's view of renunciation by stressing the ideal of the life of the householder.⁵⁶ However, in order to guard against the temptation to become too worldly Guru Arjan adds a further comment to assert that one must create a "balance" between renunciation and worldliness.⁵⁷ Thus in responding to Shaikh Farid, the Gurus reject not only the extremes of asceticism and self-mortification, but also of indulgence in and love of worldly attractions. Rather, the emphasis is placed upon moderate living and disciplined worldliness.

3. Optimistic Sikh View

54. *Vārān Bhāī Gurdās* 24: 20. The Persian source *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* says: "In short, during the time of each *Mahal* (Guru), the Sikhs increased till in the reign of Guru Arjan Mal they became numerous, and there were not many cities in the inhabited countries where some Sikhs were not to be found." See "Nanak-Panthis", Ganda Singh, ed., *The Punjab Past and Present*, Vol. I. No. 1 (April 1967), p. 57. Also see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, p. 154: "During the pontificate of Guru Arjan, the pan-Indian aspirations of the Sikhs are unmistakable. They were found in most of the cities of India."

55. Shaikh Farid, Shalok 103, AG, p. 1383.

56. M3, Shalok 104, AG, p. 1383.

57. M5, Shalok 105, AG, p. 1383. The Gurus' comments on Shaikh Farid are examined in detail in Pashaura Singh, "Sikh Self-Definition," fos. 49-51.

The third major doctrinal concern reflected in Guru Arjan's editorial policy seems to be associated with the spirit of optimism. A careful examination of Shaikh Farid's *bānī* in the *Adi Granth* suggests that its dominant theme is linked with the "gloomy view" of life in the world.⁵⁸ Attar Singh maintains that Guru Arjan took special pains to "restore social sanity to the views of Shaikh Farid where they touch borders of nihilism and total denial of life here and now."⁵⁹

In his comments on Shaikh Farid, for instance, Guru Arjan's major concern is related to the pessimistic tone which finds its highest expression in the following shaloks:

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਜਿ ਦਿਹ ਨਾਲਾ ਕਪਿਆ ਜੇ ਗਲੁ ਕਪਹਿ ਚੁਖਾ ਪਵਨਿ ਨ ਇਤੀ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਸਹਾਂ
ਨ ਇਤੀ ਦੁਖੜੈ

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਮੇ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਮੁਤ ਕੂ ਦੁਖੁ ਸਬਾਇਐ ਜਗਿ ਉਚੇ ਚੜਿ ਕੈ ਦੋਖਿਆ ਤਾਂ
ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਏਹਾ ਅਗਿਯਾ⁶⁰

Farid, if my throat had been cut on the same day as my navel string, I should not have fallen into such trouble nor undergone such hardship. (76)

Farid, I thought I alone was in pain, but actually the whole world is in pain. I went up on the roof and looked on every house in flames. (81)

Here Shaikh Farid seems to be cursing human life as worthless. His attitude towards it is comprehensively negative. For him the life in the world is devoid of joy, containing and terminating in suffering (*dukkha*). This is contrary to the life-affirming principles of Sikh faith.

In responding to the issues raised by Shaikh Farid Guru Arjan offers solutions from the Sikh perspective. His comments are interjected into his own *Vār Rāmakalī* and then

58. C. Shackle, "Early Muslim vernacular poetry in the Indus Valley: Its contexts and character," (A paper presented in the seminar on *Regional Varieties of Islam in Premodern India* [prior to 1750], University of Heidelberg, 1989), p. 10.

59. Attar Singh, ed., *Socio-Cultural Impact of Islam* (Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1976), p. 10.

60. Shaikh Farid, Shaloks 76 and 81, AG, pp. 1381-82.

repeated in Shaikh Farid's shaloks in the epilogue of the Adi Granth to reiterate the Sikh viewpoint:

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਭੂਮਿ ਰੰਗਾਵਲੀ ਮੰਝਿ ਵਿਸੁਲਾ ਬਾਗੁ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਪੀਰਿ ਨਿਵਾਜਿਆ ਤਿਨਾ ਅੰਚ
ਨ ਲਾਗਾ॥

ਮ: ੫

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਉਮਰ ਸੁਹਾਵੜੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਸੁਵੰਨੜੀ ਦੇਗ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕੋਈ ਪਾਈਅਨ੍ਹਿ ਜਿਨਾ ਖਿਆਰੇ
ਨੇਗ॥

ਪਉੜੀ॥

ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਧਰਮੁ ਜਿਸੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੁ ਪਾਏ ਜਿਸੁ ਬੁਝਾਇਹਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਆਪਿ ਸੋ
ਨਾਮੁ ਖਿਆਏ ਅੰਤਰਜਾਮੀ ਅਗਮ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਇਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਦਿਖਾਏ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਕੈ ਆਸਰੇ
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਿਉ ਰੰਗੁ ਲਾਏ ਅਉਗਟ ਕਟਿ ਮੁਖੁ ਉਜਲਾ ਹਰਿਨਾਮਿ ਤਰਾਏ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਟ ਭਉ
ਕਟਿਓਨੁ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੋਨਿ ਨ ਪਾਏ ਅੰਧ ਕ੍ਰਪ ਤੇ ਕਾਢਿਅਨੁ ਲੜੁ ਲਾਪਿ ਫੜਾਏ ਨਾਨਕ
ਬਖਸਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਅਨੁ ਰਖੇ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਏ॥⁶¹

Shalok Mahala 5.

This lovely world is like a garden, Farid, in which some poison-bearing plants
also grow. But they for whom the Master cares do not suffer at all. (1)

Mahala 5.

How sweet is life, Farid, with health the body blooms!

Yet those who love their dear, sweet [Lord], are rarely ever found! (2)

Pauri

Contemplation, austerity, self-restraint, compassion and righteousness come to
whom they are granted. He, who has his fire (of desire) assuaged by the Lord
himself meditates on the divine Name. The Inner-Controller, the inscrutable
Supreme Being, grants His unique vision to him. Sustained by the holy
fellowship (*sādh saṅgat*) he is dyed in the Lord's love. The vices of such a
one are annulled, his face shines radiantly and he is saved by the divine
Name. His fear of the cycle of birth and death dissolves and he is never born
again. By holding out His sash [the Lord] pulls him from the dark well [of

61. M5, *Vār Rāmakalī*, 1-2 (21), AG, p. 966. The two shaloks are also to be found among Shaikh Farid's shaloks (nos. 82-83, AG, p. 1382).

ignorance]. By grace, Nanak, he is clasped [to You] (21)⁶²

In his first comment Guru Arjan asserts that just as poison-bearing plants also grow in a beautiful garden, so suffering is an inevitable part of life. Joy and suffering are two aspects of worldly life which make life worth living. The Guru further provides the hope that one may find the way through the grace of the Master (*pīr*) to accept pain and pleasure with equanimity. Whereas Shaikh Farid regards the world with indifference or as a place of suffering, Guru Arjan likens it to a "beautiful garden" (*bhūm raṅgāvalī*, "colourful earth"), thus emphasizing for the Sikh community a positive attitude towards life in the world.

In his second comment, Guru Arjan maintains that human life is the most delightful (*suhāvarī*) experience that one can have with the gift of this beautiful body (*suvarṇarī deh*). Elsewhere the human being has been called the epitome of creation: "All other creation is subject to man; man reigns supreme on this earth."⁶³ The Guru further proclaims that human life provides an individual with the opportunity to remember the divine Name and ultimately to join with the Lord.⁶⁴ But rare (*virle*) are the ones who seek the divine Beloved while participating in worldly actions and delights. Thus in contrast with Shaikh Farid, Guru Arjan places a positive value on human life and seeks to ignite a spirit of optimism among his followers.

In the *paūrī*, Guru Arjan adds a further comment concerning his own reflections on

62. Christopher Shackle maintains that this extraordinary passage, in which reference to Farid is carefully worked out, provides the most revealing clues to Guru Arjan's intentions in the compilation of the *Adi Granth*. See C. Shackle, "The South-Western Style in the *Guru Granth Sahib*," *Journal of Sikh Studies*, vol. V, No. 1 (February, 1978), p. 85, n. 38. This note also mentions the references to Kabir (discussed in the preceding section) and to Guru Nanak as in stanza (18) of *Vār Rāmakalī*.

63. M5, *Āsā* 12, AG, p. 374.

64. M5, *Āsā* 4, AG, p. 15: "Precious this life you receive as a human, with it the chance to find the Lord (*gobind*)."

Shaikh Farid, that human life becomes fruitful only if one joins the spiritual fellowship (*sādh saṅgat*) to cultivate virtues in life. Here again his intention is to extend an invitation to the contemporary followers of the Sufi poet in the Punjab to join the Sikh movement. It is important to note here that Guru Arjan's comments on Shaikh Farid facilitate the integration of his verses into the Sikh scriptural tradition. Also, by providing a corrective to Sufi ideas Guru Arjan makes it quite explicit which of the two traditions possesses the truer insights.

In a similar manner, Guru Arjan interjected Guru Amar Das's and his own comments in Kabir's shaloks to restore the spirit of optimism. Kabir sometimes gives the impression of withdrawal from active life in the world and appears to be complaining against the divine will, thus betraying a type of negative or escapist attitude.⁶⁵ Guru Amar Das provides a corrective to Kabir's view by stressing the need to confront life with a positive attitude. He maintains that by submitting to the divine will cheerfully one can become carefree (*achintu*) and gain confidence in coping with any situation of anguish or despair because every happening is then seen to be coming from Akal Purakh.⁶⁶ In order to guard against over-confidence, however, Guru Arjan adds a further comment to create a harmonized "balance" between the extremes of withdrawal and excessive indulgence in the things of the world.⁶⁷

4. The Universal Nature of the Sikh Claim

The universal nature of the Sikh claim is the culmination of its effort to transcend

65. Kabir, Shalok 219, AG, p. 1376.

66. M3, Shalok 220, AG, p. 1376.

67. M5, Shalok 221, AG, p. 1376. A detailed analysis is given in my, "Sikh Self-Definition," fox 91-93.

conventional forms of Hindu tradition and Islam. Its message is open to all people regardless of their caste status, vocation or religious affiliation. The fundamental aspect of this message is the claim that liberation can be achieved only through inward meditation on the divine Name, not through any external religious observances. Evidence for this universal claim may be seen in the Adi Granth itself from two different angles. First, the linguistic structure of the Adi Granth is such that it can be seen to be intended for a wide, popular audience from different regions of India. Second, it includes the works of Bhagats of Hindu and Muslim backgrounds.⁶⁸ These two points need to be examined thoroughly to understand the implications of Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

In his analysis of the linguistic pattern of the Adi Granth, which contains various local styles and usages, but which nevertheless sustains a sufficient degree of uniformity, Christopher Shackle concludes the discussion of the "South-Western Style" with the following observation:

This brief survey will, however, have fulfilled its aim if it encourages speculations as to how it was that so many elements drawn from local traditions were made to serve as the perfectly blended instruments for the expression of great religious poetry by the magical touch of the founder of Sikhism, and how it then was that, in a still richer mixture, such elements were carefully ordered and arranged by the compiler of its holy book, deliberately to underline the new religion's claims to universality.⁶⁹

Evidently one of Guru Arjan's primary concerns with respect to his inclusion of various linguistic elements in his arrangement of the Adi Granth was to underscore the universal nature of the claim made by the Sikh religion. Elsewhere, Shackle has reiterated that the very requirements of the universality of Guru Nanak's teachings involved his drawing upon a far

68. W.H. McLeod observes: "The result is a scripture which testifies in its actual composition to its concept of religious toleration. Hindu and Muslim belief interpreted in terms of interior devotion deserved and received a place within a scripture dedicated to the practice of interior devotion." See his article "Religious Tolerance in Sikh Scriptural Writings," in Gurbachan Singh Talib, ed., *Guru Tegh Bahadur: Background and the Supreme Sacrifice*, pp. 239-40.

69. Shackle, "The South-Western Style," p. 86.

wider range of linguistic resources.⁷⁰

Christopher Shackle cautiously labels the linguistic pattern of the *Adi Granth* with a single collective expression "the Sacred Language of the Sikhs" (SLS). He further stresses the "mixed character" of SLS, which is the result of drawing upon "a variety of local languages and dialects, as well as incorporating a good many archaic forms and words."⁷¹ One may argue that the variety of the SLS was simply the result of the *Adi Granth* being a composite scripture, the work of several different people with differing linguistic emphases. But the point that we are trying to make here is that the variety of the *Adi Granth* language that we encounter in the works of the Gurus was primarily linked with its universal appeal and significance. This issue may be examined from the actual linguistic structure of certain hymns of the Gurus, particularly those of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan.

Guru Arjan's *Vār Jaisari*, for instance, provides an excellent example of stylistic contrast, yet thematically parallel expression of a single theme in its linguistic structure. The first of each pair of shaloks preceding the *paūrīs*, is written in the Sahaskriti style⁷² and the second in the South-Western style. Christopher Shackle has reproduced a pair of shaloks from this *vār* in medieval Latin and the language of Scots lyric respectively to make the point that a

70. Christopher Shackle, "Modern Standard Punjabi," in Joseph T. O'Connell et al., *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1988), p. 105.

71. C. Shackle, *An Introduction to the Sacred Language of the Sikhs* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1983), p. ii. Also see, Michael C. Shapiro, "Observations on the Core Language of the *Ādi Granth*," *BIS* 3 (1987): 181-193. Shapiro argues that it is an anachronism to categorize the language of the *Adi Granth* as either Punjabi, Hindi or Braj, since these languages attained recognizably distinct forms only somewhat later. W.H. McLeod maintains that the *Adi Granth* language represents a Punjabi/Western Hindi version of Sant Bhasa, the "language of the Sants," which served as a lingua franca for the Sant tradition. See *Sikhs*, 85-6.

72. Christopher Shackle defines Sahaskriti as "an amalgam of *sahaskrta-* with *samskrta-*, in other words a 'grandified speech' which recalls Sanskrit without attempting to identify itself with most of its difficulties." C. Shackle, "The Sahaskriti Poetic Idiom in the *Ādi Granth*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1978), 41 (2), p. 310.

certain significance lay behind the differing linguistic emphases. The relevant passage reads in the original:

ਸਲੋਕ।

ਰਾਜ ਕਪਟੇ ਰੂਪ ਕਪਟੇ ਧਨ ਕਪਟੇ ਕੁਲ ਗਰਬਤਗ ਸੰਚੇਤਿ ਬਿਖਿਆ ਛਲੈ ਛਿਏ ਨਾਨਕ
ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਨ ਚਾਲਤੇ॥

ਪੇਖੰਦੜੋ ਕੀ ਭੁਲੁ ਤੁੰਮਾ ਦਿਸਮੁ ਸੋਹਟਾ ਅਭੁ ਨ ਲਹੰਦੜੋ ਮੁਲੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਥ ਨ ਜੁਲਈ
ਮਾਇਆ॥

ਪਉੜੀ।

ਚਲਦਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਸੰਜੀਐ। ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਆ ਜਤਨੁ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ
ਵੰਜੀਐ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਸਰਿਐ ਕਿਉ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਵੈ ਨਾ ਮਨੁ ਰੰਜੀਐ। ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਅਨ ਲਾਗੈ
ਨਰਕਿ ਸਮੰਜੀਐ। ਹੋਹੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਦਇਆਲ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਉ ਭੰਜੀਐ॥੧੦॥⁷³

Shalok.

Falsum regnum, falsa forma, falsae opes et familia. Fructus mali consequentur,
si cum eis non sit Deus. (1)

What fault is in the *tumma*-gourd,

That it seems lovely to your e'e—

Yet siller nane ye'll get for it,

Nor maun your fortune gang wi' ye. (2)

Pauri.

Why heap up that you may not take with you? Why speak of 'effort' which
just parts from Him? Forgetting God how can one's heart be glad? By leaving
Him one sends oneself to Hell. If You show mercy all my fears are gone.⁷⁴

Here the meaning of the original is reproduced with great virtuosity. Through the use of different linguistic styles on the theme of the evanescence of world'y goods, Guru Arjan was surely appealing to a wider audience from different regions. In doing so he was also making the claim that the variety of the Adi Granth language is primarily linked with its universal appeal and significance.

The inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in the Adi Granth is another point to justify the

73. M5, *Vār Jaisari*, 1-2 (10), AG, p. 708.

74. Shackle, "The South-Western Style," p. 86.

Sikh claim to universality. To a certain extent it represents the pan-Indian stance of Guru Arjan's editorial policy. It should, however, be added here that the *bhagat bānī* is already to be found in the available two volumes of the Goindval *pothīs*.⁷⁵ Evidently Guru Arjan was extending the precedent of Guru Amar Das, who provides the reasons underlying the inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in a particularly interesting verse:

ਨਾਮਾ ਫੀਰਾ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਜੁਲਾਹਾ ਪੁਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ਸੁਹਮ ਕੇ ਬੇਤੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਪਛਾਟਹਿ
ਹਉਮੇ ਜਾਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ ਸੁਹਿ ਨਰ ਤਿਨਕੀ ਬਾਟੀ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮੋਟੈ ਭਾਈ ॥⁷⁶
Nama (Namdev) the Chhimbs and Kabir the Julaha obtained their spiritual
status from the Perfect Guru. In divine knowledge, recognizing the Word
(*śabad*), they spurned all self-centredness (*haumai*) and caste. Gods and men
sing their *bānī* and none can wipe it away, my brother. (3)

Here Guru Amar Das acknowledges that Namdev and Kabir had the experience of the divine Truth which they proclaimed in verbal form (*śabad*) in their compositions. Thus their inclusion in the Sikh scripture follows naturally from the doctrine of the universal *bānī*, which appears perpetually in all ages in the works of the Bhagats. What cannot be effaced deserved to be preserved, and thus collected alongside the works of the Gurus.

It is worth noting that Guru Nanak does not mention Kabir or any other Bhagat in his works.⁷⁷ Also, he does not comment on any verse of Kabir or any other Sant poet, as he does in the case of Shaikh Farid, since he was certainly familiar with the hymns of the Sufi poet.⁷⁸

75. These two volumes contain the hymns of Kabir, Namdev, Trilochan, Sain, Ravidas, Jaidev, Ramanand and finally Shaikh Farid.

76. M3, *Sirī Rāgu* 22, AG, p. 67.

77. W.H. McLeod maintains that Guru Nanak and Kabir neither met nor knew each other's works. See W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 86, n. 2 and his article "Gurū Nānak and Kabir," *Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference* (1965), pp. 87-92.

78. Guru Nanak's comments on Shaikh Farid are examined in my, "Sikh Self-Definition," pp. 37-46. Also, nine hymns of Guru Nanak are composed in the language characteristic of Farid-*bānī*. For details, see Shackle, "Early Muslim vernacular poetry in the Indus Valley," p. 26, n. 27.

It was Guru Amar Das who mentioned the names of Kabir and Namdev for the first time in his hymns. He also inserted a number of Kabir's shaloks in his own *vārs* and responded to them in his commentary verses for the sake of defining true teaching, practice and community from the viewpoint of Sikh doctrine.⁷⁹

In the Goindval volumes the clusters of hymns by Kabir and Namdev are entitled "the hymns in *bhairo* mode by Kabir and Namdev, the devotees of Guru Baba [Nanak] (ਭੈਰੋ ਕਮੀਰੁ ਨਾਮਾ ਭਗਤ ਬਾਬੇ ਦੇ).⁸⁰ Two explanations may be offered for this striking title concerning the status of the Sant poets in the Sikh tradition. First, Kabir and Namdev were generally scorned by the learned and high-born and their compositions were ignored as being of no significance.⁸¹ This kind of attitude towards the Sants was the result of their vigorous attack on the smarta tradition, that is, the social and religious order taught in the Dharamshastras and the Puranas and based on the Vedas. Tulsi Das, for instance, referred to the Sant poetry in the *Dohāvalī* (Doha 554) as follows: "In this dark age with sakhis, shabads and dohas, with tales and stories, these devotees expound devotion, while scorning the Vedas and Puranas."⁸² He considered all of the Sants as a serious threat to conventional Hindu tradition and accused them as follows: "They leave the path of devotion to Hari and dream many new paths."⁸³ In the wake of such criticism it may have been necessary for Guru Amar Das to own Kabir and Namdev as devotees of Guru Nanak so that he might establish them in the early Sikh scriptural tradition.

79. Pashaura Singh, "Sikh Self-Definition", *loc. cit.* 84-91.

80. PUL, Photocopy of volume I, f. 263a. Also see the photographs of such folios in Giani Gurdit Singh, *Itihās Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib: Bhagat Bāṇī Bhāg* (Chandigarh: Sikh Sahit Sansthan, 1990), pp. 3, 4, 555.

81. Commenting on the low-born Sants, including Kabir and Namdev, Vaudville writes: "They are generally ignorant, if not always illiterate, workshon prophets and village saints whom the learned and high-born despise and ignore." See *Kabir*, p. 99.

82. R. Allchin, *Kitavali* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1944), p. 49.

83. Doha: 555, see *ibid.*

Second, the title in the Goindval *pothīs* may reflect the expansionist policy of Guru Amar Das. By making Kabir and Namdev as part and parcel of the tradition of Guru Nanak he may have intended to attract the followers of the Sants into the Sikh fold. The Goindval volumes thus subsume the *bhagat bānī* through an editorial device that simultaneously incorporates and supersedes the Sant tradition.⁸⁴ In this way the followers of the Sant poets may have been indirectly assimilated into the Sikh Panth in the second half of the sixteenth century. Whatever the case might have been, it is certain that the title in the Goindval *pothīs* reflects the contemporary Sikh understanding of the status of Kabir and Namdev as devotees of Guru Nanak.⁸⁵

In the Adi Granth, however, Guru Arjan arranged in *Āsā* raga the works of the Bhagats under the common title "The *bānī* of the Bhagats [such as] Kabir, Namdev and Ravidas in *Āsā* mode" (ਗਾਗੁ ਆਸਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤਾ ਕੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀਉ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਜੀਉ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ).⁸⁶ This new title indicates that the Bhagats were duly acknowledged as part and parcel of the Sikh tradition when their compositions were included in the final text of the Adi Granth. It also suggests that they all shared a common status because they were all judged to have spoken the

84. "The Church did not drop the Jewish scripture idea, but adapted it rather, with a *tour de force*, some might say: one accomplished over the next couple of centuries. There are partial parallels later in partial theory though not in practice in the Qur'an; and 1000 years later the Sikh scriptures emulated this again in a minor fashion. Yet in the end it could be contended that Christian scripture is the only instance in world history where one movement explicitly incorporates the scripture of another as such within its own, adding things new but making the old part and parcel—even if, in ways never fully clarified, a somewhat subordinate part and parcel." See Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Scripture as Form and Concept: Their Emergence for the Western World," in Miriam Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), p. 38.

85. This understanding may also be seen in the panegyrics by the bards in praise of Guru Nanak. It was part of the ancient triumphant (*śigvijaya*) tradition. See Kal, *Savayye Mahale Pahale ke* 8, AG, p. 1390.

86. Kabir, *Āsā* 1, AG, p. 475.

divine Word confirmed as such by the Sikh Gurus.⁸⁷ It is quite possible that by Guru Arjan's time the followers of the Bhagats had become part and parcel of the Sikh Panth.

Moreover, in contrast with Guru Nanak's comments on Shaikh Farid and Guru Amar Das's comments on both Kabir and Farid, Guru Arjan's verses of commentary bear the "signatures" of the Bhagats who are being commented upon. This new convention shows a more intimate relationship with the *bhagat bānī*. In these instances, Guru Arjan is actually addressing the followers of Kabir or Farid directly, as the case may be, while commenting on a particular composition of the Sant or Sufi poet.⁸⁸ Through these comments he is in fact addressing the issues being debated between the Sikh community and the followers of the Bhagats. The most striking example of it is the use of Kabir's signature in the *Bhairau* hymn, where Guru Arjan makes a direct assertion of independent Sikh identity: "We are neither Hindu nor Musalman."⁸⁹ In fact, here the Guru had in his mind a particular hymn of Kabir on the same theme and in the same musical mode, when he composed his own hymn.⁹⁰ Moreover, the *bhagat bānī* has always been part of Sikh worship in the congregational setting.⁹¹

One of the most significant reasons for the inclusion of the Bhagats is that they experienced a vision of Akal Purakh by following the discipline of meditation on the divine

87. The most striking example in this context is Guru Arjan's *aṣṭpadī*, in which he illuminates the spiritual attainment of all the Sant poets. See M5, *Baṅant Duukīān* 1, AG, p. 1192.

88. M5, *Śalok bhagat Kabīr jīu ke*, nos. 209-211, 214, 221, AG, pp. 1375-76; M5, *Śalok Shaikh Farīd ke*, nos. 75, 82-3, 105, 108-111, AG, pp. 1381-84.

89. M5, *Bhairau* 3, AG, p. 1136. Although the hymn has a parallel in the *Kabīr-granthāvalī* (*pad* 338), the last two verses including the line quoted above are not to be found there. See Hazari Prasad Divedi, *Kabīr* (New Delhi: Rajkamal, 3rd edn., 1985; 1st edn., 1971), p. 158. Guru Arjan seems to have adapted certain lines of Kabir in the first three verses and for this reason he employed his "signature" in his hymn. But the last two verses are definitely Guru Arjan's own composition. W.H. McLeod attributes the *Bhairau* hymn to Kabir, although he appreciates the problem of its authorship. See "Religious Tolerance," pp. 238-9.

90. Kabir, *Bhairau* 7, AG, p. 1158-9.

91. See, for instance, the inclusion of Bhagat hymns in the Sikh music anthology based on ancient tunes of ragas. Bhai Avtar Singh and Gurcharan Singh, *Gurbānī Saṅgīt Prachīn Rīt Ratanāvalī*, 2 vols. (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1979).

Name (*nām simaran*) in spite of their low castes. This is clearly revealed in Guru Arjan's comment on Dhanna:

ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸੈਗਿ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਮਨੁ ਲੀਟਾ ਆਢ ਦਾਮ ਕੇ ਛੀਪਰੇ ਹੋਇਓ
ਲਾਖੀਟਾਗਾ ਰਹਾਉ ਬੁਨਨਾ ਤਨਨਾ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਬੀਰਾ ਨੀਚ ਕੁਲਾ
ਜੋਲਾਹਰਾ ਭਇਓ ਗੁਨੀਯ ਗਹੀਰਾਗਾ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਚੁਵੰਤਾ ਢੋਰ ਨੀਤਿ ਤਿਨਿ ਤਿਆਗੀ
ਮਾਇਆ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਇਆਗਾ ਸੈਨੁ ਨਾਈ ਬੁਤਕਾਰੀਆ
ਓਹੁ ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਸੁਨਿਆ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਸਿਆ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਭਗਤਾ ਮਹਿ ਗਨਿਆਗਤਾ ਇਹ
ਬਿਧਿ ਸੁਨਿ ਕੇ ਜਾਟਰੇ ਉਠਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਗਾ ਮਿਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪਿ ਗੁਸਾਈਆ ਧੰਨਾ
ਵਡਭਾਗਾਘੋੜਾ⁹²

Mahala 5.

In Gobind, Gobind, Gobind was Namdev's *man* absorbed. A calico-printer worth half a farthing became worth many hundred thousands! (1) *rahāu*

Abandoning weaving and stretching thread, Kabir devoted his love to [Akal Purakh's] feet. Though a poor weaver of low family, he obtained untold virtues. (1)⁹³

Ravidas, who always carried carcasses, discarded attachment to worldliness (*māyā*). He became prominent in the holy fellowship and beheld the divine sight. (2)

Sain the barber, who was running errands, became known in each and every house. The moment the Supreme Lord took abode in his heart, he was numbered with the Bhagats. (3)

Listening to such happenings, the poor Jat [Dhanna] also engaged in devotion. Such was Dhanna's good fortune that the Lord himself became manifest to him in person. (4)

Evidently Guru Arjan inspired his own audience with the example of the Bhagats achieving their status through the transforming power of the divine Name. He also refers to the imitative behaviour of Dhanna, who was inspired by other low-caste Bhagats and who therefore became

92. M5, *Āsā* 2, AG, pp. 487–88. Here Guru Arjan's comment is inserted between two hymns of Dhanna.

93. The translation of these verses is adapted from Vaudeville's *Kabir*, pp. 29–30. Here Vaudeville wrongly attributes this hymn to Dhanna, which in fact is Guru Arjan's comment on Dhanna.

deeply involved in the practice of *nām simaraṅ* ("remembrance of the divine Name").

Guru Arjan's comment in fact reveals his own contemporary situation when a large number of Jats were attracted towards the Sikh faith, following the example of the various followers of the Sant poets. They were apparently becoming Sikhs because of the universal appeal of the Gurus' message and specifically their emphasis upon equality. In this context Irfan Habib makes the following observation:

It is quite clear what Gurū Nānak and his successors preached was a universal faith, and not a narrow or sectional doctrine. In such circumstances, Sikhism, which rejected in theory the entire system of caste and whose Gurūs in practice raised Jatts to the highest positions without hesitation, could not but fail to win over and command the loyalty of large sections from amongst the Jatts.⁹⁴

Clearly, the egalitarian spirit of the Gurus' teachings must be regarded as the motivating force behind the extensive Jat allegiance to the Panth. One hymn of Dhanna in the *dhanāsari* mode was incorporated in the Kartarpur manuscript after it was bound in 1604 CE. This is quite evident from the way it is recorded on folio 519/2 with the extended margin on the left-hand side of the volume.⁹⁵ Its later addition may reflect a situation when Jats were attracted into the Sikh fold in large numbers.⁹⁶

It should be emphasized that the inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in the Adi Granth may have been motivated primarily by the popular impulse of the times in which different sectarian traditions (*sampradāys*) were equally involved in moulding the poetry of the Sants into

94. Irfan Habib, "Jatts of Punjāb and Sind," in Harbans Singh and N. Gerald Barrier, eds., *Essays in Honour of Dr. Ganda Singh* (Patiala: Punjabi university, 1976), pp. 99-100. The author of the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* (1655 CE) noted that, although the Gurus had been Khattris, "they have placed the Khattris under the authority of the Jats, who belong to the low caste of the Vaishyas, as the big *Masands* of the Guru are mostly Jats." See "Nanak Panthis," p. 57.

⁹⁵ Kartarpur MS, f. 519/2. Also see, Dhanna, *Dhanāsari* 1, AG, p. 695.

⁹⁶ W.H. McLeod made the point on the significance of Jats and Jat culture on the developing Panth in *The Evolution of the Sikh Community* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), chaps. 1 and 3. The most notable response to his tentative enquiry was offered by Jagjīt Singh, *Perspectives on Sikh Studies* (New Delhi: Guru Nanak Foundation, 1985), section 2

collections of scripture.⁹⁷ But the kind of selection and treatment of the *bhagat bānī* that we encounter in the Adi Granth collection would scarcely be found anywhere else. Although Kabir is prominently represented in the Sikh scripture, followed by Namdev, Ravidas and Shaikh Farid, eleven other figures from different regions and castes are given a token representation to justify the Sikh claim to universality.⁹⁸

5. Doctrinal Issues arising from the Bhagat Bani

Traditionally, it is assumed that the compositions of medieval Bhagats were included in the Adi Granth on the basis of complete doctrinal identity with the teachings of the Gurus. Harbans Singh, for instance, maintains that Guru Arjan "applied rigorous standards and took only such of the hymns of the saints as were in accord with the Gurus' in their spiritual tone and meaning."⁹⁹ To a point it is true that the hymns of the Bhagats are included in the Adi Granth because of a basic agreement with the beliefs of the Gurus. It is also true that Guru Arjan edited the Bhagat material before incorporating it in the scripture and seemingly chose only those aspects of the *bhagat bānī* that were in basic agreement with the Sikh teachings. But these assertions may not tell the whole story. They tend to underscore the traditional view of

97. The Fatehpur manuscript on Sur Das (1582 CE), contains a total of 149 *padas* by other poets including Kabir (15), Ravidas (8), Namdev (11). See Gopal Narayan Bahura, "Sūrdās kā padā: Manuscript of 1639 V.S. (1582)", in Monika Thiel-Horstmann, ed., *Bhakti in Current Research, 1979-1982* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1983), pp. 19-23.

98. The Saints, Sufis and Bhagats of the Adi Granth hailed from Banaras (Kabir and Ravidas), Satara (Namdev), Sholapur (Trilochan and Parmanand), Pakpatan (Shaikh Farid), Tonk (Beni and Dhanna), Birbhum (Jaidev), Lucknow (Bhikhan), Oudh (Sur Das), Rewa (Sen), Gagraun near Quetta (Pipa), Sindh (Sadhana), and Paryag (Ramanand). Surjit Hans argues that by including them Sikh faith claims to transcend and subsume the different regional and caste divisions of the bhakti movement. See *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, p. 154.

99. Harbans Singh, *Guru Nanak and Origins of the Sikh Faith*, p. 14.

absolute identity between the teachings of the Bhagats and the Sikh Gurus. This is too simplistic a view of a complex phenomenon.

As we have already seen in our analysis, some verses of the Bhagats included in the Adi Granth are juxtaposed with the comments made on them by the Gurus. These comments are not always made because of agreement between the Gurus and the Bhagats, but are sometimes made to register clear disagreements with the views of the Bhagats. In these instances, the comments of the Gurus serve to define their own understanding of the developing Sikh community. In an earlier study, I have shown that the comments of the Gurus serve to do three things:

1. To highlight the Gurus' understanding of particular themes contained in the verses of the Bhagats and to promote thereby a process of self-definition for the Sikh community.
2. To provide more clarity and understanding to the obscure texts of the Bhagats so that they become intelligible. The aim here is to render the whole of the *bhagat bāṇī* coherent and its message meaningful to the Gurus' contemporary audience.
3. To voice emphatically the Gurus' differences from the vision of the Bhagats and to provide correctives to the views of the Bhagats which verge on the erroneous from the Sikh point of view.¹⁰⁰

In the light of these observations it may be stated that the selection of the *bhagat bāṇī* was not made exclusively on the basis of identity with the teachings of the Gurus, for there is difference as well as identity. As such, the process of integration of the *bhagat bāṇī* in the Adi Granth was based upon the recognition of two major points. The first was its harmony with the Gurus' thought in broad outline. The second was the highlighting of its differences with the Gurus' thought at points essential to proper Sikh self-understanding.

100. Pashaura Singh, "Sikh Self-Definition and the Bhagat Bāṇī", *foa.* 13-15, 110-116.

It should be emphasized that the Gurus were deeply concerned to cultivate a particular Sikh view of true teaching, practice and community by way of editing and commenting on the received tradition of the *bhagat bānī*. There are certain instances in the Kartarpur manuscript where hymns of the Bhagats are either obliterated with the use of *hartāl* ("deletion") or simply crossed out with a pen. These deletions clearly illustrate Guru Arjan's readiness to exercise editorial discretion.

5.1. Deletion of Kabir material from the *Adi Granth*

There are four instances in the Kartarpur manuscript where Kabir's verses are either crossed out with a pen or obliterated with the use of *hartāl*. We will discuss this issue in detail in order to find out Guru Arjan's editorial concerns leading to the exclusion of these verses.

5.1.1. Kabir's *Gaurī* shalok:

A shalok was incorporated in a different hand on the right hand corner just below the invocation of Kabir's work entitled *Vār Sat* ("Seven Days") in the *Gaurī* mode, but later on it was obliterated with the use of *hartāl*.¹⁰¹ This shalok can still be read under the deletion paste. It reads:

ਸਲੋਕਾ

ਧਰਿ ਅੰਬਰ ਵਿਚ ਚਲਤੀ ਤਿਹ ਲਾਲ ਸੁੰਗਯਾ ਫੂਲਾ ਅਖਰ ਓਹ ਲਖਿਓ ਨਹੀ ਰੋਜਾ ਕਰੇ
ਕਬੂਲਾ

Shalok.

There is a pivotal axis (*belarī*, "circular rod") between the lower region and the sky, where there is a crimson fragrant flower. You have not learned those

101. Kartarpur MS. f. 275/1.

[potent] syllables (*akhar*) and yet you expect that your fast (*rojā*, *crozā*, "the Muslim fast of Ramazan") will be approved [by the Lord]

Here the *belarī* refers to the spinal chord, the main axis of the human body, which is called in yogic terminology *merū-ḍaṇḍā* from the analogy of Mount Meru or Sumeru, believed to be the pivot of the universe.¹⁰² There is a series of *chakras* or "discs" along the spinal chord in the shape of lotuses (*padmas*). The "lower region" (*dhari*) refers to the *mūlādhāra-chakra*, whereas the "sky" (*ambar*) refers to the "thousand-petalled lotus" (*sahasrāra-chakra*).¹⁰³

The shalok clearly reflects the mystical state achieved through the successful performance of the *haṭha yoga* technique. It seems to be addressed to a Muslim, who may have been observing his fast of Ramazan without any idea of yogic knowledge and practices. Its theme does not fit in the context of Kabir's composition entitled *Vār Sat*. Further, Guru Arjan would never approve this couplet because of its emphasis on the discipline of *haṭha yoga*. Although it was originally recorded in the Kartarpur volume, it was subsequently deemed unworthy of inclusion and was deleted with the use of *haṭāḷ*.

5.12. Kabir's *Āsā* hymn:

There is a hymn of Kabir in the *Āsā* raga, which is crossed out with a pen. It is quite certain that C.H. Loehlin was referring to the verses of this hymn when he took notes on the Kartarpur manuscript on 7 July 1946: "Several verses by Kabir in Rag *Asa* have been obliterated

102. Vaudeville, *Kabir*, p. 130.

103. For more details, see chapter 3, p. 73, n. 23.

The reason for the obliteration of this hymn in the Kartarpur volume does not appear to be linked with its paradoxical nature. There are a number of such hymns to be found in the Adi Granth.¹⁰⁹ Rather, the issue in the present case appears to be the use of such strong words as *sālā* ("brother-in-law") and *sasur* ("father-in-law") for "Ram", which form part of abusive language in the Punjabi culture. This is hardly the language of self-abasement or the poetics of humility or even respect, which is characteristic of the Adi Granth. Kabir, who had to face the daily scorn of the pandits of Banaras because of his low caste, developed a caustic and blunt style.¹¹⁰ He frequently becomes offensive to his audience, which might go well with a solitary spiritual seeker. It is, however, certainly not the style of the Sikh Gurus, who had a deep sense of social mission and the idea of an organized religious community. Whatever the original context of this hymn might have been, Guru Arjan, it seems, decided to exclude it because it did not match the spiritual tone and meaning of the Adi Granth.¹¹¹

513. Kabir's *Sorāṭhi* hymn:

109. Kabir, *Basant* 3, AG, p. 1194 and *Gaurī* 14, AG, p. 326. The second hymn includes Guru Arjan's commentary verse at the end which is intended to clarify the meaning of the hymn.

110. Hess and Singh, *The Bijak of Kabir*, pp. 10–11. For more details on Kabir's style, see Linda Hess, "Three Kabir Collections: A Comparative Study," and "Kabir's Rough Rhetoric," in Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, eds., *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India* (Berkeley and Delhi: Berkeley Religious Studies Series and Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), pp. 112–165.

111. This hymn may have originated in response to a Vaishnava's suggestion to repeat the name of "Ram", the incarnation of Vishnu. Kabir may have replied: "Why on earth shall I say "Ram" now when he is my brother-in-law (*sālā*) or father-in-law (*sasur*)?" In his compositions, Kabir explicitly repudiates this anthropomorphic "Ram". For him, "Ram" is primarily a sound, a *mantra* consisting of the long and short syllable "*Rā-mā*". See *ibid.*, p. 4.

There are only two lines of Kabir's hymn in *Sorathī* raga that were recorded in the Adi Granth and were then crossed out with a pen. These two lines appear in the Kartarpur volume as follows:

ਅਉਧੁ ਸੋ ਜੋਗੀ ਗੁਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਇਸ ਪਦ ਕਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਬੇਰਾਗਾ ਰਹਾਉ¹¹²

O Audhu! That Yogi is my Guru, who clarifies the meaning of this word (*pad*) to me. (1) *rahāu*.

Clearly this verse is addressed to an *audhū* (or *avadhūta*), "one who has shaken off [the ties of *samsāra*]"¹¹³ Here Kabir offers to become the disciple of a yogi who might reveal the esoteric meaning of a particular hymn (*pad*) to him. To entertain such an idea of accepting a yogi as Guru would amount to exposing the community of householders to the Nath tradition. This seems to be the main reason why this particular verse was crossed out with a pen in the text of the Kartarpur manuscript and why the remainder of the hymn was not recorded. Some of the manuscripts of the Adi Granth do not contain even these two lines.¹¹⁴

It is important to note that the above verse of Kabir is a part of a hymn, the complete version of which is to be found in some later manuscripts of the Banno text.¹¹⁵ The reading of the complete hymn is as follows:

ਸੋਰਠਿ

ਅਉਧੁ ਸੋ ਜੋਗੀ ਗੁਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਇਸ ਪਦ ਕਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਬੇਰਾਗਾ ਰਹਾਉ ਤਰਵਰੁ ਏਕ ਮੁਲ
ਬਿਨੁ ਠਾਢਾ ਬਿਨੁ ਫੂਲੇ ਫਲੁ ਲਾਗਾ ਸਾਖਾ ਪੜ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਵਾਕੇ ਅਸਟ ਕਵਲ ਮੁਖ
ਜਾਗਾਗਾ ਸਰਵਰ ਏਕ ਪੰਛੀ ਦੁਇ ਥੈਠੇ ਏਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਏਕੁ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲੇ ਸਤ ਜਗੁ ਬੁਟ

112. Kartarpur MS, f. 497/2. Also see, PUM MS # 8, f. 261b; Jograj MS PUM # 2, f. 288a; PUM MS # 1, f. 324b; Gurdita Sekhon MS, f. 357b; and DBSSK MS # 3, f. 296b.

113. Vaudeville, *Kabīr*, p. 125.

114. PUM MS # 6, f. 298b. In the Una Sahib MS # 2, the verse is written in the margin of folio 253a in a different hand as a later thought.

115. John Rylands Library, Panj. MS # 5, f. 216b. The whole hymn is obliterated with the use of *hartāl*, but it could still be read with some help from the following manuscripts: Sri Guru Granth Sahib Trust, MS # 504, f. 319a and Tarlok Singh Choudhary's Library, MS # 3, f. 277a.

ਚੁਟ ਖਾਇਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਖੋਲਾਗਾ ਗਗਨ ਗੁਫਾ ਮਹਿ ਉਰਧ ਮੁਖ ਕੁਆ ਤਹਾ
ਅਮਿਉ ਕਾ ਵਾਸਾ ਸੁਘਰਾ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਤਰ ਭਰ ਪੀਵੈ ਨਿਗੁਰਾ ਰਹੈ ਖਿਆਸਾਗ ਪੰਛੀ ਕਾ
ਖੋਲੁ ਮੀਨ ਕਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਕਹਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਬਿਚਾਰੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਮਹਿ ਇਕ ਮੁਰਤਿ ਦੇਖੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ
ਕੈ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ॥੧੬॥¹¹⁶

Sorathi.

O Audhu! That Yogi is my Guru, who clarifies the meaning of this word
(*pad*) to me. (1) *rahāu*.

There is a tree standing without roots, which bears fruit without flowering.
There are no branches or leaves of that [tree], still [a flower of] eight lotuses
blooms. (1)

There are two birds sitting at a pool, one of them guru and the other disciple.
The disciple has picked and eaten [the fruit of] the whole world; the guru has
enjoyed the sport within. (2)

In the cave of the sky there is an inverted well, which is the abode of the
nectar. The intelligent one drinks the nectar to the fill, while the one who
lacks a guru (*nigurā*) remains thirsty. (3)

After reflection Kabir says : "The sport of the bird is just like the way of a
fish. I have seen a unique form (*mūrati*) within the external appearance (*sūrat*),
for which I sacrifice myself to the True Guru." (4. 9)

Evidently, the whole hymn is full of Tantric language and concepts. The eight lotuses
(*aṣṭ-kanwal*) refer to the highest of the astral nerve centres (*chakras*) through which the
kunḍalini power rises. The references to the "cave in the sky" (*gagan guphā*) and the "inverted
well" (*uradh mukh kūā*) of nectar point towards the state of supra-consciousness to which the
yogis aspire.¹¹⁷ Further, there are some paradoxical statements (*ulṭabāṃsī*) too: the tree standing
without roots and bearing fruit without flowering, and a bird following the way of a fish.
Obviously these statements are intended to convey an experience which defies logic. These
esoteric teachings of Tantric Yoga would scarcely be acceptable to Guru Arjan.

116. Ibid., p. 216b.

117. Karine Schomer, "Kabir in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*," pp. 82–83.

5.1.4. Kabir's Shalok:

Although an extra shalok was incorporated in the Kartarpur volume at the end of Kabir's shaloks in a different hand, it was crossed out with a pen. An editorial comment explains that "this shalok is just an ordinary one" (ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਐਮੇ ਹੈ). Obviously it was not approved by Guru Arjan. The shalok reads:

ਕਬੀਰ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਟੰਤਰੈ ਲੇਬੇ ਕਉ ਕਛੁ ਨਾਹਿ ਕਿਆ ਲੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਟੇਇ ਸਉਪ
ਰਹੀ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ¹¹⁸

What can one take in return, Kabir, for revealing the mystery of the divine Name? What [gift of mine] could please the Guru who provides contentment?
I am surrendering [my self] within.¹¹⁹

The word *paṭantarā* stands for the "contents of an official document" which are confidential in nature.¹²⁰ In the present context Kabir employs it in connection with the mystery of the divine Name (*rām nām ke paṭantarai*), which refers to the contemporary esoteric practice of giving *nām* to the disciples who belonged to the inner Sant circles. He further proclaims that the divine Name is itself a priceless gift and that no present could repay it. He may also be referring to the Indian tradition of *guru-dakṣiṇā*, according to which it is customary for the disciple to make an offering to his teacher once he has received the Name in the form of a sacred *mantra*.¹²¹

There are at least two possible reasons why Guru Arjan disapproved of this couplet. First, the theme of the shalok is linked with the esoteric practice of giving the *nām* secretly

118. Kartarpur MS, f. 943/2. Jodh Singh reads the word *saump* ("to offer") as *chaup* (?), which does not make any sense in the present context. He seems to have confused the Punjabi letter "sa" with "cha". See *Srī Kartārpurī Bīr de Darāsan*, p. 119.

119. The analogue of this couplet appears in the *Kabīr-granthāvalī* (1.1). See Vaudeville, *Kabīr*, p. 151.

120. C. Shackleton, *A Gurū Nānak Glossary* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1981), p. 179.

121. See Vaudeville's interpretation in *Kabīr*, p. 151, n. 2.

which had no place in the contemporary Sikh practice. The Gurus freely "distributed" (*varṭāe*) the gift of the *nām* in the holy congregation.¹²² Guru Nanak's observation is particularly significant in this context: "A curse on the life of those who write the *nām* [as an incantation on a piece of paper] and sell it [for profit]" (ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਤਿਨਾ ਕਾ ਜੀਵਿਆ ਜਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਵੇਚਹਿ ਨਾਉਂ।)¹²³ Secondly, it did not fit well into the total context of Kabir's shaloks in the *Adi Granth*. Its later addition at the end and subsequent deletion may suggest that it did not appeal to Guru Arjan who considered it less perceptive and thereby took the decision to exclude it.

52. *The Mira Bai hymn*

Mira Bai's hymn is another textual problem in the *Adi Granth* which has drawn a great deal of scholarly attention in the Kartarpur-Banno debate. Although it is written in the Kartarpur volume in a different hand, it has been obliterated with a pen. Obviously the hymn was originally there, but was subsequently deemed unworthy of inclusion and hence it was crossed out. It is not to be found in the earliest extant copy of the Kartarpur manuscript, which was apparently prepared during Guru Arjan's period.¹²⁴ This indicates that the decision to exclude Mira Bai's hymn must have been made by Guru Arjan himself. Also, there is a very significant marginal note in Ram Rai's *bīṛ* (written in 1659 CE), which belongs to the Kartarpur tradition, mentioning specifically that "Mira Bai's hymn is not to be found in the *Granth* of the fifth Guru" (ਮੀਰਾ ਬਾਈ ਕਾ ਸਬਦ ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਮਹਲੈ ਕੇ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਨਾਹੀ।)¹²⁵ The manuscripts of both the

122. M1, *Mārū* 8, AG, p. 991; M3, *Vār Vadahāis*, 2 (18), AG, p. 593; M5, *Gaurī Guāreri* 100, AG, pp. 185-6; M5, *Sāraṅg* 80, AG, p. 1220; M5, *Gūjarī* 3, AG, pp. 495-6. Also see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, p. 68.

123. M1, *Vār Sāraṅg*, 1 (20), AG, p. 1245.

124. PUM, MS # 7, f. 448b.

125. G.B. Singh, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib dīān Prāchīn Bīṛān* (Lahore: Modern Publishers, 1944), p. 169.

Lahore and Kartarpur traditions do not contain the hymn of Mira Bai at all.

All copies of the Banno version of the *Adi Granth* include the Mira Bai hymn. It is as follows:

ਮੀਰਾ ਬਾਈ

ਮਨ ਹਮਾਰੋ ਬਾਇਓ ਮਾਈ ਕਵਲ ਨੈਨੁ [ਆਪਨੇ ਗੁਨ]¹²⁶ ਰਹਾਉ ਤੀਖਨ ਤੀਰ ਬੇਇ
ਸਰੀਰ ਦੂਰ ਗਇਓ ਮਾਈ ਲਾਗਿਓ ਤਬ ਜਾਨਿਓ ਨਹੀ ਅਬਿ ਨ ਸਹਿਓ ਜਾਈ ਰੀ
ਮਾਈਆ ਤੰਤ ਮੰਤ ਅਉਖਦ ਕਰਉ ਤਉ ਪੀਰ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਹੈ ਕੋਊ ਉਪਕਾਰ ਕਰੇ ਕਠਨ
ਦਰਦ ਮਾਈ ਗੀਰਾ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਹਉ ਤੁਮ ਦੂਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਬੇਗਿ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਆਈ ਮੀਰਾ ਗਿਰਧਰ
ਸੁਆਮੀ ਦਇਆਲ ਤਨ ਕੀ ਤਪਤ ਬੁਝਾਈ ਰੀ ਮਾਈ ਕਵਲ ਨੈਨ ਆਪਨੇ ਗੁਨ
ਬਾਇਓ ਮਾਈੜ¹²⁷

The Lotus-eyed Lord [with his attributes] has entwined my *man*, O mother. (1)
rahāu.

The sharp arrow [of His love] has pierced my body through, O mother. When
it struck me I knew it not; now it cannot be endured, O mother. (1)

Though I use charms, incantations and medicines the pain will not depart. Is
there any one who will treat me? Intense is the agony, O mother. (2)

You are near to me, you are not distant; come quickly to meet me. Mira's
Lord, the Mountain-Lifter, who has quenched the fire of my body, is
compassionate, O mother. The Lotus-eyed Lord has entwined [my *man* with
the wine of His] attributes, O mother.¹²⁸ (3)

Evidently, the central theme of the hymn is Krishna bhakti. The Lotus-eyed Lord (*kaval nainu*), an epithet of Krishna, was apparently the object of Mira Bai's special worship. She further employs an expanded version of her signature—"Mira's Lord the Mountain Lifter" (*mīrā giradhar suāmi*)—which clearly indicates that the image of Krishna as the Mountain Lifter is

126. The phrase *apane gun* is not to be found in the Kartarpur MS, although it appears in later manuscripts of Banno text. See Kartarpur MS, f. 811/1.

127. Kartarpur MS, f. 811/1. This is the oldest record of Mira's poem to be found in the early seventeenth-century manuscript. For more details on her poems in later manuscripts, see John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 202-3, n. 9.

128. This translation is adapted from the one given in Max Arthur Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion* vol. VI (1st edn., Oxford University Press, 1909; 1st reprint, New Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1963), p. 356.

the one she holds most dear.¹²⁹

The main focus of the hymn is on the theme of the pangs of separation from the divine beloved, Krishna. The intensity of this anguish reaches its climax in the symbolism of sharp arrows afflicting wounds in the body. The phrase *tanu kī tapati bujhāī* ("quenched the fire of my body") points towards the erotic nature of Mira's love for Krishna.¹³⁰ It is important to note that the erotic symbolism in the compositions of the Gurus is toned down from the romantic love expressed by Mira Bai in her poetry.¹³¹ This may be one of the reasons why Guru Arjan excluded her hymn from the Sikh scripture. The second reason seems to be Mira Bai's emphasis on Krishna bhakti, which is contrary to the Sikh devotional approach towards the non-incarnated Akal Purakh.¹³² A third reason may be linked with Guru Arjan's editorial policy to keep the Sikh tradition away from the Vaishnava influence, which will become clear in the later discussion of this chapter.

53. *The Sur Das Hymn*

The third major issue in the Kartarpur-Banno debate is linked with the incomplete nature of Sur Das's hymn, the first line of which is recorded in the Kartarpur manuscript in the *Sārang* mode, followed by Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das. It created a great deal of confusion for later scribes who struggled with this textual problem and offered varying solutions to it. First, most of the scribes of the Lahore tradition did not record even the single line in

129. Hawley and Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India*, p. 131.

130. "I am playing hide and seek with Him, robed in this smock of five colors. Disguised as I was, He caught me, and beholding His beauty I made myself over to Him, body and soul." See A.J. Alston, *The Devotional Poems of Mirābāī* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), p. 42.

131. Gurudharam Singh Khalsa, "Guru Ram Das Remembered: The Fourth Guru in Sikh Tradition" (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1990), p. 72.

132. W.H. McLeod, *Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion*, p. 214.

their copies of the *Adi Granth*.¹³³ Second, some scribes recorded the single line unconventionally after Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das.¹³⁴ Third, some scribes omitted the single line of Sur Das, but they attributed Guru Arjan's hymn to Sur Das instead.¹³⁵ Fourth, later scribes of the Banno text recorded Sur Das's complete hymn in their copies of the *Adi Granth*.¹³⁶ All of these scribes failed to understand Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

The single line of Sur Das's hymn is to be found in the Kartarpur manuscript, followed by a blank space. It is worth noting that early manuscripts of the Banno recension also contain only the single line.¹³⁷ Its reading is as follows:

ਫਾੜਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੈਗਾ¹³⁸

Man, turn your back on those who shun the Lord.

The opening line of Sur Das's hymn stresses the urgent need to completely cut oneself off from the company of those who have shunned the Lord. This line inspired a response from Guru Arjan, and this is the main reason why he retained it in the *Adi Granth* while he excluded the remaining lines of the hymn. This unique instance illuminates two different aspects of Guru Arjan's editorial policy, namely the exclusive and inclusive attitudes towards the compositions of the Bhagats.

In order to find out the reasons for excluding the remainder of Sur Das's hymn, we must examine the complete version of it. It reads as follows:

133. GNDU, MS # 1084, f. 351b (or 337a, second numbering); Jograj MS, PUM # 2, f. 583b; BL, MSS OR. 2159, f. 721a (or 718a).

134. *Una Sahib* MS # 2, f. 493b; PUM, MS # 6, f. 525b; BL, MSS OR. 2748, f. 690b (or 680b).

135. GNDU MS # 1084, f. 398b (or 384a); BL, MSS ADD. 25,680, f. 688a (or 721a).

136. Kanpur MS, f. 414a (originally there was only the single line, but some other hand completed the hymn much later); IOL, MSS Panj. C5 (f. 617a), C1 (f. 516b), F1 (f. 618b), D3 (f. 906a), D1 (f. 608b); BL, MSS OR. 1125, f. 576a (608a); Trinity College, MSS R. 153, f. 750b.

137. Gurdita Sekhon MS, f. 665b; DBSSK MS # 3, f. 556a; PUM MS # 1, f. 615b; IOL, MSS Panj. D2, f. 615b and John Rylands Library, Panj. MS # 5, f. 385a.

138. Kartarpur MS, f. 885/2.

ਫਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਨਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ। ਕਹਾ ਭਏ ਪੀਪਾਇ ਪੀਆਏ ਤਿਖੁ ਨ ਤਜੈ
 ਭੁਅੰਗਾਯਾਰਹਾਉ। ਕਾਗਾ ਕਹਾ ਕਪੂਰ ਚੁਗਾਏ ਸੁਆਨ ਨਵਾਇਐ ਰੰਗਾ ਖਰ ਕਉ ਕਹਾ
 ਅਗਰ ਕਉ ਲੋਪਨੁ ਮਰਕਟ ਡੂਖਨ ਅੰਗਾਯਾ ਪਾਹਨ ਪਤਿਤ ਤ ਬਾਨ ਨ ਚੋਧੇ ਰੀਤੇ ਹੋਇ
 ਨਿਖੰਗਾ ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ਓਇ ਕਾਠੀ ਕਮਰੀ ਚੜਤਿ ਨ ਦੂਜੇ ਰੰਗਾ¹³⁹

Soul, turn your back on those who shun the lord. Tell me, what good is there
 in giving cobras milk? Serpents can never surrender their venom. Why waste
 camphor by feeding it to crows or squander the water of the Ganges on dogs?
 Why array an ass in an aromatic scent? Why bejewel a monkey or dress it in
 clothes? Do you really think an arrow can pierce a fallen stone, even if you
 empty your quiver of them all? Once you've dyed a blanket black, says Sūr,
 there's no point hoping for a different hue.¹⁴⁰

Clearly, Sur Das, like Kabir, describes the obstinacy and heedlessness of sinners in the formulaic
 expressions: "You can't pierce a stone with an arrow," and "If you dye a blanket black, the
 colour will never change."¹⁴¹ Here Sur Das appears to be strongly opposed to any kind of
 association with sinners. For him, sinners are totally lost and for them the doors of liberation are
 closed.

Sur Das's view is directly opposed to the optimistic Sikh view that it is never too late
 to turn towards Akal Purakh and that every sinner is a potential sant. This seems to be the
 reason why Guru Arjan accepted only the first line of Sur Das's hymn and edited out the rest
 of the hymn. However, he offered his response to the issue raised in Sur Das's hymn. His
 comment reads:

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੁਰਦਾਸਾ

139. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Trust, Coventry, MS # 506, f. 740b. Other copies of Banno text have
 slightly different readings, but their meaning remains the same.

140. John Stratton Hawley, *Sūr Dās: Poet, Singer, Saint* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1984),
 p. 135. This hymn is to be found in the early manuscripts on Sur Das as follows: B3, U1, J2, J4,
 j5, A1 and Sabhā 332. For details, see p. 196. Here the first line is *tajau man hari-bimukhan kau
 sañg*. The Adi Granth version has the Punjabi synonym *chhādi* for the word *tajau*.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕਾ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਿ ਸਰਬਸੁ ਸਤੁ ਅਰਪਿਓ ਅਨਦ ਸਹਜ
 ਧੁਨਿ ਝੋਕਾਯਾ ਰਹਾਉ। ਦਰਸਨ ਪੇਖਿ ਤਏ ਨਿਰਬਿਖਈ ਪਾਏ ਹੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਥੋਕਾ ਆਨ ਬਸਤੁ
 ਸਿਉ ਕਾਜੁ ਨ ਕਛੁ ਆਏ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਬਦਨ ਅਲੋਕਾਯਾ ਸਿਆਮ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਤਜਿ ਆਨ ਜੁ ਚਾਹਤੁ
 ਜਿਉ ਕੁਸਟੀ ਤਨਿ ਜੋਕਾ ਸੁਰਦਾਸ ਮਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਹਥਿ ਲੀਨੋ ਦੀਨੋ ਇਹੁ ਪਰਲੋਕਾਯਾ¹⁴²

Sarang Mahaia 5 Sur Das

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

The devotees of the Lord abide with Him [alone]. They dedicate their mind, body and everything else to Him and remain joyously intoxicated by the divine music of the Word¹⁴³ (1) *rahāu*.

They are relieved of all evil at the [mere] sight of the Lord; [from Him] they receive all that they need. They have nothing to do with anything else except for the sight of [His] beautiful form. (1)

Those who, discarding the Beautiful Lord,¹⁴⁴ seek anything else are like leeches sucking lepers' blood. O Sur Das! the Lord has grasped my *man* in His hand, and has granted me [the everlasting joy of] the spiritual world.¹⁴⁵ (218)

Here Guru Arjan stresses the point that saintly people (*hari lok*) always abide in the company of Akal Purakh who is mystically present in the holy fellowship. In contrast with Sur Das, Guru Arjan's emphasis falls upon highlighting the goodness of the saintly people rather than on the wickedness of sinners. By doing so, he is in fact inviting the followers of the Bhagat to become part of the Sikh sangat and to enjoy the state of blissful *sahaj* through devotional singing.

It becomes obvious from this analysis that hymns of the Bhagats from the *saguna* ("with attributes") school, who place emphasis upon worship through image and myth, were the least acceptable to Guru Arjan. The hymns of Mira Bai and Sur Das (except the

142. M5, *Sarang Sūrdās*, AG, p. 1253. Giani Gurdit Singh wrongly attributes this hymn to Sur Das Madan Mohan. This is in fact Guru Arjan's comment on Sur Das. There is no thematic or verbal correspondence (except the rhyme-scheme) between this hymn and Sur Das Madan Mohan's hymn he quotes from the Har Sahai *pothī*. See *Itihās Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, pp. 584-5.

143. The word *dhuni* means "musical sound, tune, melody", especially "the music of the Word".

144. The phrase *siām sundar* is an epithet of Krishna. By employing it Guru Arjan is addressing Sur Das in his own terms.

145. The word *paralok* means "hereafter" or the "next world".

opening line) were excluded mainly because they were both worshippers of the amorous and anthropomorphic Krishna. This point may be further elaborated by an examination of two extra-canonical hymns by Namdev and Trilochan, which are to be found in the later manuscripts of the Lahore tradition.

5.4. *Namdev's Dhanāsari Hymn*

One extra-canonical hymn of Namdev is usually found in the *dhanāsari* mode in some later manuscripts of the *Adi Granth*. It is not recorded in the *Kartarpur* volume, which clearly indicates that it was turned down by *Guru Arjan* at the time of the compilation of the scripture in 1604 CE. Its reading is as follows:

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ

ਸਾਤ ਸਮੁੰਦ ਜਾਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਰਟੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਜਾਕੇ ਬੇਟੇ ਤਾਸੁ ਧਣੀ ਪਗੁ ਧੋਇ ਨ ਸਾਕਉ
ਇਬੜੇ ਜਾਕੇ ਪੋਟੀਆ ਬਾਪ ਗੋਵਲੀਆ ਠਲਿ ਜਾਸਿਉ। ਮੇ ਤਉ ਚੁੰਬਤੀਆ ਲੋਟੇ ਸਿਉ। ਮੇ
ਤਉ ਬੋਰੜੇ ਜੇਵੇ ਸਿਉਆ ਰਹਾਉ। ਕਰਉ ਅਢਾਈ ਧਰਤੀ ਮਾਗੈ ਬਾਵਨ ਰੂਪ ਅਨੰਤੋ
ਤਾਸੁ ਧਣੀ ਪਗੁ ਧੋਇ ਨ ਸਾਕਉ ਪਗੁ ਏਵੜੁ ਹੈ ਜਾਕੋਗ ਦਾੜਾ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਜਿਨਿ ਧਰਤੀ
ਰਾਖੀ ਬਾਰਾਹੁ ਰੂਪ ਅਨੰਤੋ ਤਾਸੁ ਧਣੀ ਪਗੁ ਧੋਇ ਨ ਸਾਕਉ ਇਬੜੇ ਜਾਕੇ ਏਤੋਗ
ਅਧੜੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਧੜੇ ਮਾਟਸ ਨਿਕਸਿਉ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਜਾਕੋ ਤਾਸੁ ਧਣੀ ਪਗੁ ਧੋਇ ਨ ਸਾਕਉ
ਨਖੁ ਏਵੜੁ ਹੈ ਜਾਕੋਗ ਨਾਮੇ ਚੇ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਰੂੜੇ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਮਾਧਉ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨ ਮੁਰਾਰੀ। ਦੁਖੁ
ਰੰਜਨ ਤੈ ਤੰਜਨ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਬਨ ਬਨਵਾਰੀ॥¹⁴⁶

Dhanasari.

His [Tortoise-form's] river (*kirani*) constitutes seven oceans, and his daughter is [this huge] earth. I cannot wash the feet of that Lord, whose back is so vast!

(1)

I sacrifice myself to you, O Father Cowherd! I am lying on the ground [to worship You] I am just as meek as one can be! (1) *rahāu*.

The two and a half paces of land was asked [from the demon Bali] by the

146. GNDU, MS # 1084, f. 222b (or 208a); DBSSK, MS # 3, f. 312a (written in the margin in a different hand); John Rylands Library, Panj. MS # 5, f. 227a; University of Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MSS R.15.153, f. 412b.

Dwarf-form, whose limit cannot be known. I cannot wash the feet of that Lord, whose cosmic feet are so huge! (2)

The giant Boar-form rescues the earth [by raising it out of the ocean depths] on one of his tusks. I cannot wash the feet of that Lord, whose teeth are so strong! (3)

The half-lion and half-man form of the Lord emerges [from a pillar to destroy the infidel King Hiranyakashipu]. I cannot wash the feet of that Lord, whose nails are so sharp! (4)

Namdev's Master is Krishna of the Yadu clan, the most beautiful Lord, the enemy of Mura the demon. He is the divine Beloved, the wearer of the garland of wild flowers, the destroyer of pain and fear. (5)

This hymn is the most striking example of Krishna bhakti. Here Namdev presents the four important incarnations (*avatārs*) of Vishnu in his native Marathi style. In the first instance he refers to the creative power of the giant tortoise in relation to the earth. The original myth is better known as the Tortoise-form (*kacchaparūpa* or *kūrmāvatāra*), for supporting Mount Mandara when gods and demons churn the sea to obtain the elixir of immortality.

Secondly, Namdev refers to the story of the Dwarf-form (*bāvan rūp* or *vāmanrūpa*). Three cosmic strides of Vishnu form the basis of this myth. The demon Bali, usurper of Indra's power, grants two and a half paces of land to Vishnu when he comes to him in the guise of a dwarf. Bali hospitably washes Vishnu's feet to welcome his guest, and then Vishnu assumes his cosmic shape, traversing the earth, atmosphere, and heaven, and destroying the demon.

Thirdly, Namdev describes the myth of the Boar-form (*bārāhu rūp* or *varāhāvatāra*). According to this Vaishnava story, the giant boar rescues the earth by raising it out of the ocean depths on one of his tusks.

Finally, the Maharashtrian Sant refers to the story of the Man-lion form of Vishnu (*narasimhāvatāra*). It is this form which destroyed the infidel king Hiranyakashipu, who threatened his own son Prahlad with death because of the son's devotion to Hari. The king had

been given a boon of invulnerability by day or night, by god, man, or beast, inside or outside his palace. To overcome it the Lord appears at twilight as a man-lion inside a pillar and reaches out to dismember the demon king with his nails.¹⁴⁷ These stories of Vaishnava incarnations played an important role in the devotional tradition of the Maharashtrian Sants.

The analysis of Namdev's extra-canonical hymn may provide a clue to Guru Arjan's editorial policy. The reason why he did not accept this hymn in the first place seems likely to be its link with Krishna bhakti through the worship of the incarnations (*avatārs*) of Vishnu. This was deemed contrary to the Sikh devotional approach of worship of the non-incarnated divine.¹⁴⁸ It is quite possible that Guru Arjan's outright rejection of certain hymns of the Sants may have created some resentment among the followers of these Sants who may have tried to interpolate those hymns in the Adi Granth text later on. This may be the primary reason for the diversity that we encounter in the early manuscripts of the Adi Granth, especially the Lahore and Banno traditions.

5.5. Trilochan's *Gūjarī* hymn

There is one extra-canonical hymn of Trilochan in the *gūjarī* mode, which was first recorded in the Lahori *bīṛ* written in *sambāt 1667* (1610 CE) during the period of Guru Hargobind. It is important to note that this hymn of Trilochan is not to be found in the Kartarpur volume. Evidently Guru Arjan had not approved its inclusion when he finally

147. These four stories are adapted from the description of Krishna's tenfold form, given in Barbara Stoler Miller, ed. and trans., *Love Song of the Dark Lord: Jayadeva's Gītagovinda* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 21–22.

148. For the explicit rejection of *avatārs* in the Gurus' thought, see M1, *Āsā* 7, AG, pp. 350–51; M3, *Vaḍahaṅs* 3, AG, p. 559; M5, *Bhairau* 1, AG, p. 1136. Also see Norvin Hein, "Guru Nanak's Comment on the Vaishnava Lila," in Harbans Singh, ed., *Perspectives on Guru Nanak* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1975), pp. 493–501.

produced the authoritative text in 1604 CE. It appears in some later manuscripts of the *Adi*

Granth. Its reading is as follows:

ਗੁਜਰੀ

ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਪਰਸੀ ਕਾਇ ਰੇ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਅਚਿੰਤ ਕਲਪਤਰੋ ਕੋਟ ਪਾਸਿ ਹਉ ਮਾਗਤ
ਆਫਉ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੁਤੁ ਏਯੈ ਲਾਫਬਗੋਯਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੋ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਰਿਨੁ ਮੇ ਅਵਰੁ
ਨ ਜਾਚਉ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਟਉ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕਾਯਾ ਰਹਾਉ। ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੇਰੀ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਦਾਸੀ
ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਸਿਵ ਰਾਚੀਲੋ ਤਾਚੀ ਦਾਸੀ ਮਹਾ ਅਸਟ ਸਿਧ ਨਾਗੀ ਕਾਜ ਹਮਾ ਤਿਸ
ਸੋਤੀਯਾ ਧਾਤੁਰਬਾਜੀ ਰਸਾ ਉਪਜੀਲੋ ਤਜੀਲੋ ਇਹ ਕੁਬੁਧੀ ਮਨ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਬੀਚਾਰ ਨ
ਦੇਖਹਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਭਗਤਿ ਭਲੀ ਰਸ ਸੁਧੀਯਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਾਤ ਸੁਨੀਯੈ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਨਿ
ਦੇਖਿਆ ਨੈਣੀ। ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨਾਮੁ ਚਰਿਤੁ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਦਾ ਸੰਤ ਕੀ ਬੈਟੀਯਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ
ਕੇਰੀ ਭਾਉ ਭਾਗਵਤ ਮਨ ਮਫਰ ਮਦ ਰਹਤਾ ਬਦਤਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਮਾਗਉ
ਜੋ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ਬਿਰਕਤਾਯਾ।¹⁴⁹

Gujari.

O [*man*]! Why [do you run after] the nine treasures and the touchstone? Why worry about the legendary tree (*kalap*) of plenty [which provides] unexpectedly? Who should I ask for boons when my Lord preserves my honour and blesses me with abundance? (1)

[My Lord is] Gobind, Gobind, and Gobind alone! I do not seek any thing from any one else except Gobind. I praise the Name of Gobind [alone]. (1) *rahāu*.

[The state of] liberation is itself the slave-girl of Gobind, although the renouncers of the world are absorbed in Shiva [for it]. All the great eight magical powers are their slaves, but I have nothing to do with these things. (2)

One must abandon this wrong thinking that the knavish tricks create delights [in life]. Why don't you look inside the *man* and contemplate? The devotion (*bhagati*) to Gobind is the only good [thing, which creates] pure delights. (3)

One must listen to the stories of Gobind. Tell me who has seen [Gobind] with his own eyes? The Name of Gobind is always wondrous and Gobind is always on the lips of the Sants. (4)

[The devotion to] Gobind is the devotion to Bhagavata. Like a mosquito my mind is always intoxicated [with the love of Gobind?]. Trilochan says: Listen O man! I seek the one who is free from the world. (5.2)

149. Jograj MS, PUM # 2, f. 234b (written in the margin in a different hand); PUM, MS # 1, ff. 269b–270a (later deleted with *hartāl*); BL, MSS ADD. 25,680, ff. 322b–323a. These manuscripts have slightly different readings.

Clearly, the key word in the hymn is "Gobind", which is an epithet of Krishna. [The devotion to] Gobind is the devotion to Bhagavata. Like a mosquito my mind is always intoxicated [with the love of Gobind?]. Trilochan says: Listen O man! I seek the one who is free from the world. (52)

Clearly, the key word in the hymn is "Gobind", which is an epithet of Krishna. This word is probably a Prakrit form of *gopendra*, which means "chief of the cowherd." The linkage of ardent devotion to "Gobind" with the "Bhagavata" worship (*gobind kerī bhāu bhāgavat*) further supports the Vaishnava context of the whole hymn.

The real issue here appears to be linked with the question of allegiance. Was Trilochan a *nirguna* Sant or a *saguna* Bhagat? It is a well known fact that Trilochan was a contemporary of Namdev and that both of them were Maharashtrian Sants. In this context, Vaudeville makes the following observation:

In the Maharashtrian tradition, the Sants are not only thought of and referred to as Vaishnava bhaktas or Bhagavatas, but are specifically identified as Varkaris, the devotees of Lord Vitthala of Pandharpur. It is indeed the popular cult of Vitthala that gives the Maharashtrian Sant tradition as a whole its characteristic Vaishnava flavor. The popular cult of Vitthala as a young cowherd boy merges into the cult of Krishna as cowherd, and Vitthala himself is identified with Krishna-Gopal.¹⁵⁰

Clearly, there was a kind of hybrid Sant tradition in Maharashtra. In the light of this observation it may be stated that Trilochan was both a *nirguna* Sant and a *saguna* Bhagat. Like Namdev, he may have had different allegiances at different stages of his life.

It was, however, Trilochan's Sant outlook which was most acceptable to Guru Arjan and that was the main reason for including four of his hymns in the Adi Granth. The present hymn stressing the Vaishnava ideal of bhakti was, of course, not included at the time of the compilation of the scripture. It may have been the case that the later followers of Trilochan

150. Charlotte Vaudeville, "The Shaiva-Vaishnava Synthesis in Maharashtrian Santism," in *The Sants*, p. 216.

failed to understand this important editorial stance and were primarily responsible for interpolating this hymn in the earliest copy of the Lahore tradition.

6. Raga Organization of the Adi Granth

The basic division of the middle section of the Adi Granth is according to ragas or melodic patterns. A raga may be defined as "a melodic formula that includes particular embellishments and tone colours."¹⁵¹ In actual musical performance, any given raga specifies particular combinations of grace notes and microtonal ornaments. In theory, the ragas are composed to suit various moods, intervals of time and specific seasons. Moreover, each raga has acquired a particular spiritual significance of its own on the basis of tradition and usage. With the likely exception of five important ragas and seventeen regional varieties, the musical modes used in the Adi Granth¹⁵² may be traced back in musical tradition of North India at that time.¹⁵³ For instance, the *āsā* raga was employed by Guru Nanak for the maximum number of his compositions. It must have been his favourite raga, and that is why it has always been part of early morning Sikh *kīrtan*.¹⁵⁴ Apart from the Sikh tradition the *āsā* raga is now found in

151. Barbara Stoler Miller, *Love Song of the Dark Lord*, p. 13.

152. There are thirty-one major ragas and twenty-nine regional varieties of certain ragas, which are used in the Adi Granth. Out of these five major ragas, namely *mājh*, *āsā*, *vaḍahaṅs*, *mārū* and *tukhārī* are unique to the Adi Granth. The other regional varieties are: *gaurī-guāreri*, *gaurī-bairāgan*, *gaurī-dīpaki*, *gaurī-pūrabī-dīpaki*, *gaurī-mājh*, *gaurī-mālavā*, *gaurī-mālā*, *gaurī-sorathi*, *āsā-kāfi*, *tilaṅg-kāfi*, *sūhī-kāfi*, *sūhī-lalū*, *bilāval-gauṇḍ*, *mārū-kāfi*, *basant-hindol*, *prabhāsi-bibhās* and *bibhās-prabhāsi*. However, the claim that these ragas are not to be found elsewhere needs to be further examined. See Devinder Singh Vidiarthi, "Gurbani ste Raga," *Khoj Patrika*, No. 26 (Patiala: Punjabi University, September 1985), pp. 248-9.

153. For further information on the musical tradition of North India, see Alain Daniélou, *The Ragas of Northern Indian Music* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1968); Walter Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968) and N.A. Jairazbhoy, *The Ragas of North Indian Music: Their Structure and Evolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971).

154. The early morning singing of *Vār Āsā* at the Golden Temple and other gurdwaras is a major Sikh tradition. See Madanjit Kaur, *The Golden Temple: Past and Present* (Amritsar: Guru

the musical tradition of Afghanistan, not in the musical tradition of North India.¹⁵⁵

Since the days of Guru Nanak the *bāṇī* had always been used in *kīrtan* in the congregational setting. It was primarily an oral tradition of singing in the worship context. Guru Nanak had employed nineteen major ragas for his *bāṇī*, whereas Guru Amar Das used seventeen of them for his own compositions. It is worth noting that the first collection of *bāṇī* was arranged by keeping in mind the needs of the singers. This is quite evident from the two available volumes of the Goindval *pothīs*, which are arranged according to ragas. Furthermore, this tradition of organizing collections of devotional songs by ragas may be seen in the eleventh-century *Gorakh-bāṇī*, Jayadeva's *Gīta Govinda* (1200 CE) and other medieval collections of religious songs.¹⁵⁶ Guru Amar Das continued this tradition when he compiled the Goindval volumes.

Guru Ram Das introduced another musical dimension to the Sikh tradition by adding eleven new major ragas for his own compositions.¹⁵⁷ He employed technical terms to provide direction in the musical performance of his hymns. For instance, the use of the word *sudhaṅg* ("pure note") in the title of *āsāvarī* mode¹⁵⁸ clearly indicates that his hymns must be sung by using the "pure notes" of that raga. Another such instance may be cited in the *naṭ-nārāyan* raga, where Guru Ram Das prescribes the changing of drum-rhythms (*paṛatāl*) after each verse while singing those particular hymns.¹⁵⁹ Here Guru Ram Das must be referring to

Nanak Dev University, 1983), p. 121.

155. Personal interview with Professor James Kippen, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto.

156. P.D. Barthwal, ed., *Gorakh-bāṇī* (Allahabad: Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, 2nd edn., 1946) and Barbara Stoler Miller, ed. and trans., *Love Song of the Dark Lord*. The twenty-four songs of *Gītagovinda* have been associated with eleven different ragas.

157. For a detailed analysis of Guru Ram Das's knowledge of music, see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History*, pp. 91-94.

158. M4, *Āsāvarī Śudhaṅg* 14-15, AG, pp. 369-70. For more details on *Śudh Āsāvarī*, see Jairazbhoy, *The Rāgs of North Indian Music*, pp. 165-66.

159. M4, *Naṭ Nārāyan Paṛatāl* 7-9, AG, pp. 977-978.

the rhythms of *pakhāvaj* ("a two ended barrel-shaped drum"), since *tablā* ("a pair of small kettledrums") was invented in 1725 CE.¹⁶⁰

Guru Arjan evidently inherited a rich musical tradition from his father. He employed the same thirty major ragas for his own *bānī* as were used by his father. At the time of preparing the final text of the *Adi Granth*, he established the sequence of the ragas after working on a number of drafts. This is evident from comparing the arrangement of ragas in the early draft of the *Adi Granth* (GNDU MS # 1245) and in the Kartarpur manuscript. He also shifted certain hymns from one raga to another to locate them on the basis of themes. Obviously he had intended to compile a scripture with a theological as well as a musicological coherence in mind.

The main concern at this point is not to study the technical nature of the ragas of the *Adi Granth*, but rather to explore the reasons for the Gurus' choice of particular modes and their organization in the final text. We may begin with the question of why Guru Arjan placed *sirī* (or *śrī*) raga in the beginning and *prabhātī* at the end. The following answers may be offered for placing *sirī* raga at the beginning. First, it is linked with Guru Amar Das's assertion that "the *sirī* raga is chief among the ragas" (ਰਾਗਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ ਹੈ...)¹⁶¹ Second, Bhai Gurdas describes the understanding of his times when the *sirī* raga was acknowledged as "chief" among the ragas (ਰਾਗਨ ਮੇ ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ...)¹⁶² Third, in two other musical traditions the position of *sirī* raga was regarded as number one.¹⁶³ Finally, the character of *sirī* raga is mysterious, gentle,

160. Stewart Rebecca, "The Tabla in Perspective" (unpub. Ph.D. dissertation; Los Angeles: University of California, 1974), fos. 6-7.

161. M3, *Vār Sirī Rāga*, 1 (1), AG, p. 83. The *Rāga-mālā* also makes the same assertion that "all [ragas] sing the praise of *sirī*" raga (*sabh mūli sirī raga vai gāvahi*).

162. *Kabitt Bhāī Gurdās*: 376.

163. According to Shaiva and Kali Nath musical traditions, the position of *sirī* raga is primary. See Charan Singh's article, "Gurmat Sangit," in Vir Singh (samp.), *Śrī Gurū Granth Kōś*, vol. III (Amritsar: Khalsa Tract Society, 4th edn., 1954), p. 1184.

and often depicts the meditation of love and the nostalgic prayerful mood of early evening.¹⁶⁴ Guru Nanak's opening hymn in *sirī* raga sets the tone of the Adi Granth by focusing on the meditation on the divine Name. This it does in contrast to worldly powers, represented by palaces adorned with pearls and gems, fragrant scents, the dalliance of attractive women, the miraculous powers of the Siddhas and the temporal power of the kings.¹⁶⁵

Similarly, the fixing of *prabhātī* raga at the end of the Adi Granth appears to be based on the following reasons. First, the message of the divine Name is reinforced in the *prabhātī* raga. The most striking example is the correspondence between the *rahāu*-verses of Guru Nanak's first hymn in the *sirī* raga and his last hymn in the *prabhātī* mode:

1. "May my heart burn in flames should I live without the Lord!" (ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਜੀਉ ਜਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਉ).¹⁶⁶
2. "May my life burn in flames without the divine Name!" (ਜਲਿ ਜਾਉ ਜੀਵਨੁ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ).¹⁶⁷

Evidently the emphasis in both cases is placed upon the divine Name as the ultimate solution to one's problems. Presumably Guru Arjan may have been adopting the ancient rule of *upakram-upasāhār* of Indian scriptural tradition, which states that a scripture or any of its sections must begin and end with the same letter or theme.¹⁶⁸

Secondly, the *prabhātī* raga is sung in the early morning at sunrise. The word *prabhātī* is derived from *prabhāt*, which means "dawn" or "daybreak". Thus the singing of this

164. Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India*, p. 226.

165. M1, *Sirī Rāgu* 1, AG, p. 14. All the thirty-three hymns of Guru Nanak (AG, pp. 14–26) stress the same theme, that is, the supremacy of the divine Name over worldly powers.

166. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

167. M1, *Prabhātī* 17, AG, p. 1332. All the seventeen hymns of Guru Nanak in this raga (AG, pp. 1327–32) stress the message of the divine Name.

168. Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Gurū Granth Sāhib dī sampādan-kalā* (Amritsar: New Age Book Centre, 2nd edn., 1982; 1st edn., 1974), p. 38.

raga is meant to inspire in one the spirit of optimism at the beginning of a new day. Thirdly, it is commonly held in Indian musical tradition that the most characteristic periods of the twenty-four hours of day and night are sunrise and sunset.¹⁶⁹ In this context, one may understand why Guru Arjan placed the *sirī* raga, which is performed at sunset, at the beginning of the Adi Granth, and why he placed the *prabhātī* raga, which is performed at sunrise, at the end of the ragas of the Sikh scripture. In this way Guru Arjan may have made the claim that the spirit of optimism was the "end" of the Adi Granth. In other words, the performance of *sirī* raga in the evening prepares one for the dark night representing the worldly powers in life, whereas the *prabhātī* raga shows the light at the end of the tunnel.

In describing the relationship between ragas and the time of their performance,

Daniélou makes the observation:

The cycle of the day corresponds to the cycle of life which has its dawn, its noon, its evening. Each hour represents a different stage of development and is connected to a certain kind of emotion. The cycle of sounds is ruled by the same laws as all other cycles. This is why there are natural relationships between particular hours and the moods evoked by musical modes.¹⁷⁰

According to this "time theory" the musicians put emphasis on the *pūrvāṅg* ("first portion", in which the *vādī* or "sonant" is in the lower tetrachord) in the performance of all ragas between noon and midnight. Similarly, in the ragas performed between midnight and noon the *utrāṅg* is prominent, that is, the *vādī* is in the upper tetrachord.¹⁷¹ In light of this "time theory", all the ragas of the Adi Granth are assigned particular time-intervals for their musical performance.¹⁷²

There are certain ragas of the Adi Granth that are arranged according to a seasonal setting. For instance, the four ragas *bhairau*, *basant*, *sāraṅg* and *malār* are appropriate to

169. Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India*, p. 16.

170. Daniélou, *The Rāgas of Northern Indian Music*, p. 95.

171. Jairazbhoy, *The Rāgs of North Indian Music*, p. 43.

172. For more details, see Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Sampādan-kalā*, p. 61.

autumn, spring, summer, and the rains respectively.¹⁷³ Some ragas are linked with particular regions. For instance, the *mājh* raga is unique to the Punjabi culture because of its association with the Majha region. There are eleven regional varieties of *gauṛī* raga alone, which are used in the *Adi Granth*. Further, there are certain regional varieties such as *gauṛī-dakhaṇī*, *vaḍahaṅs-dakhaṇī*, *bilāval-dakhaṇī*, *rāmakalī-dakhaṇī*, *mārū-dakhaṇī* and *prabhātī-dakhaṇī*, which were influenced by the tradition of the Deccan in South India. Their use in the *Adi Granth* may perhaps be seen as a symbolic expression of the Sikh claim to universality, which would embrace a Southern audience.

The most important issue at this point is, however, related to the choice of ragas. Guru Nanak and the succeeding Gurus seem to have selected the ragas very carefully. For instance, Guru Nanak describes his own understanding of *sorathī* raga:

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧

ਸੋਰਠਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਵਟੀ ਜੇ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਹੋਇ ਏਦੀ ਮੇਲੁ ਨ ਕਤੁ ਮਨਿ ਜੀਭੈ ਸਚਾ
ਸੋਇ।¹⁷⁴

If the True One is borne in the *man* (heart–mind–soul), the [performance of the] *sorath* raga shall have a lovely affect [on both listeners and performers]. The teeth should not be soiled [wit.. biting food, which is immorally obtained], the *man* should be free of hostility and the tongue should sing [the praise] of the True One.

Similarly, there are other such shaloks by the succeeding Gurus, which state that only those ragas should be used which produce a balanced effect on the minds of both listeners and

173. Ibid. Also see, Frederic Pincott, "The Arrangement of the Hymns of the *Adi Granth*," p. 442.

174. *MI, Vār Sorathī*, 1 (1), *AG*, p. 642.

performers.¹⁷⁵ Any raga that arouses passion of any kind must *ipso facto* be omitted. For instance, there are still some musicians who believe that *dīpak* raga creates fire if correctly performed.¹⁷⁶ Whether it is true or not, this raga is not used independently in the *Adi Granth*. It is, however, used as *gaurī-dīpaki* in the mixed form, so that its extreme effect is toned down. The resulting form is most suitable to create a reflective mood.

The issue of the selection of particular ragas may be further elaborated with a comparative examination of the ragas used in the *Adi Granth* and the list given in the *Rāga-mālā* at the end. For instance, a verse introducing the raga-family of *hiṇḍol* reads as follows:

ਪੁਨਿ ਆਇਅਉ ਹਿੰਡੋਲੁ ਪੰਚ ਨਾਰਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਅਸਟ ਸੁਤਾ ਉਠਹਿ ਤਾਨ ਕਲੋਲ ਗਾਇਨ
ਤਾਰ ਮਿਲਾਵਹੀਯ।¹⁷⁷

Then comes the turn of *hiṇḍol* with five consorts and eight sons. Passionate waves of melodic figurations rise when the musicians sing by strumming the strings.

The technical word *tān* ("uninterrupted succession" or "melodic figuration") stands for a sequence of notes performed at a fast speed near the end of the performance.¹⁷⁸ In the case of the performance of *hiṇḍol* raga, the *tāns* create a jubilant atmosphere. Also, the word *hiṇḍol* literally means "swing" which refers to the swing of Krishna. In the musical setting of this raga, the *gopīs* ("cowherd-girls") move the swing with passion, while Krishna plays a transverse flute to create a mood of amorous love.¹⁷⁹ Like *dīpak*, this raga is not used independently in the *Adi*

175. See, M3 (AG, pp. 83, 311, 516, 585, 950, 1087, 1419), M4 (AG, p. 849) and M5 (AG, 1425). Also see, Jagir Singh, "Gurmat Kavi vich Sangit da Mahatav," *Khoj Patrika*, No. 26 (Patiala: Punjabi University, September 1985), pp. 256-65.

176. Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India*, pp. 12-3.

177. *Rāga Mālā*, AG, p. 1430.

178. For more details, see Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India*, p. 29.

179. *Ibid.*, 114.

Granth.¹⁸⁰ It is, however, employed in the mixed form as *basant-hiṇḍol* to create a gentle tonal effect in one's mind.

The issue of *Rāga-mālā* has puzzled both scholars and Sikhs throughout its history.¹⁸¹ It is recorded in the Kartarpur volume in the same hand as the rest of the text. The *Rāga-mālā* issue must be approached in the context of the musical tradition of North India during the sixteenth century. Many of the treatises on North Indian music dating from about the eleventh century describe ragas in terms of hierarchy, *rāga* ("male") and *rāginī* ("female"), a fanciful classificatory scheme which was extended to include *putra* ("son") as the number of the ragas increased.¹⁸² This kind of classification is to be found in the *Adi Granth Rāga-mālā*.

The first known text of *Rāga-mālā* was written in 1509 CE (or 1507 CE) by Kshema Karna (or Mesha Karna), who lived in the state of Rewa.¹⁸³ Its manuscript is preserved in the Government Collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta), as No. 1195 (211). Another copy of this manuscript is held in the India Office Library (No. 1125-15165), which is ascribed to an author named Kshema Karna Pathaka.¹⁸⁴ Kshema Karna groups his material into six head ragas, each having five "female" ragas (*rāginīs*) and eight "sons" (*putras*), for a total of eighty-four ragas.¹⁸⁵

During the sixteenth century there appears to have been an increase in the number of

180. Kushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. 1 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 5th impr., 1984; 1st published, Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 307: "*Megh* and *Hindol* were not used because of their jubilant tone; *Jog* and *Dīpak* were likewise rejected for their melancholy."

181. For details, see Surinder Singh Kohli, *A Critical Study of the Adi Granth* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, reprint 1976; 1st edn., 1961), pp. 100-112. Also see, Balbir Singh, *Rāga-mālā dā savāl te Jodh Kavī ate Ālam* (Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 3rd impr., 1969) and Shamsher Singh Ashok, *Mādhav Nal Kām Kandalā te Rāga-mālā nirne* (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1981).

182. Jairazbhoy, *The Rāgs of North Indian Music*, p. 91.

183. Kaufmann, *The Ragas of North India*, pp. 47-8.

184. *Ibid.*

185. *Ibid.*

works dealing with the pictorial representation of ragas. Each school of musical thought had its own collection of *Rāga-mālā*. There was another author, Pundarika Vitthala, who wrote his *Rāga-mālā* in 1576 CE, during the reign of Emperor Akbar, which was certainly the peak time of North Indian music.¹⁸⁶ Pundarika groups his ragas into six male ragas, each of which possesses five female ragas and five sons (*putras*), making a total of sixty-six ragas. He claims that his classification of ragas is the only correct one in the North. Yet another text of *Rāga-mālā* in Hindi appeared from the school of the famous musician Tansen.¹⁸⁷

It appears that the *Rāga-mālā* of the Adi Granth was quite popular in the musical tradition of the Punjab. Guru Arjan may have included it in the scripture with the intention of highlighting the distinctiveness of the ragas of the Adi Granth in the context of the prevailing musical tradition. It certainly helps to illuminate certain characteristic features of the Sikh approach towards the ragas. For instance, its text follows the *rāga-rāgini-putra* classification of "six-five-eight", giving rise to a total number of eighty-four ragas. There is no such system in the Adi Granth, where all the major ragas appear under the same title of "Raga", not under the title of "Ragini".¹⁸⁸ Only one fourth of the *Rāga-mālā* list is accepted in the Sikh tradition. Moreover, all the sixty-three ragas of the *Rāga-mālā* that are not employed in the Adi Granth may reveal the choices made by the Gurus.

A thorough comparison of the ragas of the Adi Granth and the list of the ragas given in the *Rāga-mālā* is required to understand the systematic preferences of the Sikh Gurus. It might be possible to induce from such systematic preferences the implicit principles guiding

186. Ibid., pp. 49-50.

187. Ibid., pp. 48-9.

188. Kaufmann cites the Persian work *Naqmat-e-Asaphi* (1813 CE) of Muhammed Rezza Khan, who declares for the first time the *rāga-rāgini* (husband-wife) system absurd. See *ibid.*, pp. 55-56. Kaufmann appears to be unaware of the Adi Granth system of ragas.

their choices. Such a musicological and theological analysis would entail a thesis in itself. Here I have offered but a few probes that may stimulate further research in this area. This kind of research must be taken up by a person who is trained in the musical tradition of North India. It may involve field study in the oral performance of the ragas of the Adi Granth by different *rāgīs* ("Sikh musicians") belonging to old family traditions (*gharānās*), since the sacred music is generally passed on to different generations without any change. It is hoped that it will soon become obvious that the whole debate on the controversy of *Rāga-mālā* has been totally misdirected.

It may be added here that it is difficult to understand the ragas of the Adi Granth and their organization solely in terms of the modern North Indian musical tradition, since modern musical performance is unlikely to predate Tansen (late sixteenth century), and it is probably traceable to the eighteenth/nineteenth centuries. Perhaps scholars would be interested to look at both the Adi Granth raga system and contemporary treatises on the classical North Indian musical tradition since the former may be crucial in understanding the latter.¹⁸⁹

Conclusion

This analysis has demonstrated that the compilation of the Adi Granth owes much to the prodigious efforts of Guru Arjan. He applied meticulous standards to give the scripture its distinctive form, both with regard to its content and the style that would help the natural flow of its reading. He was mainly responsible for the final text of the Adi Granth. His editorial

189. I owe this suggestion to Professor James Kippen.

policy was guided by five major principles: (1) doctrinal consistency, (2) ideal of balanced life, (3) an optimistic spirit, (4) the universal nature of the Sikh claim and (5) the concern for distinctive Sikh identity. These principles are even reflected in the melodic organization of the *Adi Granth*, which presents an excellent combination of rational and lyrical elements.

The inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in the *Adi Granth* further illuminates the doctrinal concerns of the Sikh Gurus. The process of its integration in the Sikh scripture was based upon the recognition of two major points. First, there was its harmony with the Gurus' thought in broad outlines. Second, its differences with the Gurus' thought at essential points were highlighted to demonstrate the distinctive Sikh viewpoints. These additional reflections of the Gurus were crucial for shaping the emerging Sikh identity. They play an important role in defining what it means to be a Sikh in relation to the commonly held Sant, Sufi and Bhagat ideals. These points become obvious from the Gurus' comments on the *bhagat bānī*. It should be emphasized here that the net effect of the Gurus' comments on the Bhagats is to cement firmly the *bhagat bānī* in the Sikh scriptural tradition.¹⁹⁰

It is quite evident that some of the Bhagat material was "edited out" at the time of the compilation of the *Adi Granth*. It would appear that Guru Arjan was not only concerned with who said it, but also with what was said. He was equally concerned with identifying the circles from which a particular composition emanated as well as with the details of its message.¹⁹¹ The hymns of the Vaishnava Bhagats were least acceptable to Guru Arjan. He even rejected those hymns of the Sants that were coloured with Vaishnava or Tantric ideals. It is important to note that these Sants are otherwise included in the scripture. This process of selection of the *bhagat*

190. C. Shackle, "The First Restatement of the Bani," p. 74.

191. Cf. E.P. Sanders, et al., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, Volume Two (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), pp. 60-63.

bānī highlights both exclusive and inclusive aspects of Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

Guru Arjan's open but cautious approach to the selection of the *bhagat bānī* appears to have created a tension within some sections of the Panth. No one would have even thought of challenging the decision of the Guru while he was alive, but later on, when the situation became unstable after Guru Arjan's death, the followers of the Sants seems to have succeeded in inserting those hymns (which were earlier turned down by the fifth Guru) in their copies of the Adi Granth. This may explain the origin of the three versions of the Adi Granth in the seventeenth century.

It should be emphasized here that apart from a small number of disputed passages (which I have discussed in this study) there has always been complete agreement on the contents of the *bānī* in all three versions of the Adi Granth, even in the seventeenth-century manuscripts. This was all due to Guru Arjan's editorial policy, by which he devised certain checks and balances and which made it extremely difficult for anyone to interpolate any extraneous matter in the text. Each entry in the Adi Granth is numbered and its position is further determined by its raga, authorship, metrical form and so on.¹⁹² Guru Arjan gave to Sikhs an authoritative scripture, which provided a framework for the shaping of the community. How the community received it will be discussed in the next chapter.

192. Pritam Singh, "Bhai Banno's Copy of the Sikh Scripture," *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. XI, No. II (August 1984), p. 115. On the numbering system of the Adi Granth, see Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Sampādan-Kalā*, pp. 67-85.

Chapter 6

THE MEANING OF THE ADI GRANTH

It is now commonly held that the study of a text as scripture focuses upon its contextual meaning, interpretation, and use. What matters is the ongoing role the text has played in a tradition, not only in formal exegesis but in every sector of life.¹ Looked at from this angle the reception of the Adi Granth as Guru by the Sikh community is unique.² The Sikh scripture is believed to be the actual embodiment of the eternal Guru and that is why it is known as the "Guru Granth Sahib". As the living Word of the eternal Guru it participates in divine reality, whereby its meaning assumes central importance in the life of the Sikh Panth. One must try to keep this basic understanding in mind while one explores the process of interpretation of the *bāṇī* in Sikh tradition.

In Sikh usage the interpretation of the hymns of the Gurus is called *śabad vichār* or "reflection upon the Word". It is also referred to as *gurbāṇī vichār* or "reflection upon the utterances of the Gurus". There are four standard techniques of Indian scriptural tradition that are employed in Sikh exegetical methods. The first is *padārath* (or *śabadārath*, "meanings of the words"), which provides synonyms as well as the meanings of difficult words in a particular hymn. The second is *ṭīkā* ("commentary"), which provides the meaning of a particular hymn

1 William A. Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 6.

2. "While most religions have scriptures, the place and function of [the] Sikh scripture seems unique. In no other religion can one find a human Guru founder, followed by a series of human Gurus living parallel with a collection of scripture, ending in a breaking of the human succession and the scripture attaining full authority as Guru." See Harold Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text: Scripture in World Religions* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988), p. 130.

with comments in a simple language. The third is *viākhīā* ("exegesis"), which provides a detailed exegesis and extended commentary on a particular hymn from a particular angle. The last one is *paramārath* ("sublime meaning"), which provides the "spiritual meaning" of a particular hymn.³ Thus the interpretation begins at the discursive level, at which one deals with the literal sense of the *bāṇī*, but goes deeper and deeper as one contemplates the divine mysteries by gradually penetrating into subtler levels of its meaning. Each encounter with the text of the *Adi Granth* thus provides a fresh experience of unfolding of a divine mystery.

Guru Nanak himself placed great emphasis on the understanding of the meaning of the *bāṇī* as the fundamental characteristic of the life of a person who has "turned towards the Guru". In his *Rāmakalī Dakkhaṇī Oankār*, for instance, he says:

ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਰਲਉ ਬੀਚਾਰਸੀ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਇ ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਮਹਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਨਿਜ
ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸਾ ਹੋਇ॥੪੪॥

Rare is the one who contemplates the meaning of the *bāṇī* and thus turns towards the Guru. This *bāṇī* belongs to the Exalted One and makes one realize one's true self.

Here Guru Nanak emphasizes the point that a vast majority of people usually do not care to understand the full richness and depth of the meaning contained in the *bāṇī*. He further adds that those rare ones who care to do so will certainly have their reward in achieving their true spiritual status.

The Sikh Gurus have repeatedly emphasized that the potentiality of the meaning contained in *gurbāṇī* is inexhaustible. No matter how much one studies and interprets it, an infinity of meaning remains yet to be fathomed. This is suggested by the following verse of the

3. Taran Singh, *Gurbāṇī dīān viākhīā praṇālīān* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1980), p. 1. I have omitted the word *bhāṣya*, which is seldom used in the context of Punjabi literature.

4. M1, *Rāmakalī Dakkhaṇī Oankāru* 40, A.G., p. 935.

fourth Guru:

ਰਤਨਾ ਰਤਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਬਹੁ ਸਾਗਰ ਭਰਿਆ ਰਾਮਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਲਾਗੇ ਤਿਨ ਹਥਿ
ਚੜਿਆ ਰਾਮੀ⁵

The great ocean is full of the wealth of jewels and pearls. This is attainable
by such [people] as are devoted to *gurbāṇī*.

Here Guru Ram Das compares the knowledge of *gurbāṇī* with an unbounded ocean of jewels. Those individuals who dive deep into that ocean through reflection and meditation find within themselves a treasure trove of jewels. Bhai Gurdas echoes a similar understanding of the depth and richness of the meaning of *gurbāṇī*: "In the same way [as the ocean], all treasures are contained in *gurbāṇī*. Whatever one seeks from it, the same thing will one attain" (ਤੈਸੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਖੇ ਸਕਲ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਹੇ ਜੋਈ ਜੋਈ ਖੋਜੇ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਨਿਪਜਾਵਈ⁶).

On the potentiality of meaning of the text of the Adi Granth, W.H. McLeod makes the following observation:

Many Sikhs are quite adamant about the meaning of the Guru Granth Sahib. The sacred scripture is indeed the Guru, but it conveys its message in different ways to different people, communicating with some at one level of perception and with others at a different level. It is foolish to imagine that the scripture will speak at the same level and degree of understanding to the ordinary villager as opposed to the person who has devoted many years to meditation. Clearly it will speak in different ways, the one to a person requiring a simple meaning and the other to someone of deep perception. All people will derive a message from the Guru Granth Sahib, but not all receive the same one. The range is indeed infinite as people differ in their perception and their diversity. Non-Sikhs are certainly encouraged to consult the scripture, but the Guru's message for a person of western background will be distinctively different from that of a Punjabi Sikh.⁷

Here McLeod is challenging the assumption of certain sections within the Panth, who maintain that the text of the Adi Granth contains a single "correct" meaning. He is in fact referring to

5. M4, *Āsā Chhant* 1, AG, p. 442.

6. *Kabitt Bhai Gurdas*, 546.

7. W.H. McLeod, "The Meaning of Sikh Fundamentalism and its Origins", (a paper presented at a Conference at University of Chicago, November 1990), p. 6.

those fundamentalists in the Sikh community who believe in the doctrinal mode of interpretation. Such a doctrinal mode of interpretation, it may be stated, has lost its credibility in present-day scholarship because of its limited utility in an ecumenical era.⁸ McLeod is suggesting an approach that maintains that the process of unfolding the meaning of the Adi Granth text depends upon the level of the understanding of human beings. His appeal is to the scholarly emphasis on text reception as "reader-response" (a focus that accepts and assumes the "printed text" as the form of the message).

Recent scholarship has brought a new awareness of the place and function of the oral dimension of a scripture in world religions. This shift stimulates reflection on text reception as "hearer-response" (a focus that accepts and assumes the "oral/aural text" as the form of the message). In this context, Harold Coward makes the following observation:

Rather than there being one correct meaning for a text, the hearing and reading of a Vedic poem or New Testament parable may convey many different meanings or insights depending on the listener, the time, and the place. Instead of a hermeneutics of reduction, based on the assumption that the text has only one correct meaning, the oral experience of scripture paves the way for a hermeneutics of unfolding (*Entfaltung*), an opening up of the richness of the word in terms of its symbolic potentialities.⁹

Coward's suggestion of adopting a "hermeneutics of unfolding" through the oral experience of scripture may be conveniently applied to the Sikh experience of the Adi Granth. There is ample justification for this approach in Sikh tradition, which may be discussed in detail in the following sections.

1. Oral Experience of the Adi Granth

8. Schuyler Brown, "Reader Response: Demythologizing the Text," *New Testament Studies*, vol. 34 (1988), p. 235.

9. Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, p. 182.

11. Oral recitation of the *bāṇī*

Oral recitation of the *bāṇī* has always played a significant role in Sikh life since the days of Guru Nanak. It began during the Kartarpur period in individual and corporate settings as a part of daily discipline. Since then the memorization of the *bāṇī* has remained a devotional activity among the Sikhs.¹⁰ Guru Ram Das, for instance, prescribes the daily routine of early morning devotion for a "Sikh of the true Guru", who must meditate on the divine Name after rising and bathing and recite *Japjī* (*japu jāpai*) from memory.¹¹ In this context, the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* explicitly states: "According to Guru Ram Das, he who recites *Japjī* five times will acquire the radiance of [true] enlightenment. Thereafter let him recite whatever *bāṇī* he may know by heart."¹²

A key principle here is the Sikh belief that the recitation of daily prayers by heart has the power to transform and unify one's consciousness.¹³ Through this personalized experience one is able to understand the subtler levels of meaning of various passages of *gurbāṇī*. It is quite possible that one may have a different understanding of a particular passage at different times in one's life, since its spiritual sense is not so constant as the literal sense is often perceived. This normally happens in the life of those individuals who are always exploring

10. "Memorization is a particularly intimate appropriation of a text, and the capacity to quote or recite a text from memory is a spiritual resource that is tapped automatically in every act of reflection, worship, prayer, or moral deliberation, as well as in times of personal and communal decision or crisis." See Graham, *Beyond the Written Word*, p. 160.

11. M4, *Vār Gaurī*, 2 (11), pp. 305–6. Also see *Vārān Bhāī Gudās* 1: 38.

12. W.H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987), p. 149. Also see p. 187 for the Rahit injunction against an offender: "Any Sikh who does not know *Japjī* by heart. Have nothing to do with such a person."

13. Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, p. 133: "For the Sikh, as for the Hindu, participation in the divine word has the power to transform and unify one's consciousness. The purifying power of the sacred scripture is understood as a combing of negative thoughts from one's heart and mind that occurs as a regular part of one's daily discipline."

infinite possibilities of meaning contained in the divine Word.

12. Devotional singing (*kīrtan*)

In the *Adi Granth* itself the names of the raga and rhythm to be used in singing are stated at the beginning of each section of hymns. The hymns are also classified according to the *gharu*, or "musical clef", in which each hymn is to be sung. According to the Indian method of singing, the accent falls, and the voice rises and falls, in different positions, according to the *gharu* in which hymns are sung.¹⁴ There are seventeen different positions of *gharu* employed in the *Adi Granth*. These musical instructions in the written text fulfill the same function as that of a musical score in relation to the performed music. Like the written music, the written text of the *Adi Granth* has spiritual power only as it is sung.¹⁵ Guru Arjan, for instance, stresses the spiritual power of *kīrtan* as follows: "The false thinking of both performers and hearers is destroyed when they participate in devotional singing" (ਜੋ ਜੋ ਕਥੈ ਸੁਨੈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਸੈ¹⁶).

Thus the singing of hymns in congregational worship is the heart of Sikh devotional experience. Through such *kīrtan* the devout Sikhs attune themselves to vibrate in harmony with the divine Word and thereby immerse themselves in the deeper levels of its meaning. It is based upon the assumption that the melody in the singing of *gurbānī* evokes the divine Word of which it is an earthly resonance.¹⁷ For instance, Guru Nanak's *Sodar* presents his personal

14. See Frederic Pincott, "The Arrangement of the Hymns of the *Adi Granth*," *JARS* (1885), p. 443.

15. Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, p. 134.

16. *MS, Kānarā I, AG*, p. 1300.

17. "A direct correspondence is seen as existing between the physical vibration of the phenomenal chant and the noumenal vibration of the transcendent. The more the physical vibrations of the uttered chant are repeated, the more transcendent power is evoked in experience until one's consciousness is purified and put into a harmonious relationship or even

experience of heavenly joys in the company of all liberated ones, who sing in eternity at the door of Akal Purakh's ineffable court the praises of His glory.¹⁸

In a gurdwara Sikh worship consists mainly of the singing of scriptural hymns set to music with the accompaniment of instruments. It is normally led by a group of four singers (*rāgīs*), who are often joined by the *sangat* in the singing.¹⁹ The devotional singing has the power to inspire each and every member of the congregation, although its effect may be different for different people. In each performance of *kīrtan* each individual listener may respond differently according to the level or characteristics of his/her understanding. One may go to a gurdwara at the week-end program to acknowledge this fact. While certain individuals may be deeply absorbed in the meaning of the hymns being sung in the congregation, others may just be sitting and listening to the musical intricacies of the ragas. The appropriation of the meaning of the divine Word depends to a large extent upon the capacity, preparation and interest of the hearer.

13. Oral Exegesis of the *Adi Granth*

The exegesis of the *bānī* had its beginning in the oral context during the period of the Sikh Gurus.²⁰ The devotional singing of *gurbānī* was normally followed by the Guru's spontaneous oral interpretation of the meaning of a particular scriptural passage. It could also

identity with the Divine." Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, p. 175.

18. M1, *Soḍar*, AG, pp. 6, 8-9, 347-8. This is the only composition which appears three times in the *Adi Granth*. For its translation, see W.H. McLeod, trans. and ed., *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 91 and 96.

19. On the paramount importance of Sikh *kīrtan*, see G.S. Mansukhani, *Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kīrtan* (New Delhi: Oxford and IBH, 1979), esp. ch. 10.

20. M5, *Bilāval* 6, AG, p. 818: "The true aim of my life lies in absorption in religious discourse, *kīrtan* and vibration of the divine Word through singing and music" (*kathā kīrtanu rāga nād dhuni ihu banio suāu*). Here the use of the word *kathā* ("homily") by Guru Arjan is very significant.

take the form of a formal response to the questions raised by the sangat concerning that passage. Thus a living dialogue was established between the Guru and the Sikh in the oral context, in which the Guru would provide the necessary instruction suitable to the existential situation of the disciple.

Oral interpretation of scripture has always been a part of Sikh worship. In the congregational setting, it begins in the performance of *kathā* ("homily"), which consists of an exposition of the Sikh scriptures. There is always the possibility of several interpretations in this process of religious discourse, since each individual *giānī* ("traditional Sikh scholar") may be offering his/her own interpretation specific to the situation of a particular audience. Although the message of the Adi Granth is timeless,²¹ the process of *kathā* certainly provides the opportunity for it to remain dynamic, relevant and immediate to the changing times.

14. Taking the advice of Guru's *vāk*

The most significant point in the Sikh experience of accepting the Adi Granth as living Guru may be seen in the practice of *vāk lao* or "taking the Guru's Word or commandment." The procedure functions in a liturgical fashion of opening the scripture at random. During the process the first hymn at the top of the left-hand page is read as the proclamation of Guru's *vāk* for that particular moment or situation in life. In the case of individual early-morning devotion the whole family gathers in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib to receive the divine command which serves as an order of the day. This *vāk* becomes the

21. "It [the Adi Granth] emphasizes a universal message. It is a scripture which enables the Sikh to live in the sixteenth or twentieth century, in India or in Britain, with equal ease or difficulty." W. Owen Cole, *Sikhism and its Indian Context 1469-1708* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984), p. 280.

inspiration for personal meditation throughout the day. Again during evening prayers one takes the *vāk* upon which to conclude the day with its particular joys and sorrows.²² Similarly in the congregational setting the whole sangat receives the *vāk* as a divine command (*hukam*) at the conclusion of different ceremonies.

The origin of this liturgical tradition may be traced in Guru Nanak's own *bānī* : "The Guru's Word [or commandment] is pure and it shines eternally as the light [of divine wisdom]. Its contemplation is truly the daily bathe at the everlasting holy place" (ਗੁਰਵਾਰੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਨਿਤ ਸਾਚੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਮਜਨਾ²³). Presumably the first Sikhs would normally have looked to Guru Nanak for advice, which they would have received in the form of a *vāk* or commandment. Rather than depend upon the efficacy of external observances they were encouraged to meditate on the divinely inspired *vāk*. During the period of Guru Ram Das, his vicars (*masands*)²⁴ were probably keen to have a written *vāk* from him for the sake of establishing their credentials in the new sangats: "Only a trader in the divine treasure deals with the wealth of divine treasure. A raw dealer cannot take the *vāk* of divine wealth" (ਹਰਿ ਰਤਨੈ ਕਾ ਵਾਪਾਰੀਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਤਨ ਧਨੁ ਵਿਹਾਝੈ ਕਰੈ ਕੇ ਵਾਪਾਰੀਏ ਵਾਕਿ ਹਰਿ ਧਨੁ ਲਇਆ ਨ ਜਾਈ).²⁵ There is another instance of clear evidence from the life of Guru Har Rai, who proclaimed his first *vāk* in the written form when he assumed the office of Guruship at Kiratpur.²⁶

22. For an analysis of the *vāk* in Sikh life, see W. Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, *The Sikhs: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 54–55.

23. M1, *Dhanāsari Chhant* 1, AG, p. 687.

24. The word *masand* is derived from Persian *masnad* or "throne", and it came to be applied to a person who was given the role and authority to supervise individual sangats on behalf of the Guru and to collect the tithes and other contributions of the loyal Sikhs. The *masand* system lasted until its formal abolition by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See W.H. McLeod, *Who is a Sikh?* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 12.

25. M4, *Sūhī* 3, AG, p. 734. For more details on the institution of *vāk*, see Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jaladhar: ABS Publication, 1988), p. 100.

26. See chapter 2, p. 46–7.

The most striking instance from Sikh history concerning the effectiveness of the process of *vāk* in the affairs of the Panth, however, is related to an event that took place in 1920. Large groups of Punjabi outcastes were becoming members of the Khalsa in the hope of improving their social status. These outcaste converts proceeded to the Golden Temple in the expectation that they would there be permitted to offer and receive *karāh prāsād* (sanctified food dispensed in *gurdwaras*). The administrators of the Golden Temple had already made it quite explicit that they would be refused. The Singh Sabha reformers pressed the issue on the basis of the teachings of the Gurus that any Sikh could share in offering *prāsād* to the congregation. Eventually it was agreed that advice should be taken from the Guru Granth Sahib through the process of *vāk*. The revealed passage of Guru Amar Das put the issue beyond all doubt:

ਸੌਰਠਿ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ਦੁਤੁਕੀ॥

ਨਿਗੁਣਿਆ ਨੋ ਆਪੇ ਬਖਸਿ ਲਏ ਤਾਈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਇ। ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ
ਉਤਮ ਹੈ ਤਾਈ ਰਾਮਨਾਮਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ। ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਆਪੇ ਬਖਸਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਗੁਣਗੀਟ
ਹਮ ਅਪਰਾਧੀ ਤਾਈ ਪੂਰੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਲਏ ਰਲਾਇ। ਰਹਾਉ॥²⁷

Sorathi Mahala 3 Dutuki.

Upon the worthless He bestows His grace, brother, if they will serve the True Guru. Exalted is the service of the True Guru, brother, to hold in remembrance the divine Name. (1)

The Lord Himself offers grace and mystic union. Worthless sinners are we, brother, yet the True Guru has drawn us to that blissful union. (1) *rahāu*.²⁸

With the hearing of these words it was clear to all that the Guru had accepted the new converts and their *prāsād* was distributed by the triumphant reformers among all the Sikhs present on the occasion. This event typifies the Sikh experience of the Adi Granth as living

27. M3, *Sorathi Dutuki* 2, AG, pp. 638-9.

28. The translation is adapted from the one given in W.H. McLeod, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 68.

Guru who always speaks with power and truth to the situation at hand. From the purely human perspective the fitness of the passage is a mere chance coincidence, or at best an example of a public oracle. From the Sikh perspective, however, the random choosing of the passage functions to remove the sinful *haumai* ("self-centredness") from the process so as to allow the True Guru to do the choosing.²⁹

2. Written Interpretation of the Adi Granth

Apart from the occasional attempts made by different sects within the Panth to understand the meaning of certain works from the Adi Granth, a strong scholarly tradition of scriptural interpretation did not develop early. In fact, the first complete vernacular commentary on the Adi Granth appeared only in the beginning of this century. It was the celebrated *Ādi Srī Gurū Granth Sāhibjī Saṭīk*, commonly known as the *Farīdkoṭī Ṭīkā* because it was commissioned by the Raja of Faridkot and published in four volumes under his patronage in 1905. The best commentary, however, was to appear under the Singh Sabha influence in the name of *Śabadārth Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī* in four volumes. It was largely the work of Teja Singh, although it was published anonymously between 1936 and 1941. In this work the complete Adi Granth text is given, with commentary on all difficult words on the facing page.³⁰ Another

29. Coward, *Sacred Word and Sacred Text*, p. 133.

30. Another incomplete work is Bhai Vir Singh's *Santhyā Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* (Amritsar, 1958-62), seven volumes of which have so far been published. Two supplementary works which are indispensable for a study of the Adi Granth text are *Srī Gurū Granth Koś* (3 vols., Amritsar, 4th edn., 1950), published anonymously but largely the work of Bhai Vir Singh, and *Gurū Śabad Ratan Prakāś* (Patiala, 1963), compiled by Kaur Singh Nihang. To these should be added a two-volume *Ādi Granth śabad-anukramanikā* (Patiala, 1971), compiled by Gurcharan Singh, and the noble *Gurusabad Ratanākar Mahān Koś* of Kahn Singh Nabha (Patiala, 2nd edn., 1960). The latter is justly called "An Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature."

excellent work with much fuller exposition of the Adi Granth text is Sahib Singh's *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Darpaṇ*, published in ten volumes from Jalandhar between 1962 and 1964.

Our concern here is to introduce briefly the different approaches adopted by various schools of interpretation. A thorough examination of all or any of these would require a major scholarly project of its own. The first attempt in this field was made by the late Taran Singh in his *Gurbānī dīān viākkiā praṇālīān*, "Schools of Interpretation of Gurbani." This work categorizes seven different schools of interpretation of *gurbānī* which may be discerned, according to the author, in various works coming from the seventeenth century to the present day. These are discussed in the following sections.

2.1. *Sahaj praṇālī*

This special mode of "spontaneous interpretation" (*sahaj praṇālī*) is attributed to the Gurus themselves, who sought to clarify and expound the meaning of certain words, concepts and themes contained in the *bānī* of their predecessors. Taran Singh argues that this exegetical process may be seen to be at work as one proceeds from the *bānī* of Guru Nanak to that of the succeeding Gurus. He then cites passages from Guru Nanak's works that were interpreted by Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan respectively in their own works.³¹ For instance, the exposition of two stanzas of Guru Nanak's *Japjī* (nos. 17 and 18) may be seen in the first two stanzas of the tenth octave of Guru Arjan's *Sukhmanī*.

The *sahaj praṇālī* seems to be based upon the celebrated principle of interpretation of

31. For details, see *Gurbānī dīān viākkiā praṇālīān*, pp. 26–34.

scripture by means of scripture.³² This categorization, it may be stated, has been challenged on the assumption that the *bāṇī* of the later Gurus was equally inspired and that it must not be placed under the category of any mode of interpretation.³³ The issue of categorization aside, it should be emphasized that Guru Nanak's *bāṇī* was the main inspiration behind the *bāṇī* of the later Gurus, who were also responding to the needs of the growing Sikh community in their own historical situation.

2.2. *Bhāī prañālī*

This school of interpretation is linked with the name of Bhai Gurdas, whom Guru Arjan chose to act as his amanuensis during the final recording of the Adi Granth text. He received the honorific title "Bhai" (Brother) for his contribution to the Sikh faith, and for this reason his typical approach of interpretation is known as *Bhāī prañālī*. He was a poet and a theologian whose works are generally regarded as "the key to the Guru Granth Saṁib". The most influential among his works are the thirty-nine lengthy poems called *vārs*, which provide an extensive commentary on the teachings of the Gurus.³⁴ He is also the author of a series of 675 poems, which he wrote in Braj in the *kabitt* style.³⁵

32. A principle of Biblical criticism states that "one must interpret the scripture by the scripture." Taran Singh cites the example of the Qur'anic principle of interpretation that "the meaning of the Qur'an is understood through the Qur'an itself." See *ibid.*, p. 24.

33. Piar Singh, "Gurbani Tika Pranalian," *Nānak Prakāś Patrikā*, vol. 20, no. 2 (Patiala, December 1985), p. 108-9. The author criticises Taran Singh's categorization as arbitrary. He excludes *sahaj prañālī* from his own suggested tripartite scheme: (1) *Samṁardāī prañālī*, "Sectarian School" (2) *Ṣāstrī prañālī*, "Brahmanical School" and (3) *Ādhunik prañālī*, "Modern School". Piar Singh's scheme may be equally objectionable, since it reduces the diversity of interpretations into three fixed categories. In fact, Taran Singh's categorization reflects the historical development of various schools of interpretations.

34. Hazara Singh and Vir Singh, eds., *Vārān Bhāī Gurdās* (Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 9th edn., 1977).

35. Vir Singh, ed., *Kabitt Bhāī Gurdās*, parts 1 and 2 (Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 3rd edn., 1966). The first part contains 556 poems and the second remaining 119.

Bhai Gurdas provides an example of theological interpretation. He faithfully expounds the key terms and theological concepts of early Sikh doctrine. For instance, one may see his exposition of the Mul Mantar in *Vār* 3:15. Again, the meaning of the epilogue of the *Japjī* is clearly brought out in the light of the Sikh doctrine of Word as Guru (*guru sabadu*) in *Vār* 2:19 as follows:

ਪਵਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ਰਾਗ ਨਾਦ ਵੀਚਾਰਾ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਲੁ ਧਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਉਤਪਤ
ਸੰਸਾਰਾ॥

Air is the Guru in the sense of Word as Guru, and [this knowledge comes from] the contemplation of the music of the Word. Water is the Father and earth the Mother, which give birth to the whole creation.

Similarly Bhai Gurdas deals with the essential doctrines taught by the Guru (*gurmat*): unity of Guruship, Sikh way of life (*sikhi*), Sikh morality (*sadāchār*), holy fellowship (*sādh saṅgat*), the ideal Sikh who has "turned towards the Guru" (*gurmukh*), and so on.³⁶ In his works one may also find the source material for the early history of the Panth.

23. *Paramārath pranālī*

This school of interpretation is associated with the Miharban tradition. It was mainly responsible for the didactic variety of discourse (*goṣṭī*).³⁷ Its name is derived from the conventional formula *tis kā paramārath* ("its sublime meaning") used by the commentator after each quotation of Guru Nanak before giving the actual exegesis of the same.³⁸ Unlike Bhai

36. See Taran Singh, *Gurbānī dīān viākhīā pranālīān*, pp. 45–48.

37. W.H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 98–9. The author draws two significant conclusions from the analysis of the Miharban *janam-sakhi*: first, the work is not sectarian polemic, and secondly, it is not strictly a *janam-sakhi*, but rather it is an exegetical tradition. See pp. 33–35.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60. The same formula is also employed in the B4C *janam-sakhi* (see n. 1 on p. 60).

Gurdas who employed the medium of poetry for his exposition of Sikh doctrines, Miharban took prose as his medium. This should not, however, conceal the fact that he concludes his didactic discourse with a shalok of his own in which he tries to recapture the spirit of the original verse of Guru Nanak.

In his analysis of Sikh hagiography W.H. McLeod has suggested that the Miharban *janam-sakhi* begins with the narrative setting and the introduction of interlocutors, which provide a context suitable to the basic pedagogical purpose. This purpose, he argues, was to provide an explanation or interpretation of Guru Nanak's own works.³⁹ For instance, the detailed description of Guru Nanak's marriage-party in the wedding-discourse (*viāh-gosṭ gurū bābe nānak jī kī*) provides the setting for the interpretation of *Sūhī Chhant 1*:

ਸੁਹੀ ਛੰਤ ਮਹਲਾ ੧।
ਹਮ ਘਰਿ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਏ। ਸਾਰੇ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ...⁴⁰

ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਪਰਮਾਰਥ:

ਤਬ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਿ, "ਹਮ ਘਰਿ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਏ"। ਸਿ ਕਉਟ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਏ? ਏਹਿ ਜੇ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਥੇ ਏਈ ਜੀਅ ਕੇ ਸਾਜਨ ਹੈ। ਅਰੁ ਏ ਜਿ ਦੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ ਸੇ ਏਈ ਏਸ ਕੇ ਦੁਸਮਨ ਹੈ। ਜਦਿ ਏਸੁ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਹੋਆ ਤਬ ਏਸ ਕਉ ਏਈ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਇ ਮਿਲੇ ਸੁਕਰਮ ਜਿਨਾ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਏਸ ਜੀਵ ਕਾ ਤਲਾ ਹੋਵੈ...⁴¹

Suhi Chhant Mahala 1.

Loved friends have arrived at my home. The True One has brought about the union.

Its sublime meaning [is as follows]:

Then Guru Baba Nanak Ji said, "Loved friends have arrived at my home."
Who are these loved friends who have come? Well, all these that are good

39. Ibid., p. 59.

40. M1, *Sūhī Chhant 1*, AG, p. 764.

41. Taran Singh, *Gurbānī dī ān viākhīā pranālīān*, p. 57.

actions are the loved friends of this soul. And, all those that are bad actions are its enemies. When the True Lord showed benevolence towards this [soul], then these good actions have become its loved friends, through which this soul has achieved excellence.

Here Miharban's method of exegesis is clearly reflected in his allegorical interpretation of "loved friends" (*sājan*) as "good actions" (*sukrit*) and "home" (*ghar*) as "soul" (*jīa*). In this way he went beyond the literal sense of Guru Nanak's verse and tried to provide its spiritual meaning through the medium of homilies which he delivered to his followers in simple language during the early years of the seventeenth century.

The Miharban school of interpretation may point towards the existence during the period of Guru Arjan of a strong tradition of scriptural exegesis in the form of a religious discourse. After Miharban's death in 1640 CE his exegetical method was followed by his sons Harijī and Chatarbhuj.⁴²

24. *Udāsī prañālī*

This school of interpretation is linked with the Udasi Sikhs, the followers of Baba Sri Chand, Guru Nanak's elder son. Their ascetic ideals are reflected in their writings. They were basically itinerant sadhus who delivered their own interpretation of Guru Nanak's message orally among the people throughout India. The first written record of the Udasi school of thought may be seen in Sadhu Anandghan's commentary on the *Japjī* and other works of Guru Nanak, which he completed in 1825 CE. Sadhu Anandghan received his education in Brahmanical thought at Kashi, the influence of which can be seen in his interpretation. He maintained that

42. For more details, see *ibid.*, pp. 69–89.

Guru Nanak's whole *bānī* was written according to the Hindu Shastra tradition (ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਕੀ ਰੀਤਿ ਕੀ ਹੈ)⁴³ That is why he stressed its interpretation in the context (*prakaran*) of Vedic thought.

The most striking instance in Sadhu Anandghan's commentary may be seen in his method of hermeneutics of reduction when he declares that the actual text of *Japji* ends at twenty-fifth stanza and that the remainder of it is just its extra (*khil*) portion:

ਜੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੋ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਹੁਆ ਸੋ ਤੇ ਪੁਮੇਸਵਰ ਹੁਆ...ਤਾ ਕੇ ਅਰਥ ਦੁਵਾਰਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਜਪੁਜੀ ਏਤਾ ਹੀ ਸਿਧ ਹੈ ਅਰ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਕੁਲ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦਵਾਰਾ ਭੀ ਜਪੁਜੀ ਇਸ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ...ਆਗੇ ਅਮੁਲ ਗੁਣ ਜੋ ਹੈ ਜਪੁਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਿਲ ਹੈ।⁴⁴

The King of Kings [in the twenty-fifth stanza] must be the Supreme Lord Himself...According to this interpretation *Japji* is perfect and according to our traditional lineage its name is *Japji*...The following [stanza that begins with the words] "priceless virtues" (*amul gun*) is just an extra (*khil*) portion of the *Japji*...

In method and style Sadhu Anandghan reflects in his interpretation of *gurbānī* a Vedantic Hindu perspective so influential in Varanasi at that time. It seems that the Udasi tradition was assimilated to Hindu philosophical thought by the time it reached the nineteenth century.

2.5. *Nirmalā pranālī*

The origin of the Nirmala sect within the Panth is obscure, although there is some evidence that it existed during the Misal period in the late eighteenth century.⁴⁵ The first recognised Nirmala scholar was Kavi Santokh Singh, who wrote the celebrated works *Nānak*

43. Taran Singh, *Gurbānī dīān viākhīā pranālīān*, p. 96.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

45. Rai Jasbir Singh, "Nirmal Bhekh da Arambh", in Pritam Singh (somp.), *Nirmal Sampradāi* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1981), p. 30-7. There is no evidence to support the traditional claim that Guru Gobind Singh himself deputed five Sikhs to Kashi for Sanskrit learning.

Prakās and *Sūraj Prakās* in the first half of the nineteenth century. He also wrote a commentary on *Japjī*, popularly known as *Garbgañjanī Tikā*, "A Commentary to Humble the Pride [of Udasi Anandghan]." Santokh Singh took strong exception to Anandghan's interpretation that Guru Nanak acknowledged six gurus in a line from *Japjī*: "Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma and Parvati, all are but manifestations of the one divine Guru" (ਗੁਰ ਈਸਰ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਰਖ ਬਰਮਾ ਗੁਰ ਪਾਰਬਤੀ ਮਾਈ).⁴⁶ He was also strongly critical of the esoteric interpretation of *gurbāñī* presented in the Udasi work. It appears that the scriptural interpretation was one focus of conflict among various sects within the Panth in the nineteenth century.

Like Udasis, however, the Nirmala scholars were equally inclined towards Vedantic interpretations of *gurbāñī*. They maintained that *gurbāñī* was essentially an expression of the Vedic teachings in the current vernacular language (*bhākhā*).⁴⁷ In his commentary on *Japjī*, for instance, Santokh Singh frequently employed the Puranic myths and examples from the Vedas to make a point. There were other such scholars, like Pandit Tara Singh Narotam, Bhai Dal Singh Gyani, Giani Gian Singh, Sant Deva Singh Nirmala, Pandit Gulab Singh, Sadhu Gurdit Singh and Sant Sampuran Singh, who were all interpreting *gurbāñī* from the Nirmala perspective in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁸

2.6. *Giani pranālī*

Traditionally, this school of interpretation is associated with Mani Singh Giani who is credited with having learned the exposition of scriptures from Guru Gobind Singh at Damdama

46. MI, *Japjī* 5, AG, p. 2. The translation is from TSSS, p. 87. Anandghan interprets Guru Nanak acknowledges Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, Parvati, *mā* (Lakshmi) and *ī* (Sarsvati) as his gurus. See Taran Singh, *Gurbāñī diāñ viākhā pranālīāñ*, p. 105, n. 3.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 130, n. 1.

48. For details, see *ibid.*, pp. 138–188.

Sahib in Talvandi Sabo. However, there is no authentic work that may be consulted for understanding his approach towards scriptural interpretation. The first major work from this school, in fact, appeared in the form of a complete commentary on the *Adi Granth*, the *Farīdkoṭ Ṭīkā*, in 1905. Its author was Giani Badan Singh of Sekhwan, who was responding to the situation created by the offensive remarks made by Ernest Trumpp in his incomplete translation of the *Adi Granth* in 1877.⁴⁹ It is important to note that the Giani school of thought put great emphasis on strict adherence to the sacred text and on the received tradition of the Khalsa.

The chief characteristic of the *Faridkot ṭīkā* is its emphasis on intuitive (*anubhab*) interpretation.⁵⁰ Giani Badan Singh maintains that an interpreter's intuitive faculties are developed only in the company of ideal Sikhs (*gurmukhān dī saṅgat*), who can pass on the Guru's correct intention of a particular passage through oral transmission. He further stresses that a single meaning of a line of *gurbāṇī* should be preferred to multiple meanings achieved through various interpretive techniques. In his approach, however, he goes beyond the literal sense. For instance, note the following interpretation of a line from *Japjī*:

ਕਰਮੀ ਆਵੈ ਕਪੜਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰਾ⁵¹

(ਨਦਰੀ) ਹਰੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਟ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਸੇ (ਕਪੜਾ) ਭਗਤੀ ਰੂਪ ਸਿਰਪਾਉ ਮਿਲਤਾ ਹੈ ਔਰ
ਤਿਸ ਸੇ ਮੋਖ ਕਾ ਦਵਾਰਾ ਗਯਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਤਾ ਹੈ⁵²

49. Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth* (New Delhi, reprint, 1970; 1st edn., London, 1877), p. CXX. M.A. Macauliffe also undertook his monumental work, *The Sikh Religion* (1909), "to make some reparation to the Sikhs for the insults which Trumpp offered to their Gurus and their religion." For more details, see Harnam Singh Shan, "Macauliffe and his Contributions to Sikh Studies and Contacts between Cultures" (a paper presented at the 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies at the University of Toronto, August 19-25, 1990).

50. Taran Singh, *Gurbāṇī dīān viākhīā pranālīān*, pp. 206-7.

51. *ML, Japjī 4, AG, p. 2.*

52. Taran Singh, *Gurbāṇī dīān viākhīā pranālīān*, p. 208.

Past actions determine the nature of our birth but grace alone reveals the door to liberation.⁵³

Through the Lord's gracious glance one achieves the robe of honour in the form of loving devotion (*bhakti*), by means of which one reaches the door to liberation in the form of knowledge.

Here there is no mention of the role of past actions (*karamī*) in the interpretation of this line from *Japjī*. Rather, the emphasis is placed on the dual function of divine grace which paves the way for the loving devotion in the first place and then for the knowledge of the door to liberation.

A prominent institution of the Giani school was established at Amritsar (*ḍerā māī sato dī galī*) by Sant Ameer Singh (1870–1954), who frequently offered many new meanings of a single line of *gurbānī* on the basis of etymological possibilities of different words. However, in a number of cases his interpretations become strained and out of context.⁵⁴ Another *ḥaksāl* (literally, "mint"; here "a school of traditional Sikh learning") was established by Sant Sunder Singh of Boparai Kalan in 1906, and achieved prominence through its second incumbent, Giani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa (1902–1969) of Bhindran Kalan, who trained a large number of *giānīs* through his mobile seminary. The influence of the Bhindran *ḥaksāl* is attested by the fact that its alumni include the head *granthī* ("reader") at the Golden Temple, *jathedārs* ("commanders") of all the *takhats* ("thrones"), and *granthīs* of major gurdwaras of historical significance. In the recent past an incumbent of a branch of this school was Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, who achieved world-wide attention when he died along with many other Sikhs during the Indian Army's assault on the Golden Temple complex in June 1984.

53. McLeod, *TSSS*, p. 87.

54. For details, see Taran Singh, *Gurbānī dīān viākhīā pranālīān*, pp. 223–4.

Although the Bhindran *ṭaksāl* is known for offering many possible meanings of the same scriptural passage, nothing can be said at this stage whether its interpretation has moved towards a fundamentalist position or not.⁵⁵

2.7. Singh Sabha *praṇālī*

This school of interpretation is linked with the Singh Sabha, which began in 1873 as a reform movement dedicated to the revival of traditional Sikh values following a period of apparent decay. It was greatly influenced by the British presence in the Punjab, a presence which, among other things, provided the technology for disseminating literature. The Singh Sabha scholars adopted an approach to scriptural interpretation which was primarily guided by the scientific and rationalistic influence of Western education. Through this process of reinterpretation of the received tradition they were able to produce detailed commentaries on the Adi Granth from a purely Sikh perspective. For instance, Teja Singh (1894–1958), the author of *Śabadārath*, brought out rationally the meaning of scriptural words, phrases and passages in exclusively Sikh terms.⁵⁶

Bhai Vir Singh (1872–1957), the most prolific writer of the Singh Sabha school of interpretation, emphasized the need to practise *nām simaran* ("remembrance of the divine Name") in order to understand the deeper levels of meaning of *gurbāṇī*. In his *santhiā* ("lesson") he provided an excellent combination of all the four techniques of interpretation, comprising *padārath*, *pramārath*, *ṭīkā* and *viākhīā*, from a strictly orthodox Sikh standpoint. His typical

55. For more details on the method of interpretation of Bhindran *ṭaksāl*, see Giani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa, *Gurbāṇī Pāṭh Darāsan* (Amritsar: Bhai Mehar Singh and Sons, sixth edn., 1985).

56. For more details on Teja Singh's method, see Taran Singh, *Gurbāṇī dīān viākhīā praṇālīān*, 323–348.

approach was to explore the meaning of every line in the context of the whole hymn or composition. He frequently used quotations from the *Adi Granth*, the *Dasam Granth* and Bhai Gurdas's *Vārān* to elaborate the meaning of particular passages of *gurbāṇī*, thus following the principle of interpreting the scripture by means of scripture.⁵⁷

Unlike Bhai Vir Singh, Sahib Singh (1893–1977) was quite adamant on the principle of "a single meaning" of a scriptural passage. His approach is based upon a grammatical explanation of *gurbāṇī*, which he fully developed in his *Gurbāṇī Viākaraṇ* ("Grammar of Gurbani") in 1939.⁵⁸ He also maintained that there is complete identity between *gurbāṇī* and *bhagat bāṇī*. In his commentary Sahib Singh argues that the *rahāu*-verse of a hymn provides its central meaning. That is why he begins his explanation with it and revolves the whole meaning of a hymn or composition around it. He tries to free the explanation of *gurbāṇī* from history. He also maintains that there is always a theme running as a continuous thread throughout a composition. In order to justify this he sometimes offers strained interpretations.⁵⁹

Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued that the *Adi Granth* text has an inexhaustible hermeneutic potential. Each generation of scholars has tried to unfold its meaning from its particular angle. If one looks at the sheer number of books and commentaries on *Japjī* alone

57. For more details, see *ibid.*, pp. 295–300.

58. The idea that Gurbani has its own grammar was suggested for the first time by the much-maligned linguist Ernest Trumpp in his *Introduction to the Ādi Granth*. It was carried forward to a great extent by Teja Singh in his *Śabadārath*. But it was fully developed only by Sahib Singh. See *ibid.*, 350.

59. For more details, see *ibid.*, 351–362.

one can easily sense the diverse possibilities of various levels of its meaning.⁶⁰ Both Sikh and non-Sikh scholars have employed their skills to understand its meaning. In fact, plurality of interpretations has remained part and parcel of Sikh tradition throughout its history. It is only recently that emphasis is being placed upon a single "correct" meaning, which is the result of Singh Sabha interpretation, particularly the grammatical approach of Sahib Singh.

There is a rich tradition of oral/aural experience of Sikh scripture. Each individual Sikh tries to understand the meaning of life in the light of his/her daily experience of immersing himself/herself in *gurbānī*. Further, the process of *vāk lao* confirms the function of the scripture as Guru. For instance, each day early in the morning thousands of Sikhs gather at the Golden Temple to listen to the Guru's *vāk* and each one of them derives from the same hymn a message suitable to one's level and degree of understanding. Moreover, there is evidence that even during the battles of the Anglo-Sikh wars the Sikhs would take the scripture along and would set up a separate tent for their devotional experience of taking the Guru's command before going to fight.⁶¹ Thus the place and function of the Adi Granth as Guru has inspired the Sikhs throughout their history in personal piety, liturgy, ceremonies and communal solidarity. It has given the Sikhs a sacred focus upon which to reflect and in the process discover their identity.

The trend in recent scholarship is mainly focused on the literary approach to

60. Kirpal Singh has counted 379 books and 385 articles on the interpretation of the *Japji* in his paper "Bibliography on Japji", presented at the "Japji Seminar", organized by Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, on 14 March 1990.

61. For instance see Henry Erskine's manuscript note of April 1849 at BL, MSS. OR. 1125: "After the Infantry charging the Enemy at Goojerat the Cavalry and Light Artillery pursued the fugitive Sikhs and Afghans. The Infantry then advanced steadily in line until clear of the blazing Camp, when they filed Arms. It was there I found this Book in a tent of one of the hostile Chiefs—probably Shere Singh's. This is called the Grunth or Code of Sikh Religion. It is highly prized by the Sikhs, and I have many solicitations for it from the Sikh gentlemen."

understand the meaning of a scripture. This is an approach that treats the scripture "like any other piece of literature", to use Wilfred Cantwell Smith's phrase, and through it the reader encounters the text without preconceived notions in order to explore the possibilities of its meaning. This approach can show the plausibility of a wider range of meanings and it can also demonstrate the implausibility of certain fixed interpretations. Moreover, in the context of a religious dialogue in an ecumenical era this approach can readily expose an unjustified criticism and distorted presentation of others' religious ideas and practices. In this context the study of the Adi Granth is crucial in offering its own contribution to the study of world religions.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

The process of the compilation of the Adi Granth text began with the use of Guru Nanak's hymns in Sikh liturgy at Kartarpur. These hymns were committed to memory by his first disciples, who passed them on to the next generation through oral transmission of a singing tradition. It is, indeed, entirely possible that Guru Nanak may have himself written them down in his lifetime. Moreover, the writing of *gurbānī* has been regarded as a devotional activity in the Sikh community since perhaps the last period of Guru Nanak's life at Kartarpur. The first definite written collection evidently appeared in the form of Goindval *pothīs* during the period of the third Guru. These provided a substantial nucleus for the compilation of the Adi Granth by Guru Arjan.

The compilation of the Adi Granth evidently owes much to the enormous energies of Guru Arjan. He prepared an authoritative scripture in 1604 CE, primarily in response to the process of crystallization of the Sikh tradition that was taking place during his period. He organized the works of the Gurus, the Bhagats and other poet-bards into a coherent pattern reflecting both theological and musicological perspectives. He applied meticulous standards to give the scripture its unique form, with regard both to its content and to its style. In the process he worked over a number of drafts. He frequently revised the received texts to achieve linguistic modifications, especially through the substitution of synonyms for certain words. With a few

interesting exceptions, he took extraordinary care to maintain the original meaning and rhythm of those hymns which he revised for the final text. Examination of these exceptions has proved to be especially helpful for discovering the principles behind his editorial work. He carefully directed the whole operation of recording of the *Adi Granth*. This is quite evident from his personal approval of the content, form and organization of the *bānī* in particular *raga* sections, as indicated by the use of the word *śudh* ("correct") in the margins of the text. One important outcome of this study is confirmation—through scrutiny of manuscript evidence—of the *Kartarpur* manuscript as the final text of the *Adi Granth* as compiled by *Guru Arjan*.

Some of the fundamental aspects of *Guru Arjan's* editorial policy are reflected in the actual process by which he modified the earlier, incomplete, drafts on the way to producing the final text. Five major guiding principles that emerge from analysis of his editorial decisions are as follows: (1) doctrinal consistency, (2) the ideal of balanced life, (3) the spirit of optimism, (4) the universal nature of Sikh claim, and (5) concern for distinctive Sikh identity. There may be other aspects of *Guru Arjan's* editorial policy which may be identified through competent textual analysis of certain portions of the *Adi Granth* in future research.

This study has demonstrated that the inclusion of the *bhagat bānī* in the *Adi Granth* illuminates the doctrinal concerns of the Sikh Gurus. Selection of the *bhagat bānī* was made not exclusively on the basis of its identity with the teachings of the Gurus, for there is difference as well as identity. The process of its integration in the Sikh scriptures was based upon the recognition of two major points. First, there was its harmonization with the Gurus' thought in broad outlines. Second, its differences with the Gurus' thought at essential points were highlighted to demonstrate the distinctive Sikh viewpoints. These additional reflections of the Gurus were crucial for shaping the emerging Sikh identity. They play an important role in

defining what it means to be a Sikh in relation to the commonly held Sant, Sufi or Bhagat ideals. These points become clear from the Gurus' comments on the *bhagat bāṇī*, the net effect of which is to firmly cement its inclusion in the Sikh scriptural tradition.

Some of the Bhagat material was "edited out" at the time of the compilation of the Adi Granth. Guru Arjan evidently was not only concerned with identifying the circles from which a particular composition emanated, but also with the details of its message. The hymns of the Vaishnava Bhagats were least acceptable to him. He even rejected those hymns of the Sants (who are otherwise included in the scripture) which were coloured with Vaishnava ideals or *haṭha* yoga techniques. The selection of the *bhagat bāṇī* thus highlights both the exclusive and inclusive aspects of Guru Arjan's editorial policy.

Guru Arjan's open but cautious approach in selecting the Bhagat material appears to have created a tension within certain sections of the Sikh Panth who were still holding Vaishnava ideals. There must have been an ongoing debate on his editorial policy among those groups. They took advantage of the unstable situation created by Guru Arjan's death and re-inserted those hymns (which earlier were turned down by the Guru) in their copies of the Adi Granth. The first such *bīṛ* was prepared in Lahore in 1610 CE when Guru Hargobind was imprisoned in the Gwalior fort by the orders of Jahangir. This manuscript tradition became popular as the Lahore or Bura Sandhu recension of the Adi Granth in the seventeenth century.

This study offers the following theory of the origin of the Banno recension of the Adi Granth. The main centre of Sikh activities shifted from Amritsar to Kiratpur under Guru Hargobind, who had to withdraw to the Shivalik hills due to the pressure of historical circumstances. This provided ample opportunity for the Banno group, which represented the union of Hindali, Udasi, Bhatra and Brahmanical interests, to exert its influence within the Panth

in the area of Khara Mangat in Gujrat District. This was the time (1642 CE) when the Banno recension of the Adi Granth appeared. Apart from reflecting internal pressure within the Sikh community, the Banno group was also reacting to the external pressure of the Mughals upon the Sikhs. Out of the three competing versions of the Adi Granth text, the Banno recension gradually came to the fore at the end of the seventeenth century. It reigned supreme throughout the eighteenth century because of the Banno group's increasing influence within the Panth due to the turmoil of the period.

The decision to add Guru Tegh Bahadur's *bāṇī* to the earlier text of the Adi Granth was taken by Guru Gobind Singh, possibly at the instance of his own father when the latter left for Delhi to face the Mughal challenge in 1675 CE. It is entirely possible that Guru Gobind Singh made an attempt to standardize the text of the Adi Granth due to the problem of the circulation of three different versions of the Adi Granth during his period. He approached Dhir Mal's descendants to obtain the Kartarpur volume, but he did not succeed in persuading them to part with it. However, a number of copies of the Kartarpur text were available at that time, and it was these that he used to make the Damdama version of the Adi Granth at Anandpur in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. In the light of present research it is not yet possible to confirm the popular tradition that Guru Gobind Singh prepared the final Damdama version at Talvandi Sabo in 1705 CE. More manuscript evidence is required here.

What is now the standard version of the Adi Granth was prepared during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who promoted its copying and distribution in the Sikh community. It is based on the Kartarpur manuscript with the addition of Guru Tegh Bahadur's *bāṇī*. In other words, it is the standard Damdama version of the Adi Granth. Although the Banno version was still popular in some sections of the Sikh community, particularly in the south-western area of

Gujrat District, it soon came to be branded as a "spurious recension" (*khārī bīr*). The first printed copy of the standard Damdama version of the Adi Granth appeared in 1868 CE. This gave a fillip for its universal acceptance. A complete consensus in the Sikh community on the text of the Adi Granth was achieved, however, only as a result of the Singh Sabha reforms in the late nineteenth century, which sanctified the standard Damdama version and set aside all other versions used in the earlier centuries. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Adi Granth text even attained a standard pagination as a result of printing uniformity. All modern printed editions have a total of 1,430 pages, and all correspond exactly in terms of the material printed on the individual pages.

The Adi Granth has played a unique role as Guru in the personal piety, liturgy and corporate life of the Sikh community. It has provided a framework for the shaping of the Panth throughout its history and hence it has been a decisive factor for shaping distinctive Sikh identity. It occupies a central position in all Sikh ceremonies and its oral/aural experience has provided the Sikh tradition with a living presence of the divine Guru. In other words, the Adi Granth has given the Sikhs a sacred source upon which to reflect and in the process discover the meaning of life as Sikhs.

The Adi Granth as scriptural text has inexhaustible hermeneutic potential. In oral as well as written exegesis, each generation of Sikh interpreters has drawn out its meaning from its particular angle. In fact, plurality of interpretations has remained part and parcel of the Sikh approach to the Adi Granth throughout its history. Recent emphasis on a single "correct" meaning is a result of the distinctive doctrinal approach of certain Singh Sabha scholars. A yet more recent phenomenon of scriptural literalism in the form of a fundamentalist interpretation seems to be emerging in the Sikh tradition as a result of post-1984 events in the Punjab, but its

articulation is not yet clear. It is still in the process of development and is related to the larger process of religious fundamentalism that is taking place in India, particularly Hindu fundamentalism.

This study also calls attention to some significant areas of scholarship needing further research. For instance, probes into the musicological system of the Adi Granth in this study should stimulate further research in this area. It must be taken up by a scholar who is deeply trained in the musical tradition of North India. Such research may involve field study in the oral performance of the ragas of the Adi Granth by different Sikh musicians (*rāgīs*) belonging to old family traditions (*gharānas*) of repute, since the sacred music is generally passed on to different generations without any change. Such musicological research may contribute to understanding the musical tradition of North India in general during that period and throw additional light on the significance of the particular musicological choices of ragas made by the Gurus in organizing the Adi Granth.

It is also noteworthy that a rare manuscript (GNDU MS # 1245) has been brought to light in this study for the first time. It demands a thorough philological analysis. Its further scrutiny will certainly illuminate the linguistic forms used in the late sixteenth century in North India. It may also be helpful in understanding the language of other early New Indo-Aryan (NIA) texts. It is hoped that this study will stimulate research in these and other areas related to the Adi Granth, an important focus for scholarship which until now has been rather neglected by historians, philologists, theologians and scholars of religious studies.

The study of the Adi Granth can offer its own contribution to the study of world religions in an ecumenical era. In any situation of a religious dialogue, for instance, it can offer an approach which is based on an "open attitude", an attitude which allows not only true

understanding of other traditions but also disagreement on crucial theological issues. In such a dialogue, all participants will be able to maintain their differences in dignity and mutual respect.

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