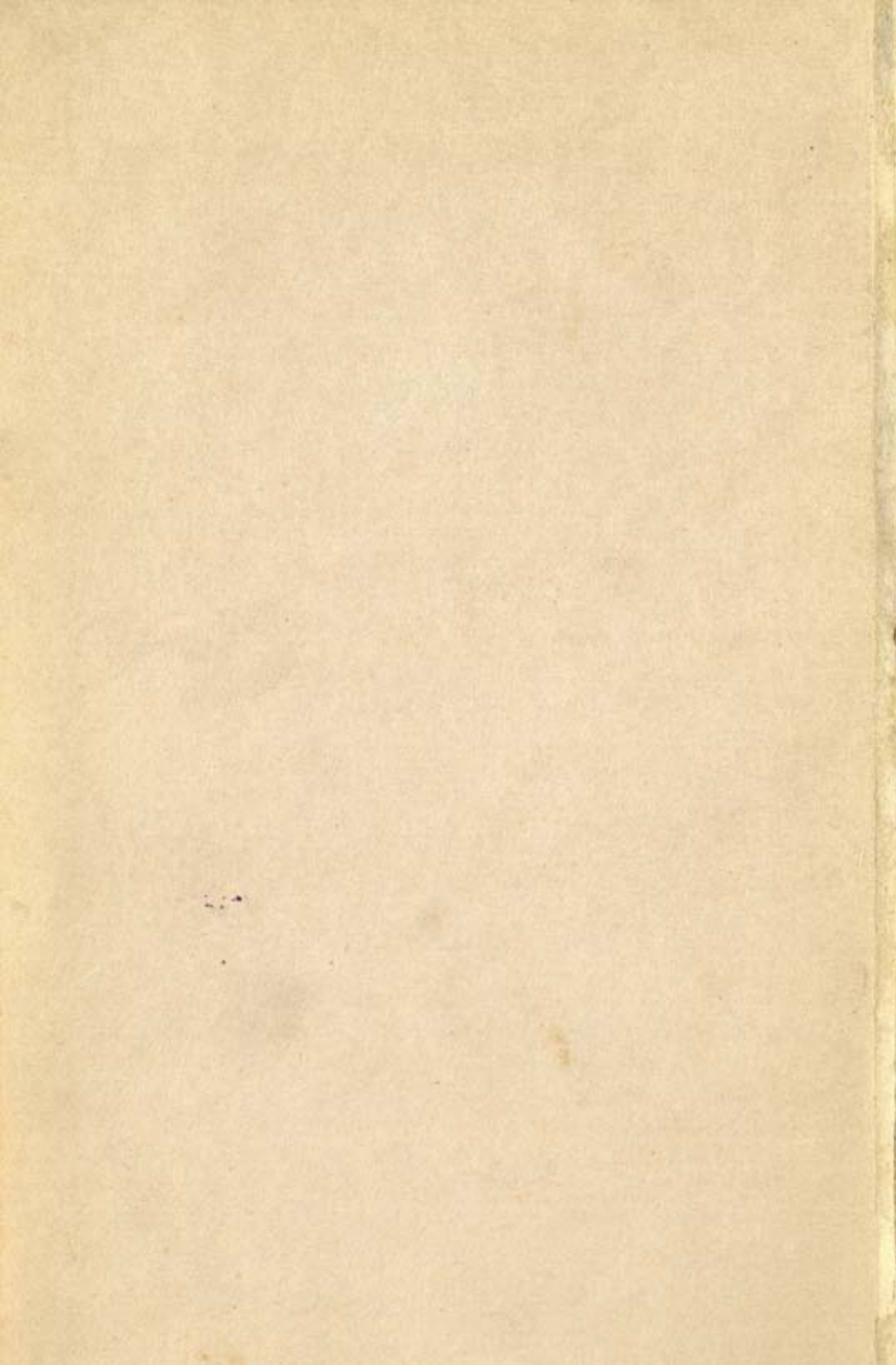


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GURU NANAK

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By

DR. TRILOCHAN SINGH

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GURDWARA PARBANDHAK COMMITTEE

SIS GANJ, CHANDNI CHOWK

DELHI

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To
my daughters

Rupinder Kaur, Sushil Kaur, Rasil Kaur

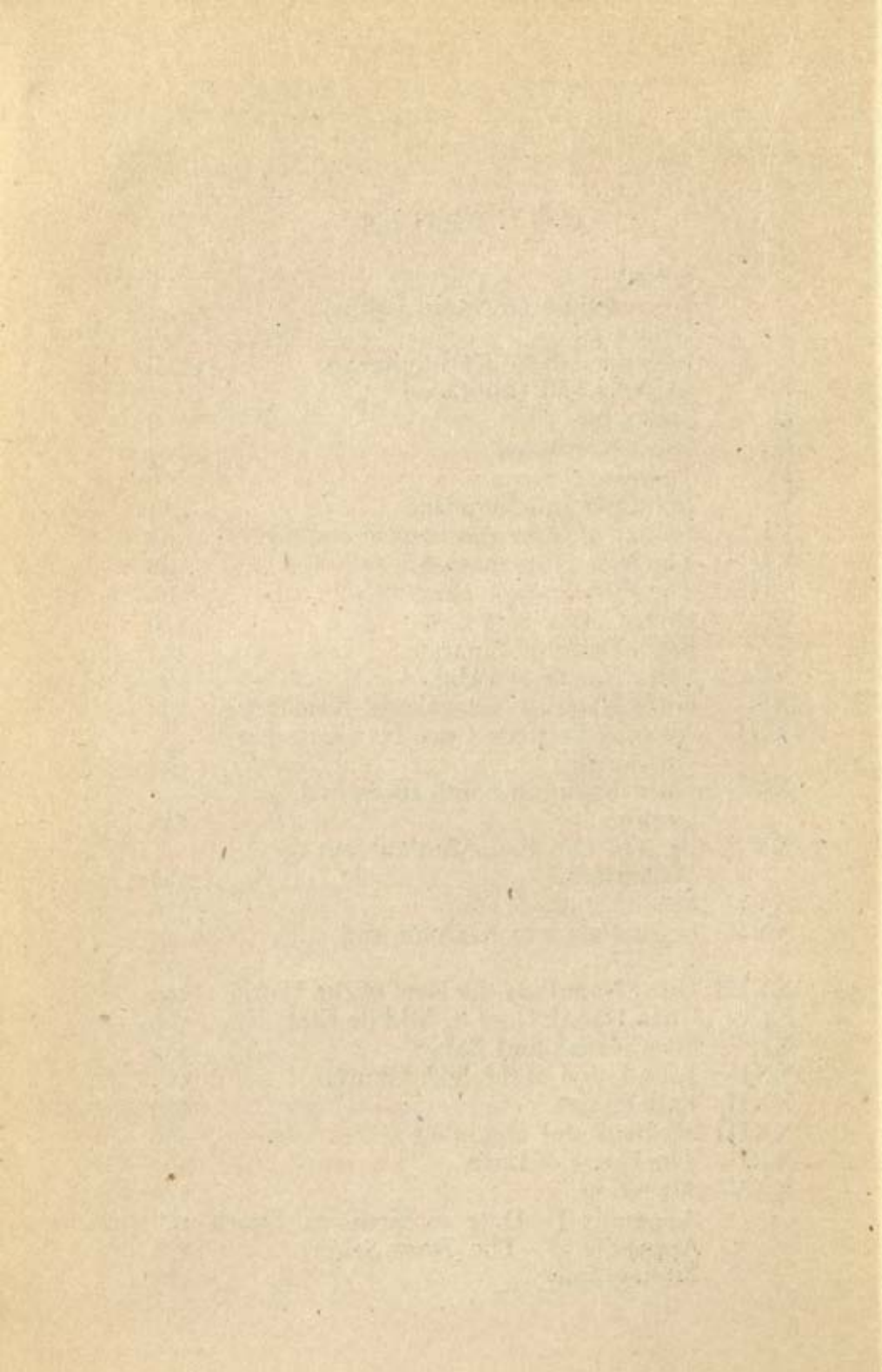
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GURDWARA PARBANDHAK COMMITTEE
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PREFACE

Five hundred years ago, Guru Nanak was born in a world plunged in medieval ignorance, feudal tyranny, and religious and cultural oppression. He dispelled ignorance with wisdom, slavery by giving a call for freedom and equality, oppression by condemning social and political tyranny. He exalted the poor and down-trodden, and made them sovereigns of their own mind, body and souls. He broke the barriers between one creed and another, between higher and lower castes, between nations and countries. Humanity was one world and one family to him. His doctrines, his faith, his philosophy was for every man who was in search of Truth.

Guru Nanak's life was a continuous journey. Wherever he went he inspired sensitive souls with ardent, inextinguishable fire and with burning and undiminished ardour. His words inflamed unforgettable ideals and sowed in human souls the germs of truth and heroic vocation. He did not give a message of sorrow but of blissful joy. He did not promise any future paradise but earthly serenity and spiritual enlightenment. He did not show a path of fasts, penance and austerities for the few but gave a way of life within the easy reach of all men.

He seldom spoke in temples and mosques. The open sky was the dome of his temple. The open fields, the soothing river sides, and imposing mountain slopes and rocks were his pulpits. Nature, reflecting the splendour and divinity of God was his altar. His manner of speaking suited the mental make up of his hearers. His speech was simple and alive with

comparisons drawn from daily life, but when he spoke to Yogis, Sufis, Darshanacharyas, his eloquence reached unparalleled heights. He adopted a style and manner suited to the type of culture of his listeners. He has preserved his vitally important discourses and sermons in his own writings, many of which are quoted in this book. All of them have a historical base for which adequate source references are given.

Guru Nanak ushered an ecumenical epoch with the whole world as its base. He showed us how the Churches of East and West could not only come close to each other, but could unite and co-operate in the spirit of Justice and Truth and thus create unity in diversity. He could sit with a Muslim and pray with him. He could sit with a Vaishnava Hindu and sing with him. For him prayer was communion with the Divine, conceived and felt within one's heart and soul, and singing divine songs was a glorification of God as He has manifested in Nature and humanity. The difference of language and the pattern of belief in Godhead did not prevent him from friendship, and spiritual and cultural co-operation with saints and divines of other faiths.

Wherever he went he met people of all shades and all types. He oriented human passions with tender kindness. He corrected, rejuvenated and sanctified the proud, the sensual, the slothful, the hypocritical and the wicked characters. Wherever he went he lifted such people from the degenerating depths into which they had fallen and elevated them to divine heights.

Though Guru Nanak's message was simple and profound, it demanded self-consecration and morality of a very high order. Man cannot comprehend God with his intellect, yet with his love he may under-

stand Him and possess Him. Love is the easiest way to God. It is the essence of perfection. He who loves the divine Guru and God loves Truth, Beauty and Perfection. Unstruck Music and the Light of His Presence is the myrrh of His consolation and the incense of His gratitude. It is the most fortifying spiritual solace.

There never was a time in Sikh history, when Sikhs were more cut off from the Nanak of history and the Sage Nanak of *Adi Granth*, than ours, nor one which needed Him more. This grim realization came to me over fifteen years ago, when I started collecting the oldest Manuscripts of *Janam Sākhīs* and other records, and critically studying and analysing all that was available on Guru Nanak. After spending fifteen years and thousands of rupees from my own precious earnings, what I have achieved is now in the hands of the readers. Little did I dream that it would be completed and published in the Quincentenary of Guru Nanak. Collecting and studying the oldest Manuscripts of *Janam Sākhīs* and sifting material out of them has been the most agonising work, which can exhaust the patience of the most patient man. That is perhaps the reason why after Kavi Santokh Singh wrote his great work "*Nanak Prakash*", no Sikh scholar has ever critically analysed and used in his biography of Nanak such *Janam Sākhīs* as *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sākhī* and old authentic Manuscripts of *Bala's Janam Sākhīs* originally called *Paide Mokhe dī Janam Sākhīs*. What I have to say about *Janam Sākhīs* and the way our present day scholars have used them and commented on them has been already said in Appendix II of this book. It is sufficient to state here that the *Janam Sākhīs* are not life-stories of Guru Nanak, but very much, like the Gospels they are stories about Nanak. Apart from taking a few dates from *Puratan Janam Sākhī* which I have proved wrong, Macauliffe gave a

capsule translation of *Nanak Prakash* of Kavi Santokh Singh. Bhai Vir Singh fictionalised the stories of *Nanak Prakash* as he frankly states in his Introduction to *Guru Nanak Chamatkar*. Of all the scholars and historians of our period, Bhai Vir Singh alone was competent to produce a real biography, but as he started his literary career with fiction and epic poetry, his epic imagination has produced a wonderful fictionalised story of Guru Nanak, adding here and there some very useful footnotes. But Bhai Vir Singh shuns and avoids taking decisions on controversial issues so much that, he does not say a word about the date of birth and death of Guru Nanak. As a matter of fact he completely avoids giving the date of birth in his voluminous work of very high literary merit, *Guru Nanak Chamatkar*.

There are the following three types of biographies and books on Guru Nanak that have appeared recently (1) Those written by orthodox plagiarists for the orthodox (2) Those written by agnostics, and so called scientific historians, making much of their methodology, for non-believers, the ignorant readers, and for the sceptics. (3) Those written by literary romancers suffering from nostalgia of literary style, and vainly believing that because they are excellent writers of English language among the Sikhs, they can become outstanding historians by ill-digested plagiarism of other people's labours, and also become renowned translators by revising other people's translations. This last category of writers, banking on political and official patronage is the worst and the most mischievous section of exponents of Sikh history and scriptures, because they do all this without ever reading a single line from the scriptures and without ever opening a single *Janam Sakhi* old and new.

This biography does not belong to any of these

categories. Although the author has spent fifteen years on this work and his life's fortune, he considers it to be a modest attempt to clear the way to the understanding of the historical, as well as the Sage-Nanak, we know from his writings. I have attempted to take future scholars out of the confusion created by negative writers on *Janam Sakhis* and Nanak. They have learnt this art from those rationalists who have proved that Christ was a myth and they have tried unsuccessfully to liquefy Nanak of history. In these negative works written with a declared purpose, there is as Giovanni Papanni would say, "an odour of burnt out lamp wick, a smell of stale incense and of rancid oil that sticks up in the throat. You cannot draw a long and free breath. Such hack work dressed in literary trot of eloquence, neither serves the cause of history, nor of literature." After reading these ill-conceived biographies, we find that we are told next to nothing in them of Guru Nanak's inner and outer development, of his personality, and his impact on the regions he visited and the people he met.

The historical Nanak cannot be understood or interpreted without understanding the Sage-Nanak which emerges from his writings. Nor can the Sage-Nanak be understood through a purely provincial, theological and literary approach. I have tried to present the historical Nanak as a personality, laying stress in every chapter on his inner and outer development and his responses to the social, cultural, and political challenges, in the context of the political and cultural environments of the place and period. I have tried, and I cannot say with how much success, a synthesis between history as it happened and the interpretation of history, between Nanak the Man, and his developing poetry and philosophy of life. I once more repeat that this is only a modest attempt, the first one in the last hundred years or more, and I

shall welcome suggestions, healthy and constructive criticism to make changes in every edition as long as I live in the light of new discoveries, based on facts and truth.

I have something to say about legends and miracles. I not only disbelieve in legends, but from my studies of these legends in Indian history and literature I have been able to trace their origin. I will discuss them in a separate book on the *Janam Sakhis*, how and when were these interpolated and who was originally responsible for this mischief. Sikh scholars have failed to interpret some of the paradoxical statements in *Adi Granth* and it is *Adi Granth* that I take as my guide on miracles. I do not believe in the legends associated with death but as they are firmly entrenched in tradition, I have put them on record giving their sources and also my own opinion on them.

The Sikh Gurus were against renunciation and asceticism, but they repeatedly stress the need for ascetic virtues. They were against going to places of pilgrimage unconnected with moral and spiritual elevation or as means to *mukti*, yet they left us the type of places of pilgrimage they considered essential. They were against miracles performed through occult powers like *riddhis* and *siddhis*, but in the *Adi Granth* they not only state that God protects his saints from harm many times through supernatural intervention, but have given autobiographical hymns of Namdeva, and Kabir as historical example of such miracles. These miracles are again referred to in the writings of the Guru. These are the miracles of God. The Gurus never performed any miracles to show their powers or to save their life from danger, but God did sometime perform a miracle to save them from some serious dangers. Guru Arjan thanks God for saving him from serious crisis through supernatural

intervention but when death came through call for martyrdom, and when he had to lay down his life for freedom, justice and truth he accepted the Will of God. So did Christ. So did Guru Tegh Bahadur. Thus the miracles of God which show that God acts and reveals by active participation through perfect men, are not only accepted but recorded in *Adi Granth*. I firmly believe in the miracles mentioned by Bhai Gurdas who spent nearly forty years of life with two great contemporaries of Nanak, his son Sri Chand and his High-priest Bhai Buddha, who had first hand information on these matters.

There is one more point, Guru Nanak, Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed were human beings, but they were human beings with a difference. They did not belong to the type of human beings we are. The difference is on two points. They were gifted human beings who at certain moment in their life received a *call* which brought them into direct contact with the eternal spirit of Truth and God. Secondly, they were human beings, who after receiving illumination remained constantly in inner communion with the eternal spirit of God. They were not merely inspired men. They were men who had a clear and vivid vision of reality, society and life. To judge such men as something lesser than the intellectuals we pose to be, as historians and scholars, is like closing our eyes and describing the colours of a rainbow. To reduce them to something most ordinary, which our short sighted imagination can imagine is to do grave injustice to these greatest men in human history. They were not Gods, but God has revealed Himself to earth only through such men, and while one civilization is built on the ruins of the other, it is the word of these great men which is still fresh, alive and eternal.

I have no words to adequately express my grateful

thanks to my esteemed friend Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, National Professor of India, in Humanities. President of the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) and well known all over the world as Asia's most eminent linguist, philosopher, orientalist and educationist, for kindly going through the book and writing the *Foreword* in an unbelievably short time. I also thank Dr. V. Raghavan the doyen of Sanskrit studies, formerly Head of the Sanskrit Department, Madras University for his *Introduction*.

I must express my grateful thanks to Bakshi Gurcharan Singh an Advocate of Supreme Court and also a learned theologian but disbeliever in miracles, for spending over a month of his precious summer holidays and making editorial suggestions and discussing with me the presentation of many historical facts. I accepted most of his suggestions. It is to Jathedar Santokh Singh's suggestion that I owe the impetus to write this book, on which I wished to spend a few more years of research work. As the far-sighted Secretary of Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, he tempted me to work on it and extended all facilities for printing and publishing. The burden of getting the book through press and printing difficulties fell on the genial Sardar Gurdial Singh Manager, and his staff-member Sardar Narinderpal Singh Gill, who spared no pains to see the book through. I also thank other members of this committee, particularly, Sardar Gyan Singh, President, Sardar Avtar Singh Kohli, Sardar Harbans Singh Frontier, Dr. Randhir Singh, Sardar Harcharan Singh for their encouragement and active co-operation.

Many thanks are due to the eminent historians and archaeologists of Ceylon Dr. W.S. Karanaratno and Dr. S. Paranavitana for the precious informations sent on Guru Nanak's information on Ceylon, to Dr. W.H. McLeod for going through the proofs

of first eight chapters and making valuable suggestions and to Captain Bhag Singh, Managing Editor of *Sikh Review* for the historical plates of Baghdad inscriptions on which I have given views quite different from those published in the *Sikh Review*. They are very precious guidelines for further research work, and I have no doubt the libraries of Middle East will some day yield surprising material on Guru Nanak's visit to Middle East.

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Trilochan Singh

ABBREVIATIONS

- A.G. *Adi Granth*
 G.N.C. *Guru Nanak Chamaikar* by Bhai Vir Singh
- J.B. (MSS I) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala*, a MSS copy 1826 A.D.
 (Author's Copy)
- J.B. (MSS II or Dacca MSS) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala* written by the Granthi of Dacca in 1869 A.D.
 (Author's Copy)
- J.B. (L I) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala*, Litho-copy printed published by Buta Singh Lahore 1886 A.D.
- J.B. (L II) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala*, Lithoprint, Amritsar 1889 A.D.
- (Other MSS copies referred are given in Bibliography. I have completely rejected *Handalya* version of *Bala's Janam Sakhi*, and all printed versions after Gulab Singh and Sons publication, which also is modernised and corrupted version)
- J.M.S(MSS) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh* (1839 A.D.) *Author's Copy*
- J.M.S (L I) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh*, Litho-copy; Bombay Nanakshahi 423, 1892 A.D.

- J.M.S (L II) *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh*, Litho copy, Amritsar, 1894 A.D.
- J. Mb (MSS) *Janam Sakhi Meharban* (Khalsa College MSS) now published.
- M.K. *Mahan Kosh* by Bhai Kahan Singh, Patiala
- N.P. *Nanak Prakash* by Kavi Santokh Singh Ed by Bhai Vir Singh
- P.J. (MSS I) *Colebrook's MSS*, photozincograph Fascimile 1885; (a copy with the author). Published versions by Macauliffe and Bhai Vir Singh. There is no material difference between the two. It is also called *Valayat wali Janam Sakhi*
- P.J. (MSS II) This is perhaps the only complete copy of this *Janam Sakhi*. All the passages missing in Colebrooke's MSS and Rawalpindi MSS (*Hafizabad wali*) are found in it. The name of the copyist is also given.
- P.P. *Panth Parkash* by Gyani Gyan Singh.
- S.B.M.S., *Sikhan di Bhagatmal* by Bhai Mani Singh (MSS copy) and those published by Gulab Singh and Sons, and Khalsa Samachar Amritsar are also used.
- T.G.K *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa* by Gyani Gyan Singh.

FOREWORD

DR. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

PRESIDENT, SAHITYA AKADEMI

NATIONAL PROFESSOR OF INDIA IN HUMANITIES

Sri Guru Nanak Dev, who is respected all over the world (among intellectual sections with an international approach for matters of the Spirit), as the Founder of the Khalsa Panth, or the Sikh Faith was born on October, 20 1469 A.D. This was a full moon day, the *Karttiki-Purnima* in the *Vikram Samvat* Era 1526, according to Hindu computation; and this *Karttiki-Purnima* is also known as *Rasa-Purnima*. In India births and other personal events are computed in the traditional way, according to the phases of the moon; and although now European dates are coming into vogue, orthodoxy still retains the old usage. This year, (1969), the official celebration, according to Indian calender, of Guru Nanak's birth fell on the full moon night of *Karttika* on the 23rd of November; and this was particularly a great day for India, as it marked the fifth Centenary of the birth of this great teacher. The people of India as a whole, including the millions of Sikhs living within India and scattered all over the world, celebrated with devoted zeal and gratitude this fifth centenary of a great event.

The Government of India, true to its popular character as a Government of the people, have arranged for a year-long celebration of this Centenary, starting on the 23rd of November. Sikh religious institutions (Gurdwaras etc) big and small, have all celebrated the religious side of this great event by instituting regular readings from the Sikh

sacred scriptures, and by chanting and singing religious songs and performing all suitable ceremonies. The Government of India has inaugurated a series of Seminars on Guru Nanak and his personality and teachings, in five different important centres in India—Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Ludhiana, and these Seminars are being held under the auspicious of the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters), Delhi, and its different branches under the direction of Central Ministry of Education, New Delhi. Through these Seminars a good deal of recent information about Guru Nanak is being systematically brought to the notice of the Indian scholarly world, both Sikh and non-Sikh, and their deliberations, often very valuable and presenting new and unexpected aspects of Guru Nanak's life and teachings will be presented before the public in due course. The intellectual *elite* among the Sikhs have not remained idle, and as a result we have a series of very valuable books as well as monographs on Guru Nanak, and also on different aspects of his life and character, his personality and teachings, his philosophy and achievements, and on various other matters connected with Sikh Faith. We have thus a great incentive given to the scholarly world in India, and also in some cases outside India, to take up anew and in greater detail the question of Guru Nanak and his Sikh Faith. The memory of a great historical event is in this way conducing to an intellectual upsurge of this character.

Among various books and papers which have come out and are coming out on Guru Nanak, the present work by Dr Trilochan Singh, *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism*, is quite an important one, when we consider its various fresh approaches to the question. The people of the Panjab (and along with them those of the rest of India) became immediately

conscious of the value of Guru Nanak's advent and his teachings after he began to preach to them; and Guru Nanak built up and organised during his lifetime a very important religious persuasion which was broad-based on the foundations of Vedantic Monotheistic *Jnana* and Puranic *Bhakti*. The faith preached by Guru Nanak was nothing new for India, it was basically the old monotheistic creed of the ancient Hindus as propounded in the Vedas and the Upanishads—the Vedanta with its insistence upon *Jnana* or Knowledge of the One Supreme Reality. And this monotheistic basis was fortified, so to say, to put the matter in a simple form by *Bhakti* or Faith as inculcated in later Puranic Hinduism. The Sikh Panth was nothing but a reformed and simplified *Sanatana Dharma* of medieval times. But it was not merely that. It brought in something more, and herein lies the special character of the message of Guru Nanak. He insisted upon men having a direct living Knowledge of and Faith in the One Supreme Divinity, in the first instance. The One and the Many were the two sides, the obverse and reverse of the Ultimate Reality that is behind life. The conception of a manifold manifestation of God, as in the various gods and goddesses of Hinduism, greater and lesser, was permitted in Hindu religious consciousness. But with the challenge from Islam, which was hammering at the door of Hinduism, the challenge with its intransigent monotheistic creed, which excluded the slightest suspicion of duality, had to be met by Guru Nanak through an equally insistent conception of and faith in *Advaita*—the God who is One without a second.

On a lower plane the acceptance of all divine manifestations could be admitted, but Guru Nanak drew the exclusive attention of his followers to the, One and not to the Many. Herein he was a true represen-

tative of the ancient sages, the Vedic and Upanishadic *Rishis* of India.

The next thing that we can note in Guru Nanak, which formed one of the fundamental propositions made by him, was the Absolute Equality of Man and Man. From the very beginning of his career, as a religious teacher, which may be said to have started from boyhood, he had denied the religious support of the Caste System which assumed certain fundamental inequalities among men. Nanak believed in the Human Personality, which was by itself above all labels of race, religion and social status. For him a good Musalman, a Musalman who led a good life, was as good a man as a Hindu of the same type. This he sought to impress upon his disciples. There were several other matters, but these two were fundamental. Then, again, he was a believer in a normal human life, and ordinary people were to live according to reason and good sense the normal life of a family man. He never tried to force upon people, as a *sine qua non* for spiritual development, the life of a celibate monk.

Guru Nanak travelled a great deal, and certainly during his time, he was, at least among Indians, one of the most widely-travelled of men. He was a good man and a great man, who lived with all his thoughts immersed in the love of God, a man who was meek and humble, and who travelled both to gain experience and knowledge and to share his own knowledge and experience with others. Such a person could not be described as one who was, at least outwardly, anything extraordinary and above the ordinary. But even in this average life of wanderings, to preach the truth that he had intuitively arrived at, there were plenty of instances of a profoundly spiritual character which marked him off from the rest of the world.

Excepting for a few beautiful stories showing his faith and his wisdom, which we can never omit to bring in while speaking about his life and personality, we can dispose of the main facts of his life in a few sentences. He was from his very childhood indifferent to worldly affairs, and to material success, and to money-making. He was deeply religious; he could not tolerate certain sectarian and exclusive ideologies and meaningless ceremonies which were based on these ideologies, as all these militated against his great realisation and sense of his unity with the various component elements in human society. Labels of religion and caste etc. were, as he was convinced, man-made; and so for him they had no spiritual value. He had a normal family life, and he had regard for his wife and children, and he did not approve of the life of a celibate mendicant who abandoned his responsibilities. He had a number of profound spiritual experiences which alone enabled him to take up the role of a teacher both with conviction and with a sense of grace. When he felt that he was in possession of the Truth, he wanted to extend its horizon all through society, if it could be done, and also to share it with others, by undertaking extensive tours. His tours were in his own state of the Panjab and also in Eastern and North-Eastern India, as well as in Southern India, in Ceylon, in Western India, in Central India and also in the lands beyond India, to the North in Central Asia, and to the North-West and West, in Iran and Iraq and even in Arabia. He had the spontaneous homage of a large section of the people who listened to him, and he made both Hindus and Muslims his disciples. After a life of 60 years, almost entirely from boyhood spent in this dispensation, he passed away in 1539, when the light merged into the great Light : *jot mai jot samai*.

This has been his simple life. But naturally the

faith of his devotees came in quite early, and they embellished this simple godly career with a number of legends and miracles. There was no certain record of his life and of his travels, much less of his itinerary in the different parts of India and the world outside India. Contradictory statements were found in his various biographies, the historical values of which has in all cases been questioned, and they require to be sifted with care. We had to be content only with the broad facts, eked out by such details and amplifications as were made by his devoted disciples, who wrote his biographies in an uncritical age. Nevertheless, the main items of his career including his itineraries seemed to be quite clear, as they were also in the case of his great predecessor, in bringing high thinking to the masses of people through religion—Sankracharya—who flourished some 700 years before him. The 'historical facts' of Sankaras's travels as in a work like the '*Sankara-Vijaya*, are of the same nature as of the similar history behind the various *Janam-Sakhis* (or Stories of Birth) and other literature connected with Guru Nanak. As in earlier times, people in their piety were quite content to take their great religious leader, who was their Master and Guide and Exemplar in life, as a semi-divine person. The broad and essential facts about him were quite enough, and people did not bother for a systematic or authentic biography. A great many stories of pietistic character, and some of them very beautiful in their truth and their human quality—these were quite enough; and they are quite enough for the ordinary run of people for all time.

But when an intellectual interest of the modern type began to develop, which sought to bring in historical Knowledge to the support of Faith, people were not content with this. As it happened in the

case of other religious leaders, particularly in India, it was, as Dr Trilochan Singh tells us, when the poet Santokh Singh attempted the first proper biography of Guru Nanak, known as the *Nanak-Prakash*, which was written in 1823 A.D., people of an intellectual bent of mind were anxious to find out the historical Nanak, the real Man behind the semi-divine Saint, Sage and Teacher. *Nanak Prakash* has been the great work to fall back upon for a kind of systematic presentation of Nanak's life and movements, for about a century, and most of the subsequent works were based on this. There were some attempts made by some European scholars, naturally based on Sikh materials, to write biographies of Guru Nanak. One of the earliest books written by a European was R.N. Cust's *Life of Nanak* which was written in 1864. During the last two decades of the 19th century, a few other works also came out, and the interest that Bengal had felt in the life of the great Guru and the Sikh Panth also was responsible for giving some books on Guru Nanak and his successors, both for the information of Bengali readers and of the English-reading public outside Bengal. We can mention in this connection the book in Bengali written by Tinkori Banerjee, a well documented little work which came out in its first edition in 1896. Now with the growing interest which is being manifested in Guru Nanak, not only among Sikhs, but also among other Hindus, we have quite a large number of books as well as monographs and papers on Guru Nanak. The Fifth Centenary of Guru Nanak's birth, which started from November 1969, naturally has come with its quota of such contributions from some Sikh scholars and others on Guru Nanak.

A few works that I have seen do not seek to give a systematic and historically accurate presentation,

in so far as it is possible to do it, of the *facts* of Guru Nanak's life. There have been some very learned and well-written treatises on Guru Nanak's ideas and teachings as well as on his organisation and his achievement, his personality and character. But a factual study of his life seeking to give in a proper historical sequence all that he did and said, at home and in his travels, is still a desideratum. But Sikh scholarship combined with Sikh piety and faith, has not lagged behind, and among such works relating to a proper biography of Guru Nanak, one must mention a number of papers and monographs which have been appearing in different Sikh Journals, like the *Sikh Review* of Calcutta. The question of Guru Nanak's travels—a proper itinerary mentioning the places which can be expected to have been visited by him and the contacts he might have made with different personalities in the context of his travels, his routes and his sojourns, his conversations and his discussions, all this have been sought to be found out through investigation and also through legitimate surmise. Attempts have been made to place on a map the routes of his travels, and to relegate the great stories or events, in the traditional account of the great Guru, with actual places and with actual personalities.

The present work by Dr. Trilochan Singh, as far as I can see, fills, more than any other book that I can think of, the lacunae which are still painfully noticeable in the study of Guru Nanak's life. Dr. Trilochan Singh has got the requisite qualification for undertaking a work of this nature. He is not only well-up in the *Guru-Vani*, the basic writings of the Gurus, beginning with Guru Nanak, and with all great books of Sikh history and tradition, but he possesses, also the very necessary knowledge of connected matters like the history of religious movements, contemporaneous with or anterior to the advent of Guru

Nanak, and in the history of the Sikhism. He knows not only the language of *Guru-Vani* but also his own mother-tongue Panjabi, and besides of course Urdu, and Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi, and several other related languages: and I can testify from my personal knowledge to his very close acquaintance with the Bengali language also. This is a rare accomplishment, and in some respects helpful in his work. Then, his book he intends to be a *repository of attested facts* connected with the life of Guru Nanak. He does not simply give a short hear-say evidence, nor does he take things as they are described with naïve faith or credulity. One great value of his *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism*, is that he makes a statement in a simple unadorned manner and in support of his text to establish a point, he, brings in corroborative quotations from Guru Nanak's own words as in the *Guru-Granth*. Statements made in the text are always fortified in this way by giving full quotations in the *Notes and References* to the various chapters from relevant literature, whether Sikh, as in the Panjabi language, or in the *Guru-Vani* speech, and from historical and other works which supply him with his source-material. The quotations from the Sikh and other Indian texts are always given for convenience in the Roman script, in a rough-and-ready but very practical system of transliteration, and they are always accompanied by English translations. In this way we have here a first-rate fully documented statement of the main facts of Guru Nanak's life, including his long travels and actual or possible disputations and discussions which he had in the course of these travels.

A work of this type is unquestionably unique. Dr. Trilochan Singh has already made his mark as a historian of Sikhism following this method. In 1967 he brought out a fairly extensive work of re-

search, which I think, can be described as quite outstanding for Indian history. It was his biography of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru who was martyred under orders of Aurangzeb in Delhi: and the place of martyrdom is now seat of a very great centre of Sikhism in North-India—the Sis-ganj Gurdwara in Chandni Chauk. In this book Dr. Trilochan Singh has given what may be considered to be the attested facts established with the help of authentic historical documents and supported with quotations from all sorts of Sikh and other religious writings which are ancillary for the purpose; and these are given in Roman transcription with translation in each case. The value of such work would be admitted to be inestimable.

Sikh scholars have been trying for the last few decades to piece together the history of the great Guru's travels. One serious attempt started during the second decade of this century by some Sikh military men in the British Indian Army, finding themselves in Mesopotamia—Baghdad—during the First World War, and they attempted to re-discover the path of Guru Nanak during his sojourn and journey in and about Baghdad. In this way, bit by bit, the full itinerary of Guru Nanak has been sought to be discovered and brought together. The same thing has been done in the case of the itineraries of Chaitanya by a scholar of the erudition of the late Sir Jadunath Sarkar, eminent historian of the late mediaeval period of Indian history. Scholars of Assam have similarly tried to establish the long series of pilgrimage routes which were followed by Sri Sankara Deva.

One can have the highest praise for these attempts. But all that can be said at the present day is that the matter requires to be further studied and weighed out. There is also (and naturally enough) deep down in

the religious consciousness of Sikh writers, who took up this work as a pious duty, primarily with Guru Nanak as a God-inspired Saint, as they are accustomed to look upon him. Guru Nanak was one of the greatest spiritual personalities, and therefore in the first instance, it would be only proper to expect that the light of his wisdom and faith also spread; during his travels and this light must have illumined the minds and spirits of all and sundry who came in touch with him. Great souls seek the company of or community with great souls—"like unto like": and therefore it would be a subject of anxious enquiry to find out whether there was an actual dialogue, and mutual benefit through this dialogue—particularly from the light which the illustrious Guru Nanak shed around him—between some of the greatest contemporaries of Guru Nanak in other centres of India, specially with Sri Sankara Deva of Assam and with Chaitanya Deva of Bengal. A similar idea we find in early medieval India when it was thought that it would be only natural that some of the great poets of Sanskrit like Kalidasa, Bhartrihari and Bhavabhuti were contemporaries, and that they met at the court of some great king like Vikramaditya or Bhoja, whose dates, imaginary or actual, were ignored. It may not be as bad as that in the case of Guru Nanak and his other two contemporaries. At least they lived within the same period (Sankara Deva flourished from 1449 to 1569, Guru Nanak from 1469 to 1539, and Chaitanya from 1485 to 1533). About these religious leaders in the East having met Guru Nanak, there is no authentic or ancient document or tradition. An Oriya biography of Chaitanya the date of which is not known, and the authenticity of which has not yet been fully established, has been laid under requisition by Dr. Trilochan Singh, to establish that Guru Nanak and Chaitanya had met and stayed together for some days and participated in their

devotional singing of *Kirttans*. I would consider this to be doubtful because Chaitanya's Bengali *Kirtanas* centering round the love of Radha and Krishna would not meet with the fullest approval of Guru Nanak, primarily because he was a *Nirguna Upasaka*—a devotee of the attributeless God. Deep down below the surface, there is of course the fundamental agreement of all religious aspirations. But it would be quite an assumption that there was a meeting and that there was an immediate understanding. This interview and dialogue between Chaitanya and Nanak attributed to the Oriya poet Ishvaradasa of unknown date and authenticity has been taken over by believing research scholars following Dr. Trilochan Singh and possibly it will become established as genuine fact in the life of both of these great saints.

But it would be best to wait and shift the evidence more thoroughly. Similarly with regard to the visit of Guru Nanak to Ceylon, Dr. Trilochan Singh, following some other scholars, has connected Guru Nanak with a teacher from North known as "Jnanakacharya" who held disputations with Ceylonese Buddhist scholars in the court of a Sinhalese king. Herein also we should have the fullest caution.

But I need not start what is called in Sanskrit "*Makshiki-Vritti*"—the fault—finding operation of a fly which would seek to find out a sore or an eruption on the body. Whether it has been successfully done or not Dr. Trilochan Singh's work, and of other scholars striving on the same lines of investigation, do certainly present to us as kind of framework of wood a *Katham*, as we use the Bengali expression—for a factual study of Guru Nanak's great life. There has to be a rigorous checking up with the toponymy of India in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. before we can set about identifying places mentioned in the

traditional biographies of Guru Nanak Deva. We should for example eschew all mythical place-names like the country of Rani Nurshah, *Kadali Vana* and *Ashoka-Vana* in Ceylon regarded as historical. But these identifications, and our anxiety to establish them, do not at all touch the fringe of Guru Nanak's great glory in the dissemination of his ideas and bringing life to a people which seemed to be dying both in the material and in the intellectual as well as in the spiritual plane. The greatness of Guru Nanak is the greatness of his Spirit, and not the greatness of his geographical wanderings or in the peregrinations in the quest of truth. But that he impressed people everywhere by his profound godliness and his faith in God is the fact which comes out from the plethora of miraculous stories which are said to have taken place in far away places, for which authentic evidence would indeed be extremely difficult to procure, and even to find a continuity of a sure tradition. But still, whatever Dr. Trilochan Singh has been able to glean in this matter from diverse sources, acknowledging his obligation to previous workers in this field in every case, and modestly claiming for himself what he himself was privileged to discover, has been placed in this book before the scholarly world in a spirit of sincere desire to find out the truth. He has not remained content just to give an occasional casual reference to a Sikh text, but has in almost all cases, wherever it was necessary given original quotations in Romanized Panjabi or *Gurvani*, and this is something for which Dr. Trilochan Singh can be heartily congratulated—he deserves our grateful thanks for this.

This book has come up to over 500 pages. I think that, as it stands, it will remain as a sort of great source-book for facts of Guru Nanak's life. And such a source book, well documented is some-

thing which very properly makes its appearance 500 years after the birth of Guru Nanak. Those who are interested in Sikh studies, and above all in the great personality of Guru Nanak Deva will have reason to thank both the learned author Dr. Trilochan Singh and the Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sis-Ganj, Chandni Chauk Delhi for giving out at the proper time this very fine and conscientious piece of research work.

Wah-i-Guruji ka Khalsa

Wah-i-Guruji ki Fateh

Sudharma

16, Hindusthan Park,

Calcutta-29

December 25, 1969.

Suniti Kumar Chatterji

INTRODUCTION

by

DR. V. RAGHAVAN

The role played by the Sikhs in the history of India is well-known but the contribution of the Gurus who founded Sikhism has not been so widely known and appreciated. The songs of Nanak and his successors form a precious part of the heritage of mystic religious poetry with which the Saints of India have enriched the local languages and sustained, inspired and guided the life and spirit of the people of the different regions of the country. But it cannot be said, even in respect of the scholarly and literary world, that the utterances of the Gurus have been as widely known and studied beyond the Sikhs who worship them as their sacred scripture and embodiment of divinity. From devotion and right conduct to the one highest Truth, devoid of name and form, the songs articulate and celebrate every aspect of spiritual life and stand in the glorious company of the outpourings of the Saints who appeared at different times and vitalised the faith of the people in every part of the country, the *Devaram* and *Divya-prabandham* of the *Nayanmars* and *Alwars* of Tamilnad, the *Padas* and *Vacanas* of the *Haridasas* and *Sivasaranas* of Karnataka, the songs of Bhaktas like Narasi Mehta, Mira, Kabir, Surdas and Tulsidas, the *padas* of Vidyapati and the writings of Sankaradeva in the East and of the music of Tyagaraja in the South.

The recent 300th Guru Govind birthday celebrations and the present celebration on a national scale of the Quin-centenary of Guru Nanak, the

first of the Gurus and Founder of Sikh religion and thought, have served to create a country-wide interest in this valuable and voluminous branch of Indian literature. National celebrations like these will go a long way in the mutual understanding and appreciation of the cultural contributions of the languages and literatures of the different parts of the country and in the effective achievement of that emotional integration which is the utmost need of the hour. The message of Nanak as that of Kabir is addressed alike to Hindus and Muslims. Mohammed Iqbal whom the author of this Volume has quoted, observed that Guru Nanak's *Japji*, is the quintessence of the *Koran*, and that Nanak was indeed a better exponent of the real tenets of Islam than many others who were ignorant of its spirit.

It cannot be said that the study and writings in the subject of the Saint-Singers of India have been copious. Much remains to be done in the linguistic, literary, historical and philosophical exposition of this song-literature of India. While we are grateful to those who have taken interest in this line of work in the past, we should now undertake a planned project on the Saint-Singers of India comprising Bibliography, Dictionary, Translation, History and Exposition. The Nanak Quin-centenary, which has called forth a rich output of essays and studies will, I hope, lead towards such a comprehensive and scholarly undertaking.

My first contact with Dr. Trilochan Singh, among Sikh scholars and writers, was through the UNESCO-sponsored English translation of *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, in which he is the Chief Translator. My own work on the Saint-Singers and the Nanak Seminars of the Sahitya Akademi have brought us together and I have had the benefit of his other writings on the

life and work of the Sikh Gurus, *A Brief Sketch of Guru Nanak*; *Guru Nanak's Religion: A Comparative Study of Religions*; *True Humanism of Guru Nanak*; *A Brief Sketch of Guru Govind Singh*; *Guru Govind Singh's 'The Jap'*, and *Guru Tegh Bahadur, Prophet and Martyr*.

Dr. Trilochan Singh has dealt with the thought, the teachings of Guru Nanak in his works referred to above, and in the present undertaking he has given us the detailed biography of the Founder of Sikhism. In an earlier brochure of his he has given *A Brief Life Sketch of Guru Nanak* and in his Foreward there, he had said that 'a complete biography of Guru Nanak entitled "*Guru Nanak : Founder of Sikhism*" is under preparation by him and that this volume of over 500 pages embodies his intensive research into old traditional biographies of the Guru called *Janma Sakhis* and other historical records, and that he has been at this for the last fifteen years. The present Volume to which he has asked me to add an Introduction represents that exhaustive biography. I gladly agreed to add my note to the Volume, as it afforded me an occasion for reading a connected account of the life and travels of the Guru and all the incidents with which traditionally, many of his songs have been woven and through which one is enabled to see the living expression of his godly spirit and teachings.

From the time of Vedic Rishis, the practice of moving about holy spots and sacred waters, visiting shrines and meeting other holy men (*Tirthayatra*, *Kshetratana* and *Satsanga*) have been the effective technique of spreading the teachings and also making the masses feel the living presence amidst them of the sages. Not only the Vedic *Rishis* but also the characters in the Epics and the Great *Acharyas* or the founders of different systems of philosophy have

all adopted this method of sacred tourism and thereby not only propagated the teachings but also made almost every small part of the country a holy place, fragrant with the memory of some teacher or other or of some miracle of his. This was also the way in which was achieved an integration of the hearts of the people and attunement to a common spiritual ideal. The author of this Volume correctly observes in his brochure on the, "*True Humanism of Guru Nanak*" "by travel from country to country, from one cultural region to another, Guru Nanak showed that a diversity of religious creeds, though a historical fact, is not an unsurmountable obstacle to human co-operation. In the face of individual and cultural divisions, he established good fellowship, brotherly intercourse and a spirit of union among various religious cultures making his humanism the meeting ground of all." It is in this light that we have to understand the traditional accounts of the lives of all the sages and saints; although the particularities of incidents and circumstances vary, all of them fall into a common pattern, oriented towards the same ultimate purpose and bringing out all the facets of the personality of a teacher and the manifold ways in which his spiritual realisation, power and grace enlightened, uplifted and blessed the people.

As it is a special characteristic of Nanak's teachings, that they comprehended not only the diverse indigenous faiths but also those of Hinduism and Islam, it is specially characteristic of Nanak's life that he traversed, in the course of his spiritual quest, not only this whole vast country but also the island of Ceylon in the South and what is more, the countries beyond India, on the west, covering the Islamic world. It is in this respect that the scope of his life and mission is widened and comes to us with a more comprehensive and modern force.

The only considerable sources on the seventy years of the life of Nanak, from Talwandi to Kartarpur, are the traditional *Janma Sakhis*. These are not really histories but hagiological accounts, *mahatmyas*. In the words of the author of this Volume they "are not life-stories of Guru Nanak", "they are stories about Nanak, and crude mixtures of his life and legends" (p. 492). There is very little of external historical sources. In the situation, historical scholars have been very sceptic and have not been able to accept the adequacy of evidence even on such widely accepted beliefs as the Guru's visit to Ceylon or his meeting with Babar¹. Our biographer errs neither with such historians nor with the all-accepting devotees. As he has stated in his Preface, "he does not believe in the miracles and legends; he has for years been sifting the different *Janma sakhis*, examining the oldest manuscripts of these, and has provided here a synthetic narrative, not claiming either to have resurrected the historical Nanak nor to have re-erected the Sage Nanak. "I have" he says "tried to present the historical Nanak as a personality; laying stress in every chapter on his inner and outer developments and his responses to the social, cultural and political challenges, in the context of the political and cultural environments of the place and period. I have tried a synthesis between history as it happened and the interpretation of history, between Nanak the Man and his developing poetry and philosophy of life." He calls this biography an "attempt to clear the way to the understanding of the historical, as well as the Sage Nanak we know from his writings." (Preface p xi). He has used the writings of Nanak to check the material of the *Sakhis* (p. xii). Each chapter has *Notes and References* in which the authorities used are cited.

1. E.g. see the recent work '*Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*', by W. H. McLeod, Oxford, 1968.

The *Sakhis* contain incidents and anecdotes; some are palpably anachronistic e.g. Nanak meeting Goraknath on Sumeru or going in to the sea and meeting Matsyendranath or even meeting Kabir at Banaras which the author has rejected; but this is the time-honoured way of integrating and establishing the spiritual tradition of a teacher. The incidents and anecdotes should be understood in depth and not on their nominal data. These encounters with ritualists and Pandits, in early life or later, emphasise the eternal truth proclaimed by the Upanishads that the Self is not to be realised by acts or learning both of which It transcends. His resort to any shrine or saint, Hindu or Muslim, underlines the universality of spiritual life and mystic experience transcending all names and forms.

The initial ignoring of the Saint, then the stages of ridicule, opposition, debate and victory over the detractors or opponents, the growth of admirers and adherents, the school of thought taking shape and gathering momentum—all this follows the common pattern of the life of a Saint or Teacher—after whom a new faith is founded. The anecdotes are therefore to be taken as a commentary on the songs of the Guru, such as has been written on most of our Saints; where they are in harmony with the meaning and spirit of the Songs they are to be taken as an *upabrhmāna*, a supplementation or amplification of the Songs; where they are against, they are to be ignored. To emphasise an idea or the uniqueness of a teacher, exaggeration is the time-honoured technique and if the *Janma Sakhis*, like their kindred writings, belittle other scholars, teachers and faiths and glorify their hero we should not be hard on them as this is a failing which even the so-called modern critical scholars are prone to.

Naturally, the attention of one like me is drawn especially to that part of the narrative which deals with Nanak's itinerary in the South. His was the time of a great ferment of Bhakti, of Sankaradeva and Chaitanya in the East and Purandaradasa and Arunagirinatha in the South. The traditional accounts on Nanak mention a number of holy places in the South, sometimes with corrupt forms of their names, but none of the persons mentioned seem historical or important. The author of the biography says that intensive research in South Indian documents may yield corroborative data but what has so far been known does not throw any light. The exception seems to be Nanak's visit to Ceylon. The author has been able to get a piece of epigraphic evidence, which he has set forth and discussed on pp 269-71, according to which, in the fifteenth year of King Parakramabahu, a religious teacher named Jnanakacharya is said to have visited Jayavardhana; it is argued that this may refer to Nanakacharya and the King Sivanabha of Ceylon of the *Sakhis* may be Vijayabahu VII, C. 1528 A.D. It is quite likely that at that time, already traders and Sadhus from Panjab had been moving about in South India.

The present biography is one more in the series of devoted studies which, Dr. Trilochan Singh, as a scholar, writer and a follower of the faith, has been contributing towards a better and fuller understanding of the Sikh Gurus and their lives and teachings. We congratulate him on this exhaustive account and look forward to his proposed critical analysis of the *Janma Sakhis*.

Madras
December 30, 1969.

V. Raghavan



Guru Nanak dressed as an *Udasi* with Bala and Mardana (with rebec)
Frontispiece

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND CHILDHOOD



THE ANCESTORS OF Guru Nanak were rulers of the Punjab. With Lahore and Kasur as their capital cities, they ruled over the land of five rivers for more than a century. Claiming descent from the Solar dynasty of the Kshatriya heroes, Raghu and Aj, they were not only great rulers, but also profound scholars and exponents of the Vedas. From these scholarly traditions, which were maintained in this clan up to the middle ages, they came to be known as *Vedis* (*Bedis*), and up to the time of Guru Nanak they were respected for their integrity, valour, scholarship, and learning. Their kingdom dwindled into a petty *zamindārī*, and in the fifteenth century they possessed only twenty villages. Farming was their main profession¹, which they supplemented by trade and cattle breeding.

Rai Bhoe, a Muslim chief, was granted a feudal estate by his son-in-law, Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Governor of the Punjab.² Rai Bhoe selected and rebuilt Talwandi, earlier known as Raipur, as the chief city and administrative centre of his fief. This city, situated about forty-eight miles from Lahore, came to be known as Talwandi Rae Bhoe³. This Muslim chief, Rai Bhoe, appointed a Kshatriya named Shiv Ram Bedi, son of Ram Narayan Bedi, as the *Kardār* (administrator) of his fief⁴. Shiv Ram's wife Banarsi Devi gave birth to two sons: Kalu Chand who was born in 1497 B.S., (1440 A.D.) and Lalu Chand who was born in the year 1501 B.S., (1444 A.D.)⁵ After the death of Rai Bhoe, his pious and

noble son, Rai Bular, became the chief of the fief and Kalu Chand succeeded his father, Shiv Ram, as *Kardār*⁶ of the fief at the young age of about twenty-two.

Kalu Chand lived as his forbears had lived, clinging tenaciously to their conception of honour. He ruled his house in accordance with the example which austerity and moderation of his forefathers had set. A down-to-earth realist, he thought, judged, and acted as his forbears had done, and cherished the traditions and noble ways, for which his ancestors were popular. He was a conscientious administrator, skilled businessman, well-versed in farming and cattle breeding. The earthly glory of his ancestors was always haunting his imagination, and he set it down as a purpose of his life to acquire wealth and power by hard work, extensive trade, and redeem as much of the ancestral glory of the family as possible.

Kalu Chand's young wife, Tripta⁷, was of a different type. The routine of her life, her outward bearing, differed but little from the Punjabi women of upper middle class, who for centuries had fulfilled the duties of mothers and wives in Punjabi homes, where the vicissitudes of war and peace, plenty and poverty, were felt as naturally as the changing seasons of Punjab's extreme weather. This lively and beautiful woman devoted a great part of her time to prayer and charity. Her dreamy and idealistic nature was made luminous by her patience and cheerfulness, which was of such springlike purity, that even the most sullen felt charmed in her presence.

ANCESTRY AND CHILDHOOD

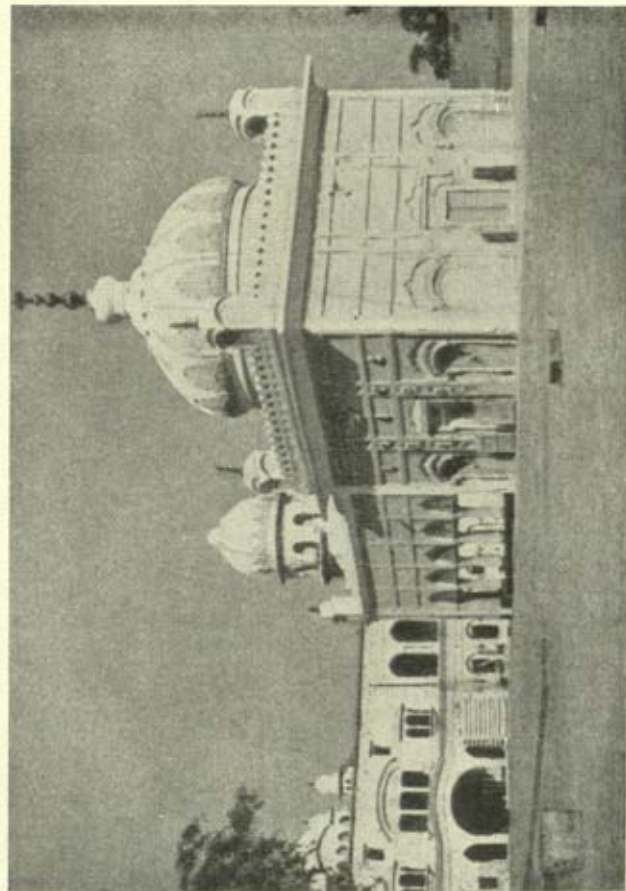
In the year 1464 A.D., Tripta gave birth to a daughter who was named Nanaki.⁸ This lively child inherited all the virtues, and traits of her mother, and was dearly loved by her parents for her unusual ability and tenderness. Five years later a son was born to Tripta on the full-moon day of October 20 1469 A.D. *Kartik Puranmashi*, 1526 B.S.⁹, at Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib.

According to the custom of the times, Kalu Chand invited Pundit Hardy, the village priest, to prepare the horoscope of the child.¹⁰ Pundit Hardy inquired from the nurse, Daultan, about any particular sign or happening that she might have noticed at the birth of the child. Daultan reported, with considerable surprise, that the child did not weep immediately after his birth, but smiled like a sage.¹¹ After inquiring the exact time of the birth, Pundit Hardy consulted some books, and informed Kalu Chand that his son would grow up to be a great man. He may become a king or a prophet. The umbrella of sovereignty would surely wave over his head, Pundit Hardy named the child, Nanak.¹²

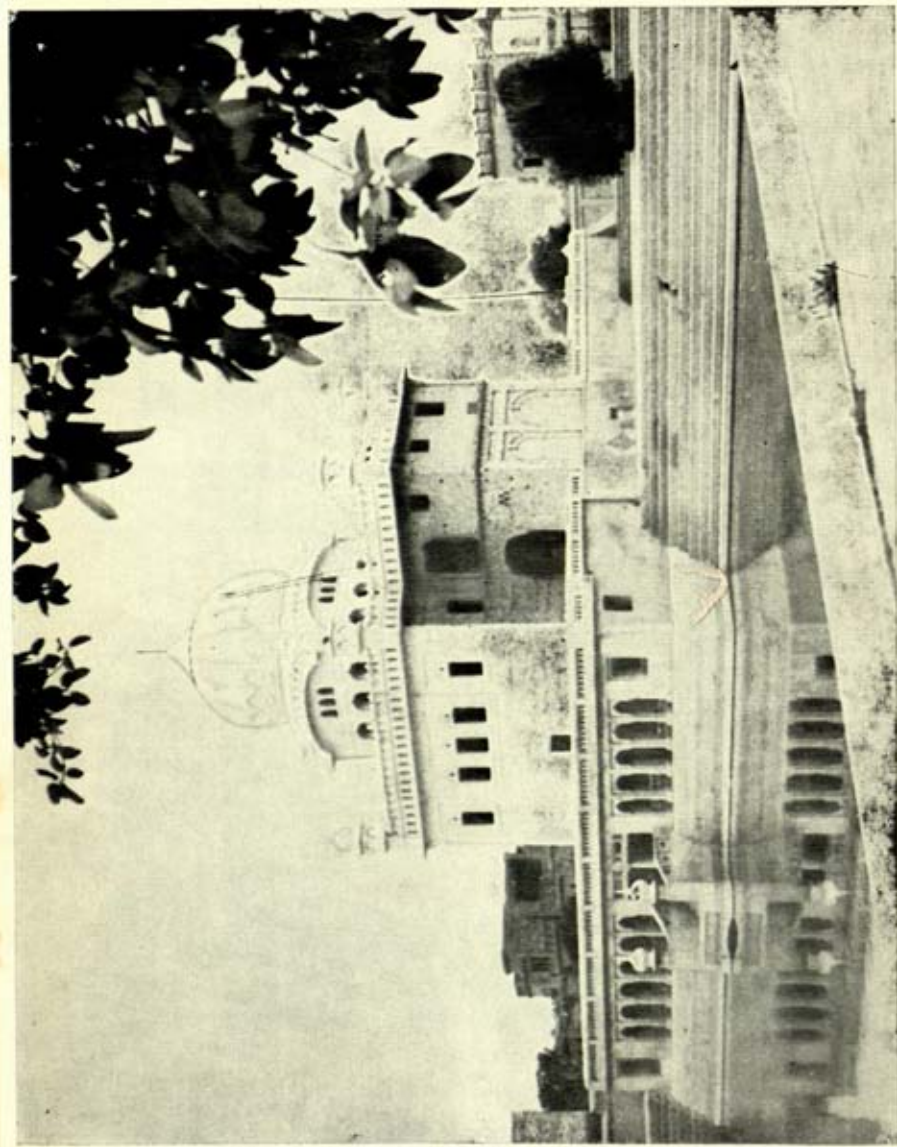
Kalu Chand, twenty-nine-year old father of Nanak, was extremely happy to learn that his son was a child with a great future. He distributed food and clothes to the poor, and sweets to all who came to congratulate him on the birth of the son.¹³ There was great rejoicing. Rai Bular, the chief, sent his gifts and blessing. Gifts were also brought by Tripta's parents, Rama and Sabhrai. Happiest of all was Nanaki, to have so lovely and promising a child as her brother. She saw from his very infancy, in him, the light of God, and kept her discovery a profound secret.

Nanak, the child, became the centre of attraction in Talwandi. His strange but impressive behaviour, his radiant face, his affectionate and tender response to everyone who met him, and his wonderful memory, surprised and impressed everyone. He would not eat anything that his mother gave him, without sharing it with his sister and playmates. He would rush out to give, whatever he could get hold of from the house, to the needy *fakirs*, monks, *yogis*, and beggars, who came for alms. Why should anyone suffer in need of bare necessities, felt Nanak, when his father had plenty. Utensils, clothes, money, foodgrains were readily given away by him to the needy, in charity.¹⁴ His mother could never stop him from doing anything. Nanaki would never let her do it. To her, her brother was a living god, an embodiment of love, and compassion. Whenever Kalu Chand came to know, about what, he called the wasteful habits of his son, he was very angry, but Nanaki would not allow her father to show any anger to her little brother.

If he saw a devout Muslim, he would say "*Allah is Great*" and if he met a Hindu, he would say: "*Glorious is Govinda*"¹⁵." Both the Hindus and Muslims felt a strange spiritual kinship with him, which they did not feel among themselves. He would listen with wrapt attention to the religious discourses, the music of the bards, and singers of religious songs. At times, he would take up a book and even an account book, and pretend to read it seriously. When he was asked, what he was reading" he would say: "I am studying scriptures."¹⁶ Some one then advised Kalu Chand to send Nanak to school.¹⁷



Janam Asthan: The place where Guru Nanak was born at Talwandi (Nankana). A cloak embroidered with Koranic verses said to have been presented at Baghdad to Guru Nanak is preserved here.



Bal Lila: The place at Talwandi which was playground of Nanak.

ANCESTRY AND CHILDHOOD

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. bīs gāñv tin ke reh gae,
jin me karat krisāñī bhae.
tin Bedian kī kul bikhe pragte Nānak Rāi,
sabh Sikhan ko sukh dae, jeh teh bhae, sahāe.
Guru Gobind Singh; *Bachiter Nātak*. ch: 5,3,4.
2. Bhatī Rajput Rāe Bhoē ne apne javāī Punjab de sūbe
Daulat Khan Lodhī dī sahāyātā nāl Shakārpur dā praganā
jagīr pāe kar, Bār Des vic Talwandī nām piñd apne nām
par ābād kitā. T.G.K. p 49.
3. G.N.C. p 35; M.K.
4. T.G.K. p 48; M.K.; G.N.C. p 35.
5. Kalu Chand's name is recorded in various *Janam Sākhīs*
and historical records as: Kalu Chand, Kalu Rai, Kalyan
Rae. As the name Kalu is similar to that of his younger
brother Lulu, the name Kalyan Rae appears to be a later
invention. Most of the *Janam Sākhīs* simply address him
as Kalu or Mehta Kalu. The word Mehta is an honorific
title equivalent to Chowdhary (Landlord).
6. tām esne Kālū Chand nū apnā Dīwān banā lyā; pher osde
ghar dā sārā bihār Mehta Kalu Chand kardā rihā. T.G.K.
p 39.
Meharban's *Janamsakhi* suggests that Kalu Chand was the
Diwan or *Sarpañc* of Rae Bular: aisā Dādā Kalu thā, Rae
Bhoē kī Talwandī rehtā, pañcāñ meh, nāek, sabhnā pañcāñ
kā mukhī, it nagar mai srést, dībān meh srést. J.Mb. p: 22
All *Janamsākhīs* and historical records except Bālā's *Janam
sākhī* say that he was "*Kardār*" of Rai Bular's fief. Only
Bālā's *Janam Sākhī* says, he was *Patwārī*, that too in one
place only. *Patwārīs* were under the Revenue Minister of
the Governor Daulat Khan Lodhi and could not act as
Kardār of a fief. Among present day writers, Bhai Vir Singh
and Bhai Kahan Singh also say that he was *Kardār*, and not
a *Patwārī*.
It is a strange thing that many historians who deny and
and condemn Bala's *Janam Sākhī* outright as spurious,
accept it on this and many other controversial points.
7. The name of Tripta is given by some historians as Tripat,

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and by others as *Tiprā* or *Tiptā* (J.Mb.) But all other *Janamsākhīs* give the name as *Triptā*.

8. Nanaki according to some records was born at Tripta's parents home at Chahal, in the Lahore District. Tripta's father's name was Rama, mother's, Sabhrai. She had one brother named, Krishna.
9. This is the correct and traditionally accepted birth date. The first to change Guru Nanak's date of birth, and place of birth, and a number of other things, among the earliest biographies of Guru Nanak was Meharban. Those subsequent historians, who were misled by his *Janam Sākhī*, have also accepted his date: April 15, 1469. The following historical records give *Kārtik Puranmāshī*, October 21, 1469; Bala's *Janam Sākhī*, *Gurbilās pātshāhī* VI, *Sākhī Pothī* (a very old MSS), *Bansāylināmā*: Kesar Singh Chhibber, *Suraj Prakāsh*; *Gurparnālī* Gulab Singh gives both the dates, and points out that *Kartik Puranmāshī* is correct, and the other one introduced by Meharban is incorrect. For detailed discussion see Appendix I.
10. *Janam Sākhī Bālā* (all versions); G.N.P. adh: 4; P.J.p. 51; Preparation of the horoscope was a very important event and not only the Hindus but even Mughal Emperors were guided by astrologers and horoscope. Prince Muazzam's horoscope which Aurangzeb got prepared has been preserved by history and happens to be remarkably correct.
11. Bala's *Janam Sākhīs* are the only ones which give the name of the nurse, as Daultan, most probably a Muslim lady. J.Mb., says that he began to utter the name of God as soon as Nanak was born. This is less probable.
Daultan is reported to have said: "isdā avāz istrāñ nikalyā jistrāñ koī vadā syānā hus kar mildā hai." His first utterance was like the whispering smile of a very wise man, when he encounters someone.
J.B. (all versions)
12. Pundit Hardyāl named the child Nanak on the thirteenth day. Kalu is said to have objected that the name was neither Hindu, nor Muslim.

Khushwant Singh in his *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, suggests that Nanak was so named because he was born at his mother's place (*nānke*). This fact is not supported

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by historical facts, There is not a single shrine at his mother's place Chahal to commemorate either his birth or the events of his childhood. On the other hand there are nearly a dozen shrines at Talwandi (Nankana Sahib) commemorating the various events of his childhood and boyhood. It is quite possible that Nanak's sister Nanaki, the first child of the family, was born at Chahal and derived the name in this manner, With Nanaki as the elder daughter in the family, it was not improbable to name the first son after her as Nanak. Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* is the only one that says that Nanak was born at Chahal and stayed there upto the age of seven. This highly improbable fact is not supported by any other *Janam Sākhī* or historical record.

13. Kaī sai, take, kharait Dāde Kālu bāñte:

J.Mb. p.10

14. Jab koī sāñt āvai tāñ usnū ghar lai æe, sevā tehal bhī bahut kare.

J.M.S. p. 47

lok dekḥ kar eh kehan jo ojo bālak hai, ate kaisiā miṭhiāñ bātāñ kardā hai; eh koī khudāe dā sādak yā pīr paidā hoyā hai, ar koī sañt āvai tāñ usnū ghar lai āvai, usdī sevā, tehal bahut kare, jo kuch padārath gharoñ lai āvai so bāhar gavāi avai

J.B. (MSSI) and J.B. (MSSII) J.B. (L) I; p. 12

jo kuch unāḥ nū gharoñ mildā so sādḥāñ, sañtāñ, garibāñ, fakīrāñ, loḍvañdā nū de unāḥ dī ichā pūrī karde.

T.G.K. p. 42

15. je koī Hindū janam dekhiā se kahai, "dhan Gobind etā kū bālak hai ar kahā subh bacan kehtā hai; koī parmeswar kā rūp hai, ar je koī Turk dekhai so evai kahai jī "vāḥ Khudāe terī paidāes.

J.Mb p. 11

16. ghar kiāñ vahiāñ ar kāgtāñ kiāñ pothiāñ banvāi, upar hachai rumāl cadhāvai, ar je bālak khedan vāste bulāvan tāñ kahe maiñ pothī paḍhdā hāñ. J.M.S. p. 44

17. mātā pitā ne kihā isnū pāñdhe de paḍhne pāiai.

J.B. (All versions)

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION



AT THE AGE OF FIVE, Nanak was sent to school¹. His first teacher was Gopal, who was hard-working but agnostic, and down-to-earth realist. A Sunday was selected as the most auspicious day for Nanak to begin his school education. Kalu Chand offered five rupees to Gopal, as a mark of respect and distributed sweets to all the school children².

For three years Gopal gave elementary education to Nanak in language, arithmetic and other subjects, that were taught during those days. Nanak loved poetry, songs, and music. He easily committed to memory, everything that was taught to him. Every day he wrote his lessons on a wooden slate. After three-years education, students were taught such practical subjects which could be helpful in trade, government service, and other secular pursuits.

When Gopal gave his first lesson in a secular subject and asked the students to write it on the wooden slate (*Patti*), Nanak wrote some verses in the form of an acrostic, and showed them to his teacher. The teacher was taken aback by what he saw written on the wooden slate. "So, the boys are right," said he, "when they say that you keep on humming and composing poems. You really are a *Shair* (poet). He found on the slate an acrostic, written in couplets of extremely simple Panjabi language. What surprised him was the profound thoughts of the poems:

(s), sasā

*He who has created the universe,
Is the One Supreme Lord of all;
They who contemplate Him in their hearts,
Truly serve the Gracious God.
Blessed indeed, is their coming on earth.
O foolish mind, why are you misled in self-deceit?
Truly learned will you be deemed,
If in His Presence, you reckon for your deeds. (1)*

(n) ñañā

*Consider him learned Pundit,
Who has attained the divine vision.
He sees the Lord, pervading all,
His self-sense departs from within. (4)*

(k) kakā

*When your hair grows grey,
And without soap turns silvery white,
Consider them to be messengers of death
Who hold you in bondage. (5)*

(j) jajā

*Thy servant humbly begs of Thee,
The gift of spiritual knowledge;
I have begged for this gift again and again
In countless cycles of lives.
He alone gives the Light,
He alone deprives man of Light
No Giver, besides Him, have I heard or known. (11)*

(n) nanā

*Through His grace I visualise,
There is but one God, and none none besides;*

*All places and spaces are filled with His Spirit
The One God pervades the mind and soul. (13)*

(d) dadā

*Blame not any one for your present state,
Blame your own deeds that have made your fate;
According to my moral and spiritual efforts,
I have carved my destiny and get what I deserve,
Why should I blame others for my plight and fate.*

(a) aiḍā

*He who has created the whole cosmos,
His Will is evolving it to his purpose.
Nanak, the poet (shāir) sayeth:
He is the cause of all that occurs.³*

Guru Nanak : *Āsa, Pattī*, p 433

Teacher Gopal wondered at the depth and simplicity of Nanak's Acrostic (*Pattī*). One thing was clear to him. The boy would take up spiritual life and studies seriously and might turn his back on purely secular pursuits of life. He found that Nanak was gifted with a clear vision of God, but his thoughts did not seem to reflect the Hindu faith, as he knew it. Somehow, he did not like this precocious student taking religion and God so seriously at such a tender age. He made one more effort to divert Nanak's mind from intense religious studies, and spiritual inquiries, and urged him to acquire all the education and training, necessary for the life of worldly happiness and glory saying : "My child, those who spend their life contemplating God and Truth do not even get two square meals, but those who lead a worldly life, commit sins, indulge in evils, rule others, and never think of God seem to be perfectly happy."⁴

"The happiness of man," said Nanak, "lies not in the wealth and power he accumulates, but in his moral and spiritual achievements. Kings and tyrants suffer the most ignoble end, while pious devotees of God live and die in peace. The joy of surviving the physical body is only for those, who have lived righteously. Their faces shine with the bliss of seeing God, the wonderful reward of their virtuous life. Those who live in sin and evil, hide from the glare of His presence, in the gloom that emanates from their own selfishness. True judgment on man's moral and spiritual achievements is revealed only in the presence of ultimate Truth, that is God. Those who follow only their base desires defile their conscience and lose the grace of God. It is sheer vanity to be a slave of bodily desires, and care for things which bring certain retribution."⁵

Deeply impressed by the profound and convincing thoughts of Nanak, teacher Gopal met Kalu Chand and advised him to send his son to a learned scholar who could teach him Sanskrit and Hindu scriptures.

There was in Talwandi, Pundit Brijnath, a brilliant Sanskrit scholar of dignified mein, famed not only for wisdom and scholarship, but also for his spirituality and insight. Kalu Chand placed Nanak under his tutorship, so that he might become a great scholar of Sanskrit and adept in Vedic studies.⁶ While Nanak studied Sanskrit, he continued to compose poems giving his critical reflections on everything that tickled his sensitive imagination. His deep philosophic mood, his penetrating vision, tried again and again to give life and meaning to every thing that seemed lifeless to others. The pen, the ink, the paper, the art of writing, the purpose of writing, were for the

young poet-prophet, the ethical instruments of existential spiritual life. Once he wrote :

*Burn all attachment in true knowledge,
Grind it to ashes and make ink out of it;
Make thy clean mind the paper.
With love as thy pen and thy heart as the writer,
Write the Name and glory of God
Under the inspiration of the Guru.*

Guru Nanak : *Srī Rāg*, p. 16

Having studied some Sanskrit, Nanak one day naively asked his teacher, why he had taken the name Brijnath, an epithet of Lord Krishna, for himself.⁷ The teacher and the student began to argue about the etymological and theological meaning of the word. For young Nanak, every word was a message of God to man, and an instrument of man's worship of God. The lessons which his learned teacher gave him from various Sanskrit texts became the subject of discussions between the teacher and the precocious student. He accepted One God but not gods and goddesses. He accepted man as brother of man, but rejected the differences of castes and creeds reflected by Sanskrit scriptures. He mixed freely with the Hindu saints and Muslim *darvishes* and brought more knowledge of his experiences with many of them, than the narrow text of scriptural readings, which the Sanskrit teacher could teach. After two years, Pundit Brijnath informed Kalu Chand that Nanak had nothing more to learn from him. He was an embodiment of spiritual wisdom, and everyday his classmates squatted around him and listened to his melodious songs, his strange stories, and sermons. There was nothing that he could add to his knowledge of Sanskrit which



The Shrine at Nankana, commemorating the place where Nanak learnt Persian

facing p. 12



Malji Sahib: The place where a cobra shaded Guru Nanak's face from the heat of the sun while he was asleep.

he had acquired within two years. Young Nanak was anxious to know things which Brijnath could not teach. His questions were baffling and his comments on traditional Hindu thoughts extremely disturbing.

Nanak was now ten years old. Rai Bular, who loved him tenderly, advised Kalu Chand to make arrangement for teaching Persian and Arabic to Nanak, so that he could become his *Kardar* (administrator), when Kalu Chand wished to retire. Nanak, with his unusual talents, could even take up a higher post under the provincial governor. Persian being the court language, and Arabic being the language of Islamic scriptures, their study was important for the children of Kshatriya families⁸.

Kalu Chand requested Mulla Qutab-ud-din to teach Persian and Arabic to Nanak. It was on a Wednesday, Nanak started studying Persian. He applied his mind to it seriously, and surprised his teacher by his quick grasp over all the aspects of these languages, and by his prodigious memory⁹. Within two years he acquired sufficient proficiency in Persian and Arabic languages to enable him to read and study their literature. His free use of Koranic terminology, to express some of his theological views in his later writings, shows that it is during this early period he studied the Koran and other Islamic scriptures available to him. Even while studying under the Muslim teacher, Nanak was generally busy in stimulating religious discussions. He continued to write poems in Punjabi but now he wrote quite a few verses in Persian also, the poetic fervour and profundity of which delighted his teacher. Having studied what Mulla Qutab-ud-din had to teach,

Nanak ended his education by learning all that the teachers of Talwandi could teach him¹⁰."

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. P.N. Chopra in his "*Aspects of Society and Culture*" (p.129) points out that during this period Hindu children were put to school at the age of 4½ while Muslim children were put to school at the age of 5. Some *Janam Sakhis* say Guru Nanak was sent to school at the age of five; according to others, at the age of 7. A precocious child like Guru Nanak must have been sent quite early: tãn Bãbã barsãñ panjãñ dã hũã ar mãtã pitã ne kahã isnũ Pãñdhe de padne pãñai; tãñ bhale dñ aur naucañdã aitvãr ar bhalĩ thĩt thãl šakar ka bharke ar upar pañj rupai rakhke *Pattĩ* te budhka Bãbe de hath de ke pãñdhe pãñ lai gayã.

J.M.S. (MSS & L) p, 47; JB. (LI) p:12

2. *Ibid*: only Bala's *Janam Sakhis* gives the name of the teacher as Gopal.
3. I have quoted only a few verses out of the 35 stanzas of the Acrostic (*Pattĩ*). These 35 stanzas and the letters of alphabet mentioned in it became the basis of Punjabi Script, now known as *Gurmukhi*. It was coined by Guru Angad, during the life time of Guru Nanak at Kartarpur and further reformed by Bhai Gurdas. Meharban's *Janam Sakhĩ* completely ignores the *Pattĩ* of Guru Nanak, while other *Janam Sakhis* and historical records admit that it was composed during childhood. The compositions of Guru Nanak quoted by Meharban are those which Nanak is supposed to have addressed to his Sanskrit teacher, Brij Nath.
4. eh jo parmeswar kã nãm lete haiñ, tin ko tãñ koĩ nahĩ jãntã; un ke tãñ rotiãñ bhi nahĩ jud avtiãñ; ar ik je pãñsãhĩ karde hain, so buryãñ bhi karde hain ar parmeswar bhi nahĩ simarẽ.

JB (LI) P15; P.J. (MSS) f.13

5. *ibid*.
6. pãñdhe kahã Kalu terã putra shãstrãñ nũ jagat, vic pargat

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karegā.. tokā kahayā tusī Brijnāth pundit nū jo Talwandi r:hādā hai, usde pās Bābe nū paḍne pāo.

J.B. (LI), p. 12-13; J.M.S. (LI) p. 49

7. phir Bābe kehya Brijnath tāñ Bhagwān dā nām hai; so tūñ apnā nām kioñ rakhyā hai, J.M.S. (MSS and I) p.52
8. ik dīn Rāi Bulār kehiā, Kālū je putar nū farsī padhāe, te kam sikhe te sārā kam tere havāle kariāi, tān Qutab-dīn Qāzi pās age khatrīyān de putar paḍhde se usde pās Kālū Bābe nū lai gayā, te jāe ke kahyā, he Mullāñ, tū Nanak nū paḍhāo, tāñ ago Mullā ne ākhyā, Mehta Kālujī mai Nānakji nū paḍhāvāñ gā; Subah hai budhvār hi, tusān Guru Nānak nū lai āvīo. J.M.S. (LI) p.106; J.B. (LI) p.23.

According to some *Janam Sākhys*, Guru Nanak started learning Persian and Arabic at the age of nine.

Dāde Kālū musalmāni paḍhāvane kī mansā karī je, Nanak ko Torkī padhāvon; tab Dade Kālū makdūm sadāe kar kahayā je, "Mullā jī, Nanak, kai tāi padhāe; tab Mullā kahayā je, "hāñ jī, bhalā hovai; subhā būdhvār hai, tusīñ Nānak mere havālai karo, Nanak ko mai khizmat karesan.

J.Mb. p. 15

pher kaī mahiñe pichoñ Kalu Chand ne Bābe nū farsī padhaun lai Kutab Dīn Mullā de sapurd kitā, kuch dīn tāñ Bābā jī paḍhde rahe, ik dīn othe bhi Pādḥā vañg carcā cali. T.K.G. 54

sift prakāś bhīa, Kālū sut budh rās,
pārsī ilam jo kaṭhin sikhio beg hī;
ae mukh dekhai karai ilam parekhai nar,
sun bain ko bisāl bismai gahi;
Mridul madhur mukh bolat hai bain
mano det updes rikhī dekhg, sikhāpne
pārsī so milī joū nām ke bhajan sañg
Gañg jaisī bānī kali klimal khāpane.

N.P. Adhyae 8:9,10

9. J.M.S.; J.B. (LI) p24, J.Mb p. 16.
10. Macauliffe gives the name of the Persian Teacher as Rukan-din but does not give the source of his information. One Rukan-din is said to have accompanied Guru Nanak to


Mecca. The *Janam Sākhis* attribute a Persian Acrostic and a number of poems to Guru Nanak which are believed to have been written at this age. While the poems are found in the Guru Granth, Guru Arjan did not include the Persian Acrostic in the Holy Book, because he doubted its authenticity. But it is quoted by a number of major *Janam Sākhis*. The author of "*The Seir-ul-Mutakherin* states : He (Nanak) was son to a grain merchant of the Khatri tribe, and in his youth he had been remarkable for good conduct and a laudable character, as well as for the beauty of his face and the sensibleness of his repartees. Nor was he destitute of money. There was then in those parts a fakir or divine of note, called Sayyed Hassan, a man of eloquence as well as wealth, who having no children of his own and being smitten with the beauty of young Nanak, upon whom he chanced to cast his eyes, conceived an affection for him and charged himself with his education.

As the young man was early introduced to the knowledge of the most esteemed writings of the Muslims and early initiated in the principles of their most approved Sufis and contemplatives he improved so much in learning and became so fond of books that he made it a practice in his leisure hours to translate literally or virtually as his mind prompted him, such of those maxims, as made the deepest impression upon his heart. This was the idiom of Punjabi, his maternal language. Little by little he strung them together these loose sentences, reduced them into some order and put them into verses and by the time he had so far shaken off those prejudices of Gentlism which he had imbibed with his milk, that he became quite another man.

Seir-ul-Mutakherin Eng. : Tr. p. 8.

CHAPTER 3

SPIRIT REBELLIOUS

 AT THE AGE OF TEN, Nanak sang passionate songs of the love of God, and talked like a sage. His subtle mind, illumined in the light of indwelling truth, took delight in deflating dogmas, puncturing presumptions, with the sharp point of questions, exhibiting the rare union of sharp logic with the Pythian enthusiasm of a poetic vision of life. His intoxicating mixture of music and philosophy, poetry and the rebellious spirit, flavoured with jest and irony, baffled the priests, the *pundits*, the *mullas*, and the traditionalists. His playful but stimulating arguments, his lively battle against hypocrisy, formalism, and lifeless ritualism, made him appear to be a strange and wayward boy, who talked neither like orthodox Hindus, nor like pious Muslims but was searching a new path, and giving expression to a new outlook. Thus, very early in life, he set his mind in decomposing the decaying age, and fearlessly forging a realistic and practical path of truth.

Nanak refused to bow before any idol and image, or to pay homage to any Hindu deity. He sang heart-rending songs of the One God, who for him was a living presence, in association of Hindus and Muslims. By freely mixing with the saints and sages of every creed, he tried to gain a perspective of thought in which every extreme was seen as half-truth, and the various aspects of divergent faiths blended into a universal experience of justice, the good, and truth. He set aside caste prejudices, and mixed freely with low-caste people. He disregarded the artificial cultural gap between the Muslims and Hindus. He

joined the Muslims in their silent prayers in the mosques, and participated in the *Kirtan* of the Hindu congregations.

Kalu Chand was extremely happy when the village priest Hardy¹ fixed a Sunday for the initiation of his son, Nanak, into the Hindu code of conduct, at which ceremony he would also receive the sacred thread, and be reborn as the twice-born Kshatriya. Finding him unusually gay and cheerful, Rai Bular asked Kalu Chand, what made him so happy. "Well Sir," said Kalu Chand, "the day for Nanak's initiation into the Hindu faith according to Vedic rites has been fixed. I have now to make elaborate arrangement to feed the Brahmins with vegetarian diet, and the Kshatriyas with meat, for which some goats shall have to be slaughtered. I wish I could get some hunted animals for the occasion which the people relish." "I will go out hunting tomorrow," said Rai Bular "and will hunt some deer for you,"² Kalu Chand was overwhelmed. He was sure, that when the village priest initiates Nanak into the Hindu code of conduct, the wayward habits of his son would change. The Hindu social laws and ethics would become ingrained in his mind.

Elaborate arrangements were made for the entertainment of all types of people. The Brahmins and Kshatriyas were given special treatment and food. At the request of Nanak, food was served to hungry *fakirs*, *sadhus*, mendicants, and even low-caste people, though the Brahmins resented such people being treated as their equals. The courtyard had been plastered, and on a raised platform the village priest Hardy¹ spread a carpet, and drew a circle around it.

In the centre of the platform he placed his stone-god, *Sāligrāmū*.³

The priest then informed the audience that he was going to initiate Nanak into the Hindu rituals of worship. He would, after reciting certain Vedic *mañtras*, impart the *bijakśras* (seed letters), *sandhya-vāñdhanī* (worship of the sun as savitr) *navgrah tarpana* (oblation of water to non-Vedic deities), and other obligatory rites, like imparting the *mūlmañtra* (*gayatri*) and investing the boy with the sacred thread.⁴ The priest asked every Brahmin and *Kshatriya* to bless Nanak before the initiation.

Hardyal then asked Nanak to sit opposite him for the initiation ceremony. Nanak sat there and asked the priest what was he supposed to do. "First pay homage to the deity, *Sāligrama* (stone-god)," said the priest, "and be prepared to receive the *mañtram*, (ritual formula) from me. I will be your guru, and you will be my disciple from this day onward." "Why should I bow to this little stone?" asked Nanak. "Because," explained the priest, "this is the manifest image of God." Guru Nanak picked up the stone and said, with a sharp irony, "How on earth can this lifeless stone be image of manifest God? What do you think God is? A mountain or a pile of stones?" "How is it possible to worship the Unmanifest, without conceiving some form of His Presence?" retorted the priest. "The whole of humanity is His manifestation, and the whole of living Nature is His manifestation. Would it not be better to serve His manifest form in humanity? What can you get out of these stones picked out of a river?" remarked Nanak.⁵

Kalu Chand was getting uneasy. "Why argue with him"? he said to the priest, "the boy has his own strange convictions. There is no need to worry about them. Proceed with the ceremony. Impart the *Gayatrī mañtram* to the boy, and invest him with the sacred thread. Explain to him the rituals.⁶ If you once get entangled with him in his arguments, there will be no end to it."

The priest then recited some ritual formula, and coming close to Nanak, uttered the *Gayatrī* in his ear and asked Nanak to repeat it after him: "Tat Savitur varam rūpam jyotih parasya dhīmahī yannah sateynah dīpayet." (Let us meditate on the most auspicious form of *savitri* (solar deity), on the supreme light which shall illumine us with truth.) "You who wish to initiate me into the mystery of spiritual life, are you yourself enlightened? Have you realised truth? Have you realised what the supreme Spirit and Light is? What spiritual change will I experience if I wear the sacred thread, and submit to all these rituals?" asked Nanak.⁸ "I am doing, what it is my duty to do as a Hindu priest," said Hardy. "By accepting this *mañtram*, and by wearing the sacred thread you will become an initiate Kshatriya, able to go to the kitchen of the high caste, and be entitled to all the privileges and *dharma* of the twice born. Without this initiation and the sacred thread, you will not be deemed a pious and virtuous Kshatriya, and will not be entitled to the special privileges of the high-caste people," added the priest.

Nanak listened to the arguments of the priest and with the convictions of a spiritually illumined rational mind he again asked: "Is it the sacred thread which

makes a Brahmin or a Kshatriya perfect in his *dharma*, or are his acts and deeds responsible for it? If a Brahmin or a Kshatriya tells lies, cheats people, exploits and swindles the poor, and commits such sins that are harmful to society, will the sacred thread entitle him to purity and perfection of *dharma*? How can such a man be considered better than those who are virtuous, humane, and noble, but do not wear the sacred thread, because they do not belong to the higher caste?"

The priest was dumbfounded. He stammered for a reply, looking sometime at the other learned Brahmins sitting there, and sometime at Nanak's father, hoping that Kalu Chand might at least stop him from upsetting the ceremony by such pertinent and dangerous questions. The radiant face of Nanak glowed with the wisdom of a sage. There was a compassionate smile on his lips indicating that he could show the way. "Give me", said Nanak, "a sacred thread that would never break." The Brahmin was happy and hopeful that Nanak had at last agreed to wear a strong sacred thread, and before he had chance to assure him that the cotton thread chosen by him was durable and strong, Nanak burst into the following song:

*Countless thieveries, countless sensual exploits,
Countless falsities, countless abuses,
Countless deceptions and countless sins,
Abide with man day and night.
Yet for spiritual initiation of such a man,
A Brahmin twists thread spun from cotton,
A goat is slaughtered for the ceremony,
It is cooked and eaten as feast,
Everyone then blesses the wearer.*

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*When the thread becomes old,
The wearer will throw it away;
And seek another one to replace it.
Sayeth Nanak : A sacred thread can never break,
If the thread is made of moral strength.*

Guru Nanak : *Āsā-kī-Vār*, 15

Expecting to catch Nanak in the game of his own arguments, Pundit Hardyal asked : "What, may I know, is the sacred thread of moral strength, which will last all life? Have you acquired it, and how is it possible for us to spin and wear it?" "I will tell you how to spin the sacred thread", said Baba Nanak, "which may help you, and remain with you in life and death. By the grace of God I have acquired it and that is the only thread I will keep in life. I will never wear this cotton thread worth a penny. This is how you can prepare a lasting sacred thread :

*Out of the cotton of compassion,
Spin the thread of contentment;
Tie the knot of continence,
Give it the twist of truthfulness;
Make such a sacred thread
O Pundit for your inner self.
Such a thread will not break,
Nor, get soiled, be burnt, or lost;
Blessed is the man O Nanak
Who makes it a part of his life.
You buy this cotton thread for a penny
Then sit in a square mud-plastered
And put it around the neck of others.
In the ears some words you whisper, O Brahmin,
And claim to be a spiritual preceptor.
With the death of the wearer falls the thread.*

SPIRIT REBELLIOUS

*Thus without the thread he leaves the world.
With faith and communion with the Name,
Honour and esteem is attained;
Make praise and glorify Truth
Thy real sacred thread.
You can wear it even in His presence,
Such a pure thread can never be destroyed.*

Guru Nanak: *Āsā-kī-Vār*. 15

Nanak thus refused to enter the four-fold order of Hindu society. He refused to acknowledge the superiority of one caste or class over the other. He refused to believe that rituals, formulas, and symbols deprived of ethical significance can ever be useful for religious or spiritual life. He was so clear in his mind about his philosophic and religious outlook that he refused to subscribe to any religious views, which did not conform to his experience of truth, even when it came from the religion of his parents. Even at such a young age, he not only denounced the religious practices of traditional faiths, but tried to show the right path in the light of his inner illumination. The *pundits* and the society elders were seriously upset at Nanak's refusal to undergo the initiation ceremony, and wear the sacred thread; and many of them grumbled and remonstrated with Nanak, for showing disrespect, for what the Hindu *rishis* and sages had been practising since ages. But, Hardyal had some secret faith in the prophetic wisdom of Nanak, ever since his birth. "You are right," said Hardyal; "young Master, I have been initiating people without any divine knowledge. Give me the light and peace that reigns in your soul." Nanak instructed and blessed him. The aged priest Hardyal received the inspiration which lifted his soul to the joy of com-

munion with Spirit Divine. His mind felt inwardly, the moral fervour of the young prophet's sermons, the like of which he had never experienced.

Rai Bular was surprised to learn that Nanak had refused to bow before the stone-god and other Hindu deities. He had refused to accept the Brahminical *mañtram*, and he had even refused to wear the sacred thread, which alone could entitle the boy to acquire a privileged position in the Hindu society. Everyone wondered what this boy would do, when he grew up and his strange thinking assumed some definite form and content.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. J.M.S. gives the name as Brijnath which seems to be an error of the copyist. All other *Janam Sakhīs* and historical records give his name as Hardyāl as the village priest.
2. hor samagrī mai sabh tyār kar āyāñ hāñ ik, mrig dī tūcā hath nahī lagdī, tāñ Rai Bulār kehīā mai bhalke śīkār cadhoñ gā ar mrig mār lyāvāñ gā, tāñ Kalu kehīā kal bhalke naucandā aitivār hai arthāth pancmī hai so mai bhalke Nanak ko janeū pāvañgā tusāñ mrig jarūr lyāvnā.
J.M.S. (MSS, LI). f 98.
3. *Sālagrāma* : A Stone held sacred and worshipped by the Vaishnavas, because its spirals are supposed to contain or to be typical of Vishnu. It is an ammonite found in the river Gandak and is valued more or less according to the number of its spirals and perforations. J. Dawson : *Hindu Mythology*

Brahmin cauke de kār lagā devne; prāt sañdhyā, mandhyā, trikāl sañdhyā, tarpan, gayatrī, lage, Brahmin sikhālne, ar, sikhā sūt dhoti, ar janeū mālā k sūcī, lagā sikhālvnei; śastar bed kī marjādā lagā sikhālne; khat karam, lagā batāvne; Sālagrām kī sevā lagā sikhālne, Nanākji, nhāvai cauke upar baiṭhā, janeū lagā pāvne.

J.Mb. p. 20

5. These arguments are given in a number of other places in the *Janamasākhī*s. J.M.S. indicates that the last verse of 14th Canto of *Āsā-dī-Vār* was uttered here." *sil-pujas bagal samādhāṁ...*"

6. Kālu ākhyā, he prohibit, Guru Nanak nū gayatrī mañtar devo, ate janeū bhī pāo; tāñ prohibit lagā Guru Nanakjī de kanāñ vic, gayatrī mañtar phūkan, tāñ Bābe Puñdit nū kahayā, tūn āp mañtar sikhyā hoyā hai jo sānū sikhāvadā hai.

J.M.S. (MSS; LI) p.99

7. prohibit lagā Guru Nānakjī de kan vic gayatrī mañtar phūkan"
—J.M.S. f : 99

8. "tan Bābe Nānak nū kahyā, tū āp mañtar sikhyā hoyā haiñ jo sānū sikhāñvda hain." *Ibid*

gaytrī tarpan sañdhya sevā kare, bhalī jugat mai rahe, is namit karan khatrī brahmin ko janeū paṭṭā hai binā janeū te khatrī Brahmin kā dharm rehtā nahī"

J.Mb. p. 20

"tāñ Hardyāl jī bole is janeū ke nā pehre binā apvitar hoñdā hai cauke kā adhikārī nahī hotā, jab ved kī bidh pūrab khatrī brahmin is janeū ko pehrte hai tab sabh karm dharm kā adhikārī hotā hai."

J.B. (L) I. p. 29

9. "eh Pundit, khatrī ka dharm janeū sioñ rehtā hai, ki karm kar kar dharm rehta hai"? jab eh bāt Nanak ne kahī tab jitne lok ikatr bhae the sabh hairān bhae"

"suno Pundit jī, khatrī Brahmin hoe kar janeū gal pāyā ar bure karm karne thī nā talyā; khote karm kardā rehiā, tāñ Brahmin Khatrī janeū pāe ke bāhrle dharm nū kya kare gā; dhan vāste hiñsā, dhroh, adharm añt pryañt duṣṭā, jhūth, cuglī kitī tāñ oh Brahmin khatrī nahī cindil hai.

J.B. (L) I p. 29

10. eh updes' Hardyāl ne man mai dhāran kiā ar Guru Nānak jī nū dhan dhan kehiā.


J.B. (L) I p. 32

tab un pandit ar sabhno namaskār kiā, je vāh Nanak, dhan Nanak, Sat Nanak."

J.M.B : 22

CHAPTER 4

AGONY AND ECSTASY

 LIKE AN ARTIST passing through an agonising period, just before a violent outburst of creative energy, Nanak passed through an intense period of his inner life, which the mystics call, 'the school of suffering'. He was not tempted by any evil passions and sensuous desires. His sorrows were not caused either by *mara* or the devil. While his soul felt the inflowing of God's divinity his vivid and penetrating vision saw humanity passing through an unprecedented moral and spiritual crisis. Falsehood, tyranny, hypocrisy, the use of religion for the exploitation and tyrannising over the poor, the weak and the oppressed, pained his soul. The corrupt Brahmins and *qazis* were cheating and misleading the Hindu and the Muslim society and harming the cause of religion and truth. He wanted to face it and fight it with his only weapon, the sword of truth and light, but he must seek the command and blessing of his beloved Lord. For this he must come face to face with God, and respond to His call actively, when He gives His assurance that He would bestow all His blessings and grace on him, and guide him in his mission as the Father guides the Son.¹

Nanak was conscious of his mission as a Saviour, and he was preparing himself by going beyond illumination to perfect communion with God. As a boy of eleven, he was practising and preaching to his village society, what in more concrete and institutionalised form he was to teach and preach later to the world beyond the frontiers of his province and his country. He did what he was asked to do by his

AGONY AND ECSTASY

parents, but everything he did became God's instrument of unveiling his spiritual greatness. Everything that went amiss became a historical sermon of godly acts and deeds, in which Nature and God revealed themselves as witnesses of his supreme exaltation. Each little anecdote of his life during this period tells us, through simple historical facts, that God and Nature guided and protected him in his ungodly surroundings, and made everyone realise that Nanak was a man of destiny, whose joys and sorrows, tears and laughter, jokes and criticisms, had become so mysterious and puzzling, that every day they waited for new surprises.

One day Mehta Kalu came home extremely worried over the behaviour of the family cow-herd, who had quarrelled with him and absconded. The cows and the buffaloes were still in the stables, and another man was not immediately available. Nanak offered to take the cattle to the pasture for grazing. Mehta Kalu Chand hesitated for a moment, but Nanak, who respected all manual labour, said, "What harm is there if I take my own cows and buffaloes for grazing? Did not Lord Krishna act as the cow-herd for his own cows?"

Kalu Chand was delighted to hear these words. "All right son," said he, "take them to the pasture-land till our cowherd returns, or I will engage some suitable person. You love to spend your time in the forest. The cattle will give you opportunity to spend most of your time there in solitude. I shall also be happy that you are busy with something"².

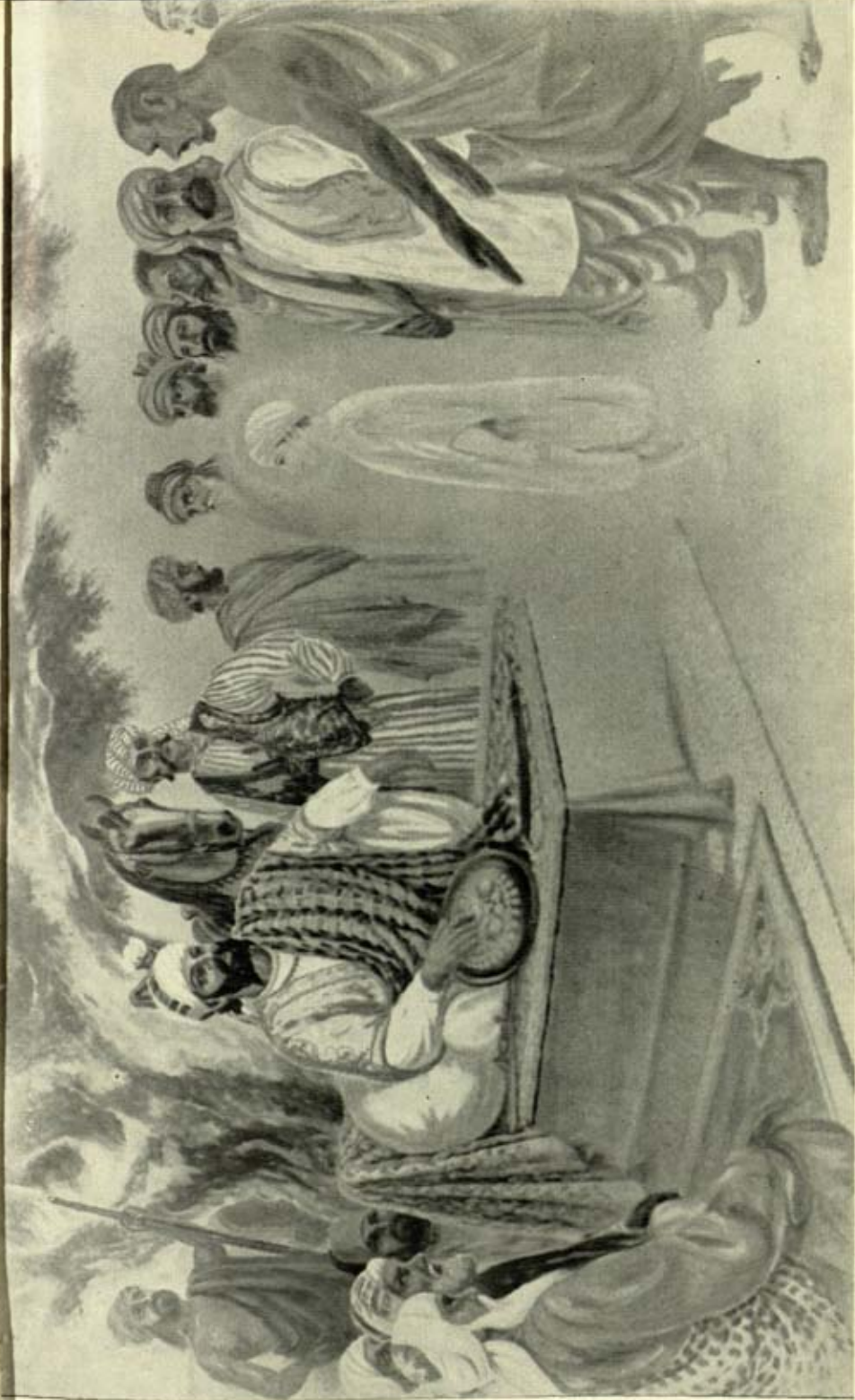
While the cows and buffaloes were grazing, Nanak sang melodious songs of Nature and God. At times

he sat in silent communion with the Spirit Divine and was lost in ecstasy. When he felt tired he rested and enjoyed an open-air siesta under a shady tree.³ On the third day, while he was resting under a tree, a farmer came grumbling and complaining that Nanak's cattle had destroyed all his crop. He shouted at him and cursed him, and in an uncontrollable fit of anger, threatened to report the matter to the chief, Rai Bular, and get damages from his father, Kalu Chand.

Nanak was puzzled. He trusted his cows and buffaloes as one trusts his friends. He wondered why his cattle went to the farmer's fields when he left them in the pastureland, where there was plenty of grass. While the farmer rushed to Talwandi to lodge a report with Rai Bular, the chief of the fief, Nanak went in search of his cattle. He found them grazing in the pasture. He then went to the farmer's fields and found that not a single leaf of his crop was damaged by his cattle. He was happy that his cows and buffaloes had not caused any trouble. He drove them swiftly home.

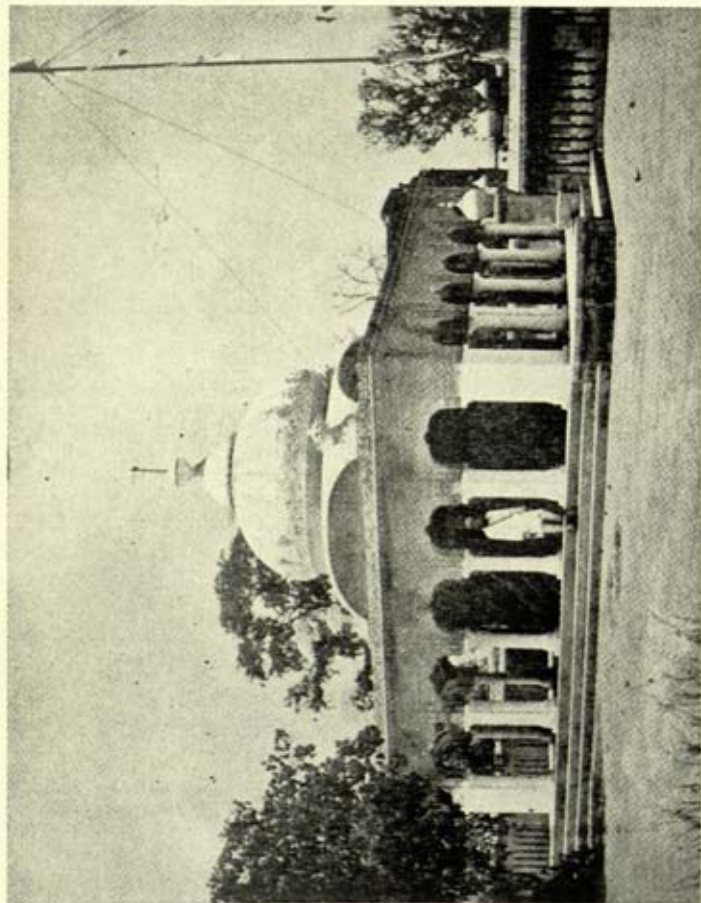
The farmer had by now raised a hue and cry at the door of the chief, Rai Bular. "Give me justice, O chief. I have been ruined by Kalu's son who drove his cattle into my fields and they have destroyed all my crops. I want justice, O Chief. If you show undue favour to this boy whom you love so much, I will go and appeal to the Governor."⁴

Rai Bular was seriously upset. He sent for the village *pañchs* and for Mehta Kalu, who was the *sarpañch* (head of the people's court).⁵ He was



Nanak appears before the Chief Rai Bular

"My cattle have not damaged the farmer's crops."



Kiara Sahib : The place where Nanak pastured his cattle the cattle was supposed to have destroyed the farmer's crop.

facing p. 29

angry with Kalu Chand for sending such a carefree boy as Nanak for grazing the cattle. It was possible that the boy was not able to control such a large herd.

When Mehta Kalu came to know what had happened, he was besides himself with anger. "This boy will ruin me," he said. Being the *sarpañch* of Talwandi and the *kardār* of the chief, he atonce agreed to pay the damages, and asked the chief, Rai Bular, to send an assessor to calculate the cost of the damage done to the crops.

At this moment, there arrived on the scene Nanak, calm and undisturbed. He had come to know from his sister about the serious situation that had been created by the farmer's complaint. Everyone's eyes were now fixed on Nanak, who looked at Rai Bular as if nothing had happened. Rai Bular's anger changed into compassion and love, and he tenderly said: "Nanak, my dear child, you should not have driven the cattle to the farmer's fields. They have destroyed all his crops and your father will have to pay the damages". "No Sire," said Nanak, serenely, "my cattle have not damaged a single leaf of the farmer's fields." Everyone was stunned by the anticlimax of the situation. "This boy is telling a lie," said the angry farmer. "Nanak has never told a lie," remarked Rai Bular, "I must find out the truth". He asked the assessor to go with the farmer and report the truth. The farmer's crops were found untouched and undamaged by any animal. Truth was on the side of Nanak, but the farmer swore that he had seen the damaged crops, and Nanak's cattle grazing in the field. Everyone dismissed the farmer as a mad man, who probably saw his fields damaged in a dream.

Rai Bular wondered all night about all that had happened. Had the Almighty miraculously restored the crop, to save Nanak from embarrassment? And yet there was nothing miraculous about it. No one had seen the crops damaged and then restored. The farmer may be mistaken. He was, however, determined to find out the truth.

The following day Rai Bular went out hunting and, on the way back, he went to the pastureland where Nanak generally grazed his cattle. It was evening, yet the summer heat was blazing and Nanak was sleeping under a tree. As the sun was on the western horizon the shadows of all the trees, had moved in the opposite direction, except the shadow of the tree under which Nanak was sleeping. Nature stood at the service of the young prophet. Hearing some noise Nanak woke up and greeted Rai Bular, who embraced and kissed his forehead. The very next moment the shadow of the tree moved in the right direction.

A few days later, when Rai Bular again passed through the pasture he found Nanak having his siesta under a tree. Through the thick branches of the tree some rays of the hot sun fell on the tender face of Nanak. A large hooded snake was trying to shield the boy's face from the burning rays. When Rai Bular saw the snake raising his head over Nanak's face, who was lying motionless, he thought he was dead. He was overwhelmed with grief and despair. As he went nearer, aiming his arrow at the deadly cobra, it disappeared. Nanak got up and greeted Rai Bular, who was more than a father to him. He bent low to touch the feet of Nanak, but he would not let him do it. From that day on-

ward Rai Bular was convinced that Nanak was a messenger of God. He rode straight to Kalu Chand's house, who was surprised by the unusual visit of the chief. "Well Mehta Kalu Chand," he said, "I have now found out that the farmer was telling the truth. You will have to pay the damages." Kalu Chand was taken aback and said, "But Sir, when you sent the assessor he found the fields undamaged, and you reprimanded the farmer for bringing a false complaint." "The assessor was right, and the farmer's complaint was correct. You will have to pay him," said Rai Bular with a smile. "If it is your order Sir," said Kalu Chand, "I will certainly pay, though I am still at a loss to understand how the farmer's complaint could be correct if the assessor's information was true⁶."

"That is why I have come straight to your house today. Can you believe it, Mehta Kalu, that the animals ignorantly destroyed the poor farmer's crops, and God wisely restored them to save Nanak from any trouble? Can you believe that? I believe it. I have come to tell you, Mehta Kalu, never and never to treat Nanak as your mere son. He is something more. He belongs to the world. He is destined to do something unique. I have twice seen nature serving him, and protecting him. Snakes shade him from the sun's rays. Shadow of the tree dared not to move as long as he slept under it. I am more than ever convinced that Nanak, the gifted child of God, is most probably a prophet. Promise me that you will never get unnecessarily annoyed with Nanak when he does something contrary to your expectation. You and I cannot understand him, unless he chooses to reveal his real nature to us" said Rai Bular. Confused and puzzled by all that Rai Bular said, Kalu Chand promised. Even as Rai Bular left Kalu Chand's

house, he repeated his warning in very strong words : "If you want to be wealthy and great, Mehta Kalu, go on serving Nanak; let him do what he likes. But if you annoy him or hurt him, then you will face death and destruction."⁷

Mehta Kalu knew that Rai Bular had a superstitious reverence for his son, from his early days. He was now surprised to find this reverence take the form of legendary stories. Only the *avatārs* could be treated like that, but he saw no legendary signs of *avatārs* around his son. He could not easily dismiss the strange stories Rai Bular had told him. He sincerely felt that if Rai Bular went on pampering his son in his truancy, and the boy's associations with saints and sufis increased, he might make him good for nothing. So he made up his mind to train Nanak in some business.

Kalu Chand was anxious to see his son become a perfect man of the world. Nanak knew commercial arithmetic, Indian book-keeping and accountancy. He could, if trained, become a successful trader and businessman. But Nanak lacked one essential trait: thrift. He could easily learn the art of making money, but would it be possible to curb his extravagance, which he called charity (*dān*). Mehta Kalu, of course, would not mind if his son earned a lot of money, and gave something as charity, but to his utter disappointment, Nanak knew of no other delight than that of giving everything to the needy and suffering. According to him everything man has, is the gift of God, and is given to him to serve His creatures. To serve His created beings was to serve His manifest Spirit. This apologia for extravagance annoyed Mehta Kalu and he felt that it was only a bad habit which the boy had developed from childhood. If he

AGONY AND ECSTASY

was given some practical lessons in saving money, through profitable trade, he was bound to learn the virtues of thrift and saving.

The worldly-wise Kalu thought of a novel plan of training his son step by step in a profitable trade, under his personal guidance. He gave Nanak twenty-five rupees⁸ to start trading on a small scale within the district and if he seriously applied his mind to trading and made reasonable profit, he could then go to distant cities and lands. But knowing Nanak too well, the cautious father felt that it would not be proper to trust him all alone with this money. Some one older and more thrifty than him should be sent along with him to take care of his money and his personal belongings. He could think of no better a young man than Bala Sandhu, son of Chander Bhan Sandhu, the farmer who looked after Mehta Kalu's land⁹. Bala was a hardworking, truthful young man, three years older than Nanak. Being playmates both loved each other very much. Bala Sandhu was strictly advised by Kalu Chand to allow Nanak to spend the money only on profitable trade. As Nanak was careless about keeping money it was Bala's duty to see that Nanak did not spend any money on unprofitable business.

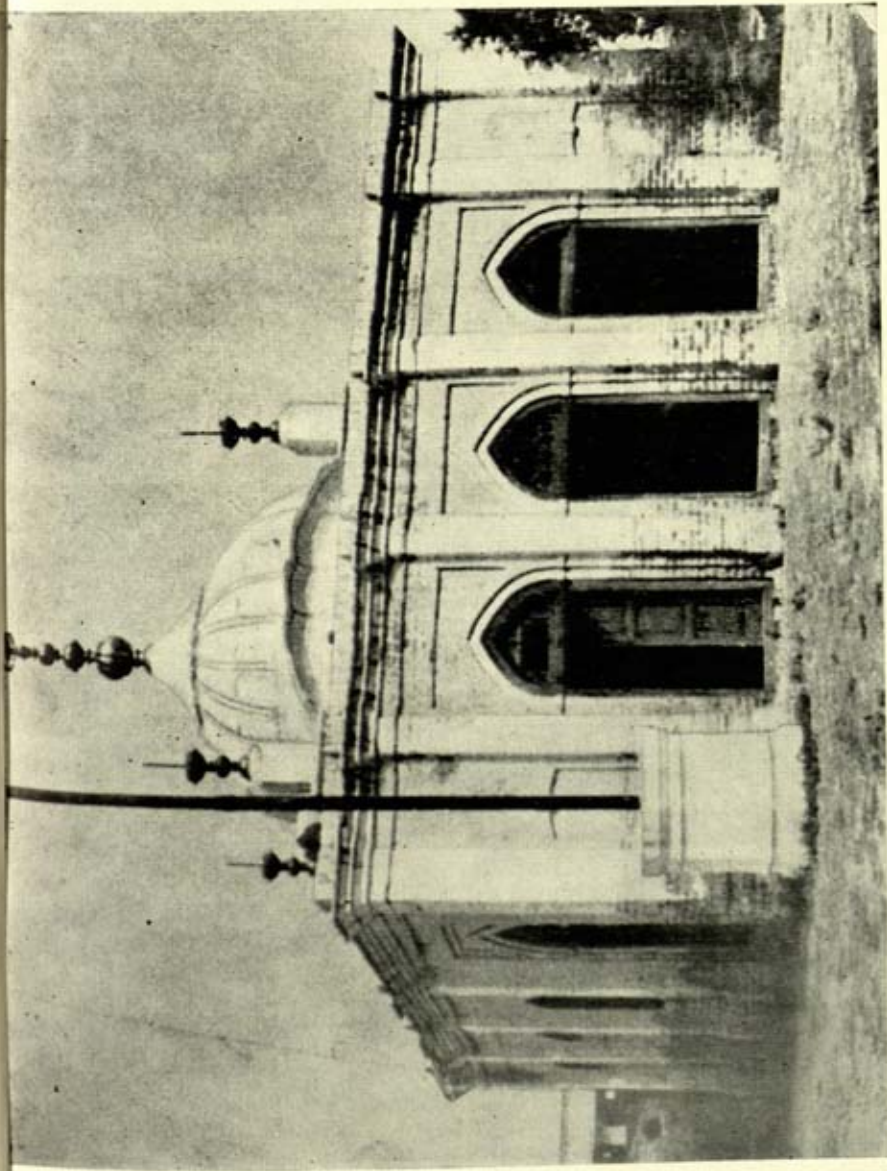
After receiving the blessings of his father, mother and sister, Nanak left Talwandi with Bala Sandhu, They had not gone more than fifteen miles, when in the Chuharkana forest they saw a band of *Yogis* and *Brahamcharis* sitting in meditation, and practising *yoga* in various forms. This gaunt and mournful band of ascetics, dwelling apart, held the body to be the foe of the soul and they tortured their nerves to overpower desires. They lived in such poverty and

hunger that Nanak was moved to pity by their naked and starving condition. Some of them stood with lifted arms, others sat cross-legged, and still others in various *yogic* postures (*asanas*). Nearly all of them were besmeared with ashes and mud.¹⁰

In the centre of the group sat their leader discussing some doctrines with a student who was reading some book. The name of the leader was Santrain.¹¹ Nanak asked the leader : "Holy ones, do you go about naked because you do not get clothes, or is it a part of your creed not to wear clothes?" "My child, we are seekers of *nirvana*," replied Santrain, "We have renounced everything, even the pleasure of wearing dress." Bala impatiently whispered to his companion, "Listen Nanakji, let us not worry about their clothes. We have a long way to go. Think of the trade we must do and not the problems of these homeless mendicants."

Ignoring Bala's advice, Nanak again asked Santrain, "Who provides you your food? Have you renounced eating and drinking also?" The leader of the ascetics replied : "For our food we depend entirely on God, and the charity of noble people. We live in forests, and never go to houses of the people to beg our food. Whatever God sends us through charitable people here, we accept. Otherwise we go without food for days together."

Such profound faith in God moved Nanak deeply. He came to know from another ascetic that they had not taken a morsel of bread for many days. He asked Bhai Bala for the money, explaining to him that there could be no better profitable bargain than to provide food to the hungry saints, who lived in remembrance of God. Bala hesitatingly handed over



The Shrine commemorating the place where Guru Nanak traded in Truth by spending all his money in feeding hungry ascetics. It is known as *Sachia Sauda*.
facing p. 34



The place where Guru Nanak was married at Batala. This mud wall (p. 47) still stands intact.

facing p. 35

the money to the Master telling him firmly, "Do not blame me for the consequences, later on. I take no responsibility for explaining this strange profitable bargain to your father. You are doing exactly the same thing which your father feared you would do." Nanak took the money and gave it to Santrain. But the Yogi would not accept it. "No my Child" said he, "I cannot accept the money for two reasons: Firstly, your father gave you the money for trade, and you are spending it on us. Secondly, we do not touch money. We accept only food. God bless you for your compassion for us."¹²

Nanak left the place. Bala heaved a sigh of relief. As soon as they reached the nearest city, Bala asked his Master, what he proposed to buy. "We will buy flour, rice, pulses, ghee, and fruit" he said. When everything was bought, he asked Bala to carry them to the Chuharkhana forest for the hungry ascetics. "What explanation will you give to your father?" asked Bala Sandhu. "We will tell him that we have made a very profitable bargain. That is what he wanted," replied Nanak. "And what profit will you show him?" asked Bala. "Our gain will be the grace of God. Is it not more precious than all the wealth my father has?" replied Nanak. "Ah," said the puzzled companion of Nanak, "It is very difficult to prevent you from doing what you wish to do. I should have told your father that I cannot resist the temptation of obeying you. It is still more difficult to understand you. Pundits and *qazis* are baffled by your arguments. How can a poor Jat like me understand you? But remember, I am prepared to share the grace of God with you, but not the shoe-beating your father may give both of us. I can imagine what will happen to Mehta Kalu when I tell him that you

have brought immense grace of God for all the money he gave us."

Food was distributed to the starving ascetics. They blessed Nanak. Nanak wanted to serve food to the ascetics with his own hands, but their leader Santrain did not allow him to do so, explaining later on to his disciples that the boy was a god in flesh. He could see that the Divine Spirit had manifested Himself in him. He had already done a great sacrifice by spending all his money on them for which he might have to suffer at the hands of his parents, but how could he allow such a divine soul to serve them with his own hands?¹³

Nanak and Bala wended their way home. As soon as they came near Talwandi, Nanak was a little worried about facing his father's reactions. "How should we explain it to father, Bala?" he asked his companion. "Do not ask me Nanakji" replied Bala curtly. "It is your responsibility to explain to him that you have made a profitable bargain." "All right, go to the village," said Nanak, "while I will think about it here, and then explain it to father." Bala went to his house. Kalu came to know that he had come but Nanak was probably still busy with trade-deals. He sent for Bala.¹⁴ Bala told Kalu Chand everything, and the latter became very angry when he was told that all the money had been spent on feeding the ascetics. "Where is he, where is he?" he shouted, "I will teach him a lesson." Taking Bala along with him he came out in search of Nanak. Nanaki followed her father to save her dear brother from his wrath.

Kalu Chand saw Nanak sitting near a dry pond, calm and resigned to meet whatever fate was in store

for him. His father asked him to explain why he had wasted the money on feeding the hungry ascetics but Nanak remained silent. He slapped him again and again till Nanaki fell at her father's feet, and begged him to forgive him. The news that Nanak had been again severely beaten reached Rai Bular. He immediately came to the spot on horseback and severely reprimanded Mehta Kalu. He took Nanak to his house and made up his mind to keep him in his house as his own son. He asked his Begam Sahiba to hand over twenty-five rupees to Mehta Kalu which the puzzled father was reluctant to accept. Rai Bular told Nanak that if he ever required money for charitable purposes he could take any amount from him, but under no condition should he annoy his father, Mehta Kalu, by spending his money.

Jai Ram Palta, son of Parmanand Palta and a minister of Daulat Khan Lodhi, Governor of Punjab, came to Rai Bular to collect the revenue of his fief. Impressed by the character and personality of the young man, Rai Bular asked him if he would agree to marry his *kardār's* daughter, Nanaki, who was beautiful and gifted, Jai Ram who had heard of the family at once agreed. Rai Bular then said to Mehta Kalu: "Nanaki is as dear to me as Nanak, and, I consider her to be my own daughter. I have selected a highly-placed and noble young man for her and I hope you will agree to betroth Nanaki to him and arrange for the marriage soon." Kalu Chand was proud that so noble a person as Rai Bular should treat his daughter with such esteem and affection.¹⁵ The marriage was duly performed and Nanaki left for Sultanpur, the capital of the Punjab, where Jai Ram worked as the most trusted minister of the provincial governor.

The departure of his sister, Bibi Nanaki from Talwandi made Nanak very sad. There was no other person in the world whom he loved so much and to whom he confided all his thoughts, feelings, and sentiments. In this sorrow of separation from his dear sister he ate little, slept little, and talked to no one. He either went to the forest to seek solitude and peace, or he sat at home in a room brooding over some inner agony in pensive silence. Sick at seeing everything topsy turvy in society, his heart and soul, which, had identified itself with the whole world, was silently suffering at the sight of exploitation of the poor, the hypocrisy of the religious people, the injustice the downtrodden and low-caste people suffered at the hands of the Brahmins and *qazis*. Now and then he would compose a song, to immortalize his agony which no one understood. People were drifting away from the truth of great scriptures and slipping into the snare of false belief.

Nanak was sick of the social degradation around him. He was sick of the priests and pundits. He was sick of the suffering the rich heaped on the poor. He was sick of insults and humiliations which the high caste elite heaped on the low caste masses. He was happy that the chief of the fief, in which he was born and brought up, was pious, generous, and noble, but the harrowing tales he had heard from wandering ascetics, of the cruelty and tyranny of the Delhi Sultans, bled his heart. He wanted to fight it all. He wanted the people to fight it all. For this he must seek strength and power from his beloved Father, God. He wanted to meet Him face to face and ask Him, what is the solution to this terrible state of affairs. After seeking His blessing and grace, he would sacrifice his all for the regeneration of man-

kind. The poignant longing to know from God, the secret and purpose of His creation, and to fulfil that purpose with the weapons of truth and wisdom, deepened his pain, anxiety, and agony to start his mission at once after seeking God's grace, so that he might not falter or fail in his mission.

Everyone saw that Nanak was not only sad, because his sister had left him, but was sick and ailing. They advised his father to consult a good physician. Mehta Kalu Chand invited the village physician Hari Das, to examine Nanak and treat him as best as he could. Haridas examined Nanak's pulse, his face, and eyes, and asked him whether he had any fever or pain. Guru Nanak's historical reply has been preserved in his hymns:

*They have called the physician,
He holds my arm and feels the pulse;
The physician, a simpleton, knows not,
The agony is within my heart.*

Guru Nanak: *Rag Malār.*

"And what may I ask is the agony in the heart?" asked the physician. Nanak calmly answered; "The world is steeped in sorrow and suffering. It weighs heavily on my heart. Can you cure the pain of this sorrow? He who understands a disease can certainly find the cure, if he makes an effort." With a deep sigh Haridas replied, "I am myself troubled by many personal sorrows, for which I have found no cure. When you do find the panacea to these manifold sufferings treat me, Master, as your first patient." The physician then advised Mehta Kalu not to worry about Nanak's health. His inward agony was a painful search for the permanent cure to the social, political,

and spiritual evils that had brought degradation all round.

Nanak's mother asked him to go to Sultanpur and bring Nanaki for a short stay at Talwandi. This was the custom. Also, she thought Nanaki might help in removing the mysterious sorrow of Nanak. Accompanied by Bhai Bala, Nanak went to Sultanpur. Nanak bowed low to touch the feet of his sister Nanaki, but she would not allow him to do so, saying, "It is I who should anoint my forehead with the dust of the feet of my godly brother, whose equal the world has never seen." Jai Ram Palta greeted Nanak with utmost respect and said, "Within this short period of Nanaki's stay here I have realised that your sister can never be completely happy without you. She was pining like a *chatrik* for a sight of you. Thank God you have come. Please stay here with us for a long time. I will request my father-in-law to allow you to stay here for an indefinite period."¹⁶

"I myself feel I am living in heaven," said Nanak, "when my dear sister Nanaki is near me. Only God and Bibi Nanaki understand me completely. When Bibi Nanaki is away, I am left all alone with my inscrutable God." Bibi Nanaki came to Talwandi with Nanak, but during the harvest season Jai Ram Palta came to take her back to Sultanpur.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Historians who depict Nanak as half-mad, and an idler, shirking work and duty, during this period, fail to understand and interpret correctly the inner life of Baba Nanak which is clearly portrayed in his hymns of this period. Nanak looked at society, nature, family ties, religion and even secular duties of man in quite a different way. In theory and practice he continued to assert his own spiritual outlook on domestic,

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social, and cultural affairs. There lies his originality, his genius, and his greatness.

2. bacā Nānak, aj māhī khañḍā chad gayā hai, aj tū mahī piche jāh; jā māhī āvai tāñ tū nā jāñ; aj khañḍā tūhe ucher.

J. Mb, p 22.

bahūḍo Bābā barsāñ yārān kā hūā tāñ ek din Kālū kā jo vāgī gāiyāñ te māhiāñ nū cārdā sī so rus gayā, tāñ Kālū kāhya jī māhī ghare khalotiāñ haiñ, asīñ tāñ tainū ākh nahi sakde, ki carāe lyavaiñ, tāñ Bābe kehya Sri Krishan ne ghar diñ gauāñ carāiāñ san so asīñ bhī cār lyāvāñ ge; tāñ Bābe khūñdi lai ke māhiāñ carāvangāyā. J.M.S. (MSS ; LI) p 108

3. Baba Nānakji baiṭh kar lagā simrin karan tab simrin kartā kartā dhyān bikhe hoe gayā.

J.Mb, p 22.

ṭhañde brich tale ar ṭhandī chāñve smādh lagāe ke beh rehiā.

J.M.S. (MSS;LI) p 109

4. Rāi jī, razāi khudae merā tapāvas kar; jitnā khet sās Kālū de khañde ujadye hai;

J.M.b p. 23

mai muṭha hāñ; merā tāu khet ujadya hai; merā tapāvas kar; nahi tāñ mai turkān pās vaiñḍāñ hāñ;

P. J. (MSS) III f. 5

5. aisā dādā Kālū thā, Rai bhoē kī Talwañḍī rehtā pañcā meh nāik; sabhnā pācāñ kā mukhī, caukadiyā; it nagar meh śreṣṭ, dibān meh śreṣṭ.

J.Mb. p 22

6. tāñ did: Kālū kehya jī, bhalā hoveRāi jī, "jā binā ujadē mai te divāyā cāhāñḍā hai tā sādā kā cārā." tab Rāe Bhoē kahayā jī, "nā, nā, binā ujadē te kāhe se, jhakh māre; sir di saugañdh hai je mai jhūṭh kahā, ujadā sahī hoyā;" tāñ Kālū kehya, bhālā Rāe jī, bhalā hoavai, jāñ tusiñ sahī kitā, tāñ sahī hoyā, tud vin ujadē hoe hī te divāyā bhāvda hai te dehga.

J.Mb p. 27

tab Rai Bhoē kehya : eeh Bhāi Kālū, tū eev kar mat jānai, jo eh putar merā hai, pāl pos kitā hai; mat eh gal jāñḍā hovai, ki kāi gal tehal farmāis kardā hovai; oh tera putar nāhi; vadā bazurg hai; koī khel khudāi dā hai; par azmat sāth bhariyā hai; tūñ ehdi khidmat hī kardā rauh, je kite marātbe te pahuñciā loḍda hai, nahi tāñ mārya jāvai gā. J. Mb p 28.

āvdō hī Bābe de ghar āyā āe ke akhyos,” Kālu ghar hai ke nahī; “āho jī ghare hāñ;” “Kālu, ure āo te gal sun; te tere put de sir ujāḍā sāhī hoyā hai; mai bhī sahī kitā hai;” Kalu ākhyā “Raejī, tud jo, sahī kitā so sahī hoyā, hai, pañcī ugāhī ditī hai; mai bhī sahī kitā hai;” Kalu ākhyā “Raeji tudh jo sahī kitā so sahī hoyā;” “Rae akhyā nā,” hāse dī nahī, khudāe dī sauñh, ujāḍā sahī kitā, hai; jāñ Dāde Kalū Khara dār gayā, tā Rae Bulār ne ākhyā, ve bholyā kirāḍā, eh jo terā put hai, so mānū nahī, Kalu esnū kade put kar nāh jāne gā, eh koī gauś khudaḍ da hai.

P.J. (MSSII) p. 16

Colebrooke's MSS does not contain the above reference.

8. Some *Janam Sākhīs* give the amount as Rs. 50, others give Rs. 20.
9. Some historians have ignorantly and unwisely tried to completely wipe out the name of Bhai Bala out of history. All *Janam Sākhīs* and historical records concerning Guru Nanak's life, except two, give the name of Bala as an important historical figure. These two *Janam Sākhīs* not only ignore Bala but also exclude the stories in which Bala plays some historic role. Of all the disciples of Guru Nanak we have till this day the *Samādhi* of Bhai Bala alone, preserved at Khadur. See details Appendix.
10. tapasi tap karte haiñ, koī khaḍiāñ bāhan karke baiṭhe haiñ, koī sāñt khade hoe hain, koī padmāsan lāe baiṭhe haiñ, koī sidhāsan kar baiṭhe haiñ, ik pustak padte haiñ, ik mondhārī baiṭhe haiñ.

J.B. (MSS I); J.B. (L) I; p 47


11. Guru Nanak jī ne pūchā, he Sañtjī āp bastar nahī peharte hath nahī āvdā ki pehnde nāhī...itnā sun kar Sañt ne kahā Bhai ham nīrvān sadhu haiñ, bastar ka sañjam hī rakhnā cahīhai. ibid,
12. J.B. (L) I p:47
13. J. B. (L) I. All MSS copies of Bālās *Janamsākhīs* give these details. The material has been corrupted in printed ones.
14. The *Janam Sākhīs* call Bālā “nafar” which means servant. nafar Bhai Bale ne Nānak jī de bastar bhī uṭhāe. J.B.(L) I

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15. Some *Janam Sakhis* have given a romantic colouring to the betrothal story. They say that Jai Ram Palta happened to see Nanaki during one of his visits and fell in love with her. He approached Rai Bular to arrange the marriage if there was no problem caused by caste and *gotra* prejudices.
16. J.B. (LI) p55.

CHAPTER 5

MARDANA AND MARRIAGE

 AT THE DOOR of Nanak's house, one day, came a village bard. He sang plaintive Punjabi folk-songs and heroic strains in various *ragas*. The art of music was in his blood. As a family profession, he could use it for no better purpose than to sing at marriage ceremonies, or for begging money, food, and clothes, from door to door. He belonged to that great class of minstrel-poets who composed and sang verses, celebrating the achievements of chiefs and warriors. They were looked down upon as *sudras* (low-caste people) by Hindus. To gain some social respect and patronage for their art, almost all the bards had become Muslims.

"What is your name?" asked Nanak. "You play on the rebeck, so well." "My name is Dana, Sir," said the bard. "God bless thee, for appreciating my art. No one has said such words of appreciation before." "You play the rebeck like a master-musician and you seem to have profound knowledge of *rāgas*. If you sing *sabads* (the hymns of God) in such *ragas*, I will provide you the hymns. You will receive, Gods' blessing both in this world and the next," said Nanak. "It is all very well, Sir, as you say, but who will provide me and my children with food, which I get only by begging," replied Dana and continued, "As for being saved in this world and the next, I recite the five *namāzes* and keep fast during *Ramzān*. That is quite enough for my salvation, Sir. God bless thee for liking my music." "I shall take full responsibility," said Nanak, "for providing for your family. Remember God provides for all those who labour in His service,

and in the service of humanity. As for the *namāz* you say, and the fasts you keep, they can bring salvation if in your prayers and fasts your mind is tuned to the love of God through the path of virtue." "How am I to know how such a complicating thing is to be done? I just say my *namāz* and keep the fasts, and I know I will not go to hell," said Dana. Nanak was moved by his innocence and said, "Listen, this is how it is to be done. Play the rebeck and I will sing the song of true *namāz* in the *Rāg Mājh*."

*Five prayers, five times a day,
Have five different names :
Make Truth the first prayer;
The second to lawfully earn your daily bread;
The third : charity in the Name of God;
Fourth : purity of mind;
Fifth : adoration of God.
Recite these five prayer in practice.
Let good deeds be your article of faith, the Kalmā.
Then you can call yourself truly a Muslim.*

Guru Nanak : *Vār Mājh*

Dana was won over, not so much by the arguments of Nanak, but by his affection and assurance that he would not have to beg for his food any more². He could sing the sacred hymns which the low-caste people were not entitled to sing. He would be treated as his brother. "Thanks be to thee, Sire, for your kindness. You have a very tender heart. In this unmusical world, music has been made the profession of beggars. How can I ever dream of being treated as a brother by the scion of a Kshatriya of the Solar dynasty like you? I am a downtrodden bard, you are the highest and noblest among the twice

born," said Dana sadly. "No my dear friend Dana, there is no difference between you and me. We are both human beings, made of the same elements, and we carry within us the same light of God. He created us equal. The only difference is that you are a bard of society which knows not how precious music and musicians are, while I am a bard of God, Who has given me a mission to awaken people from their sleep of ignorance, to the realisation of truth, through music and poetry. Join me Dana. Be my companion ever, and God will bless you with all the graces of life."³

Thus ended the first meeting between the great bard of Sikh history, Dana, and Baba Nanak. Dana was won over and was renamed Mardana by Baba Nanak. He spent most of the time with his Master, but could not help going to marriages of the rich on festive occasions to sing for them and beg money. Mehta Kalu felt that his son was giving indications of renouncing the world, and wandering away from home. He was advised to arrange his marriage. At the age of fifteen or sixteen he was betrothed to Sulakhni, daughter of Mul Chand, the *patvārī* of Batala. The date of the marriage was fixed a year later.⁴

Mehta Kalu went to Rai Bular to seek his blessings for Nanak's marriage. "Your humble servant Nanak's marriage has been fixed, Sire. Give him your blessings," said Mehta Kalu. "Ah," said Rai Bular, "Do not indulge in such blasphemy, Mehta ji. How can you ever call Nanak, my servant? Nanak is the world-teacher. He is the Lord of the world. All kings, rulers, and chiefs are his servants. This is the truth you have not realised. This is the truth the world will know soon. Hindu marriage cere-

monies are very intricate. Nanak resents priests and rituals. If something happens there, do not show your usual wrath. I hear Nanak's father-in-law is also a bad-tempered man. Do not offend Nanak in any way."⁵

Rai Bular then sent for Nanak. He embraced and kissed his forehead, and then loaded him with gifts. The marriage party left Talwandi first for Sultanpur. From there it went to Batala. Local tradition maintains that Jai Ram brought some elephants and horses of Daulat Khan's court to add to the pomp and pageantry of the wedding party.⁶ Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* and an old recension of Bala's *Janam Sākhī* give the details of the marriage ceremony which partly substantiates the traditional accounts, supported by the historical evidence of a tell-tale mud wall at Batala. Bhai Vir Singh has also recorded this story about the wall in his historical footnotes to *Nanak Prakash* of Kavi Santokh Singh. It is said Guru Nanak refused to marry according to Brahmanical rites and suggested a simpler wedding ceremony. The Brahmins resisted and Mul Chand Chauna refused to marry his daughter to Nanak according to any other rites. He even threatened to send the wedding party back. The Bhandari family of Batala agreed to marry their daughter to Baba Nanak if Mul Chand Chauna broke his daughter's engagement to Nanak. Mul Chand Chauna at once relented, but agreed on the condition that Nanak must convince the Brahmins that the ceremony he proposed was better. A discussion was arranged. It was raining that day. At the time of discussion Nanak was given a seat near a crooked mud-wall which was about to fall. Mul Chand expected victory from either of the two scores. Either Nanak

would be defeated by the pundits, or a little push given to the wall could kill him. An old lady, who came to know about the conspiracy, informed Nanak. Nanak smiled and said to the lady, "This wall will not fall for centuries. The Bhandaris who have shown concern for me shall be blessed. The Chaunas who conspired to kill me shall be uprooted. The Will of God shall prevail."

It is further recorded in old manuscripts of Bala's *Janam Sūkhī*, that Baba Nanak composed four *tāvāṅs* (marriage hymns) and four *mangalās* (songs of felicitation). These four *tāvāṅs* (marriage hymns) and *mangalās* are recorded in Bala's *Janam Sūkhī* (Litho Copy) published by Aftab Press Lahore and some old copies also. They are quite different from the *tāvāṅs* read nowadays. Each marriage hymn describes one *yuga*. The fourth reads as follows: *Ram cauthī lauṇ karte kaljug pragtayā balrām-jio; Jin Hari sion prīt nahī te saṅg bhrame maya jio*". By the fourth nuptials circling, the Lord created the *Kaliyuga*. Those who loved not God were ensnared in the web of *māyā*."

Janam Sūkhī of Meharban also strongly indicates that no Vedic ceremony was performed. Meharban says that *kīrtan* was performed and many hymns composed by Nanak were sung at various stages of the marriage. He has given some hymns though, to differentiate his collection from those of Guru Arjan's authorised version, he corrupts almost all the hymns. In their correct form these hymns are still sung at the time of the wedding, though they do not form an essential part of the marriage ceremony. In the end Meharban writes, "Every one present, Hindus, Muslims and many low caste people were

deeply impressed by the ceremony which was open to all."⁸

The marriage party came back to Talwandi. Whoever came to offer felicitations received gifts and sweets. Both Mardana and Bala received special gifts from the Master. To Mardana, Nanak offered his wedding-dress saying: "This dress will be a bond of equality and fraternity between you and me, and you must now promise never to beg for your living. You are my companion, my friend now; I take complete responsibility for the welfare of your family. Your music will give divine inspiration to the world. You will live and move in society like a respected musician, and not like a beggar."⁹ Mardana promised and solemnly kept the promise. He even gave up the little begging he indulged in, out of habit, after his first meeting with Nanak.

After the marriage, when Bibi Nanaki left for Sultanpur, her parents loaded her with gifts and presents. Her mother, Tripta, asked Nanak to pray to God that Bibi Nanaki may have a child. Nanak was prepared to do anything for his dear sister. He said: "By the grace of God, Bibi Nanaki will have one son and one daughter in due course."¹⁰ Bibi Nanaki was happy and said to her brother: "More than anything else, my dear brother, I want you near me. Promise me that you will come to Sultanpur, and stay with me for a very long time." Nanak promised.

Among the guests, who had come to participate in the wedding, was Mata Tripta's sister, Lakho. She could not help remarking, rather sarcastically, "Your son, Nanak, my dear Tripta, is half mad. He picks up

every good thing in the house and gives it to the poor." Nanak, who overheard it said, pointing to her little son, Ram Thaman, "Your son, dear aunt, will be madder than me."¹¹ Ram Thaman later on came to be known as the intoxicated saint. His memory is still commemorated on Baisakhi gatherings at Kasur every year.

For the next four years, Nanak led a quiet homely life looking after his father's affairs as best as he could. In the morning and evening he would perform *kīrtan* and give spiritual discourses. In the day time he would go about his work. He liked looking after his farms. During these years he had two sons who were named Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das.

Early one morning when Nanak went out he met a starving mendicant. As he did not have any money with him, Nanak gave him his gold ring and *lota* (metal jug). This annoyed Kalu Chand and he complained to Rai Bular. Rai Bular began to think seriously about the matter. After some reflection he said, "This place is too small for such a great man as Nanak. I am sending a messenger to Jai Ram to keep Nanak at Sultanpur, the capital city, where he is bound to attract the attention of the governor and distinguish himself in every field."

A few days later Nanak received an invitation from his brother-in-law Jai Ram Palta to visit Sultanpur, which he readily accepted. Elaborate preparations were made for his departure as he had decided to go there for a longer stay.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. "ji merā nauñ Dānā Mirāsī lok kehñde han" Nanak kahyā:
"tūñ rabāb bhalā vajauñdā haiñ, te tainū rāgāñ dī, bhalī
sojhī hai, par je tūñ asādī sañgat karaiñ, tāñ eh śabad rāg
pāke gāvai; tāñ asī terā dīn dunī vic udhār kariāi." Ji asīñ
dhanī logañ nū rāg sunāe ke cār paise lyāñvde hāñ, apne
putrāñ dhīāñ vic duniyā dī gujrān karde hāñ, te pañj vele
namāz padde hāñ te tiñ roze ramzān nū rakhade hāñ, asādā
dīn dā bhalā huñdā hai.

S.B.M. (MSS), J.M.S. (MSS), f 58, f 67.

According to another *Janam Sākhī* Dana was younger brother of Mardana.

2. Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* says that Mardana was a playmate of Guru Nanak. This *Janam Sākhī* has put in many improbable facts and is not supported by any other *Janam Sākhī* on the question of Nanak's place of birth, place of stay in early life. When Mardana met Guru Nanak, the Guru was unmarried while Mardana had grown-up children and was therefore much older. He also died much earlier than Guru Nanak. It is highly inconceivable that Mardana, who was at least fifteen years older than Nanak, could be his playmate.
3. This dialogue has been given in slightly different form in Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sākhī*, *Sikhāñ dī Bhagatmāl*, and Bala's *Janam Sākhīs* (Old MSS).
4. *Purātan Janam Sākhī* fixes the marriage date at the age of 12, which is too early. Bhai Mani Singh and Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* fix it at the age of fifteen or sixteen, which seems to be correct. Bala's *Janam Sākhīs* fix it at the age of eighteen, which is less probable. The month and date of marriage in all these *Janam Sākhīs* is the same.
5. pher Rai ne kihā, he Kālū terā subhā baḍā khotā hai, bol vigāḍ hai, dekhī kich bol vigāḍī kardoñ; ate Mulla bhi terā kuḍam, oh bhi baḍa sakhat hai, dono iko jehe ho, mate koī kam bigāḍ do. J.B. (L. I and II)p.75
6. Almost all *Janam Sākhīs* say that the betrothal ceremony took place at Talwañḍī and the marriage party left for Batala from Talwandi. Bala's *Janam Sākhīs* (Old MSS)

say that the betrothal ceremony took place at Sultanpur and the wedding party started from Talwandi and first went to Sultanpur and then to Batala. The correct position appears to be that the betrothal ceremony took place at Talwandi and the distance from Talwandi to Batala being 90 miles, it could be covered in four or five days. A day before the marriage the wedding party reached Sultanpur and from there it went to Batala. Elephants and other royal paraphernalia could be acquired for the wedding only from Sultanpur.

7. jis divār heṭh goṣṭ hoī, oh divār kacī hai, aje tak khaḍi hai te viṅgī. Chonyā ne nāh kīṭi te Bhañḍārī kehan lage ke asīñ nātā dende hāñ. is par Gurūji ne var ditā : Bhañḍārī bhare rehan gete Chaune cune jān ge.

Bhai Vir Singh's footnote to *Nānak Prakāsh* p 155.

8. Khatri, Brahmin, Sūd, Vais, jitnā sā, jitnā Musalmān thā, se sabh Guru Baba kī ustat lage karane, je dhan ho Guru Baba Nānak. J.Mb. p. 37
9. Guru Nānak ne apne gal thī colnā Mardane nū laḥ ditā tañ Mardāne colnā apne gal pāyā, tañ pher Guru Nānak jī kehyā Mardanyā tū ik sādā bacan man; tañ Mardāne ākhyā pharmaīai tañ Nānak ākhyā sun Mardānya tu Bediāñ dā Mirāsī haiñ horas pāsoñ mangnā nahī J.B. (L) I p: 71
10. Mātājī ke kahe Guru Nānak ne Bibī Nānakī nū ik loṅg, ik lācī dīṭī ar kehiā ke ik putar hovegā ar ik dhī hove gī.


J.M.S. (MSS); LI p: p 113

We do not find any details of the life of Bibi Nanaki or Jai Ram, nor is there any indication whether they had any children. Further research into the history of Palta families may throw some light on these facts.

11. Gurujī di māsi Lakho nāmī apnī bhain nū milan āi te Gurujī dā hāl vekh ke bolī : terā putar tañ, kamlā jihā hai, jo kujh ghar vic labhdā hai lokāñ nū de diñdā hai, eh gal sun ke Guru Sāhib bole, masi jī tera putar mere nālon bhī kamlā hovai ga". T.G.K. p 52.
12. According to another tradition Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand were born at Sultanpur.

CHAPTER 6

SERVICE OF MAN AND THE SERVICE OF GOD

 AS BABA NANAK was to stay at Sultanpur for a long time, Mehta Kalu Chand gave him two camel-loads of household goods, two horses, and some servants, including Bhai Bala. Nanak told Mardana that he would send for him as soon as he settled down and started work. Nanak's wife, Sulakhni, expressed her desire to accompany him, saying: "Even though I do not get sufficient attention from you here, my Lord, I can nevertheless see you, listen to your sweet words, and feel blessed by your presence near me. I will find it very difficult to bear separation from you. Please take me along with you. When you were here, I felt I was the queen of a large kingdom." Baba Nanak smiled and said, "Sulakhni, my dear, I will come as soon as possible. You will have the kingdom of this world and the next at your command. Your sovereignty will spread all over the world".¹ "My Lord," replied Sulakhni, "I do not want the kingdom either of this world or the next. I do not want wealth or heaven. I just want to be near you, to be able to serve you with my own hands, and earn your pleasure. Promise me that you will send for me soon."² Pleased by her selfless devotion Nanak promised her saying, "Rest assured that I will send for you and the children." Nanak bade everyone farewell and left for Sultanpur on horseback.³

After five days Nanak reached Sultanpur.⁴ Bibi Nanaki was extremely happy to see her brother. She embraced him and even tried to touch

his feet, but Nanak prevented her saying, "You are older than me, dear sister, you should not do such a thing." "But in my eyes you are not a man, dear Nanak; you are a living presence of God. To love you and worship you, is my only religion," replied Nanaki.

Soon Jai Ram came home. He was delighted to meet Nanak. He asked Nanak to make himself comfortable, and deem his house, and all that was in it as his own. He asked Nanaki to give him everything he required for his missionary work. If he desired any special arrangements to be made for his religious discourses, and for his meditations, he would at once do it. Nanak, however, said that he had come there to work for his living, and not to sit idle. He asked Jai Ram to make arrangements for some work, by which he could honestly earn his living. Jai Ram said, "God has given us everything in abundance. We would be happy if you devote your time to meditation and spiritual elevation of the people. But if you insist, then you can take up my post of the *modi*, as the governor wishes to give me the administration of another ministry. I have already spoken to the governor about you. I can get an audience tomorrow, and I am sure you will be immediately appointed." Guru Nanak insisted on getting some work to earn his living, because he believed: "He who sweats for his bread, and gives something in charity out of his hard-earned income, can easily know the path of truth."⁵

The very next day Baba Nanak met governor Daulat Khan Lodhi along with Jai Ram. It was the custom that whenever persons of high birth or position met the governor he presented a rich gift accord-

ing to his position and status. When Nanak met Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi he presented him a white Iraqi horse."⁶ Deeply impressed by the glowing personality of Nanak, Daulat Khan asked Jai Ram in Persian, "What is his name?" "His name is Nanak," replied Jai Ram."⁷ Nanak silently looked at the Nawab and smiled. Daulat Khan remarked, "What a godly and divine personality he is. He appears to be much greater and nobler than what you described him to be."⁸

"You are right Your Excellency," said Jai Ram, "he is very highly educated.⁹ He is the noblest of the human race, and of boundless wisdom. He is capable of solving any administrative difficulty.¹⁰ He will surely bring glory and greatness to the durbar." The very sight of Nanak had impressed Daulat Khan Lodhi very much. On hearing about his intellectual equipment the governor at once said, "Give this noble young man a gold-embroidered robe of honour, and the best horse from my stables,¹¹ which is the highest honour my court can bestow on such a noble visitor." The governor then offered Nanak the portfolio of Household Minister, but Nanak said that he would prefer the administration of "Provision Supplies Department", the *Modi-khana*, probably because it was connected with charitable institutions and with helping the poor and the needy.¹² Daulat Khan Lodhi at once agreed. Showing his general reluctance to accept any office in the royal court, Nanak said, "You rulers are in the habit of mistrusting everyone and are easily misguided by the poisonous whispers of backbiters and detractors. I accept this office, if you assure me that you will not listen to such detractors." Daulat Khan Lodhi gave a solemn assurance¹³.

The governor then asked his Prime Minister (*Diwan*), Dev Dutt, to officially hand over the administration of the Provision Department to Baba Nanak, as he had been appointed the *Modi*¹⁴ (lit: Incharge of Granary). Nanak was also to be given about a thousand rupees as contingency money.¹⁵ Diwan Dev Dutt was an orthodox Hindu who displayed his orthodoxy by always keeping a Brahmin cook and a Brahmin guru (religious teacher) at home.¹⁶ He handed over to Baba Nanak the whole of the Provision Department, the account books, the weights and measures, and the granary stores, and explained to him that it was the duty of his department to provide provisions to the palace, the state guests and visitors, to the charitable institutions and to the army. Provisions had to be sent to the army wherever they were required.¹⁷ His staff and clerks were introduced to him. Nanak picked up the smallest weight measure and placing it before him bowed to it saying: "This little weight-measure is great because it is the symbol of humility. It bows before everyone." Nanak thus made it clear to his staff that humility and service were to be the keynote of his administration¹⁸.

Baba Nanak's benevolent administration of his department created a sensation in the state capital. The *Modis* and the *Bakhshis* generally took one-tenth of what they paid from state funds as service money, and became very rich and powerful. Nanak abolished this custom, and refused to take a single penny from anyone's share or pay.¹⁹ Large amounts began to be spent on helping the poor, the needy, the destitute, and the *fakirs*.

For some days Nanak stayed with his sister

Nanaki and then took a separate residence allotted to him by the governor. It began to be called Baba Nanak's *derā*. People from Talwandi and neighbouring areas flocked to Sultanpur for jobs and Nanak helped everyone to get work suitable to his attainments. After a few months Nanak sent for his bard Mardana²⁰ and his wife and children. Whatever was saved from his pay Nanak put in the state charity funds, and thus to everyone's surprise more and more sums began to be spent on charity than were actually sanctioned by the governor.

The daily routine of Nanak's life, as recorded by the *Janam Sākhī*s shows that he not only worked conscientiously, but worked very hard. He got up early in the morning, and went to a river nearby for his bath. A servant accompanied him who carried his jug (*lotā*) and clothes. After his bath he sat in meditation on the banks of the river for an hour or two. He then came home and performed *kīrtan* (congregational hymn singing). After taking his breakfast he went to his office, and was generally the first to reach the office. The whole department was organised in such a way that all bribery and corruption disappeared. Everyone's work was done without much ado. Provisions were sent to the army, the palace, and the officials in time. The poor and the needy were well provided. Nanak used his influence in the court to get justice for the exploited, and mercy for innocent victims of harsh officers. Prisoners were released, and those that had to be kept for some punishment were given very humane treatment. Everyone praised and blessed Baba Nanak.²¹

In the evening there was a congregational gathering, in which *kīrtan* was performed and sermons

were delivered. Nanak's kitchen became a free kitchen for all who wished to take food. Mata Sulakhni was instructed not to refuse food to anyone. If the work of checking accounts was left undone in office, Nanak brought the account books home, and worked on them till late at night. He kept all his records so up-to-date as to be able to render account and give charge to the government at any time.²²

While working one night, he almost forgot to take his supper. The servant waited till his master finished his work. Nanak would not take it till he had performed his prayers. On being pressed by the servant he took his supper first, and then said his prayers before going to bed.²³

Peace and prosperity reigned over the capital city of Punjab under the moral and spiritual influence of Baba Nanak. All classes of people felt blessed and well looked after. The personal difficulties and troubles of everyone found solution when Baba Nanak was approached by them. The milk of human kindness that now flowed from the court of Nawab Daulat Khan brought him honour and praise from all quarters.²⁴ No other minister, not even the Diwan (Prime Minister), was so highly respected as Baba Nanak. When Mehta Kalu Chand heard some thrilling stories about Nanak's popularity and generosity he was happy. He came to Sultanpur to see if his son had amassed some wealth by this time, and felt very unhappy when he came to know that he saved nothing, but wasted all his savings in helping and feeding the poor. He even remonstrated with Bhai Bala for not taking care of Nanak's earnings, and accused him of becoming a parasite

on him. Bhai Bala felt this accusation very much and was about to leave the company of Nanak²⁵ when Bibi Nanaki pleaded with him not to do so. She also asked her father not to expect Nanak to behave like mundane people who hoarded money. Now Mardana was very happy. He did not have to beg. He lived with Nanak as a member of his family. His family was provided for by the Master. Now and then Mardana went to Bibi Nanaki's house, who gave him many little gifts. One day she asked Mardana to express his greatest wish which she was anxious to fulfil. Mardana at first hesitated, then said: "Your brother has given me everything. Everything belonging to him is mine, he says, and that is how I feel. I have almost become desireless as far as food and clothings are concerned. But there is one thing I hesitate to ask my Master. My *rabāb* (rebeck) has grown old and rickety. If only I could have a new *rabāb*, I could string music and *rāgās* which would thrill my Master. But I hesitate to ask him. He already spends so much on me. I always used to wear old tattered clothes. Now he gets me brand new clothes, the like of which only *vazīrs* wear. I eat the very food he eats. He has given me more comforts than he enjoys. He eats little, sleeps little, and wears very simple dress. O how can I ask him for anything more."

Bibi Nanaki was deeply moved. "Mardana," she said, "my brother loves you and Bhai Bala because both of you are sincerely devoted to him. You have the gift of music while Bhai Bala has the gift of serving him selflessly. Here is some money. Go and get the best *rabāb* that is available, no matter what the cost. You can take any amount of money from me. The *rabāb* you buy must be the most attractive and

the best. Mardana went to the homes of some bards who made musical instruments. They looked down upon him for having abandoned his profession and faith and refused to sell any *rabāb* to him. Baba Nanak then advised him to go to a village in the forest on the other side of the river where he would find a bard named Indersain Firanda whom people also called Pheru. He made the best musical instruments and Mardana could get a *rabāb* from him. When Mardana went to Firanda he gave him a newly made *rabāb* on which he had laboured much.²⁶ He was happy that the *rabāb* was being bought for Baba Nanak whose fame had already spread to the neighbouring regions.

Many devoted disciples came and began to stay at Sultanpur to live near their Master. They earned their living in the day time and attended the congregation of Baba Nanak in the evening. People of all castes and creeds attended his sermons, and took food from his kitchen. Nanak became the source of boundless charity, and extremely liberal and revolutionary religious thoughts and social practices. He preached boldly against the false caste superiority and puritanism of Brahmins and the corrupt practices of the *qazis* and *mullas*. This particularly hurt the susceptibilities of the puritan Diwan Dev Dutt, who not only became jealous of the growing popularity of Nanak but also his treatment of the low-caste people as his equals. He suspected that Nanak was wasting a lot of state money on charity to become popular among the low-class people. He secretly inquired from three employees of Nanak's office, whose duty it was to weigh the provisions,²⁷ about the exact amount that was being spent on various state func-

tions. These employees informed him that about a hundred rupees was spent daily on palace requirements of the governor while about five hundred rupees were daily spent on charity by Nanak.²⁸ These two figures shocked Diwan Dev Dutt and provided sufficient material to lodge a complaint with the governor. "If such things go on for another six months," he said to the governor, "the treasury will be empty and the state will be bankrupt."

Nawab Daulat Khan was seriously upset. He asked the Diwan to inform Jai Ram Palta first and through him get the accounts checked. Dev Dutt at once informed Jai Ram about the state of affairs, and his suspicion that Nanak had made a mess of the finances handled by him. Jai Ram did not dare to say anything to Nanak, but he became extremely nervous and told his wife Bibi Nanaki that Nanak will have to clear himself of the serious charge of over-spending on charity by getting his accounts checked. Bibi Nanaki had unbounded faith in the veracity of her brother. She asked Jai Ram to dispel all suspicion, and avoid any unpleasantness that might be caused to Nanak. She even tried to persuade him to go to the Nawab and tell him that he stood surety for any loss to the state. Jai Ram, however expressed his helplessness. The picture of the sorry state of affairs that had been given to the Nawab by the Diwan was supported by some facts and figures of his informers, and as such there was no way out except to get the accounts checked. Bibi Nanaki at once sent her maid-servant Tulsān to request Nanak to come as soon as he could.

Baba Nanak had just come from the *modikhana* when Tulsān arrived with Bibi Nanaki's message.

For the first time in the last two years Bibi Nanaki had sent this sort of urgent message. He suspected something was wrong somewhere. He took some sugar-cakes with him, as a Punjabi brother never goes to his sister's house without some gifts, and soon arrived at Jai Ram's house. Finding both his brother-in-law and sister upset he said, "So there is some trouble. Is there any report against me?" Jai Ram apologetically explained everything. "Let us go to the Diwan first," said Nanak.

Both Nanak and Jai Ram entered the Diwan's house by the back door. As they passed by the kitchen Baba Nanak's robe touched the body of the Brahmin guru of Dev Dutt, who was cooking his food. He was seriously upset because he felt that this touch of a non-Brahmin outsider had polluted his food. The Diwan and his Brahmin guru also started shouting at Baba Nanak. The Master kept quiet for some time and then sternly gave a reply which is recorded by him in the following historical verses :

*You wear the loin cloth,
And put on sacrificial-marks and wear rosary,
And yet for your living you depend on Muslims
Whom you call Malechas : the evil-minded heretics.
To please the Muslim rulers you recite the Koran
At home you secretly worship in the Hindu way;
You have adopted alien customs and manners of the Turks;
Give up this hypocrisy.*

Addressing the Diwan's Brahmin guru he said :

*You Brahmins come to the house of such Hindus,
And recite the scriptures and blow the conch,
Then join in their revelry.
You trade in sin with the wealth of falsehood.*

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*You earn your living by practising guile.
Modesty and righteousness are miles away from thee.
Sayeth Nanak : Thou art wallowing in sin and falsehood.
On thy forehead you put on frontal marks, O Brahmin,
And wear loin cloth, tucked up behind;
In your hand you carry the dagger of exploitation
In reality you are a butcher, who bleeds society.*

Then turning to Diwan Dev Dutt, he said :

*You Hindus wear blue dress,
To become acceptable to the Muslim rulers;
You depend on the Muslims for your living
Yet you call them malechas : evil-minded heretics.
You secretly worship your deity.
You eat secretly goat's flesh
Cut ceremoniously in the Muslim way;
Yet you permit not any low-caste Hindu
To step into your cooking square,
Lest your food is polluted.
There, in the cooking square,
The evil-minded hypocrite sits,
Proclaiming : "Touch me not, touch me not
You will pollute my food by your touch."
Polluted are the bodies and souls of such Hindus
With deadliest sins;
They rinse their mouths, pretending to be clean and pure,
But full of impurities are their minds and souls.*

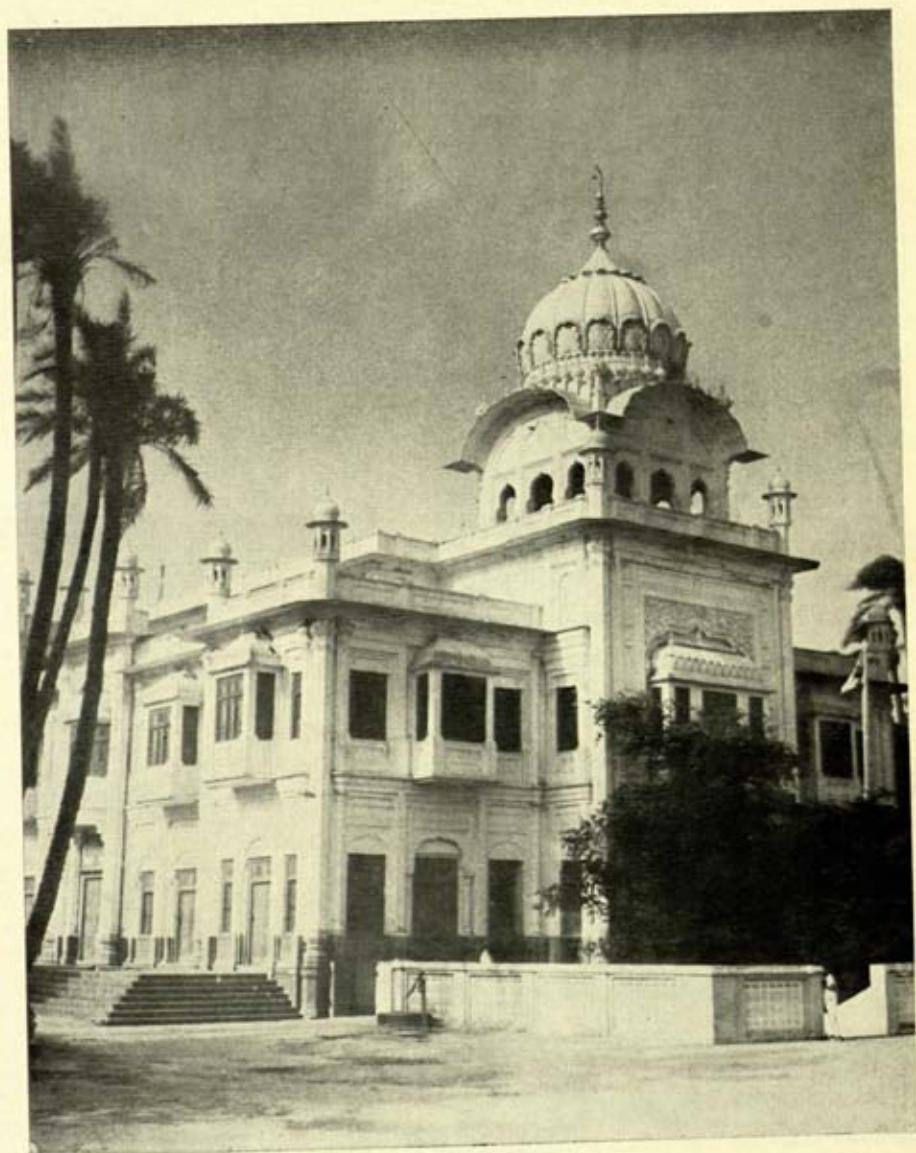
Guru Nanak *Āsā-ki-Vār*. p. 470

Baba Nanak, who had reached a spiritual plane far above petty rote, law, or doctrine, exposed the false vanity, and power of Diwan Dev Dutt and his Brahmin guru indicating that he refused to be cowed down by threats and false accusations, and be dragged on the path of intrigue and maladjustment.

"Let us go to the Nawab," said Nanak to the Diwan "you will have to declare the charges against me and I will answer them." Diwan Dev Dutt was terribly shaken by the Master's challenge, and the moral force in his admonishing voice. He apologetically said: "O it was only about some suspected over-expenditure on charity."

All three of them came to Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi. "I have come to clear my accounts," said Nanak, "please appoint someone who can start doing so immediately. You promised not to succumb to whispering campaigns against me, but now that your suspicion has been aroused, I must clear myself." Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi appointed Yadav Rai (Jado Rae), to audit all the accounts of the last two years and report if there was any error²⁹."

With a number of assistants, Yadav Rai immediately started checking all the accounts and worked round the clock. He severely questioned Nanak on many points. It took him, five days and five nights to complete his audit report³⁰. Then the granary and other stores were checked. The money in the cash box was found in excess. Different *Janam Sākhīs* give different figures about the excess of money found there. Yadav Rai gave one copy of his findings to Nanak and the other to the Diwan to be handed over to the Nawab. Nanak took the Diwan along with his brother-in-law to the *modikhana* and handed over to him the complete charge of his office saying, that he would not work for the Nawab any more. So saying, he went home. Jai Ram and the Diwan begged him not to resign his post, but the Master did not agree saying, "I cannot work where there is so much jealousy and suspicion. The Nawab



The Shrine at Sultanpur

facing p. 64



Shrine at Sultanpur where Guru Nanak is said to have been kept under house arrest while accounts were being checked.

has never suspected corrupt officials, but he questioned my integrity because there was a whispering campaign against me.”³¹

When the audit report of Yadav Rai was presented to the Nawab, Daulat Khan Lodhi, he was surprised to find that there was some money in excess. He at once sent for his treasurer, Bhavani Das, and asked him to pay the excess amount to Nanak immediately, and to give Rs. 3,000 more as reward for his honesty and efficiency in work.”³² Bhavani Das accepting the order said that the money would be paid to Baba Nanak early next morning. Jai Ram then informed the Nawab that Nanak had made up his mind to give up his post, because corrupt people had become his enemies and lodged all kinds of false reports.³³ The Nawab then requested Jai Ram to extend his apologies to Nanak for listening to the reports of his enemies. He promised never to do so again. He even offered the Diwanship (Prime Ministership) of his state.

Early the next morning Nanak went to take his bath in the river. He was accompanied by a servant who carried his things for bathing. After brushing his teeth, Nanak planted a sapling at the place where he generally sat for meditation, early in the morning.³⁴ He then took off his clothes, and tying his hair into a tress-knot³⁵ and with a loin cloth on, he dived into the river. The servant waited for some time but he could not see the Master. An hour passed, still he could see no sign of the Master. He moved up and down the river thinking that the Master might have swum down or up the river. Three hours passed and it was dawn, still there was no sign of the Master anywhere. He was seriously upset. He intensi-

fied his search with the help of the people who had come to take their bath in the river and after a search of another three hours no trace of Nanak was to be found anywhere.³⁶

The same morning, employees of the *modikhana* reported to the Diwan that Baba Nanak had not attended his office. The Diwan reported the matter to Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi. Daulat Khan Lodhi blamed himself for hurting the sensitive mind of Nanak. He decided to go to Nanak's house personally and seek the Master's forgiveness. The Diwan advised him not to do so, as it was below his dignity to go to a Minister's house, more so, for an apology. But Daulat Khan Lodhi said : "I broke my promise to him. I am the cause of injury to his prestige. I should not have listened to scandal-mongers. I will go to his house to beg forgiveness. Nanak is not an ordinary man. He has some miraculous powers and gifts which he keeps concealed. I will offer him the highest office in my state and will assure him that I will never listen to a single word against him."⁷³

But when he reached Baba Nanak's house he was not to be found there.³⁸ Just then, Nanak's servant, who had accompanied him to the river bank arrived weeping and wailing : "Baba Nanak is lost, Baba Nanak is lost. He entered the river and never came out." Jai Ram was immediately informed. Daulat Khan Lodhi personally went to the spot where Nanak had dived into the river. He ordered the best divers of the state to search the river and try to find the body of Nanak. Fishermen threw the largest nets (*mahājāl*) which covered the whole span of the river. For a distance of four miles the river was searched but no trace of Nanak was found.

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In the evening all hopes of finding his body were given up.

"Accept this as the Will of God," said Daulat Khan to Jai Ram "Never in my life will I see so honest and godly a man. Never had my State prospered so much as it did for the two years he was with us." He then offered the *māṭmi khilat* to Jai Ram.³⁹ Mehta Kalu Chand and Mull Chand, Baba Nanak's father-in-law, were immediately informed. Everyone gave up Nanak as dead, but only Bibi Nanaki had unshakable faith that her brother had disappeared under some unusual circumstances, and would come back. She prayed for his return, and assured everyone that he was not dead, though no one believed her except Jai Ram, and the closest disciples of Nanak.

On the day Nanak resigned from the service of Daulat Khan Lodi, he decided to serve humanity through the service of God, and never again through the service of earthly rulers. The *Janam Sakhīs* say: "The same evening he met a wandering saint wearing the dress of Muslim *derwish*. He said to Nanak, "Give up the service of these fickle-minded rulers, and serve only the One Supreme Sovereign. It is for His service you are born, and it is for His service you are destined to work."⁴⁰ It is said Nanak treated this Muslim saint with the utmost respect, and after talking to Nanak for a short while, he went away for ever.

What happened to Nanak's body after he dived into the river, has ever remained an unsolved mystery. It is quite possible that he crossed the river, and sat in some forest-cave which was not easily accessible to the people. No one looked for him anywhere

except in the river. This theory is also possible from the fact that after he came out of the river, for nearly a year or two he stayed mostly in thick forests.

But the near-contemporary apostle, Bhai Gurdas, Bhai Nand Lal Goya, and the writers of the *Janam Sākhīs* are almost unanimous about what happened to the mind and soul of Baba Nanak during this period. In the immeasurable space of existence Baba Nanak came face to face with the Supreme Being, the Embodiment of eternal Truth, and received from Him the gift of the Word Divine, and a true vision of life's purpose. Nanak met his great spiritual Enlightener (*Gurū*), the only true Guru and Teacher he acknowledged in life, and attained *Nirvāna*, the supreme realisation of Truth. Having attained perfect spiritual union with his eternal Guru, he was given by Him a great assignment. This historical communion and dialogue of Nanak with God is recorded by Bhai Nand Lal Goya, the Poet Laureate of Guru Govind Singh as follows :

*Thus spake God unto Guru Nanak:
Thou, My Son, art the true Guru (Enlightener),
Go, reveal My Light to the world.
Guru Nanak meekly replied:
I am Thy slave, Thy humblest servant Lord,
I am the dust of Thy creatures.
God repeated His blessings:
"Thou art the Guru (Enlightener) of all the worlds,
I will abide in thee in full radiant glory,
My Spirit is in thy soul and being,
My Will is thy will,
My Light is thy wisdom;
Thou knowest My Law and Justice.
Go, reveal the real Path to humanity.*

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*Be the singer of My love and power;
I will be thy Helper in thy mission,
I will be thy Friend and Companion ever.
He who understands thy greatness, My Son,
And learns from thee My glory and wisdom
I will reveal Myself to him.
This is My abiding promise to thee.
Carry all over the world,
The torch of My Light and Truth.
Be a World-Teacher, My Son;
Tell misguided humanity,
Without My Light and Power,
The whole world is not worth a grain.
By My Will, I give Light and Wisdom to men,
By My Will, I leave them in darkness;
Without true knowledge of My existence,
Humanity wanders in darkness.
Religious leaders and pundits
Have become hypocrites and magicians.
They may, with limited powers—My gifts,
Even kill the living,
And bring the dead to life;
They may make fire dance on water;
These are all magical tricks,
And fruitless feats of occult powers.
Show mankind the Way to Me; the Ultimate Reality.
Teach the right meditation of Truth;
Prevent them from going on the wrong path.
Guide them to My Door, My Son;
Dispel from their minds
All thoughts of any other.
Prevent mankind from falling into the fires of hell,
Where they suffer for their sins in bondage;
The world is sunk in sin and wickedness,
Kings have become tyrants and rule through terror;
Without knowledge of Me, the Truth,*

People are ignorant of higher joys and love;
 Men all over the world are confused and perplexed.
 Forgetting Me, the Creator,
 People seek happiness in the creation;
 Their faith in spiritual life is shaken,
 Because of selfishness and hypocrisy,
 Of the priests and pundits.
 Go, point out the right Path to men;
 Tell them not to go astray,
 And seek light where there is none.
 Teach them to contemplate Me, the Eternal Light.
 I will help all true seekers in their aspirations;
 I will bless all true seekers with Light and Wisdom.
 Guru Nanak humbly replied:
 Am I, O Lord, equal to this great mission?
 I am but Thy humble creature, O Infinite One.
 Could I carry such Light and Inspiration
 As to change the outlook of the whole world?
 Great is Thy mission, Lord, so humble am I;
 I will not forget Thy Word even for a moment.
 Be thou my Guide and my Voice, Lord;
 Be thou my Power and Light, O Eternal Father.

Bhai Nand Lal : *Ganjñāmā*

The *Janam Sākhīs* have recorded this historic dialogue in almost identical words: "Nanak, he whom thou favour, shall be blessed by Me; he who receives thy grace shall receive grace from Me. My Name is the Supreme Being; your name shall be the *Gurū-Spirit* of My Own Being." Nanak bowed before the Lord. He bestowed on him the robe of honour of His grace and vision. "Thou art the liberated and enlightened one. Whoever follows in thy footsteps shall be liberated and enlightened."⁴¹ Baba Nanak became the Enlightener (*Gurū*) of humanity. To

enlighten the world with the truth of ultimate Reality, became his mission in life. God, the Guru of Nanak, made him the Guru of humanity. From this day onwards he came to be known as *Guru Nanak*.

On the third day, when not the slightest hope of finding the body of Guru Nanak was left, from the same spot on the river, came out of its waters Guru Nanak bathed in the glory of perfect illumination. With his flowing beard, tress-knot on his head, and loin cloth (or perhaps underwear), he came out, inflamed with a new inspiration and a new vision. People who saw him were stunned to see a dead man come to life. Some thought he could not be the real Nanak; it must be his ghost. The news that Nanak had come out of the river and talked in a strange manner spread throughout Sultanpur like wild fire. Happiest of all were his brother-in-law Jai Ram, his sister Nanaki, and his disciples Mardana, Bala and others.⁴²

Guru Nanak went to his house. His wife, Mata Sulakhani, and children received him with joy and tears. Nanak distributed all his household possessions and personal belongings to the poor, the *fakirs* and the mendicants. With the exception of some of his personal belongings of his wife, he gave away everything to the poor. People thought he had gone mad. "There is no Hindu and no Muslim," he said. Saints and seers, *yogis*, and *sadhus* gathered around him and started asking him all kinds of questions.

When Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi came to know about the mad ways and strange utterances of Guru Nanak he sent a messenger requesting the Master to meet him.⁴⁴ "Go and tell Nawab Daulat Khan" said Guru Nanak, "that I am no longer his servant, and

he is not my Master who can command me to present myself at his court." After some time the messenger again came and said, "Noble Nanak, Nawab Daulat Khan does not command ye to come. He deems himself as your servant, and begs you to come in the name of *Allah*. In the name of *Allah* he appeals to you to honour him with a visit." Guru Nanak smiled, and said, "Now my God, my Lord, commands me to go and meet the Nawab, so I must go."⁴⁴

Daulat Khan Lodhi was very happy to meet Nanak. He was so impressed by the glowing personality of Nanak, that he surprised everyone by seating him by his side. He asked him to accept the Diwanship (the Prime Ministership) of the state. Guru Nanak refused it saying, "I have accepted the service of God and God alone will I serve. I will not serve any man or earthly ruler all my life."⁴⁵

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *tāñ istri kehyā ke je tusī ethe rehñde se tāñ sādē bhāne rāj sī sāre jagat dā, ar je tusī calde ho tāñ mainū vī lai calo;* "Bābe Nānak kī istrī pairī padī, Guru Bābe "Kehyā, paramesvar arādhnā, ciñta nā karnī, asīñ jhab hī avāñge.

J.Mb. p. 73.

tāñ bacan hoyā asīñ jhadbe avāñge, te terā rāj dino din vaddhā javegā, khātar jamā rakh.

J.M.S. (MSS; LI) p. 116.

2. *jī jāñ tūñ ehthai seh tāñ hauñ jandī je dīn dunyā dī pātshāī mainū hī hai; hun mere bhāne sañsār ujād hai, mera sañsār kit kam bai, tud bin merā koī, nahī tab itne kehñe sioñ Gurū Bābā jī meharvān hoyā*

J.Mb. p. 74

3. *jāh ghumīe, dīn dūnī dī pātshāhī tud no hoī, tab pher Mātājī kehīyā; jī mai dīn ate duniyā kyā karne haiñ, mere kam tuhī*

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- hai, na hauñ dīn dī bhukhī hañ na duniyā dī bhukhī hañ;
mai tere darsāñ dī bhukhī hañ; mainū jī tū nāl lai cal;....
Jeh tū mainū sadāe, par tū parmeswar kā vacan deh, jo
bharosā hovai tere vacan kar kar; tab Gurū Bābe, Nānak
kehyā , jah Mūlo dhīye, merā vacan hai tainū sadāe leigā,
kai mainū āvañgā.” J.Mb. p. 74
4. Gurū Baba Nanakji ghoḍe asvār, hoā Sultānpur ko cale. *ibid.*
Gurū Nānak Talwañdīoñ pañjeñ din Sultanpur jāe vaḍe.
J.Mb: p. 74 J.M.S.(MSS).
5. ghāl khāe kich hathoñ de, Nānak rāh pachāne soe. *Adi
Granth: Rāg Sarañg* p. 1245;
6. ek kotlī pāk Irāqī ghoḍa thā, Guru Babe Nanakji kā, oh
svār pehrāe kar peś kasī ko kīā. J.Mb. p. 75.
7. Ai Jai Ram, iñ mard nām cīst; “Khānji slāmat, Nanak ast
iñ mard nām.”
8. kahe Jai Ram, iñ mard Khudāe sūrat nazar avtā, nek khudāe
kā hai jaisā tū kehtā thā tis se bhī balke jāste hai. *ibid.*
9. ākhyās Nawāb salāmat merā ik sālā pichōñ āyā hai; bahut
khūb paḍyā hai. P. J. (MSS) p:22
Colebrooke's MSS does not contain the above line
10. mardānā ādmi hai, khūb laik hai, muhīm sar karnhāra hai.
ibid.
11. tab sunehrī siropāo āyā, Daulat Khān anāe kar pehnāyā...
Daulat Khan siropao ghoḍa ditā.... J.Mb. p. 23
12. mere ghar dā kam isnū sauñpo; Bābe ākhyā mai hor kam
nahī laiñdā, jehḍa Jai Ram Modī Khānā leyā hai mai os vic
kam karañgā. J.M.S. (MSS) LI p. 175
13. Bābe ākhyā asīñ tusādā kam nahī uṭhavte, kyoñ jo tusi
rāje lok ho, ar vicar nahī karde or lokan dīāñ cugliañ,
bahut sunde ho tāñ Khan ākhyā he Nanak asīñ tere ute
cugliañ nahī sunā ge. *ibid.*
14. The terms, *diwan*, *bakshi* and *modi* indicated ministerial
offices and many historians have made a serious mistake
by translating the term *modi* as the store-keeper. The
office of the *modi* was equivalent to the present day “Food

GURU NANAK : FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

Minister" who was also in charge of charitable institutions. jitnī merī eh sarkār hai titnī sabh Nānak ke havāle karo; jitnī sarkār hai titne kā kharc sabh kā Nanak ke hath bic karo. J.Mb. p. 75

15. Dev Dutt, Khan dā Diwān haisī ate Brahmin dā sikh haisī, so us nū sad ākhyā, mere ghar dā sārā kam es nū saurp deho. J.M.S. (MSS, LI), p. 117.

16. Bala Sandhu akhyā, "Nanakji tusān tā hazār rupyā rok litā ate Modikhānā litā, tū asānū vidā de. J.B. (MSS)

17. J.Mb. p 76

18. Jab Bābe pāu dā vatā diṭha tān usde age mathā tekyā, dhan eh vatā hai jin āp nu ghat sadāyā.

Mani Singh : *Sikhañ dī Bhagatmāl.* p. 41

19. age modī the, se dehnimī kat laiñde; Guru Babe Nanak ji kisī kī ḍamdi nā rakhai. J.Mb., p. 76

20. ik din Mardānā rabābī Talwandīoñ āe, Gurujī nū milyā, sabh sañdese Talwandi de Babe nū dties. J.B. (LI) p. 85

21. sabh jitnā laṣkar lok sagird pesā Dualat Khan kā thā sabh duāe den : yā Khudāe Nānakji kā bhalā hoe, tab Guru Nānak sabh laṣkar ke lok sagird pese kī mautād baḍhi, bañdh kar mautād, ji intnā tum khah itna ghar bhejo; sabh koi brāfat rotī khāe;...na sikdar koi jhagddā, na bañdikhāne mildā, na koḍanidā. J.Mb. p. 76

22. Ar jo kich alufā Guru Nanak ko mile, khāvai so khāvai, avar parmeswar ke arth devai; te rātī nitapratī kīrtan hovai.

P.J. II (MSS) p. 23

tab har din je sarkār kā kharā hoe se likhyā jāe, ar je lekhai khare se rāt baiṭhā jode; tab Gurū Babā Nānak baiṭhā thā; jioñ baiṭhā joḍtā thā, tioñ rāt kai sameo; ar carāgh jalde haiñ, ar Guru Baba Nanak ji baiṭhā lekha joḍda hai, tioñ Guru Babe Nanak ji kā man birakt hoe gayā, oh kāgad hathoñ saṭ behyos. J.Mb. p 80

23. ar je din likhe kharc so rāt baiṭhā jode; tab rasoīyā kehya; Baba Nanakji rasoī baḍī ber kī hoī paḍī hai, tūn uṭh kapde utāro te rasoī leh; tab Gurū Babe kehya; parsād to jeviegā par kīrtan nahi kitā...Baba Nanak pārsad leyā, pārsad le

SERVICE OF MAN AND THE SERVICE OF GOD

kar chiṅg cūlī kar bastar lai karūpar jahāñ simrin kartā
thā tahā jāe baiṭhā, lagā simrin karan. J.Mb. p. 86

24. *ibid.*

25. J.B. I (L) ; J.B. II (MSS) p. 116

26. All versions of Bhai Bala's *Janam Sākhī* give this story with slight variations. Some say that the *rabāb* was given at the marriage of Baba Nanak. Bhai Vir Singh is of the opinion that the *rabāb* we find nowadays is different from the one used by Mardana. Mardana's *rabāb* described in *Kānūne Iṣrat*, is found in the Rampur State.

27. tāñ Diwān nū khabar hoī; so Diwān ne tolan vālyan nū
bulā ke puchiā jo kharayat kitnī uṭhdi hai, ate Khān da
kitnā kharc uṭhda hai; J.M.S. (MSS, LI) p. 11

28. Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* and *Purātan Janam Sākhīs* are silent about accounts being checked, but all other *Janam Sākhīs* are unanimous in their statements. The only difference is that some give the amount spent on charity as 300 others 500 rupees.

29. J.M.S. p. 118.

This incident is recorded exactly as stated above in Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sākhī* which is the only record which gives the name of the Diwan. Other *Janam Sākhīs* skip over it though they indicate that the trouble arose because of the jealousy of the Diwan. Meharban's. *Janamsākhī* and the *Purātan Janam Sākhī* completely ignore the incident of checking the accounts, though what followed is described as a consequence of this suspicion and is correctly reported by them.

30. The name of the man who was appointed to check the accounts is given in Bala's *Janam Sākhī* MSS copy which I acquired from Dacca and Litho copy I. It differs from other *Janamsākhīs* of Bala only in a few points. There are some facts given only by this *Janam Sākhī*. It is not very old, though the copyist claims he copied it from a very old MSS.

pañj rātāñ te pañj din hisāb hoyā, Jādo navisandene bahut
udāvniā pāyian.

J.B. (Dacca MSS) P42; J.B. (Litho) I p. 84

31. According to local tradition Baba Nanak was kept under house arrest during the five days when the accounts were checked. A room is generally shown at Sultanpur where he was detained. But no *Janam Sākhī* or any other historical record mentions it. Bālā's *Janam Sākhī* says that the checking took place twice. After the first checking the Master continued to work on being pressed by Jai Ram, but after the second checking he resigned.
32. Nawab kehya, Bhavānī Dās khazāncī ko bulāo; Bhavani Das Khazāncī āyā; Nawab kehya Bhavani Dās jo kich Nānak ke paise āvte hai so adā kar abhī; aur tīn hazār rupeyā aur de; Bhavani Das kehya bahut khūb Nawab salāmat.
J.B. IV Dacca MSS p. 42.
33. Jai Ram arj kītī, Nawab Salamat, log duḡmanī bahut karde haiñ. *ibid.*
34. Mahārāj ne dtan karke gaḍ diti sī oh harī hoī, sañt ghāt tīs kā nām hai
J.B. (L) I p. 90
35. jioñ kapḍe utār nafar ko pakḍāe, jūḍā kar kar jioñ daryāv vic tubkī māri pher nā niklyā. J.Mb. p 87.
36. All *Janam Sākhīs* are unanimous about the details of the incident.
37. phir Khān nū khabar hoī, oh dūje din Diwān nū nāl lai ke caḍh ke Bābe de dere āyā; eta Baba jhalañge hī nāl tehlīe nū lai ke veñ te isnān karn vaḍya sī.
J.M.S. (MSS)LI p. 128
38. *ibid.*
39. cār pehar din Daulat Khān dhūñd rehyā, sañjh ko ghar āyā, āe kar Jai Ram ko siropāo pehrāyā; Jai Ram taslīm karī.
J.Mb. p. 87
40. J. B. (L) I and other MSS copies. The story in the *Janam Sākhī* calls him a messenger from God (*Gobind-lok*) in the dress of Muslim fakir. Jad Srī Chand sādhe trai variāñ dā hoyā tā ik din ik gobiñd lok āe milyā, torkijāme vic, Babe jī usdā vadā ādar kitā baiṭhāyā; tā us gobiñd lok ne ākhyā ikañt mai, tum Nānak nirañkāri ho, nirañkāri kā nām prasidh karo ke *modikhānā* uṭhavte raho ge, itnā keh kar oh caltā rihā.
JB (L) I p. 89.

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41. P. J. I & II J.M.b. p. 89.
42. J. B. (L), J.M.S. p. 131.
43. tab Gurū Bābe jī derā lutāedūr kiā; Daulat Khān ko khabar
hoi jo Nānak derā lutāe kar jāe bairān vic baiṭhā hai.
J.Mb. p. 90.
44. Khān de ādmī Bābe nū sadan āgae; tañ Bābe ne ākhyā kī
tere Khān dī te tere qazi dī kī parwāh paī hai, tañ ādmī pher
āe Khān nū sabh sunāyā, tañ Khān ākhyā : “ki tusiñ ab
jāe ke kaho jo Khudāe de vāste sānū didār devo, tañ Bābā
āyā.”
J.M.S. (MSS), LI, p. 131
45. Ham Nawāb ke naukar nahī ; jab ham naukār the to gilā
guzāri sunte the; ab ham sace sahib ke naukar hūe haiñ.
P.J. (MSS I & II) p. 21. *All Janam Sākhīs of Bālā.*

CHAPTER 7

THE NEW DISPENSATION

*In this dark age, Guru Nanak revealed¹
God the Supreme Being is one and no other;
He initiated his disciples with charnamrit:
Water sanctified by the touch of his lotus feet,
And gave a new code of conduct,
As the high Way of spiritual life (rahirās)².
Thus, Guru Nanak gave to dharma, its lost legs;
He blended four castes and creeds into one: the Sikhs.
He gave the lowliest, social equality with kings.
He taught humility to all the world.*

Bhai Gurdas Vār I, 24

 DAULAT KHAN LODHI was deeply impressed by the fearlessness, and fiery mystic fervour of Guru Nanak. The qazi resented Guru Nanak being seated by the side of the Governor, more so when he was uttering such blasphemous words: "There is no Hindu and there is no Muslim." Noticing the uneasiness of the qazi, Daulat Khan asked him to question Guru Nanak on some theological point. The qazi then asked Guru Nanak to explain what he meant by saying "There is no Hindu and no Musalman," when the whole population was either Hindu or Muslim. Am I, the qazi, not a Musalman"? he asked.

"No man," said Guru Nanak "can claim to be a Muslim if he does not live up to the high and sublime ideals of Islam." How can anyone who does not live like a sincere and true Muslim ever claim

to be a Muslim?" "And what, may I know," asked the *qazi* "is the code of conduct for a true Muslim?"³ The reply of Guru Nanak is recorded in the following historic verses:

*Difficult it is to claim to be a Muslim,
To do so one must love and act like a true Muslim:
First, he must be devoted to faith in God and the prophet
And remove all pride and vanity of wealth
Through charity, as the file removes the rust.
After becoming a Muslim, one should abide by Islam,
And dispel all delusion about life and death.
He should gracefully accept the Will of God,
And through utter dedication have faith in the Creator;
If then he shows compassion to all creatures
He would be worthy of being called a Muslim.
Let compassion be thy mosque,
Let faith be thy prayer carpet;
Let just and lawful earning be, knowledge of Koran;
Let modesty be thy rules of observance
Let piety be the fasts thou keepest;
In such wise strive to be a Muslim.
Let right conduct symbolise the Ka'aba
Let eternal Truth be the spirit of the prophet;
Let good deeds adorn thy prayers,
And let submission to God's Will be thy rosary⁴.*

Guru Nanak: *Rāg Mājh*. p. 141

The *qazi* was silent, and speechless. The moral fervour of Guru Nanak's words projected timeless universal truths, with moving intensity. His thoughts blazed forth from his intimate experience of truth and knowledge of the best that was in the Semitic and Vedic faiths. Like Beethoven's deathless music, of which the composer said, "From the heart it has

sprung, to the heart it shall penetrate," the flaming and musical words of Guru Nanak reached the deepest recesses of emotional and spiritual awareness of his hearers. Neither the learned Nawab, nor the *qazi*, nor the *mullās* of the court, questioned Guru Nanak's deeper knowledge of Islam, nor could they find fault with his conception of a true Muslim. "The whole country is swarming with Hindus," said the *qazi*, "and yet you say there are no Hindus." "Grieved by the practice of idolatry, primitive practices of worship, hypocrisy, slavish mentality of the Hindus, Guru Nanak commented :

*The Hindus are fundamentally in error;
Having missed the right path, they wander in darkness;
Narada led them to the worship of idols and images,
Thus, they have become spiritually blind and deaf,
In blind idolatrous worship, they live in utter darkness;
These uncultured fools worship stone-gods.
The stone-god easily sinks in a stream,
How can it help you cross the Ocean of life.⁵*

Guru Nanak : *Vār Bihāgḍā*. p. 556

Heartened to learn that Guru Nanak was so much against the idolatrous practices of the Hindus the *qazi* asked : "Are you a Hindu or a Muslim?"⁶ Guru Nanak replied : "Both the Hindus and Muslims are made of the same physical element. So physically I am identical with both Hindus and Muslims. I do not differ from either of them. I worship the same God whom Hindus and Muslims consider to be different, and whom they have given different names. I have within me the blazing Light of God which is neither Hindu nor Muslim. I am a brother of all lovers of God. All those who live in His service are my kith

and kin. They are my brothers in faith, be they Hindus or Muslims. But to be frank, at present some call me a ghost, others think I am possessed; some pity me as a sad lonely man, and think I am mad. I am indeed mad, but I am mad after my Beloved Lord.”⁷

It was now time to recite the Friday *namaz* and the Nawab and his Muslim countries left for the mosque. The *qazi* invited Guru Nanak to join them since he deemed Hindus and Muslims as equal. Guru Nanak readily agreed and joined them in the prayer which was led by the *qazi*.

The very fact that Guru Nanak had gone to the mosque to pray with the Muslims in the truly Islamic manner surprised and shocked his brother-in-law Jai Ram. He ran to Bibi Nanaki and broke to her the shocking news, that Guru Nanak had almost become a Muslim, as he had joined the Nawab and others in their prayers in the mosque. Bibi Nanaki laughed heartily and asked Jai Ram not to worry about it.⁸ “My borther,” said Bibi Nanaki, “is a prophet. To him a mosque and a *mandir* are the same. He would not become a Muslim by praying in the mosque, nor would he become a Hindu by praying in a *mandir*. For him all prayer, all congregational meditations are *Sat Sañg*: communion with truth. He would gladly go to places and persons where he can have spiritual communion with truth. He has gone to the mosque for such a communion with Truth. If he finds it there, he will devoutly pray. If he does not, he will come out, Nanak worships God and the Almighty is on his side and bestows His grace on him.”⁹

Guru Nanak had accompanied Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi and the *qazi* to Friday prayers. Along with them, he devoutly performed ablution and joined them in the prayers which were led by the

qazi. Khushwaqt Rai in his "*Tawarikh-i-Sikhañ*" says "With great pressure the Muslims asked him whether he was a Muslim or a Hindu," "None of the two" replied Nanak, "I am a slave of the Lord and all are my creeds." The Muslims argued that if all religions were the same to him, he should recite the *namaz* (Muslim prayer) with them. Nanak agreed and they took him to the mosque. Nawab Daulat Khan was also there. Nanak did not salute anyone—neither the Nawab nor the *Qazi*. This the Nawab did not like, and he asked him why he had not observed the custom of saluting. "The head of the desireless is held high," said Nanak. With all their zeal, the Muslims went for the prayer. Nanak also came and stood with them. While the Muslims regularly sat for the prayer, stood up and prostrated. Nanak did not bow down. After the prayer the Muslims became furious with Nanak enquiring why he had not offered the prayer."

Addressing the *Qazi*, Guru Nanak said, "Your prayer will not be accepted." "And why, may I ask, will my prayers not be accepted by God?" asked the *qazi*;¹⁰ "Is there anything wrong with our *namaz* (prayer)?" "No," answered Nanak. "nothing is wrong with the *namaz*. If it had been sincerely recited in the mental presence of God it would surely have been accepted by *Allah*. While your lips were uttering the prayer, your mind was thinking of your mare, which had just foaled, and you feared lest the foal might fall into the well, which is in your courtyard. How can your prayer be accepted by *Allah*?" The *Qazi* was dumbfounded. He admitted that Guru Nanak was telling the truth. But he asked: "Was not the Nawab praying sincerely?" "The Nawab," said Guru Nanak, "was thinking of his horses which his agents were buying in Kandhar." Daulat Khan Lodhi was

taken aback. "Cursed be the day and my fate when through my folly, such a noble *wazir* (minister) like Guru Nanak became a *fakir*," said the Nawab.¹³ He fell at Guru Nanak's feet and said, "Blessed I am that I have met so great a prophet of God. Assure me, O Nanak, that by your mercy and compassion all my sins will be forgiven in the court of God." "May God shower His grace on thee, Daulat Khan Lodhi. In life and death I shall be a witness of your noble heart and I shall stand by you as your Protector in all your ordeals in this and the other world,"¹⁴ said Guru Nanak. "Most revered Master," said Daulat Khan Lodhi, "all my kingdom, my wealth and my army are yours. Please accept them and treat me as your humble servant." Pleased with the spirit of self-dedication of Daulat Khan Lodhi, Guru Nanak said: "God bless thee, Nawab Daulat Khan.¹⁵ You, as my disciple will keep this kingdom, wealth, and army and rule nobly over the people of Punjab. I am renouncing everything. I am leaving this place soon."¹⁶

Like many mystic scholars and Muslims of his time, Daulat Khan believed in a mysterious personage of near-eastern folklore—a sort of scholar-gypsy called Khizr, who had discovered the Elixir of life, and who appeared from time to time to ordinary mortals. The persian poet Hafiz is said to have miraculously received the gift of poetry from Khizr. Daulat Khan Lodhi asked Guru Nanak if he could, through his blessings, see Khizr. Guru Nanak assured him that he would do so soon. The *Janam Sākhī*s say that the same night the Nawab saw Khizr in a dream vision, and told him that by the command of Guru Nanak he would always be at the service of Daulat Khan.

Guru Nanak then went home and met Bibi Nanaki. No one understood Guru Nanak so well as she did. To her, the will of her brother was the Will of God. He was an embodiment of truth. As such she not only loved him but revered him as a prophet. Guru Nanak shared all his spiritual experiences and divine knowledge with her. Nothing of his inner life was a secret from her.

From this day onward Guru Nanak began to spend most of his time in the forests, in seclusion. He sought solitude and elected silence. He would not come to Sultanpur for days at a stretch. In the forest he would sleep in the open, take whatever fruit or leaves nature afforded, and spend most of his time contemplating his great vision and cherishing the divine gifts and commands he had received from God. Mardana and a few close disciples came to him and sat near him. It was during this period of seclusion and periodic reappearance into the city, he composed his great Meditations: the *Japji*, the *Sodar* and the *Sohila*. It was during this period of silence and prophetic utterance he, as the Guru, introduced the new baptism through water, touched by his lotus feet and sanctified by the prayers he had composed. The baptism came to be known as the *Charan-pahul*, and it remained the sole medium of initiation till it was replaced by *Khañde dī pahul* by Guru Gobind Singh. The details of both ceremonies were the same. The ethical code of the disciples was the same. Every Sikh was supposed to recite three prayers composed by Guru Nanak which the devout began to memorise and copy. These three prayers were: *Japji*, *Sodar*, *Sohila-Arti*. Tradition has it that Bibi Nanaki was the first to be initiated according to the New Dispensation. Then Guru Nanak initiated some of his

closest disciples. History records that when Mardana the bard was baptised, he received the following instruction: Do these three things (1) Keep hair on your head; (2) Early at dawn contemplate the Divine Word and meditate on it by repeating it. (3) Serve all devotees of God and virtuous men irrespective of the caste and creed.²⁰

Guru Nanak then told Mardana that he intended to go on a long missionary tour. He would like him to accompany him. Mardana readily agreed but before he left home he wanted to perform his daughter's marriage. At this time there had come to stay with Guru Nanak, the Chowdhary of Malesihan Village, named Bhagirath. He was a devout worshipper of Durga, but the goddess in his vision told him that if he wanted peace and enlightenment he must go to Guru Nanak. He met Guru Nanak and became his devout disciple. Guru Nanak asked Bhagirath to pay double the amount required by Mardana for his daughter's marriage. He asked him to personally go to Lahore and buy the best gifts for Mardana's daughter.

When Bhagirath went to the shop of a rich merchant named Mansukh at Lahore and placed order for all the things required, Mansukh asked him whose marriage was to be performed with such costly articles. When he informed him that Guru Nanak was arranging the marriage of the daughter of his bard, he was taken aback. "I want to meet your Guru," said Mansukh, and, if he is really so great as this noble act of charity indicates I will not charge a penny for all the articles, but will give something more for the bard's daughter's marriage. As soon as Mansukh met Guru Nanak he felt so spiritually exalted that he dedicated his

services to the Master. He did not charge any money for the articles he had given for the marriage of Mardana's daughter. Bhagirath gave a substantial amount of money for performing the marriage to Mardana. Mardana also received money and gifts from Bibi Nanaki, Mehta Kalu Chand and Rai Bular. His daughter was married with great pomp and show.

When Guru Nanak's father-in-law Mul Chand came to know that the Master had renounced the world, he came to Sultanpur with a Brahmin scholar named Sama²¹ who was the family guru and priest of Mul Chand. They came to know that Guru Nanak spent most of the time in uninhabited forests close by, and he came to the city only on some days²².

Pundit Sama met Guru Nanak. He had come to conquer the Master's mind with his intellectual powers but felt helpless when he met him. "Why have you renounced your family and household life, Nanak? Everyone is seriously upset about it. If you leave your wife and children their life will be ruined," said Pundit Sama. "Who told you," asked Guru Nanak, "that I have renounced my householder's life? I have not renounced my wife and children. I have not broken any contacts with my parents and relatives. I have only renounced *māyā*. I want to devote some years of my life exclusively to the service of humanity. I want to dispel the moral and spiritual darkness that prevails all over. Many householders go away from home to conquer lands and kingdoms. For years they may be away from home, yet they do not renounce the family life. Many traders go to far off countries and leave their family behind. They do not renounce their family

life. I have not become an ascetic and I have not renounced my family life. But the call has come for a greater cause of humanity, so I must go. My wife and children are amply provided for. Sister Nanaki and my father will look after them. When my work is over I will come back and settle down to the same life. My wife and children will live with me."

Sama was silent. He begged for spiritual instructions which the Master gave. Pundit Sama then advised Mulla Chauna not to interfere with Guru Nanak's mission. "Guru Nanak belongs to the whole of humanity"; he said, "He has a duty towards God and responsibility to save humanity. He has spent the best years of his youth with his family, and now the family must not be a hindrance to his service to mankind at large. No matter where Nanak goes, he will come back home. He loves his home. He loves his children. He loves his sister, mother and father. He loves Rai Bular and now he loves Daulat Khan Lodhi. He will come back to all of them. But now he has a mission and command of God to be fulfilled. Only once in many thousand years is such a one born who receives such an assignment and if even these rare souls do not serve humanity and sacrifice their narrow interest, humanity will go to hell."

Down to earth wordly minded Mul Chand could not understand all this. All that he was concerned was the domestic happiness of his daughter. Bibi Nanaki assured him that his daughter Sulakhani would receive every tender care from her, but he angrily decided to take Sulakhani and her younger son Lakhshmi Chand with him. Bibi Nanaki kept Sri Chand with her. The boy was deeply attached to

her. Some days later Mardana came to Sultanpur, after having performed the marriage of his daughter.

After Guru Nanak's transfiguration, it now became clear to all, that he had become supernally exalted with incomparable and perfect enlightenment, and he was determined to translate his new religious experiences and mystic illumination into far-reaching thoughts and actions. He was now ready to give to the world, new conceptions of synthetic faith based on realistically conceived social foundations and political consciousness. The New Dispensation was then known as "*Babe Nanak dī Sīkhi*"; the religious discipline of Baba Nanak. But Guru Nanak and his apostles called it by a number of names symbolising its purity, individuality, and distinctive spirituality, such as, *Gurmukh Mārag* (Path of the Enlightened); *Nirmal Mārag* (Path of the Pure); *Sach dā Mārag* (Path of Truth). Guru Nanak laid the foundation of his new Faith: (1) by channelising his spiritual experiences and imparting them through his own spiritual and ceremonial baptism known as *charan-pahul-amrit*. (2) by imparting to his disciples his own Divine Word, *guru-mantram*, (3) by giving his disciples new prayers, written by him such as *Japji*, *Rahirās*, *Sohilā*, (4) by giving them a new code of conduct based on his own view of social ethics, which broke down completely the barriers between the Hindus and Muslims, the high caste and low caste people, and the rich and the poor. Guru Nanak did not cast his revelation in any traditional form, nor did he try to renew and revitalise any old faith. He founded a religious philosophy and cultus of his own, based on such ideals of fellowship, communion and passion for social and political freedom, as were hitherto unknown. The central experiences of Guru

Nanak, the founder of the New Dispensation, were concretized in the structure and organisation of Sikhism. The whole community of his followers, hailing from Hindu and Muslim societies, were infused by his spirit and outlook.

Guru Nanak left for the Punjab tour along with his bard. It appears from all *Janam Sikhas* that no other disciple was with Guru Nanak during this Punjab tour, which was undertaken for about two years or perhaps more.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. caran dhoe rahirās kar, carnāmrit sikhāñ pilāyā;
pābrahm pūranbraham, kalyug āñdar ik dikhāyā;
cāre pair d'harm de, cār varan ik varan karāyā.
rānā rañk barābrī, pairīñ pavnā jag vartāyā.

Bhai Gurdas VI, 24.

2. The word *Rahirās* is the Punjabi form of the Persian word *Rahi-rasam* which means "Code of Conduct". Bhai Gurdas makes it quite clear that Guru Nanak introduced the baptism by water touched by his lotus feet (*Charnamrit*), and gave to his disciples his own Code of Conduct. The details of the Code of Conduct are given by Bhai Gurdas in other *Vārs*. Thus, Guru Nanak laid the foundation of his own mystic and spiritual faith, embedded in social life. His baptised disciples were called *Guru-sikhs*, while the unbaptised novices were called *nām-dhārīk Sikhs* corresponding to the *Sahajdhārīs* of today. These two words are repeatedly used in the *Janam Sākhīs*.
3. tab qāzī puchiā, he Nānak, tū jo kehnā hai, nā koī Hindū aur nā koī Musalmān hai so tudh ne kyā pāyā hai; tab Bābe kehyā Hinduāñ kā karam kare so Hindu hovai, ar Musalmānā de karam kare so musulman hovai tāñ Qāzī puchiā musulmān de karam kehde hain.

J.M.S. (LI, nd II) p. 129

GURU NANAK: FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

ik Hinduāñ dā rāh hai, ik Musalmānā dā rāh hai, par tū kehde rāh vic hai, tab Bābe Nānakji kehyā ji, “nā koi Hindu hai nā koī Musalmān hai, mai kis de rāh hovañ ? mai khudāe de rāh hovañ; Khudāe nā Hindū nā Musalmān hai; mai jehā si khudāe de rāh hāñ; asādī nazar vic nā koī Musalmān hai nā koī Hindū hai; rāh sir koī nahī;

Guru Nanak said: I do not see any real Hindu or Muslim ? I cannot accept any of these religions. My religion is the Religion of God. God is neither Hindu nor Muslim, so mine is the path of God. Neither the Hindus nor the Muslims are on the right path.

J. Mb. p. 92

jo Hinduā de karam kare soī Hindu kahidā hai, ate jo Musalmānā de karam kare soī Musalmān, tāñ Qāzi ne puchiā Musalmānā de karam kehde han.

J.B. (L I) p. 95

4. Almost all *Janam Sākhīs* and other biographies of Guru Nanak quote these hymns as the historic answer. Some have added more verses which appear to have been written on some other occasions. Some *Janam Sākhīs* which have been corrupted by those who wished to depict Guru Nanak's faith as a sect of Hinduism have either avoided or misquoted what Guru Nanak said about the Hindus of his times. I have given the actual historical verses which are given in old MSS copies of *Janam Sākhīs*. In the later versions it has been replaced by a Sloka whose author is Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru, and not Guru Nanak.
5. Hindū bhule hoe ate apuṭhe hī jāñde hain; ate man Nārad de ākhe lagde hain tis karke andhe hain, brahm dīstī nahī dekh sakde; te gunge hain, pārmeswar dā jas nahī kar sakde hain; pathrāñ nū pūjde hain, mūrakh hain, so pathar jehdā āp duban vāle hain so tinā nū kis tarān tāran ge.
J.B. (LI) p. 96
6. This question was asked from Guru Nanak in many places and by many persons. The answer given by Guru Nanak is almost the same. We shall refer to it in two or three important places.
7. phir qāzī puchiā, Nanak jī tūñ Hindu hai jā Musalmān ? tāñ Bāba bolyā, is tan nu koī sunat bahāe ke Musalmān

THE NEW DISPENSATION

kehñdā hai, ar is tan nū koī tilak jenjū pāe ke Hindū kehañdā hai, tāñte mai vicār ke divānā hoe rehyā hā, so parmesvar toñ binā hor nahī jāntā.

(In the above quotation Guru Nanak points out that the difference between the Hindus and Muslims was merely physical and social. He who circumcised claimed to be Muslim, and he who put on frontal marks claimed to be Hindu. He was neither of these by these standards. He was a God-intoxicated man). Guru Nanak says:

J.M.S. p. 130

mai is sarīr de pavitar karanvālā ātmā hāñ, age atmā te parmātmā vic bhed koī nahī; jaise trañg mai jal ik hai taise sarirōñ mai satyā parmātmā dī ik hī hai; jad dā mai gurañ thī eh gyān driḍ kītā hai, tāñ mai Vah-gurū binā dujā kich nahī jandā; deh hī Hindū hai, deh hī Musalmān hai, mai deh dā sākhi nyarā hāñ, tāñ Khān sunkar mathā tekyā jo mai tainū Khudāe dā Walī jandā hauñ.

I am the living Spirit, Atma, behind this body. The Atma is not different from the Supreme Being; its relation to God is the same as the wave of water to the sea. In the same way I believe that the living Spirit in all human beings, (be they Hindus or Muslims) is the same. My Divine Teacher, God Himself, has enlightened me with the conviction that Hindus and Muslims differ only in their bodies or physical life, but the Witness of all human bodies, the eternal Spirit of Man, is the same everywhere. I am not the body. I am the eternal Spirit. On hearing this, Nawab Daulat Khan fell at the feet of Guru Nanak in humble adoration and said: "From this day onwards, I acknowledge thee as a great prophet of God."

S.B.M.S. p. 25

8. Jai Ram baḍlā dilgīr hoe ghar āe vadiā, Jai Ram ne kehīa, sun parmesvar dī bañdī, aj tere Bhai ne kyā kītā; jo Nawab nāl jume masīt vic namāz karne gayā; ate sāre šehar vic Hindu Musalamānā vic dand paī hāī, hāñ, jo aj Nanak Turk hoyā hai; mai kyā na dilgir hosañ.

J.B. (Dacca MSS) p. 58

9. tāñ agoñ Nānakī kehyā ji tusī uṭh kar rasoī jovo, tusīñ Nānak de valoñ dhokhā koī nā karo, aciñt raho, Nānak

jo hai so dhādhe dā hamaitī hai; Nānak val koī nahī buri nazar dekh, sakdā.

J.B. (Dacca MSS) p. 58

10. *tab Nanak kehya*, khān jī mai qāzī kī kyā parvāh paḍī hai. par qāzī kī nimāz kabūl nahī paḍī; et, vāste hasyā hāñ; tab qāzī kehīā Khān jī je in kāī pāī hai tāñ meri taksīr zāhar karo,

P.J. I and II. p. 21, p. 23.

11. Nimaz upar khaḍa tusān asān dithā jī Nanak hasiā ? eh kiā hisāb hai jī nimāz vic hasiā. tab Nānak boliā, Khan, jī eh taksīr qāzī vic hai, nimāz vic nahī.

tāñ Qazi kehya, dekhā Khan, eh kāfir asādā namāz nū hasyā hai, tāñ Khan puchyā, Baba tusīñ sādī namāz nū kion hasai ho ?

S.B.M.S. p. 43

12. Bābe kehya Khāñ jī, jā eh namāz, upar khāḍā thā tab is kā man thauḍ nahī thā, in kī ghodī sūī thī, vacherī jamī thī, ar, vacherī chad āyā thā; tai vede vic khūhī thī, in kehīā mat vacherī khūhī vic pauṇḍī hovai; is kā man uhāñ gayā thā.

P.J. I and II p. 22, p. 23.

jaḍ eh namāz par khāḍā hoyā ta is kā jīo hor thāī gayā; ghar ghodī sūī sāsū; Nimāz upar sijdā dende us ghodī upar jīo payos; havelī vic khūh sī, vic ghodī badhi haī, piche vachretū hai, iānā vachretū hai, khūhe vic pāī māre gā.

J.Mb. p. 89-99

tāñ Babe kehya, jis vele tusīñ ujū karde se, os vele tusaṇḍā man namāz val haisī, tan tusade upar Khudā prasan sī, par jad tusī namāz paḍan lage ho tāñ tusādī namāz kabūl, nahī paī, tāñ Babe jī kehya Qazi nū: Imām tū hai, so tere ghar ghodī sūī hai, tere ghar vic khūhī haisī, terā dhyān, odhar gayā sī, mat merī vacherī khūh vic and pai jaṇḍī hovai; je Imām dā man rehya nahī tāñ hornā dī namāz kithoñ pāvai.

S.B.M.S. p. 43

13. tab Khān kehya, eh merī kambakhtī hai, jo tudh jehā vazīr fakīr hoyā.

P.J. I. and II. p. 20-23

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tāñ Khān akhayā: Bhai eh koī vadā Walī hai, isnū merī Dīwāngī bhī deo.

S.M.B.S. p. 42

14. Nāñakjī salāmat, tere didār, dekhane dā asāno eh hāsal hovai je asāno khudāe kiveñ bakhśe, tāñ Bābe de mūh vlicoñ niklyā, je “jāh Khān, terā dargah dā jāman haūñ; taino bhist Khudāe kanoñ pavaiśān; terā nā koī ethe hisāb lae gā, tūñ Khudāe khālās kitā hai”.

J.Mb. p. 102

15. tāb Khān kehiā, Nānak, rāj, māl, hukam hāsal sabh terā hai; tab Gurū Nānak kehyā: Khudāe terā bhalā karegā, hun tikān kī bāt rahī, rāj māl, ghar bār tere haiā; asīñ tyāg cale.

J.P.I. and II p. 22-24

16. Apostle Bhai Gurdas mentions the name of Daulat Khan Lodhi amongst the prominent disciples of Guru Nanak. “*Dault Khan Lodhi bhalā hoā jīñd pīr abināśī.*” *Vār II 13.*
17. The story how Khizr met Daulat Khan Lodhi and how the Nawab earned the title of Zindā-pīr is given by Bhai Mani Singh in his *Sikhiāñ dī Bhagatmāl*, p. 85.
18. The *Charanpahul* ceremony is mentioned by Bhai Gurdas, in his *Vārs* and by Bhai Mani Singh in his *Janam Sākhī*, to which historians rarely refer. The details of the ceremony as modified by the followers of Sri Chand, is described in *Tehkikāte-ī-Chistī*. The novice according to them is offered the baptismal water five times to drink, five times it is sprinkled on his eyes and five times it is poured on his head. Then the Mystic Word (Nām) is imparted. This is exactly how the Khalsa is baptised even now.
19. *Sodar Ārtī gāvīai amrit vele Jāp ucārā.* Bhai Gurdas *Vār 1:38* “*Sanjai Sodar gāvnā, man melī kar mel milāñde ratī kirtan sohīlā kar ārtī parśād vaḍāñde.*” *ibid Vār 6:3* Some scholars who study Guru Nanak's work merely as poetry have made an arbitrary division of his writings and have declared without any external or internal evidence that the shorter verses of Guru Nanak were composed by the Guru in earlier life while the major compositions were written during the last years at Kartarpur. The *Janam Sākhīs* make it quite clear, and there is internal

evidence also, that *Japjī* and *Sodar* were composed at Sultanpur immediately after Enlightenment; *Patti* was composed during early years; *Sidh-Gosht* was written immediately after the Guru's visit to Sumer Mt. *Omkar* was written during the southern tour. *Āsā-dī-Vār* was composed at Pakpattan. Thus all major, compositions were composed before settling at Kartarpur. All literary reflections about the possible dates of compositions or periods not supported by historical facts are unscholarly fancies.

20. Guru Nanak once asked Mardana to impart the Sikh code of conduct to a baptized disciple, which he did as follows: *Mārdāne ne kehā; : tīn bātān tūn kar : ik sir, to kes rakhne; dūjā pichlī rāt Satnām dā jāp japnā, ar tīsra eh ke sādḥ sant āñvdē jāñvdē dī sevā tehal karnī.*


J.M.S. p. 457

21. *Mülle Chaune dā Sāmā Pundit melī ahā, Müllā Same pundit dā sevakaī dā dāvā rakhdā āhā.*

J.B (LI) p. 98.

CHAPTER 8

THE FIRST PUNJAB TOUR

 THE MIND—AND SOUL of Guru Nanak were in a state in which his whole inner being was irradiated with His light, and bathed in His presence. He had now reached the point where his contemplation of truth was engulfed in action and his will had become one with God's Will. He now wanted to change the field of his activities. He had worked and contemplated within the narrow limits of his home, town and district. Now he wanted the whole world to be the stage of his action. Bitterly opposed to doctrines of escapism and renunciation of society, he opened wide the gates of his spiritual experience. Bracing himself for establishing an entirely new social order, he sought in solitude, grace and blessedness, strength and creative power to throw himself into the current of world-life. From his personality radiated an extraordinary energy, a daring realistic vision of truth, a powerful conception of new social order, and a determination to face the national crisis and international situation of his times.

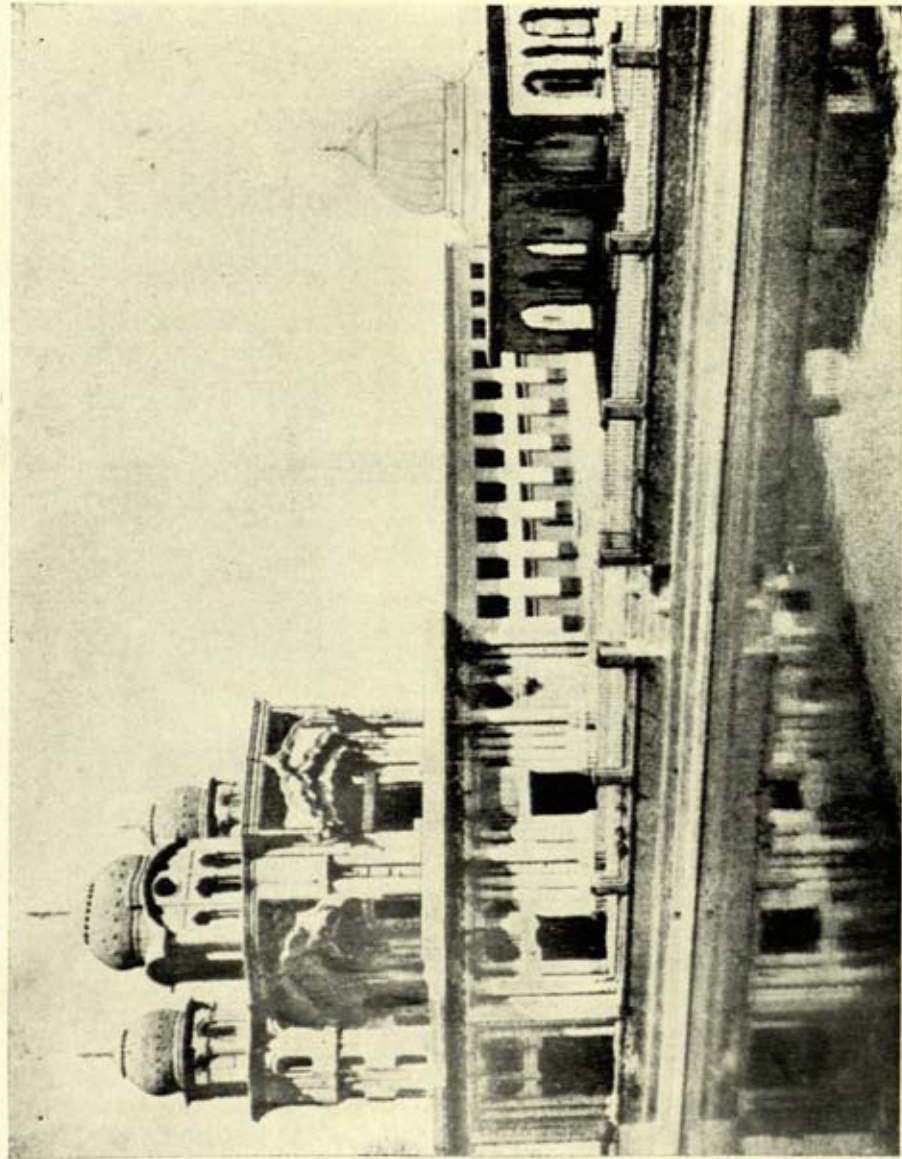
God was revealed in full splendour to Him and his soul lived in the Spirit of God. There was no more mystery about Him and His purpose of creation. His individual problems had vanished and his agony and sorrow about the human situation dispelled; everything was flooded with light. He could look into the soul of things. A superabundance of vitality flowed from the springs of his inner being. He felt truth flowing from its fountain head like an active force. He could no more help spreading

it abroad than the sun can help diffusing its light. The love which consumed him was no longer the love of man for God. It was the love of God for all men. Through God, in the strength of God, he loved mankind, and now he wanted to serve humanity with his body, mind and soul.

Elected Solitude

From Sultanpur Guru Nanak moved slowly towards Western Punjab, followed by Mardana the bard. He was wearing a turban, a robe like that of *Sufi fakirs*, a loin-cloth and carried a saffron sheet with him.¹ Ever since Daulat Khan Lodhi had become his disciple his fame had spread far and wide. He kept away from the cities and visited some humble dwellings now and then. He allowed Mardana to go to the cities and get as much food and personal requirements as he desired, but he did not allow him to carry anything with him. He was ordered to distribute amongst the poor whatever surplus food or clothes he got from the people in the name of Nanak.

Guru Nanak himself slept little, ate very little and lived a very austere life. Mostly, he slept on a bed of stones and earth, and ate whatever fruit or leaves nature afforded.² He was planning to travel all over the world, meet the people of all nations and countries. He was going to open a spiritual dialogue with the divines of all faiths to achieve unity of thought, and deeper understanding of the spirit of truth in various religions. For this mission he had to go to inaccessible territories through forests and deserts, and had even to cross mountains and rivers. So now, during his Punjab tour, he started moulding his body to the hardest life of a traveller. He disciplined his mind to all



Here at Eminabad Guru Nanak spent many months in Elected Solitude



Here at Eminabad Guru Nanak is said to have been imprisoned and with other prisoners made to grind corn.

stresses of hunger, fatigue and dangers of life in alien lands. He gave up all material comforts. He made the hard ground his bed. He made the fruit and leaves of the forests his food, when no other food was available.³ He performed *tapasya* (askesis) to achieve an unshakable determination to fulfil the mission of God.

Mardana was surprised at the severe austerities to which the Master submitted his body without mortifying it. He had suddenly given up all comforts of life. Frank and outspoken as he was, he asked Guru Nanak, "Exalted One, why must you lead such a life of austerities after receiving perfect enlightenment." Guru Nanak replied : "God has bestowed me the light of His Word and the grace and gifts of humility. I am now living in austere contemplation to make these gifts inseparable part of my inner being. I seek now from God His abiding assurance to help me in my mission and to guide me as the Father would guide His Son."⁴

From Sultanpur Guru Nanak moved to an uninhabited region where he meditated for some days. This place later came to be known as Goindwal. From here he moved to a small mound in another forest. Here also he meditated for many days in detached solitude under a tree. History and tradition says that it is on this mound the sacred Harimandir (the Golden Temple) was built, and around it was dug the tank by Guru Ram Das.⁵ Mardana one day felt very hungry. Guru Nanak asked him to go to the neighbouring village. The people in the village were good, particularly the Uppal family. Nanak asked him to eat as much as he liked or take things which he required for personal use, but he should not bring any money, clothes or anything that may be offered

to him. If people do offer him something he must immediately distribute them among the poor. Mardana promised to abide by the Guru's command.

When Mardana went to the city people came to know that he was a disciple of Baba Nanak. Muslims and Hindus touched his feet, offered delicious food, clothes and money. The Uppal kshatriyas of the village showed great devotion and offered costly gifts. They asked many questions about the whereabouts of Nanak but Mardana kept silent. After some time Guru Nanak saw Mardana coming towards him with a big bundle of rich garments and fruits. Guru Nanak burst out laughing, and according to the *Janam Sākhis* laughed so heartily that he "rolled on the ground in complete abandonment" to the amusement created by Mardana's innocent submission to temptation⁶. "Well Mardana, I asked you not to bring anything but what is all this?" "Master," said Mardana, "People were offering many things in your name. I felt that I would be committing a great sin if I failed to convey their offerings to you. Now you can do whatever you like with them. I have not brought these things for myself." Guru Nanak was amused the way his innocent disciple tried to rationalize his temptation. "All right, Mardana," said the compassionate Guru, "It is good of you to think like that, but please dispose them off. Give them away to the poor. We will not carry anything." Mardana gave away all the things to the poor and the needy.⁷

From this place Guru Nanak went to the forests, adjoining Saidpur. Here in this forest, Guru Nanak meditated for many days, in a place now known as Rori Sahib. While Mardana went to the city for his food Guru Nanak depended upon what nature gave

him. At times he took the *ak* fruit which particularly grows in sand, as it is sweet and harmless. The place where he meditated became a hermitage and the people of Saidpur who came to know about the austerities of Guru Nanak called him Nanak, the hermit (*tapa*). It is during this *tapasya* (askesis), says Bhai Gurdas, Guru Nanak achieved the supreme perfection, in which God treated him as the manifestation of His own Spirit⁸. He stood face to face with his beloved God once more, in the realm of Truth, eager to have from Him, the sustaining grace to fulfil His command, which he had received at Sultanpur. Etherialised into the very perfume of devotion, he felt in the throb of divine joy, the assurance that throughout his mission on earth he would constantly retain the supreme vision of Truth and be an inseparable part of it. From this transcendent state Guru Nanak saw the tragic realities of human existence. His kindling vision saw the whole humanity groaning under tyranny, oppression, social injustice, and moral degradation. Apostle Bhai Gurdas, a near contemporary, puts it as follows :

*"After he had performed great tapasya (askesis)
Through the grace of God, Nanak attained perfect union.
Baba Nanak ascended to the realm of Truth,
From God he acquired the treasure of His Name and humility
Baba Nanak then cast his omniscient vision on the earth.
He saw that the whole world was burning in flames.
Without the Enlightener of Truth, there was darkness;
In ignorance and sorrow the world wailed in pain.
The cries of suffering humanity moved him deeply."*

Bhai Gurdas : Var I p : 24.

After these days of silence and solitude in the forest retreats, Guru Nanak jumped into the life of action

and liberation of humanity. Mardana was happy at the Guru's decision to visit the cities and carry the Word of God, the Light of Wisdom, and the peace of soul, and goodwill to the most crowded centres of the world religions and human civilisations.

Blood of the Oppressed and Milk of Honest Labour

Close to the forest-hermitage of Guru Nanak was the city of Saidpur, which was symbolic of the degradation of human society and religious institutions. In the city was a fort under the charge of a military Governor, named Nawab Zalam Khan. The chief administrator of the Nawab was a very corrupt Hindu, named Malik Bhago (Bhag Mal). On the outskirts of the city but very close to Guru Nanak's hermitage, there lived a very hardworking, God-fearing and honest carpenter named Lallo. Being a member of the low-caste people and extremely poor he lived almost as an outcaste of society. But being a devout and noble soul, he led a sinless and contented life.

After his *tapasya* (askesis), when Guru Nanak decided to go to the city, to Mardana's surprise he chose to visit Bhai Lallo carpenter's house first. Without questioning who he was, Lallo offered him hospitality which a great saint deserved. When Lallo came to know that he was the same great saint who lived in solitude in the forest-hermitage he felt blessed. He knew that Baba Nanak of the forest hermitage, was respected by both the Hindus and Muslims. The Muslims of that area called him, Nanak Shah *fakir-āervish*, while the Hindus called him Nanak the hermit (*tapā*). Lallo had also come to know that Brahmins had gone to him, and had

lost the debates and discussions which they held to show their superiority and wisdom.¹⁰

Bhai Lallo felt, that according to Hindu social laws, he could not entertain a high caste Kshatriya like Guru Nanak. He offered rations to Nanak and asked him where he would like to make his cooking square. Guru Nanak smiled and said: "Bhai Lallo, the whole earth is sacred to me. Every inch of this earth of God is pure for cooking purposes. I will take food prepared by your hands. Your hands are holier and purer than those of any Brahmin in the city, because the hands of the Brahmins are the hands of vain idlers, swindlers, hypocrites, and sinful people, who commit every abominable crime under the cloak of their high caste. Your hands are the hands of a virtuous, honest, God-fearing labourer, who earns his living by the sweat of his brow. Your hands are pure and sacred in my eyes, and whatever is prepared by them will be full of the milk of humanity and goodness. Your deeds and your honest life of labour and love have made you higher and nobler than any Brahmin. So I will eat whatever you offer me."¹¹

Guru Nanak and Mardana took the simple food of barley, bread and boiled green herbs. Mardana was surprised to note that the Master found it very delicious. Guru Nanak accepted Bhai Lallo's hospitality to stay with him for about a month.

Early in the morning and late in the evening spiritual discourses were held near the house of Bhai Lallo. Hindu and Muslim devotees flocked to the place to listen to the melodious voice of the Master. The Brahmins were upset by the growing popularity

of Guru Nanak. Out of jealousy of his increasing influence they started condemning him for living with a low-caste carpenter and for having a Muslim bard as his companion. Both Guru Nanak and his devotees were dubbed as *Kurāhīyās* (unorthodox backsliders). In the day-time Guru Nanak went to his forest-hermitage and meditated for many hours of the day.

During this period, Mardana asked the Master's permission to go to Talwandi and see his people.¹² When he reached Talwandi Guru Nanak's father, mother, and uncle made anxious inquiries about the Master. Bhai Bala had just arrived from Sultanpur. Rai Bular made a touching appeal to Mardana: "Do me one favour, Mardana. I am old and cannot travel; so please bring Guru Nanak at least once before he goes to distant lands. I am waiting impatiently to see him and touch his holy feet. Tell him that his humble devotee Rai Bular, implores him in the name of *Allah* to come, at least once, before he goes far away¹³." Mardana promised to convey Rai Bular's request but asked him to send Bala Sandhu with him. Both of them could easily persuade him to come. Bala Sandhu agreed to accompany Mardana at the request of Rai Bular¹⁴.

Malik Bhago had fixed the marriage of his son. He made arrangements to feed the Brahmins and high-caste Hindus. The feast was called *Braham bhoj* (feast for gods). Among others, Guru Nanak was also invited through a Brahmin messenger. But Guru Nanak politely declined saying: "What has he to do with the feast of Malik Bhago. That is for the high-caste people. I am a *fakir* and my place is with the lowly."¹⁵

Guru Nanak then came to know that Malik Bhago had driven away from the feast all sadhus and *sakirs* who belonged to low-castes. Malik Bhago felt so slighted by Guru Nanak's refusal to attend his "feast for gods", that he immediately summoned Guru Nanak to his presence, and sent policemen to bring him by force if he refused to come.¹⁶ When Nanak went there Malik Bhago asked: "Why do you, a Kshatriya from such a high family eat from the hands of a low-caste carpenter and why have you refused to take food from my "feast of gods." Calmly but sternly, Guru Nanak said: Your "feast for gods" is given from your ill-gotten wealth in which I see the blood of the poor whom you cheated, exploited, and looted to amass your fortunes. This "feast of gods" is poison to a Man of God like me. The food of Bhai Lallo has the milk of humanity in it. It is as pure as his mind and soul. It is the bread earned by this noble soul by the sweat of his brow. It is the bread which gives peace to the mind and strength to the soul. What is your high caste and that of these Brahmins worth when all the evils which lower a man's character and status in society ever reside in you?" The Brahmins began to grumble. Malik Bhago boiled with anger and said: "You are adding insult to injury. Prove it otherwise I will punish you for what you have said." "Bring some food from your "feast for gods" and I will prove it," said Guru Nanak calmly but firmly. He asked Bhai Lallo to bring some food from his house also.

Guru Nanak took some bread from Malik Bhago's "feast for gods" in one hand and Lallo's coarse bread in the other and squeezed them. To everyone's surprise, out of Lallo's bread oozed milk, while out of Malik Bhago's bread blood was dripping. Malik Bhago was stunned to see his cruelty and sins exposed.¹⁷

Overcome with shame and humiliation he was speechless.

Nawab Zalam Khan's son was seriously ill. Physicians failed to cure him. Some one suggested that the blessings of some saint might save the boy's life. The wicked Malik Bhago suggested that the best thing was to imprison all saints and not release them till someone cured the boy. The unwise Zalam Khan accepted the proposal. All the Hindu monks and Muslim *fakirs* were imprisoned. This was the moment to test the spiritual powers of Guru Nanak, thought Malik Bhago. So he threw Guru Nanak also into the prison.

Bhai Lallo was seriously upset. Shedding tears of woe, he asked Guru Nanak what was likely to happen now. Inspired by a vision of the terrible future which awaited such tyrants Guru Nanak said :

*As the word of God descendeth on me,
So I make known, the wisdom of divine justice, O Lallo,
With bridal procession of sins
The Invader shall hasten from Kabul
To seize by force his bride:
The wealth of Hindustan, O Lallo.
Modesty and righteousness have both vanished,
Falsehood leading the van, holds the field, O Lallo.
Both the Qazi and the Brahmin will be out of work;
The devil shall read the marriage services.
Muslim women reciting the Koran
In their agony will cry on God, O Lallo
Hindu women of high or low caste
Will meet the same dire fate;
Men will sing the songs of murder
And instead of saffron, smear their hands with blood.
This shall be a city of corpses;
Nanak praiseth the Lord in it,*

*And uttereth a prophetic truth.
God the Creator created men for a purpose
Sitting aloof He watcheth their deeds.
Just and true is the Lord,
Just and true is His judgement.
Bodies of men shall be cut to shreds like pieces of cloth
And let Hindustan remember what I say now.*

Guru Nanak : *Rāg Tilañg*. p : 722

Frightened and deeply moved, Bhai Lallo asked : "Master have you cursed the whole city? Have you condemned everyone here?" "No Lallo," said Guru Nanak, "it is not a curse. To me all human beings are an embodiment of His Spirit. But I have just stated how nemesis will overtake the tyrannical rulers. God is not silent when wickedness abounds. The wicked are ultimately punished. Corrupt society and cruel rulers are ultimately doomed. This is the law of God's Justice."¹⁸

Just then Nawab Zalam Khan came there, along with Malik Bhago, and ordered the imprisoned saints and *dervishes* to cure his son. Guru Nanak burst into loud laughter. "What makes you laugh Nanak Shah?" he asked. "Listen Nawab," said Guru Nanak : "Can anyone cure a dead man?" "Certainly not," replied Nawab Zalam Khan. "Your son is dead," said Guru Nanak, "how do you expect any one to cure him?" A few minutes later the Nawab received the news of the death of his son. He repented over the maltreatment of saints and *fakirs*. He blamed Malik Bhago for misguiding him.¹⁹

Sheikh Sajjan, the Thug

Soon Bala and Mardana arrived with a message

from Rai Bular. People were at this time going to Sheikh Farid's shrine at Pakpattan. Mardana asked Guru Nanak if he would like to visit Pakpattan. The Master at once agreed.²⁰ On the way he stopped at Talamba, where a Sufi Saint named Sajjan had made special arrangements to entertain both the Hindu and Muslim devotees, received the Guru and his companion. Sheikh Sajjan showed the utmost courtesy to the visitors and it was his practice to murder them at night and deprive them of their belongings. When it was time to sleep Guru Nanak did not sleep. He sang a soul-stirring song which shook from its very depth Sheikh Sajjan's conscience :

*Like a hypocrite, the bronze shines brightly,
 Rub it, its blackness sticks to your hands.
 True Sajjans (friends) are they,
 Who stand by thee beyond death;
 Where man has to render account for his deeds.
 Hypocrites are like palaces, mansions, painted from outside
 But empty and hollow within, useless and decaying.
 Hypocrites are like white cranes in holy rivers,
 Sitting in meditative mood to devour innocent creatures.
 The body of the hypocrite becomes an imposing figure
 Like the Simmal tree, which never yields any fruit;
 He is like a blind man carrying his load of sins up a mountain.
 He needs the eyes to see the path,
 Without the inner eyes he cannot climb the mountain;
 His false virtues, his hypocritical service, and his cleverness,
 Are the pitfalls of his doom.
 Remember O Nanak, the Name of God
 So that you may be saved from the snare of death.*

Guru Nanak : *Sūhī*. p : 729

Each word of Guru Nanak's hymn lifted from Sheikh Sajjan's face the veil of his deception, he was

wearing. He stood exposed in naked sinfulness before the Master, and more so before his own conscience. Trembling with fear, and repenting bitterly over his dreadful life, he came to the Master and fell at his feet, begging him to give him the eyes of true faith, and save him from the terrible doom that was in store for him.

Guru Nanak asked him to distribute all the property of his victims among the poor and completely dismantle and destroy his mansions of deception, and all the snares he had built for his victims. Sajjan obeyed the Guru. Guru Nanak then initiated him as his disciple and asked him to live a simple life by earning his bread by his own labour and by serving the needy. Sajjan in due course built a temple to commemorate the visit of Guru Nanak.²¹ The *Janam Sākhī* call it the first Sikh temple. Sajjan the thug became Sajjan the saint, whose services to the poor and suffering are still remembered with respect in that region.

Sheikh Ibrahim of Pakpattan

Sheikh Ibrahim was the twelfth *Sajjadanashīn* of Sheikh Farid's *khanqah* at Pakpattan.²² He was popularly known as Bālā Pīr. When Guru Nanak met him he was quite young and known for his piety, simplicity, and wisdom. One day his disciple Kamal was collecting fire wood from the forest for the *langar* (free kitchen) of the *Khanqah*. At a distance of two miles from the city he saw a divine man sitting under a tree with a bard and an attendant. In a very melodious voice he was singing the following song:

*The Spirit of God is the tablet,
In His Hand is the Pen,*

*He writes the destiny of mankind.
Think only of One God,
Why ever reflect on any other.*

Sheikh Kamal went close to Guru Nanak and after paying his homage he asked the meaning of the couplet. The Master explained it and treated Kamal with tender affection. Kamal went to his *khanqah* and reported to Sheikh Ibrahim that a great saint who appeared to be a Hindu, emphasised on the Oneness of God, and like the Muslim theologians, he also talks of the Writing and the Pen of God. There was such a glow on his face, that he appeared to have achieved the presence of God. On hearing this Sheikh Ibrahim remarked sceptically: "If he is a Hindu then it is not possible that he has achieved the light of God, and if he has acquired the supreme enlightenment then he is not a Hindu.²³ Take one of my questions to him. If he gives a satisfactory answer then everything you say is true, otherwise I am not prepared to believe that he is an enlightened sage." Kamal brought this question to Guru Nanak:

*There is One God,
But two paths: Hinduism and Islam
Which one is acceptable?
Which one is to be rejected.?*

Guru Nanak replied :

*God is One,
The Path is One.
Accept the Path of Truth
Reject all other ways.²⁴*

On hearing this reply Sheikh Ibrahim at once went to pay his respects to Guru Nanak. He greeted Nanak

saying *Salam—alekam*²⁵ (Peace of God be with you) to which Guru Nanak replied: "*Alekh ko Salam hai*" I Salute the Infinite Lord. Sheikh Ibrahim asked: "O *Dervish* are you a Hindu or a Muslim." Guru Nanak replied: "If I say I am a Hindu, I would be telling a lie, I am also not a Muslim."²⁶ And then explaining his position, Guru Nanak continued: "The human body of both the Hindus and Muslims is made of the same elements; so I do not recognise any physical difference between them. The spirit of the same One God pervades all Hindus and Muslims. So I do not recognise any spiritual difference between them. The same God judges the deeds of all. He who serves the One God sincerely and truly receives light and grace from Him."²⁷ It is not by mere profession of a creed that man can be saved but by his deeds. The virtues and noble deeds of both the Hindus and Muslims are blessed by God while the wicked deeds of both of them are condemned and punished by Him. I am a servant of God and a brother of true devotees of all men, no matter to which creed they belong. Sheikh Ibrahim embraced Guru Nanak.

The discussion between the two then turned on the life and *slokas* of Sheikh Farid. Sheikh Ibrahim confessed certain ambiguity in the *slokas* of Sheikh Farid which had been piously preserved in the *khanqah* and asked Guru Nanak his opinion about them. "Is it possible," asked Sheikh Ibrahim, "to be so tolerant, as Sheikh Farid suggests in this *sloka*:

*If someone smiteth your face, O Farid,
Return him not a blow for blow;
Nay, kiss his feet who smiteth thee;
Forgive him, and go home in peace.*

Sheikh Farid: *Ādi Granth*: p: 1378

Explaining it Guru Nanak said : "An enlightened saint should have the humility and patience of the earth. If any one hits you with his hand, or abuses you, do not hit him back and do not soil your mouth with abuse. But say : 'Has my bony body hurt your tender hand? If so forgive me for that.'²³ "Sheikh Ibrahim was deeply impressed by this interpretation of Sheikh Farid's ethics of tolerance.

Again Sheikh Ibrahim read a hymn of Sheikh Farid which was pessimistic and ambiguous. The Sheikh wanted to know how far Guru Nanak subscribed to this part of Sheikh Farid's ethics. He recited the following song :

*You did not launch your boat
When the weather was pleasant and calm,
Impossible it is to set sail
Now, when the sea waves storm and rave;
Touch not the flaming flower,
The flower of worldly desires.
You will be burnt in scorching fires.
On the one hand I am weak and frail,
On the other I am deprived of His grace;
As spilt milk cannot be regained.
Alas, I may not meet the Lord again.
Saith Farid, Listen my friends,
The Beloved will send a call,
The soul shall have to depart,
Leaving the body to mingle with dust.*

Sheikh Farid : *Ādi Granth* : p : 794

Guru Nanak composed a commentary verse which not only explained the mystic theme of the poem but also gave a new approach to the same problem. Guru Arjan has preserved both the hymns in *Adi Guru Granth*. Guru Nanak made the following comment:

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*Launch ye, the boat of austere contemplation,
With which it is easy to cross the rough ocean;
So smooth becomes life's journey,
No storm, no tempest can obstruct thee.
The Divine Name is the flower
Of eternally fast colour;
My whole being is dyed in it,
O my Love, my Beloved !
How can the seekers true
Meet the Beloved Lord ?
If you have some virtues,
He will meet thee of His own accord.
He who attains this spiritual union
Will never know separation.
The cycle of birth and death will cease,
When the true Lord is one with Thee.*

Guru Nanak : *Ādi Granth*. p : 729

Guru Nanak then stayed as Sheikh Ibrahim's guest for some days. According to the *Janam Sakhī* Sheikh Ibrahim, who was a young man, entertained Guru Nanak for many days. He asked Guru Nanak to compose a prayer of glorification of the One God, and in response to this request Guru Nanak is said to have composed his famous *Āsā-ki-Vār*, which is sung by the Sikhs early in the morning. Guru Nanak left the copy prepared by his own hands with Sheikh Ibrahim and it is said Guru Arjan procured it from his successors when he wanted to compile the *Ādi Granth*. In return Sheikh Ibrahim gave Guru Nanak a correct copy of the mystic poems of Sheikh Farid, which was preserved by Guru Nanak and given to his successors.²⁹ The Diwan of Chawali Mashaykh who was a close friend of Sheikh Ibrahim came to know that the famous *dervish* Baba Nanak had come to Pakpattan. He went there and invited Guru Nanak

to Multan. The Master accepted the invitation and stayed at the house of Diwan of Chawali Mashaykh. Multan was under the spiritual jurisdiction of the descendants of Sheikh Bahau-ud-din Zakariya Suhrawardi. Guru Nanak held spiritual discourses with the saints of the Suhrawardi *Silsala* and won their respect and love. The Diwan of Chawali Mashaykh changed his house to a shrine of Guru Nanak, which is still preserved by the Pakistan Government as a historical Gurdwara. A fair used to be held here annually to commemorate the visit of the Master.³⁰

From Multan Guru Nanak hurried back to Talwandi, stopping on the way in a number of places for a day or two and enlightening people with his spiritual and moral influence, and bringing about a unique social and cultural awakening.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Babe jī de sir ute sāfā badhā hoyā gal kafnī pedhī hoi
ate bhagveñ rañg dī cādar ute lai hoī, teḍ, kupīn, is fakīr
ves nū dekh Chañdo Rāni ioñ Kaḍkī jiveñ bijlī kaḍkdī
J.B (LI) p 107.
2. tab Guru Bābā vasdī kadejāh nāhī, jāñ kade ukhmā jāge tāñ
Mardāne no Gurū Bābā Nanak jī kahe : Purkhā tainū
kich ukhmā jāgi hai ate sedh ik piñd hai, ut piñd jāi kar tūñ
bacā parsād lai āo
J.Mb. 106
tab Bābā jī aujāḍh ko cale; tab kite vasdī vaḍe nāhī, kite
jañgal kite daryāo, kithai tike nāhī, kade je Mardāne nū
bhukh lage tāñ Bābā akhe Mardānyā bhukh lagī hai, tāñ
Mardana ākhe jī tūñ sabh kich jāndā hai. P.J. I, II. (MSS)
P: 23, p 25.
3. Bābe akhyā, he Mardānyā; asānū Pārbrahm thoñ Nām dī
te garībī dī pehle bakhsh hoī hai, so asīn tap karne hāñ.

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jo isde thehrāvne vāste karde hāñ, ar hun asāñ dyhāñ karke
dīthā hai tāñ sārā jagat triṣṇā vic pāyā hai.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 134

4. Bābā mastānā hī phire, ate je bhukh lage tāñ ret dī tali cāe
māre ar kadī kadī do patar khāe tode. *ibid.*
5. Beas pār ho, Goindwāl jithe huñ baulī hai othe, brich heṭh
a baithe; ik jat the chaliāñ cabaiāñ; Mardāne ne prem
nāl śabad gāvya, te Gurūji bole,: "Bhai ethe ik satpurkh
baitḥke nām dā te an dā sadāvrat calvāvaigā, curāsī kategā;
othoñ tur Fathehabād rāt kat ke Sultanpiñd dī jūh vic
ik dhāb de kināre cañgi chāyā dekh birāj rahe, jithe hun
Amritsar hai, Guruji bole ethe bhog mokh da pravāh calū.

T.G.K. p. 66-67.

6. Bābe di khuṣī hoi, Mardānā ik din ṣehar nū bhejya; bhejdiāñ
nāl pūjā bahut lagī; jāñ gayā tāñ sārā ṣehar āe pairiñ payā,
jāñ gayā tāñ pañjihe kapde pañd banh ke lai āyā; Bābā
hasdā hasdā niletu hoyā. Bābā vekhe tāū baniḥ pañd, lai
āñdā hai, tab Bābe akhyā: "Mardanaīā kiā āñdā hai."

P.J. I and II. p. 24, 26

7. tab Mardāne ākhyā. "ji sace Patṣah, tere nāvaiñ dā sadkā
sārā ṣehar sevā nū uṭh āyā; jio Pātṣah mai ākhyā, jo eh vast
kapde Bābe pās lai jāvāñ; "tab Gurū bolyā," Mardānyā
āñdo bhalo kīto par eh asāde kite kam nahī." *ibid.*
8. pehlāñ Bābe pāyā bakhś dar,
pichoñ de phir ghāl kamāl,
ret ak ahār kar rodāñ kī gur karī vichāl;
bhārī karī tapasyā, bade bhāg harī sioñ ban āl.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1,14

tab Bābe Nānak tap arambhyā; kaisā tap ? bars dinā ik tālī
ret dī bhakhe ar ik ak dī khakdī bhakhe. tapasyā Gurū Bābe
thalīyāñ vic arambhī, mahā udyāñ vic, pūrab kī dhartī,
duñh, kohāñ upār dai badhī, ik sāhā, ik saha simrin kardā
kardā, parmeswar japdā japdā, Ot dherī jāe kadī ot dherī
jāe.

J.Mb. p III.

9. bhārī karī tapasyā, bade bhāg Hari sioñ ban āl;
Bāba paidhā sac 'khand nau nidh nām garibī pai;
Baba dekhai dhyan hai, dhar jaltī sabh prithmī dis āl;

bājh Gurū gubar hai, hai kardī sunī lukāi.
Bhai Gurdas Var 1; 24

10. Muslammān Nanak Shāh te Hindū Nānak tapā bolde san;
Kāzī Pundit sārē hī Bābe nāl dvais̄ thān ke carcā karan aven
te hār man ke cale jāven.

T.G.K. p. 68

11. Bhai Lallo jitnī dhartī, hai, titnī caukā hai, jahāñ kahāñ
parmesvar byāp rehyā hai, tāñ Bhai Lallo eh bāt sun kar
prasād age ān rakhyā. jan Mardānā dekhe tāñ kodre diāñ
rotiāñ han ate saroñ de sāg dī pinnī tāñ mardāne jī vic
gintī khādī.

J.B. (L) I. P. 129

12. Ja doe din hoe tāñ Mardāne ākhyā jī tusiñ tāñ mahīnā tike
ho, je mainū hukam hovai tāñ Talwāñdī phir āvāñ.

J.B. (MSS 1826 A.D.)

13. asīñ birdh hoe hāñ te Nānak jī nū milyā loḍde hāñ so kiveñ
tūñ Nanakjī nū ethe toḍī lai ā, eh cañgiāi asāñ nāl karsī tāñ
asīñ terā ehsān manā ge.

ibid.

14. Mere nāl Bālā Sañdhū mile asīñ doveñ jāvia gā te tuhādī
tarfoñ bentī kariye gā.

ibid

15. Guru Nānakjī kehyā: Pāñdhā, Malikde pās merā kyā kam
hai,

J.B. (L)1 p. 132

16. Malik ne gusā khādā, gusā hoe kar ākhyā, he Punjā misar,
tū jāe kar Tape nū pakad lyāe tāñ Brahmin ne jāe, kar
Nānakjī nū tāmbiā kitā. ate kehyos cal Nānak Tapā, Malik
guse vic āyā hai ate je nahi jāñvegā tāñ auh dekh admī pakad
ke lai javange.

J.B. (LI) p. 132

17. Srī Guruji ne saje hath vic kodhre dī rotī lītī, ate khabe
hath vic lūciāñ kacodīāñ lītīāñ, dono hathāñ nū ghutyā,
tāñ kodhre dī rotī vicoñ, dudh simyā, tāñ lūciāñ kacadīāñ
vicoñ lohū simyā.; jitnī majlis baiṭhi hai sī so sabh dekh
kar bismād hoī ate Guru Nanak jī kehyā, "sun Malik,
eh brahm bhoj admīāñ de lahū da kitā hai, ate eh vekh
sūdar de ghar dī rotī, so bramhhoj Lallo de ghar nit huñdā
hai

ibid p. 133.

Meharban's *Jaman Sakhi* and *Pūratān Janam Sakh* completely
ignore the historical events in which Bhai Bala and Bhai

Lallo come in. Incidentally they mention the hymn in which Lallo is mentioned. Meharban excludes all lines from the hymns in which the Mughals are directly criticised.

18. he Lallo je tūñ ākhen ināh sādhañne kop hoe sarāp pathānā nū ditā hai, so asāñ srāp nahī ditā; asīñ sarb nū parmeswar rūp jāñde hañ par jo akāl purkh dī āgyā ai, hai teha mai kehnā han.

There is an interesting prophecy about the Sikhs also: "Je āpas vic itfāk karan ge tāñ hornā valayatāñ dā bhī rāj māl lavan ge, ate āpas mai virodh karañge tan Hindustān vic hī pae dukh pāvange."

If they are united they will rule beyond the borders of their country, but if they quarrel among themselves, they will suffer even within India," J.M.S. (MSS, LI) f 266.

19. sehat putar kī mangte ho, aur kaid fakīroñ ko karde ho eh kaun sa nyāo hai jis putar ke vāste eh yatan kyā hai us kī khabar to mangvāo; voh guzar cukā hai; . . . Khān ne eh sun Dīwan ko kahā: ai Mālik Bhāgo, laḍke nū rājī karan lai fakirāñ nū pakaḍvāyā sī, achā rājī kīyā hai.

J.B.(L) I p. 153

20. Mardana mirāsī Babā nū ān milyā, so tad lok Farīd jī dī jyārat nū jāñde sān, tañ Mardane kehyā, Baba jī je tūñ caleñ tā asīñ bhī jātrā vālyāñ nāl jyārat kar āie.

J.M.S. (LI) p. 60.

21. Tulamba the place where Guru Nanak met Sajjan Thug is situated on the Grand Trunk Road midway between Harrapa and Multan. The *Samadhi* of Sajjan is still found there. I do not understand why Meharban in his *Janam Sākhī* says that Tulamba is in South India. Prof. Kirpal Singh in his editorial note to Meharban's *Janam Sākhī* suggests that the Tulamba and the Sujjan Thug mentioned by Meharban are different from Sujjan Thug of Tulamba near Multan. The story as given by Meharban is exactly the same as given by other *Janam Sākhīs* and even the hymns quoted are the same. We know that there is a place called Tulamba near Multan but we know of no such place in South India. Meharban commits a serious geographical error here and this is not the only one.

tab Babe Nanak kehyā, je, purkhā eh mahal dhāh; khaḍe Babe ne oh mehal hduāe dūr kīte; jithe khun hoñde othe

dharamsāl badhā an, jo jīā nū mārde se, se lage jīān dī rakhyā karan. J. Mb p. 239

tab Sheikh Sajjan hukam mānyā, bast laī āyā; khudāe nāe lutāī; Guru lagā japan; naudhrīkh Sikh hoā, pehilī dharam-saī othe badhi. P.J. (I and II) p. 26

Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sākhī* gives the same story but places the meeting between Nanak and Sajjan in his Eastern tour at Hastinapur, which is not correct;

22. The line of succession was as follows : Sheikh Farid--(1) Sheikh Badr-ud-din Sulaiman, (2) Shaik Alau-ud-din (3) Sheikh Muiz-ud-din (4) Sheikh Fadl (5) Sheikh Munawar (6) Sheikh Nur-ud-din (7) Sheikh Baha-ud-din (8) Sheikh Muhammed (9) Sheikh Ahmed (10) Sheikh Ata-ullah (11) Shaikh Muhammed (12) Sheikh Ibrahim. The fifteenth Sajjadanashin a contemporary of Guru Arjan was also named Shaikh Ibrahim. The *Janam Sākhīs* call Shaikh Ibrahim, Sheikh Brahma. No *Janam Sākhīs* or any older record calls Sheikh Ibrahim, Farid Sani. He was sometime called Bālā Pīr, probably because he became the Sajjadanashin when he was quite young.
23. Gurūjī Ravi nadī te Beasā de vic jāhe Pattan Sheikh Farīd de do kos de farak te āe biaṭhe; Pattan dā Pīr, Sheikh Farīd dī aulād Sheikh Braham āhā; Sheikh Braham dā murīd Khudāe dā pyārā lakḍiān cūnan bāharvār āyāsī, Kamal darvesh. . J.B. (L) I P.

The same thing is reported by J.M.S. J.M.b., P.J.I. and II The mystic Pen and the mystic Record are symbolic foundation of the Revelation to man in Islam. The whole of the Sura 68 in the Koran is given the title "*Al Salam*", "The Pen".

24. Sheikh Braham pās jāe kehyā, Pīr Salāmat Nanak sū ain Khudāe kī mūrāt hai, mai dekh āyā hān; Allāh nū pachātā hai ; so haq tālā nū apḍyā hai; Pīr ne kehyā : Hindū kyā, te Khudāe kī sūrat kyā, merā svāl lai jā; jab badtos tān habo sac nahī ta sabh jhūṭh.

J.B. (L) I P.



25. Originally this is the Arabic form of the Jewish greeting in Hebrew : *Sholom aleichem*

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26. Sheikh Braham puchiā: Fakir tūñ Hindu ke Musalmān? tāñ Bābe kehyā slokā:; "Hindū kahāñ tañ māriyā, Musalmān bhī nāh. J.M.S. (LI) p. 62
27. eh sarīr pañjāñ tatān kā putlā hai, ar parmātmā is mai gupt vartadā hai, so pañj tata Hindu, Musalmān me ek hī haiñ; ar parmātmā sabh sarīroñ me satā de rihā hai; tānte Hindu Muslimān kis nū kahiyai. J.M.S. (MSS, LI) f. 63
28. Gurmukh āp ko sabh te nīcā jānte hain; ate sabh te ūcā hovte haiñ tānte Farid ne kehyā, ki jo tujhe durbacan kahe usakā hī mūh fikā hoyā hai, terā to kich gayā ha nahī; ar je tujhe must kā prahar kiyā, hai tā jaise uske hath ko dukh hūāhai taisai tere sarīr ko hūā hai; tānte uske pāiñ par; ke jāne mainu kise ne dukh denā thā ab tere hāth se jo must lagī haī so ab mere dukh kā talā huā hai ar merā sarīr bajar samān hai ar terā hath komal hai so je āpnū dukh pahuñcyā tāñ muāf karnā.
This is the humility and tolerance with which Guru Amar Das reacted to the insult of Datu when he kicked the Guru.
29. All *Janam Sakhīs* including the older copies of Bālās *Janam Sakhī* clearly state that the slokas preserved in the *Adi Granth* are the compositions of Sheikh Farid. The only exception perhaps is *Purātan Janam Sakhī* which causes confusion by saying in one chapter that Sheikh Braham was successor of Sheikh Farid and describes the meeting between them, but in another chapter describes a legendary meeting between Nanak and Sheikh Farid in Assam. There is not the slightest indication in any of these old historical records these slokas are the compositions of Sheikh Ibrahim. Slokas of Sheikh Farid began to be attributed to Sheikh Ibrahim by those Sikh scholars who would not believe that any Punjabi literature existed before Guru Nanak. In the *Adi Granth*, Guru Arjan makes it quite clear that all the compositions are the works of Sheikh Farid. All the poems of Farid reflect his thoughts, his moods, his age and sentiments. The author of this book has prepared a biography of Sheikh Farid along with translation of his complete poems, in which all its aspects are discussed. It will go to the press shortly.
30. Subsequent visits of Guru Nanak to Pakpattan to meet Sheikh Ibrahim will be discussed in other chapters in greater details.

CHAPTER 9

GURU NANAK GOES EAST

 GURU NANAK REACHED Talwandi. He asked his companions to go into the city,  but preferred to remain outside at the well of Chanderbhan, father of Bala Sandhu. When the news spread in Talwandi, Kalu Chand, his brother, Lalu Chand, and Mother Tripta came to the place with sweets and fruit. Kalu Chand was pained to see his son in the simple dress of a medicant. He was wearing a small turban and had the robes of sadhus on his body. He carried, a sheet of cloth which served as his prayer carpet.¹ When pressed to go home he was reluctant to do so. He was anxious to leave for his eastern tour. Someone then reminded him that the aged Rai Bular was anxious to see him. Guru Nanak loved Rai Bular deeply and profoundly. He at once went to meet the devotee and protector of his childhood.

As soon as Rai Bular saw Guru Nanak he got up and embraced him, now a youngman of about thirty two. With tears in his eyes he said: "Let me touch your feet, my dear Nanak. The world has now recognised you as the greatest living sage. I knew it so long ago." "No, Raiji" said Guru Nanak, "You have always been a real father to me, and I shall ever be proud to be your son. Always be a loving father to me, and I will feel honoured to serve you as your son." Rai Bular embraced Guru Nanak again and kissed his forehead. "Pray Nanak, then, for me, so that *Allah* may forgive my sins and lead me to His Light," "Raiji", said Guru Nanak, "You were

forgiven and blessed from your very birth. I have the highest respect and love for you." "My noble Child," said Rai Bular, "I wish to spend my last days in your presence and be very near you. Remember me always." "Wherever I am Raiji", "said Guru Nanak, "I will never forget you. Can a son forget his father?" "Honour me then dear Nanak by taking your food today at my house. Shall I call a Brahmin cook", asked Rai Bular. "Rai ji", said Guru Nanak, "Your house is purer than the cooking square of all the Brahmins. The food that is cooked in the house of such a saintly and virtuous soul like you, will be more sacred to me than the food offered to deities. Nothing shall give me greater joy than to take my meals in your house."² Rai Bular was overwhelmed with joy. The next day Rai Bular came to know that when Guru Nanak rose up very early to take his bath, no well of the village had started working, and there was no river or pond. Rai Bular at once decided to build a bathing tank in memory of Guru Nanak, which the Master could use for bathing purposes.³

After five days stay Guru Nanak left for his missionary journey to the East. He was accompanied by his bard, Mardana, and his disciple, Bala, and perhaps one or two more disciples.⁴ He put on the garb of an Indian holy man which looked neither purely Hindu nor purely Muslim. It was not possible to have access to places of pilgrimages without the display of holy robes. Guru Nanak put on such a religious garb which could not identify him with any specific creed or faith. He changed this dress according to the requirements of the region which he visited.⁵

Bisakhi Fair at Hardwar

Guru Nanak went to Hardwar, an important

place of Hindu pilgrimage on the banks of Ganges. Pilgrims had gathered here from all parts of India for the Baisakhi fair.⁶ Early in the morning he saw pious Hindus standing in the Ganges water with their faces towards the rising sun in the East. They were reciting the *Gayatri mañtra* and offering water to the sun-god, so that it could reach their ancestors. Guru Nanak stood there with his face towards the West and started throwing water out of the river towards the West. The dramatic reversal of the age-old practise attracted everyone's attention. The Brahmins asked, "Why are you standing with your back towards the sun, and why are you offering water towards the West?" Guru Nanak replied: "Some miles away from Lahore I have my fields. This year we have not had any rains. So I am offering water to my fields." Everyone burst out laughing. "Are you mad?" said the Brahmins, "how can your water reach your fields near Lahore?"⁷ "Guru Nanak smiled and said if the water you offer to the sun can reach your ancestors in heaven thousands of miles away, why can it not reach my fields which are only about a hundred miles away on this very planet. If my attempt to water my fields from here is an impossible feat is not your attempt to offer water to the sun utterly futile and useless?" This remark made everyone think seriously about the primitive ceremony which had no significance in the age of Nanak and least so in our own time.⁸

Then, Guru Nanak sang passionate songs of the One Beloved God and discouraged the worship of *avatars* as gods. "*Avatars*" he said "were human beings, who had attained perfection. They were divine in Spirit and were no doubt sent with a definite mission, but they were human all too human. In

the vast universe of God there were innumerable creatures like the *avatars*. They were not incarnations of God. God is never born."

In the evening Mardana went near a Vaishnava and asked for a little fire from his hearth. The Vaishnava angrily abused Mardana saying: "You *Chandala*, you have polluted my food and cooking square by stepping into it. Get away."⁹ He prepared the cooking square again and started cooking his meals. He wanted to offer this food to a very holy man first. He extended an invitation to Guru Nanak whose influence and popularity at *Baisakhi* fair had spread like wild fire. Said Guru Nanak: "I would have certainly accepted the food, but it is polluted. So I hesitate to eat it." The Vaishnava was taken aback and explained that he had carefully prepared the cooking square and not permitted any low caste *Chandala* (pariah) to come near it. Guru Nanak said, "The cooking square was quite pure before you entered it. It is your presence in it O Vishnava, that has polluted it because along with you the four most despicable *Chandalas* (your inner vices) have entered the cooking square. And all the food prepared by you is impure, no matter how pure a Vaishnava you claim to be."¹⁰

*Perversity of the mind is like a low caste woman,
Lack of compassion is like a butcher woman;
The desire to find fault with others
Is like a scavenger woman,
The sin of wrath is like an utter outcaste;
What use it is to draw line around your kitchen.
If four vile vices keep your company
Make practice of truth your disciple,*

*Make the practice of virtue your cooking square;
Make meditation of the Holy Name
The ceremonial cleaning of your body;
Sayeth Nanak : Those alone shall be deemed good and pure
That walk not in the way of sin.*

Guru Nanak : *Srī Rāg*

All the *sannyasis*, *yogis*, *brahmcharis* now came to Guru Nanak for spiritual discourses and received enlightenment. Raja Vijai Prakash, the ruler of Garhwal under whose jurisdiction Hardwar was situated, also came to pay homage to Guru Nanak. After receiving the Master's blessings he invited him to his state, but the Guru expressed his inability to go at the moment as he was planning to tour India for missionary work.¹¹ The Raja was anxious to know the caste of the Guru, and the reason why he had renounced his household life and adopted such unorthodox ideals as his creed. Guru Nanak explained to him that caste system was the artificial creation of Brahmins. Men were born equal and no group of people had the right to condemn a section of society as low by birth and claim racial, clannish, or any other purity. He judged men by their character and virtues and not by their claims of high birth. The Master further explained that he had not renounced a householder's life. He had his wife and children. He had a mission to be completed and for that he had left home for some period. He had not renounced his family. The only thing he had renounced was love of wealth and earthly power. Raja Vijai Prakash was deeply impressed.¹²

All parts of Kurukshetra

Guru Nanak then came to the historical place of

pilgrimage at Kurukshetra where people from all parts of India had come on the auspicious day of solar eclipse. The first to meet the Master was a group of *siddha yoga* who held a discourse with him in the hope of winning him to the cause of *yoga*. Guru Nanak explained what true *yoga* was, and so profound was the influence of his sermon, that they bowed before him acknowledging him as the truly enlightened Master.

To his great surprise Guru Nanak came to know that a Brahmin whose real name was Nanu, claimed to be Guru Nanak, the prophet of his times. He carried a copy of *Bhavish Purana* (the Hindu Book of Prophecies), which stated that in *kaliyuga* a great prophet by the name of Guru Nanak will be born.¹³ Pundit Nanu was no doubt a great scholar. In debates and discussions he had defeated every scholar that challenged him and before Guru Nanak arrived at Kurukshetra he was respected as Nanak, the Messiah of Kaliyuga. Guru Nanak was amused to hear about the pretensions of this Brahmin scholar. He sat apart and sang a few songs to the tune of Mardana's rebeck. A crowd gathered around the Master.

Prince Jagat Rai, son of Raja Amrit Rai of Hansi state, came there with his family. He had been driven out of his state by his enemy and now he begged the Guru to pray for him and bless him with the restoration of his kingdom.¹⁴ Guru Nanak asked him to prepare some food and distribute it to the poor. There were free kitchens for high caste people but there was none for the poor and the low caste visitors. The prince confessed that he did not have any money. A deer which he had hunted on his way to Kurukshetra was the only thing he could offer.

Guru Nanak asked him to cook the meat of the deer and distribute it to those who could eat.¹⁵ Firewood was lighted and the flesh of the deer began to be cooked in a large cooking pot.

To prepare meat during the solar eclipse on the sacred grounds of Kurukshestra was considered an act of sacrilege. The eyes of all orthodox pundits now turned to Guru Nanak. Under the leadership of Pundit Nanu (the impostor Nanak) all of them came to the Master to condemn his unholy act.¹⁶ Guru Nanak pointed out that in the classical age horses and other animals were sacrificed on auspicious occasions and their meat was cooked and eaten by the Brahmins.¹⁷ From the very seed and egg from which human beings are born to human bodies, every thing is made of flesh. All human relationships centre around the flesh. Commenting on the hypocrisy of the Brahmins who shunned eating meat, but did not hesitate to suck the blood of innocent people, Guru Nanak said :

*Only fools wrangle about eating or not eating meat.
They ignore the truth: the way of right actions;
They know not what is flesh and what is non-flesh,
They differentiate not the food that was sinful,
And the food that was connected with piety.
In ancient days the Hindus killed rhinoceros
And offered its flesh in oblation at the sacrificial fires,
The Brahminical Hindus today have become man-eaters;
They suck the blood of the innocent masses,
Through most cruel and pitiless exploitation.
But at the very sight of meat,
They hold their noses and show contempts for flesh.*

*They are morally and spiritually blind,
Who cannot see or act upon what is right.*

Guru Nanak : *Rāg Malār*

"Banish cruelty and hypocrisy from your minds", said Guru Nanak. Merely vegetarianism would not bring you any salvation.¹⁷ All the Brahmins begged the Guru to *initiate* them as his disciples. And according to Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sākhī*, Guru Nanak baptised them with *Charan-pahul amrit*.¹⁸ A Sikh temple was established which survives to this day and Kurukshetra became an important centre of Guru Nanak's faith."

Meeting with Sheikh Sharaf of Panipat

On his way to Delhi, Guru Nanak stopped at Panipat where he attracted the attention of Sheikh Tatihri, disciple of the Sufi Saint Sheikh Sharaf. Sheikh Tatihri reported to his Master, his impression about Guru Nanak, which he had formed after a short conversation with the Guru.

Sheikh Sharaf came to meet Guru Nanak and the first question he asked him was : "If you have become a *fakir* why do you keep hair ? A clean shaven head was the first major symbol of a Hindu or Muslim *fakir* who has renounced the world." To this Guru Nanak replied : "I have not renounced the world. I have renounced all that detracts me from God and Truth. Merely shaving the head does not clean the mind of the vices that are in it".¹⁹ Then Sheikh Sharaf asked, "To which faith does your garb belong. What is the symbolic meaning of all the things you wear ?" Guru Nanak replied : "My garb is not an expression of my ideals. If at all it reflects anything,

it shows that I do not believe in any distinguishing garb. While in the court I had to dress like a courtier. While going to holy places I have to dress like holy men. I change this garb according to the needs of the place and country. I am not attached to any particular garb.

Sheikh Sharaf then turned the discussion on to serious questions of spiritual life. He was now anxious to know from Guru Nanak how enlightenment could be achieved. He prayed day and night for a glimpse of the Light of God, but had not achieved much. He formulated his eager thirst into the following verse.

Sheikh Sharaf:

*I ever ask scholars and sages,
How and when can the Beloved be met ?*

Guru Nanak :

*Be not in haste, O Shah Sharaf
One pang cannot become a passion;²⁰
Be not mad to have a glimpse of Him.*

And then continued Guru Nanak : "The life of the spirit should grow as naturally as a fruit. A fruit is at first green; it then becomes yellow and sour and then it becomes sweet and red. This is how the soul should mature naturally towards perfection. At first there is the pang of separation and the seeker becomes pale and sad. Then he achieves perfection. His face glows with the Light of wisdom."²¹

When the discussion turned on the study of scriptures and Sufi doctrines, Guru Nanak said, "A

seeker of truth should not be blindly attached to any of the four ancient scriptures, either of Hindu religion or of the semitic faiths. He should not be a dogmatic follower of the *shariat* (Law). He should tread the path of *tarikāt* (doctrines) and *ma'rifat* (experience) with faith and confidence. He should be pure within and righteous in his outward deeds. Such a Sufi can easily enter the Lord's inner Castle."²²

Sheikh Sharaf then asked: "How can a man be released from the wheel of *karma*." Guru Nanak replied, "All the chains of *karma* break when one lives in the love and grace of God. If one gives up all attachment to everything other than God, the mind attains its poise and balance and the seeker finds himself on the highway to truth. One should give up cruelty, oppression and exploitation of the poor before he walks on the path of truth."²³ Sheikh Sharaf bowed his head in reverence to the Guru and accepted him as his preceptor.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *tāñ kãe dekhan, sir de upar do gaj dā sãfã badhã hoyã hai,*
ik cãdar ute te ik cãdar ted ik dũdh gaj dā sãfã hath vic.
They saw that Guru Nanak was wearing a turban about two yards long, and had a sheet on his body and another one around his legs. He also carried a scarf one and a half yard long.
J.B. (LI) p. 41
2. All old MSS of Bala's *Janam Sãkhĩs* give the incident in considerable details.
J.B. p. 141-3
3. *tāñ Guru Nanak pehar rāt rehandi bãharvãr isnãn, karan vãste gae ãhe, Jãe kãr dekhan tãñ koi khũh bhĩ*

vehañdā nahī, tñ sri Guru ji de mukh thī vacan hoyā,
jo ethai thān tobā bhi koi nahi, jo eh khabar Rāe Bular
ne suni jo tape de mūho tobe dā avāj nikliyā hai, aj asīn
nihāl hoe hān tan Rai Bular ne kihā, ethai tobā khato
tape ji de nau dā. Rae ne Babeji de nām dā tālāo lavāyā.
Three hours before dawn when Guru Nanak went out
to take his bath, he found that no well was working. He
then said that it is a pity there is no pond here where one
could take his bath. When Rai Bular came to know
that Guru Nanak, the sage mystic (tāpā), has expressed
his desire for a pond he was extremely happy and eager
to fulfil the least wish of Guru Nanak. He immediately
had a beautiful pond constructed and named it after the
Master.

J.B. (LI) p. 144; MSS

4. Some *Janam Sakhīs* give Mardana's name as his only companion. Most of the *Janam Sakhīs* give the name of Bala, Saido, Gheo and others. The Bangali MSS at Orissa gives the name of Sarang.
5. phir Bābe ākhiā, grehstī dā bhekh tirthān te nibhdā nahi,
so tñ bhi te mai bhi udāsi dā bhekh kar laiai. Sir te
topian pā laiai ar gal vic cole pālae teḍ, langote mutke
ban lae, ar paīrin khadavān pā laiān.

J.B.S p. 134, MSS 144

cale prabhu pun is sidh kar kai,
abdhūt bekh tan bikhe dharke,
kesar tilak bhāl mai lālā,
sir par urdh kulā bisālā,
bhagvañ ambar ipar linā,
nīlo teḍ lapetan kinā,
māl bisāl kanṭh mai pāi,
ik rumāl kar ma suhāi,
ik pag panhi nok bad ik pag kauñs tikāe.
Hindu Turk na lakh pare, aiso bhekh banāe.
Santokh Singh : *Nanak, Prakash* adh, 21, 70-3.

GURU NANAK GOES EAST

6. Bāba ji Gangā ko cale ar ramte ramte Baisākh ke mele jāe pahunce.
J.M.S. p. 200
Bābā Nānak Gangā tirath ke upar baithā thā;
age purab lagā Baisākh kā. lok bahut cār kut kā juḍia hai,
J. Mb. p. 117
7. Lahore ke najīk hamārā ghar haī, ar khetar haī; mere, khetar me, mīh kadī nahī paḍyā, mai us khetar ko pāni, detā hun; tab oe lok has paḍe koī eh bāvlā hi.
J. Mb. p. 118
8. J.M.S. p. 210, J. Mb. p. 118.
9. Mardāne ne unā toñ ag mañgī tāñ oh krodh kar māran uṭhe ke malech dī dristī nāl sadā cauñkā bhrist to ho gayā hai,
T.G.K. p.
10. jicar tusiñ na sau caḍhde cauke ticar caukā sucā sī, tusāñ. caḍhoyān sāth caukā bhitā; tab Guru Nanak ne kihā tusāñ caḍhdyān nāl nic caḍhe; tab oni ākhyā, asān tāñ nā āyā, dis, nic caḍhdyān; tab Guru Bābe ākhyā, aje tusāñ hī nāl baiṭhe hain, maino disde hain, tusāñ no nahñ disde.
J. Mb. p. 119
11. Bābe dā jas sunke Garhwal de rājā Vijai Prakāsh ne Bābe dā darsan kar puchiā, tumārī kya jāt hai ar fakīr kioñ hoe ho?
T.G.K. p. 74
12. ibid.
13. Gyan Singh in his *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa* says on p. 26, that the prophecy is found in the 28th chapter of *Purva khanda* of *Bhavisha Purāna*. It also says that the Sikhs will rule for a short period and then lose their kingdom. Then after some years they will rule for 350 years. The prayer of the Sikhs' *rajkarē ga Khalsa*' is possibly based on this deep faith in their political destiny.

14. Amrit Rāi Hañsivāle de bete Rāja Jagat Rāi ne mrig mār ke jo āndā si rihnañ di samagrī samet bhetā rakh ke arj kītī.

T.G.K. p. 74

Rāni ne ardās kītī sade sarīk parbal pae han ate sānū des vicoñ kadh ditā hai, tusī kirpā kāro tāñ asīñ pher des vic jāe vasīe.

J.M.S. (L) p. 135

Bala's *Janam sākhis* say that he was Raja of Patna J. B. (LI) p. 535.

15. ibid.

16. tāñ Bābe kehyā tusin sābhe pundit kurkhetar de ikaṭhe hovo tad mai tuhade nāl caracā karnā hāñ, tāñ sabh, pundit kurkhetar de ikaṭhe ho, ate, Nānū Chand jo badā pundit sī ho bhī vic āe bhiṭhā.

J.M.S. p. 136

17. A fairly complete account of the sacrifice of the horse such as it prevailed in the Vedic times is to be found in hymn 152 of the first *mandala* of the Rig Veda. The meat was roasted and boiled while the soul of the horse was supposed to go to the gods.

Romesh Chander Dutt : *Early Hindu Civilization* p. 37

18. Guru Nanak did not make meat eating a creed. as some try to interpret. He made it plain that eating or abstaining from taking meat cannot be a means of salvation. What is necessary is purity of heart.

19. tab jete pundit, rikisar ar rāje the ān carnī lage; tin ko saje caran kā aṅguṭhā dhoe kar carnāmrit diā ar tin ko satnām dā ar bhau bhagat kā updeś kiā.

J.M.S. p. 185

Meharban in his *Janamākhi* says that the pundits of Hard. war also asked to be initiated into Sikhism and they were

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initiated. tab Guru Baba Nanak ji kirpal bheya, kirpā kar
kar un ko dīkhyā dīnī, J. Mb. 123.

20. N.C. p. 56

21. nit puchāñ pundit joisī
pīa kabi milāvā hoeśī,
Shah Sharaf na thīo utāvalā.
ik cot na thivan cāvulā.
kioñ daraśn ān bhulābāvlā.

J.M.S. p. 186

22. cahu kitābā dī kān chade, śarah sariāt na mani, tarīkat
ma'rfat dā faca rakhe, bāhroñ sahī androñ lāl, Gurūjī
Gurūjī kaha, tau chetī mehal mai pahuñco ge.

J.B. (LI) p. 524

23. phir Sharaf puchā

karmā te mukt kaise hoi dā hai ? Gurūjī kahā; khudae
dī mehar hovai, dūjā bhāv chadai tadoñ rah oḍak dā
pāvai, eh rehanī rahe tai man darust rehañda hai; jor
julam chado halemi pakḍo.

ibid.

CHAPTER 10

FROM DELHI TO BENARAS



AFTER THE DEATH of Mohammed Tughlaq in 1412 A.D. Delhi was without a royal Master. Such government as existed was conducted by the Afghan Amir Daulat Khan Lodhi¹, who had by now become a disciple of Guru Nanak. Daulat Khan Lodhi, however, did not assume the insignia of kingship. Khizar Khan Saiyad seized power by overthrowing Daulat Khan Lodhi in 1451 A.D. Bahlol Lodhi, who was born posthumously in extraordinary circumstances, succeeded his uncle and father-in-law in the fief of Sirhind. The entire area covering Dipalpur, Lahore, Panipat, and Sirhind was under his control. He ascended the throne of Delhi in 1451 A.D.²

Assumed or real Bahlol was a man of extremely simple habits. "In social meetings", says the author of *Tarikhe Daudi*, "he never sat on the throne and would not allow his nobles to stand; and even during public audience he did not occupy the throne but seated himself upon the carpet." He maintained brotherly intercourse with all his chiefs and nobles. If anyone was ill, he would himself go and attend on him.³ He was succeeded in 1488 by his third son, Nizam Khan, under the title of Sikander Shah Lodhi.

Sikander Shah Lodhi (1489-1517 A.D.) was born of a Hindu mother, and was anxious to marry a Hindu princess. His attitude towards a vast majority of his subjects appear to be rather baffling and inexplicable, for it was bound to prejudice the

realization of his political aims. However, his regard for the well being of his subjects, his benevolence and love for justice ushered an era of peace and prosperity in which trade and agriculture flourished. Grains and other goods were available in such abundance that a man of moderate means could also live in comfort. The cultivation of the arts of peace by happy and contented minds brought about a cultural renaissance which transcended commercial barriers. The Sultan was a poet himself, and his bounteous appreciation of learning attracted scholars from distant lands to his court, where they received every encouragement.

Bigotry was his chief weakness, and he hated the Hindus bitterly. Even as a prince he had been dissuaded from raiding the Hindu tanks at Thanesar by a verdict of the famous divine, Mian Abdulla of Ajhodhan who had also ruled against the demolition of non-Muslims places of worship. Sikander, as a king, frequently razed the temples to the ground and erected mosques and public utility buildings in their places. This is illustrated by his behaviour at Mandril, Utgir and Narwar. At Mathura he prevented the Hindus from bathing at their sacred ghats or having themselves shaved. The stones of broken images of Hindu idols brought from Nagarkot were given to butchers to be used as weights. He imprisoned and tortured Kabir. In conformity to his opposition to idolatory, Sikander stopped some of the semi-idolatorous practices that had grown up among Muslims also, such as the visits of the tombs of the saints by Muslim women and carrying of *taziana* during Muharram. That he was ready at one stage to destroy even the beautiful mosque built by the Sharqi kings in order to obliterate

rate the memory of his foes, but was held back by the *ulemās*, shows that the occasional fury of his temper did contribute to his intolerance.⁴

Guru Nanak and Emperor Sikander Shah Lodhi

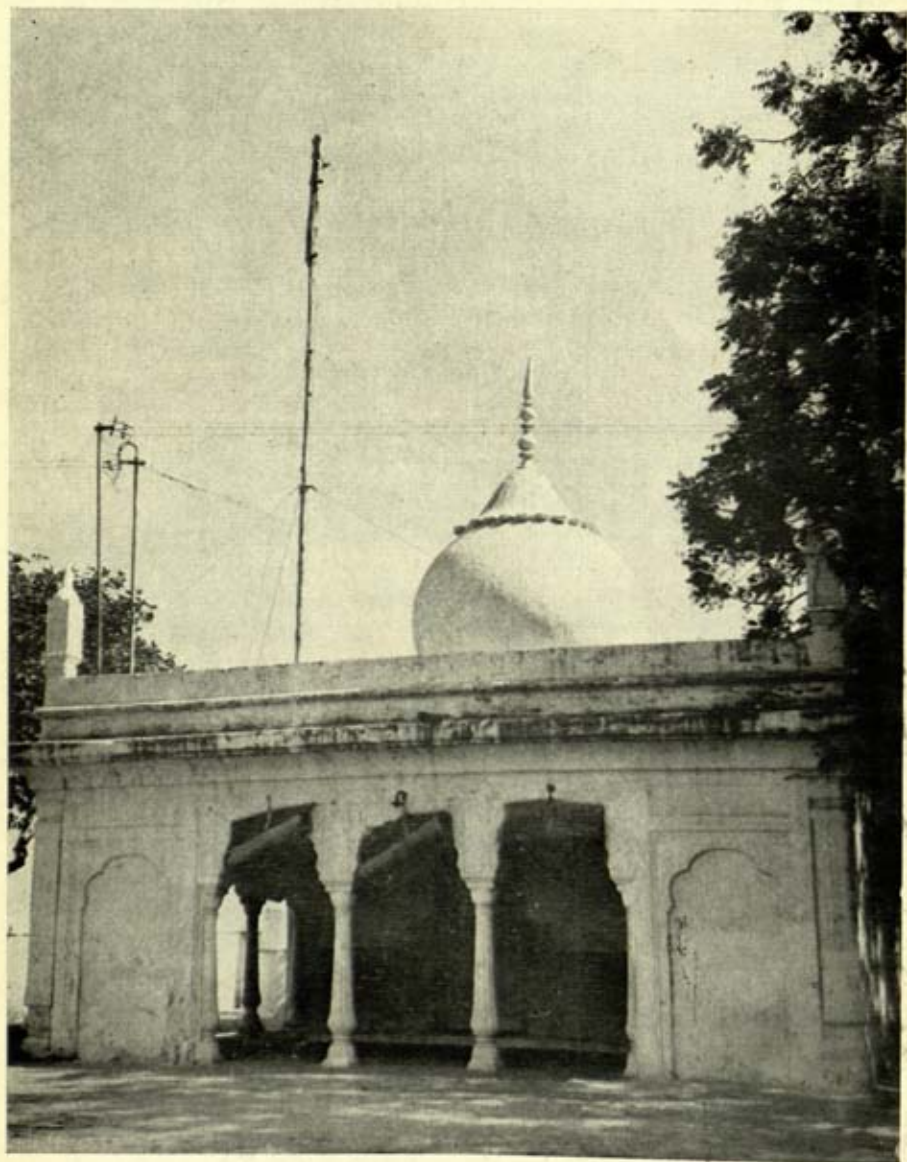
Guru Nanak was twenty when Sikander Shah Lodhi came to the throne and he was thirty-four when he set out on his first Punjab tour. Two years later, at the age of thirty-six or so, he set out for his eastern tour in the year 1505 A.D. along with his bard, Mardana, his devoted servant, Bhai Bala, and a few more disciples.⁵ On the *Baisakhi* festival of the year 1505 he was at Hardwar. Sometime in May he was at Kurukshetra. In June 1505 or thereabout he reached Delhi.

Guru Nanak camped on the outskirts of Delhi, in a garden now situated on the Grand Trunk Road, outside Sabzimandi. People flocked in large numbers to pay homage to the new prophet, who delivered sermons in music and poetry. They not only began to worship Guru Nanak, and brought precious offerings for him, but bestowed countless gifts on his bard Mardana wherever he went. Guru Nanak distributed all the offerings he received among the poor and the needy. The garden in which he rested became a shrine, and a haven of peace for pilgrims and wayfarers. The man to whom the garden belonged changed it into Guru Nanak's shrine. The highway travellers rested here in the summer heat, and were served with cold water from the well, and food from the kitchen. Guru Nanak appointed one of his devotees as the missionary incharge of the shrine which later came to be known as *Nānak Piyāo* (shrine of slaking thirst). Here Guru Nanak slaked the thirst of many wanderers in the wilderness.⁶



The Shrine of Nanak Pyao, Delhi

facing p. 134



Majnu Tilla, Delhi

One day Guru Nanak saw the owners of an elephant crying over the dead animal. The Master pointed out that the elephant was not dead, and he helped them to revive the apparently dead elephant. A few days later Emperor Sikander Shah came to know that a non-Muslim *fakir*, who had won the admiration of all the Hindu and Muslim divines of Delhi had brought a dead elephant to life. When one of his elephants died, he sent for Guru Nanak and ordered him to bring to life the dead animal. Nanak refused to do so. He was immediately imprisoned. Guru Nanak's life in the Emperor's prison and his deep sympathy for the suffering prisoners, had a great moral and spiritual influence on the prison officials. They informed the Emperor that Guru Nanak was not an idolator and he possessed some unusual spiritual influence.⁷ On July 3, 1505, when Guru Nanak was probably still in Sikander Lodhi's prison, a great earthquake shook the capital. It was in fact so terrible, writes the chronicler, that mountains were overturned, and lofty edifices were dashed to the ground: the living thought that the day of judgment had come, and the dead the day of resurrection⁸. Coming events did cast their shadows in advance in these terrible portents. Many thought that the new *fakir*, Nanak, who had been imprisoned by the Emperor, had cursed the king and the empire. This or some equally frightening event, or perhaps, the strong intercession of the Sufi saints of Chisti Order, who had strong influence on the court, shook the mind of the Emperor, and he sought the Master's forgiveness. On Guru Nanak's request all prisoners were released.⁹

Majnu, the Recluse

On the banks of Jamuna, there rested a Muslim

fakir, who lived a lonely life of prayer and penitence. The vigils and fasts which he kept made him so thin and his yearning for a glimpse of God made him so mad after the unknown Beloved that people called this Muslim *fakir* by the name of Majnu, the Persian lover, whose name became symbolic of the intense love in the marriage of romance and mysticism in Sufi literature. When Guru Nanak went to him Majnu achieved the supreme enlightenment and he became a devout disciple of the Guru¹⁰. His hermitage, situated on the banks of Jamuna, came to be known as Majnu-ka-Tilla.¹¹ The grand personality of Majnu attracted many people and his spirituality and dedication to Guru Nanak made his shrine an outstanding missionary centre of Sikh faith. Many Sufis, *yogis*, *bairāgis*, and saints of Delhi came to Guru Nanak and held spiritual discourses with him, conspicuous among those who came to pay homage and were deeply influenced by Guru Nanak, was the *sajjadanishin* of Nizamuddin Auliya.¹² From Delhi Guru Nanak moved on to Pilibhit, where there was one of the most important centres of Kanpatta *yogis* of Gorakh Nath school of thought.

Gorakhmata Becomes Nanakmata

A festival to commemorate the memory of Shiva was being held at Gorakhmata, a place twenty miles from Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh. All the *Yogis* were trekking their way to Gorakhmata. Prominent *yogis* of various schools had reached the place to show their feats and powers of *yoga* and establish their supremacy among the *yogis*. Guru Nanak also reached the place with his disciples. He sat under a tree the leaves of which were very dry. It is said that the leaves of the tree turned green during Guru Nanak's stay there.¹³

The divine personality of Guru Nanak attracted everyones attraction. The leader of the *Yogis* named Bharathari tried to show occult powers to impress Guru Nanak. But at night when a severe storm came they were surprised to find that the fires of all the *yogis* were extinguished, while the fire of Nanak was still burning. Some *yogis* tried to uproot the tree under which Guru Nanak was sitting with their occult powers. Guru Nanak raised his hand to undo their occult powers, and the *yogis* could not perform the contemplated feat. Legend has it, that the leaves of this tree assumed the shape of the hand. This distinguishing feature of the leaves which a sceptical eye may not read as the impression of the hand is still there.¹⁴

All the leading *yogis* then hoisted their flag in front of Guru Nanak's camp, challenging him either to accept the superiority of *yoga* and its powers and become their disciple or defeat them by showing the superiority of his ideals, in which case they would lower their flag and become their disciples and even hand over the historical place to him. Guru Nanak accepted the challenge and raised his own flag symbolising his faith in the Word of God.¹⁵ We do not know what type of a flag it was.

The debate started. Guru Nanak first answered their questions. Then he started his counter-attack giving his views about the *yoga* practices of Gorakhnath school in the light of his own knowledge and experience of truth. He said:

*Yoga lies not in wearing a patched coat,
Nor in staff, nor in besmearing the body with ashes:
Yoga consists not in wearing earrings,*

GURU NANAK : FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

*Nor in shaving the head clean.
There is no yoga in blowing the horn.
Amidst temptations abide in God;
This is the true path of yoga.
Yoga lies not in mere talk and discussions;
He who sees the one in all.
And sees all as equal,
Know him to be a true yogi.*

* * *

*Yoga is not achieved outside oneself,
In the cremation grounds and grave-yards;
You find no yoga in drug-strophied minds.
Nor by wandering to places of pilgrimages.*

* * *

*Verily the practise of yoga is this :
To die to one's self, while living,
To hear the unstruck music within,
Without the blowing of the horn;
And to reach the spiritual stage of fearlessness;
Amidst temptations abide in God.
This will lead you to true yoga.*

Guru Nanak; *Rāg Sūhī* p. 730

After hours of discussion Guru Nanak's philosophy and mysticism of the Word (*śabad*) overpowered the occult yoga of the *siddhas*. Some notorious *yogis* continued to play some tricks with their occult powers but their attempt to belittle the powers of Guru Nanak rebounded on them like a boomerang. The elder *yogis* were so deeply impressed that they bagged the Guru to initiate them as their disciples and con-

tinue to stay there as their leader. Guru Nanak initiated most of them as his disciples. All the *yogis* being serious seekers of truth, were so intensely influenced by Guru Nanak's *sahajya yoga* (natural *yoga* or *yoga* without self-mortification) that they now changed the age old name of their shrine from Gorakhmata to Nanakmata, the shrine of Guru Nanak's faith.

A few *yogis* who wished to enjoy the Master's company followed him in his itinerary. Guru Nanak camped under a soapnut tree, about twenty miles from Nanakmata. When Mardana and some *yogis* felt hungry, Guru Nanak asked them to take some soapnuts from the branch under which they were sitting. Soapnuts are generally very bitter but they found those soapnuts to be sweet. Anxious to carry such rare specimens of soapnuts with him, a *yogi* climbed the tree and started plucking the soapnuts. When he tasted some of them he found them to be very bitter. To his surprise he found that only the soapnuts of the branch under which the Master was sitting had turned sweet. Upto this day this historic tree grows sweet soapnuts on the branch under which Guru Nanak sat and bitter soapnuts on other branches.¹⁶

Guru Nanak at Ayudhia and Benaras

On the way to Benaras, Guru Nanak stopped for a few days at first at Allahabad and then at Ayudhia. The pundits of Ayudhia gathered around Nanak and asked him to define the true Guru. "Broadly speaking," said Guru Nanak, "there are three types of gurus. One type is the *pundit-guru*, who had knowledge but no spirituality. They preach a lot but practise nothing. Whoever meets them gets

some knowledge but no spiritual enlightenment or peace of mind. It is like the learned blind leading the ignorant blind. The second type of guru is the *yogi-guru*. He is a practical man who abandons himself to innumerable *yogic* practices but lacks knowledge of higher spiritual life. They are sometimes able to liberate their own souls, but they are not able to liberate others or show the true path to others. The *yogi-gurus* are the anti-thesis of the *pundit-gurus*, as they lack knowledge. Like a cripple, they may swim across a river but they cannot save others.¹⁷ The third type is the sage-guru (*maha-purush-guru*) who have knowledge and spiritual wisdom. They practise what they preach. They are able to impart divine light to others. They are the true saviours of the world.¹⁸

The pundits of Ayudhya asked Guru Nanak: "Master, some people become monks, others perform severe penance and practise self-mortification, still others keep fast, and wander in forests and go to places of pilgrimages. Will they ever attain peace and enlightenment?"¹⁹ "All these efforts," said Guru Nanak, "when used as an end in themselves, misdirect the energies of man and he wanders away from true spirituality and enlightenment. The highest enlightenment is attained by the Word of God. Whoever contemplates the Name of God attains the sublimest spiritual state."²⁰

Guru Nanak at Benaras

Guru Nanak then went to Benaras where he first rested in a place now called Guru Nanak's *Sangat*. The Benaras of his times, as it is now, was a labyrinth of streets which linked temple to temple and which in themselves were thickly strewn with shrines and

altars. In every shrine, divinity was honoured in a special way and from a special aspect. The images that were worshipped and adored ranged from the image of Shiva and Ganesha, the elephant headed protector of earthly success.

Leading pundits came to show their theological and metaphysical wisdom. Chaturdas, the scholar who was adept in all branches of knowledge wondered why Guru Nanak had given up the Hindu way of life. His holy garb was unlike that of any Hindu sect. He did not worship or carry any stone-god. He did not wear the necklace of sacred basil. Guru Nanak replied :

*O Brahmin, of what use is the worship of stone-god?
Why display your piety by wearing necklace of sweet
basil?*

*Why waste your water by irrigating barren lands?
Why try to plaster a frail mud wall? Such is idolatory.
Make the Name of God thy raft of salvation.
Seek the mercy of the Compassionate one.*

Guru Nanak: *Basant* p. 1171

Guru Nanak asked Chaturdas to turn inward for the indwelling spirit of God resides within the heart of man. No external aid is necessary for reaching it. Faith, purity of mind, and spiritual effort reveal Him within us. Chaturdas and innumerable other Hindus of Benaras gave up idolatory and became the initiated disciples of the Guru.²¹ Guru Nanak established his church there which is still known as Guru Nanak's *Sangat*. It became a very important centre of missionary work and remained so during the lifetime of his successors. According to Meharban's

Janam Sākhī, Guru Nanak met a Raja named Hari Nath to whom he preached about the virtues of silence and action.²² Raja Hari Nath was so deeply influenced by the spirituality of Guru Nanak that he was prepared to renounce the world. Guru Nanak said to him, "Listen Hari Nath, I do not want you to renounce your kingdom and become a beggar. I shall be happy if you achieve the supreme spiritual state while doing your duty as a ruler. Contemplate the Name of God and rule the people with justice and compassion. My blessings are with you. You will attain liberation while doing your duty as a ruler of this state."²³

Did Guru Nanak Meet Kabir ?

At Benaras Guru Nanak must have met some prominent successors of Kabir, from whom he acquired the earliest and most authentic writings of Kabir, which were preserved by the second and third Guru in the form of early recensions named *Bānī pothīs* (Books of Hymns), from which the *Ādi Granth* was subsequently compiled by Guru Arjan. It is highly doubtful that he ever met Kabir. Before we come to any conclusion it would be worthwhile to study the historical evidence available. There are only three historical records which vaguely suggest that Guru Nanak met Kabir :

(1) *Meharban's Janam Sākhī* (seventeenth century) This *Janam Sākhī* was condemned by Guru Arjan as extremely misleading.²⁴ Apostle Bhai Gurdas criticised the author, his father, and their followers as *Mīnās* (high-way robbers). They were called high-way robbers because they plagiarated and pirated the hymns of the Gurus by producing their distorted versions in their own name, and they also misappro-

priated the national wealth of the Sikh community and set up rival guruship. After a close study of this *Janam Sākhī* I find that it provides very useful information on Guru Nanak's stay at Sultanpur, but it tends to differ from other *Janam Sākhīs* on all other historical events, and replaces them from imaginary and fanciful stories. After every four or five chapters he takes Nanak to heavens and records lengthy imaginary dialogues between God and Guru Nanak. So it is doubtful whether the dialogue given between Nanak and Kabir by Meharban is historical. It may be imaginary like many such dialogues recorded between God and Nanak. We will examine Meharban's statement in the light of near contemporary historical records.

According to *Meharban's Janam Sākhī*, when Guru Nanak reaches Benaras, Kabir comes to meet him and Guru Nanak stands up to receive the great saint. The following dialogue between them is reported by Meharban.

Kabir: Good God, please be seated. I am not so great that a man of your eminence should stand up to receive me.²³

Nanak: When a god comes, how can one remain seated?²⁴

Kabir: O no, no; thou art a *jagat-gurū* (world-teacher) and I am thy slave.²⁵

Nanak: Blessed am I that I have met you.

Kabir: Thou hast been sent to save the world, O Nanak.

Nanak: I am not worried about the world. All I wish is that I may not forget God.

Kabir: Yet the world will acknowledge you as the supreme prophet.

Nanak: O Kabir, thou serveth God. Thy deeds are truthful, thy mind is one with the pure Being (*nirāñjan*).

Kabir: From whom did you receive the divine light? Who is your Guru?

Nanak: I met the perfect Being, the supreme Person and embodiment of Truth and have received enlightenment from Him. It is only a perfect Guru, illumined by God, who can save the world. Guru Nanak and Kabir greeted each other and parted.

Meharban, however, suggests that Kabir accepted Nanak as the *Jagat-guru* (world-teacher), and a prophet spiritually far exalted than him. He does not even vaguely suggest that Kabir was the guru of Nanak.

According to Meharban, Guru Nanak left for his missionary tour in 1506 A.D. If the first Punjab tour took him about a year then he must have reached Benaras in 1507 or 1508 A.D. The generally accepted dates of death of Kabir are 1492 A.D., and 1498 A.D. Kabir as a disciple and contemporary of Ramanaṇḍa could have lived upto the year 1506—1508 A.D., only if we accept the total age of Kabir to be over 150 years, which no historian believes.

In another chapter Meharban seriously contradicts himself. When Guru Nanak reaches Ayudhya, the Bhaktas Jaidev, Kabir, Ravidas, Namdev, Trilochan, and Sain descend from heaven to pay homage to Guru Nanak, the saviour of the world. He takes them to be dead and living in heaven, and they all descend to the earth in their astral bodies.²⁷ After describing Guru Nanak's discourse with Kabir at Benaras,

Meharban takes Guru Nanak to heaven (*sac-khand*) and describes a lengthy dialogue between God and Guru Nanak, which closely resembles his imaginary dialogue between Nanak and Kabir. So in this *Janam Sākhī*, at times, it is difficult to say where history ends and a legend begins.

2. *Gyan Singh's Tawīrikh Guru Khālsā*: late nineteenth century) Gyan Singh also says that Kabir met Guru Nanak at Benaras. His source of information is "*Nanak Prabodh*" alleged to be written by Dharam Das, a disciple of Kabir. It is doubtful whether Dharam Das ever wrote such a book. Dharam Das stayed at Kashi for a very short period and it is doubtful if ever he was an eye witness to this episode. The first serious error which Gyan Singh makes is, that he says, that Namdev also was at this time at Benaras, and came along with Kabir to meet Nanak. All biographers of Namdev are definite about Namdev's year of birth as 1270 A.D., which is recorded in Namdev's own writings and his date of death as 1350 A.D., for which there is overwhelming historical evidence.²⁸

The meeting between Nanak and Kabir is described by Gyan Singh as follows: "When Nanak went to meet Kabir at Kashi (Benaras), the saint had gone to Raghunathpura to meet his disciple Bijli Khan. So when Guru Nanak set out from Benaras to meet Kabir, the saint left Raghunathpura to meet Nanak. Both of them met at the village Pusa in the *Katrik* 1558 B.S. October 1501 A.D. They held illuminating spiritual discussion and stayed together for seven days at Pusa²⁹."

The only source of information on Bijli Khan is the *Archaeological Survey of India*, according to which Bijli

Khan was the Nawab of Maghar and a great devotee of the saint. After the death of Kabir he built a cenotaph at Maghar in 1450 A.D. on which the date of death of Kabir is recorded as 1448 A.D. (1505 B.S.) Nawab Fidai Khan repaired it in the year 1667 A.D. In view of these established historical facts the statement of Gyan Singh, alleged to be based on the basis of "*Nanak Prabodh*" by Dharam Das, that Bijli Khan belonged to Raghunathpura and that Kabir met Nanak at Pusa in 1501 A.D. is extremely doubtful.

Handāliya's Janam Sākhī (eighteenth century) Handal was a disciple and missionary of Guru Amar Das. His descendants who continued missionary work became very corrupt in the third and fourth generation. Their characterless activities were resented by the Sikhs so much, that the Khalsa panth disowned them, and condemned them as the enemy of the Guru (*guru-drohī*). This is the word used for them by Bhai Mani Singh in his letter to Guru Gobind Singh's wife, Mata Sundari, immediately after the arrest of Baba Banda. They were instrumental in the mass massacre of Sikh people including women and children.³⁰ They were the first who started propagating that Kabir was the guru of Guru Nanak, and they concocted stories to prove that Nanak was a humble sinner compared to Kabir and introduced imaginary dialogues and stories to every *Janam Sākhī* they could get hold of. It became difficult for the masses to distinguish between an authentic and corrupted *Janam Sākhī*.

Westcot and most of the Hindi writers have used only the Handāliya *Janam Sākhīs* of Guru Nanak to prove that Kabir was the guru of Nanak.³¹ They have never referred to any other historical record. To give importance to this story they have even dis-

missed the idea that Kabir ever met Ramanand, although there is overwhelming evidence to this effect.³²

The Handaliyas corrupted every copy of Bala's *Janam Sakhī* and Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sakhī*, they could lay their hands on. That is why all old manuscript copies of these *Janam Sakhīs* differ from the later versions. The older the manuscript the less corrupt it is. A scholar who takes pains to make a comparative study of these old manuscripts of *Janam Sakhīs* can very easily detect the amount of distortion and the methods of falsification adopted by these sworn enemies of the Sikh faith.

When Kavi Santokh Singh started writing his monumental work, "*Nānak Prakāsh*", in the year 1835 A.D., he was so pained by the extent of corruption and distortion these *Janam Sakhīs* had suffered, that he warned the readers of his biography not to accept every *Janam Sakhī* as genuine. He says, "A descendant of Handal turned out to be *Rahū*, the evil genius amongst gods, who was responsible for contaminating *amrita* (nectar of gods) and causing dark spots of eclipse on the moon. They threw the original copies of Bala's *Janam Sakhīs* into the river and popularised the copies prepared by these evil mongers. The *Sakhīs* (stories) added by them, says Kavi Santokh Singh were like flies in a milk pudding.³³ So Kavi Santokh Singh tried hard to sift truth from falsehood. It is this *Janam Sakhī* of the Handaliyas, miscalled Bala's *Janam Sakhī* by Karm Singh, which is generally made the basis of the theory that Nanak accepted Kabir as his guru. No old manuscript copy of Bala's *Janam Sakhī* known so far, nor even the litho-print copies, ever mention that Nanak accepted Kabir as his guru. In his book

"*Katik ke Baisakh*" Karam Singh throughout quotes the Handaliyas *Janam Sākhī*s, and on the basis of shocking quotations from it condemns all versions of Bala's *Janam Sākhī*, which he actually never quotes. The highly objectionable quotations given by him are not to be found in any known Bala's *Janam Sākhī*s. Most of the Hindi writers who have written studious literary works on Kabir have accepted the erroneous facts quoted by Westcot, without referring to any authentic record of Sikh history. Thus the historical documents which state that Nanak and Kabir met at Benaras and the Sikh guru accepted Kabir as his guru are highly unconvincing, and self-contradictory.

Historical Records Which Prove that Kabir and Nanak Never Met

(1) *Guru Amar Das* (1479—1574 A.D.) was only ten years younger than *Guru Nanak*. Born in an orthodox Vaishnava family, he went to Hardwar, Benaras and other Hindu places of pilgrimages before he met his spiritual preceptor, *Guru Angad*, the second guru of the Sikhs. He did not meet Kabir at Benaras probably because Kabir was not living, and he did not meet Nanak probably because his orthodox Vaishnava sentiments prevented him from meeting the great prophet who was known for breaking the barriers of his ancestral religion and was liberal enough to welcome Muslim disciples and manners. But it was God's will that he should be the third successor of *Guru Nanak*, and receive divine illumination from his immediate successor. *Guru Amar Das* refers to Kabir as a historical figure of the past :

*Namdev, the tailor,
Kabir, the weaver
Acquired enlightenment.
From the perfect guru.
They understood the Word,
They had knowledge of God;
They gave up pride and caste prejudice.
Men and angels sing their hymns;
Immortal is their spirit.*³⁴

Guru Amar Das, *Sri Rag*, p. 67

Thus, even to Amar Das, who was almost as old as Nanak, Kabir was a historical figure of the past like Namdev. Even after becoming the third Guru of the Sikhs he went to Benaras, Allahabad and saints of all sects paid homage to him. Guru Amar Das' knowledge of Kabir is no doubt first hand as it is acquired from the immediate successors of the saint. It is Guru Amar Das who compiled the earliest manuscripts of the hymns of his predecessors and of saints like Kabir called *Bānī-pothīs*, of which only two are available now, on the basis of which Guru Arjan compiled the *Adi Granth*. No wonder that the majority of the hymns found in *Adi Granth* are not found in any Benaras collection of Kabir's writings. There is a clear indication in the *Adi Granth* that Nanak and Kabir are historically apart.³⁵

(2) *Guru Ram Das* (1534—1581) was five years old when Guru Nanak died. At the age of twenty-five or so he accompanied Guru Amar Das to Benaras and Agra. Earlier he represented Sikhism in the court of Akbar when someone created a suspicion in the mind of the Emperor that the Sikh Gurus were corrupting both Hinduism and Islam. Many people

who met Guru Nanak during his visit to Allahabad might still be living. At least those who were in their thirties when Guru Nanak visited Benaras would at that time be in their sixties.

Guru Ram Das mentions the name of Kabir twice in his writings along with other pre-Nanak saints, and he does so in the context which clearly suggests that Guru Ram Das does not acknowledge Kabir to be a contemporary of Guru Nanak. To show that the Sikh movement, which also has the contemplation of divine Name as the basis of its practical mysticism, is spiritually connected with similar movements in the past, Guru Ram Das mentions the names of prominent Bhaktas of the pre-Nanak era, who achieved the highest mystic state. The names he mentions are Jaideva, Namdeva, Trilochan, Kabir and Ravidas. None of these saints ever met Guru Nanak on the physical plane and none of them is considered associated with Guru Nanak as guru or disciple. Referring to Kabir among the fore-runners of Guru Nanak's school of thought, Guru Ram Das writes :

*In the dark age of Kali,
The substance of divine Name,
Has liberated many saints;
Saved were Jaidev and Namdev,
Saved were Trilochan and Kabir,
Saved was even the cobbler Ravidas.³⁶*

Guru Ram Das, *Mārū* p. 995

*Brahmins , kshatriyas, vaisyas and sudras,
All were liberated on meeting the saint;
Saved were Jaidev, Kabir and Trilochan,*

*And even the chandala Ravidas, a cobbler
Was saved in association with the Saint.³⁷*

Guru Ram Das : *Bilāwal* p. 845

(3) *Guru Arjan* (1563—1606 A.D.) *Guru Arjan* refers to the precursors of *Guru Nanak* in the following hymn. He describes the fundamental virtue and quality of each saint and in the end tells us that *Guru Nanak* was not a mere saint like *Kabir*, *Jaidev*, *Namdev* and others, but illumined from birth and as such an embodiment of His Light. He says :

*Dhanna served God in child-like innocence,
Trilochan became a siddha on meeting a guru;
Beni was enlightened by his guru,
O mind be thou a servant of God.
Jaidev renounced all egoism,
Sain, the barber, was liberated by serving God;
O mind, wander not in wilderness.
Kabir contemplated Him with singleminded devotion,
Namdev remembered God ever in his heart;
Ravidas worshipped the wonderful Lord.
Guru Nanak was a perfect embodiment.
Of the eternal spirit of God.³⁸*

Guru Arjan, *Rāg Basānt* p. 1192

This hymn was written by *Guru Arjan* about sixty years after the death of *Guru Nanak*. Two eminent contemporaries of *Guru Nanak* who could provide first hand information about the life of *Guru Nanak* were still living. They were, *Sri Chand*, the elder son of *Guru Nanak*, and, *Bhai Buddha*, the High Priest of *Guru Nanak's* durbar. This hymn

of Guru Arjan makes three things clear: (1) All the pre-Nanak *Bhaktas*, namely, Jaidev, Kabir, Namdev, Trilochan, Ravidas had human gurus from whom they received enlightenment. (2) Only those saints who worshipped the One God acquired the highest spiritual state or liberation, (3) Guru Nanak had no human guru, least of all Kabir, whom Guru Arjan deems a pre-Nanak figure. Guru Nanak was enlightened from birth and a perfect embodiment of the spirit of God. This statement of Guru Arjan sets to rest the baseless theory that Kabir was the guru of Nanak. Guru Nanak was about thirty-five when he came to Benaras. By this time he had been accepted as the Guru by people and divines in the Punjab and at Hardwar, Kurukshetra and Delhi. Guru Nanak was no more a seeker but a Master and a prophet acknowledged as the world-teacher by Daulat Khan Lodhi, Rai Bular, Sheikh Sharaf, Shiekh Ibrahim and all the prominent Hindu and Muslim saints of Punjab.

(4) *Bhai Gurdas* (sixteenth century) was nephew of Guru Amar Das, brother-in-law of Guru Ram Das, and maternal-uncle of Guru Arjan. During the life time of Guru Amar Das he was fully educated and disciplined in Sikh history and theology and was sent at quite an early age as a missionary first to Chamba and then to Benaras and Agra. During his stay at Agra and Benaras, he acquired the highest prestige that a great scholar and mystic could do amongst the pundits and *pirs* of these places by scoring a victory in philosophical discussions with them. His Braj Bhasha poems written in inimitable poetry bears witness to the depth of thought and insight, and to the force of his arguments, and astounding aesthetic sense. He was co-compiler of *Adi Granth* along with Guru Arjan. The Guru blessed his writings and

called them the Key to Sikh scriptures. Even if the Sikhs had no other scriptures, the writings of Bhai Gurdas could furnish Sikhism much more material to thrive and grow than the New Testament provides Christianity. As Bhai Gurdas had opportunity to stay at Benaras for quite long periods, he had access to first hand material on the life and works of Kabir. He refers to Kabir twice and both these references are of great historical importance.

According to Bhai Gurdas, Kabir was the first low-caste devotee who dared to meet Ramananda in a dramatic way and he not only received spiritual inspiration but became his initiated disciple. Bhai Gurdas writes :

*"At Benaras there lived Ramananda Gosāīñ, the recluse. Early in the morning Ramananda went to bathe in the Ganges. In the dim hours of dawn, Kabir lay on the steps of the Ganges, where Ramananda was accustomed to bathe. When Ramananda trod upon the body of Kabir the compassionate saint lifted him up and initiated him, imparting to him the divine Name thus made him his disciple. Just as the philosopher's stone changes iron into gold, and just as sandalwood makes the bitter neem tree fragrant so was Kabir transfigured (by the initiation of Ramananda). The wisdom of the true Guru changeth even an animal and demon to a saint. The meeting of Kabir and Ramananda was the meeting between soul and divine splendour and the sublime mingling with the sublime. Kabir acquired from the meeting the highest mystic experiences of Unstruck Music, in which the fount of the Infinite consciousness rained bliss in unbroken stream. Under this discipline the Word of the Enlightener moulded the soul of Kabir, who attained perfect spiritual union with God."*³⁰

On hearing that (the low caste) Kabir (after the initiation

of Ramananda) had achieved spiritual glory and popularity as a saint the second (low caste seeker after truth) who became a disciple of Ramananda was Sain, the barber. At night he worshipped God; in the day time he worked as the court barber.⁴⁰

From this very important statement of Bhai Gurdas it is quite clear that Ramananda was not only an incidental inspirer of Kabir but the true guru of Kabir, who imparted to him the mystic Word and helped him in the spiritual discipline of achieving the highest mystic state, during his life time. Many scholars who have projected ingenious theories to prove that Kabir was born after the death of Ramananda, without giving any historical proof thereof, in support of their theory, cannot ignore this statement.

Nor is the argument that Ramananda is not a historical figure but a theological term, Rama-ananda (bliss of God) tenable. This theory is completely refuted by Bhai Gurdas's statement: *hoe veract Benārasī rehañdā Ramananda Gosāin*, at Benaras there lived Ramananda Gosain, the recluse.⁴¹

It is also clear from Bhai Gurdas' statement that normally it would have been impossible for the puritan Hindu ascetic Ramananda to accept a low caste person like Kabir as his disciple. The Muslim boy Kabir in whom the religious passion was innate, saw in Ramananda his destined teacher, but knew how slight were the chances that a Hindu Guru would accept a Muslim disciple.⁴² He therefore devised a remarkable plan to meet Ramananda in the dim silence of dawn and lay bare his soul to Ramananda. It would not be out of place to mention here that Guru Gobind Singh mentions Ramananda amongst great

prophets like Mohammed, Gorakh and others, who were sent by God to bring about a spiritual awakening.

Bhai Gurdas' statement reveals another historical fact : On seeing that Kabir a low-caste seeker of truth had dared to approach Ramananda, the puritan Hindu mystic, and had acquired great spiritual glory and popularity, Sain, the barber, was the second low caste saint to become the disciple of Ramananda. (*sun partāp Kabīr da dujā sikh hoā Sain nāi.*) On hearing about the spiritual greatness achieved by Kabir, the second to become disciple of Ramananda was Sain, the barber. The third in the list of Bhai Gurdas is Ravidas. This further indicates that Kabir remained under the direct spiritual influence of Ramananda upto quite a mature age when he became well known and inspired other low-caste seekers of truth to join the spiritual brotherhood for which doors were opened by Ramananda. This being so Kabir must have lived with Ramananda atleast upto the age of eighteen or so. With this historical fact as a highly probable truth it would be impossible for Kabir to meet Nanak unless he lived for more than 150 years.

The second statement of Bhai Gurdas also has great historical significance and it clearly proves that there was no spiritual encounter between Nanak and Kabir. Bhai Gurdas writes :

*In Kāliyuga Namdev has been a great Bhakta,
God turned the temple doors towards him,
And he brought the dead cow to life.
Well known is the saint Kabir;
He walked out of the prison unnoticed;*

*An ideal Sikh has greater tolerance.
 He is as humble as the dust of feet;
 Having attained the Infinite
 A Sikh reveals not his infinite powers.*

Bhai Gurdas, *Vār* 12 p. 15

Bhai Gurdas first mentions Namdev and refers to historical incidents of his life which we have no reason to doubt because they are both mentioned in the autobiographical poems of Namdev, preserved in *Adi Granth*. When the Brahmins turned Namdev out of the temple, because he was a low caste Hindu, the dejected saint sat near the back wall of the temple and started praying. The temple doors miraculously turned towards him.⁴⁷ In the other incident the Sultan of Delhi imprisoned him in Delhi and offered him one of the two alternatives : either he must accept Islam or show a miracle by bringing a cow to life. He prayed to God and through his spiritual powers brought the cow to life.⁴⁸

Bhai Gurdas then mentions a little known incident of Kabir's life. Kabir was imprisoned and tortured by the Emperor. One night when he prayed for liberty, his chains fell and the prison doors opened. On seeing the miraculous powers of Kabir, he was set free. Bhai Gurdas suggests that an ideal Sikh would have never shown a miracle. This has been proved to the hilt by the martyrdom of Guru Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Bhai Mani Singh, Banda, and Bhai Taru Singh. Bhai Gurdas places the tolerance of a Sikh at a higher level than that exhibited by Kabir. In view of this comparison, to conceive Kabir as the guru of Nanak is therefore preposterous. All the

historical references of Bhai Gurdas clearly suggest that Kabir was a pre-Nanak saint.

(5) *Prān Saṅglī* (sixteenth century) is an interesting theological work written by some very prominent disciple of Guru Nanak who accompanied Guru Nanak to Ceylon and was posted as the first apostle missionary in the island. Although it has been written in the name of Nanak it is certainly not a composition of Nanak. The writer appears to have been as close to the Guru as Bhai Gurdas was to his contemporary Gurus. He has attempted to record the discourse of Guru Nanak with the Saiva saints of Ceylon. Guru Nanak was in Ceylon a few months after he passed through Benaras. To the Sikhs of Ceylon the later writings of Kabir were not available, So *Prān Saṅglī* acquired great importance in Ceylon. Guru Arjan procured a copy of it and finding it apocryphal and not a genuine composition of Guru Nanak did not include it in the *Adi Granth*. In the *Pran Sangali*, Guru Nanak refers to Kabir as a historical figure in the discourses :

*Namdev, Trilochan, Kabir,
Sang the praises of God,
In complete devotion to Him.
The glory of the Lord.
And contemplation of His Name
Has liberated the saints
Who loved and praised God,⁵⁰*

Prān Saṅglī, p. 246

Whatever the theological importance of the work be, it is known to be a work older than *Adi Granth*. Being written by a disciple who accompanied Nanak

to Ceylon, the author's treatment of Kabir as a pre-Nanak historical figure clearly indicates that Kabir and Nanak never met each other, during their life time.

(6) *Bālā's Janam Sākhī* : Old manuscript copies of Bala's *Janam Sākhīs* and also Litho-print copies refer to Guru Nanak's visit to Benaras. In the discussion that takes place between the pundits of Benaras and Guru Nanak, the Guru refers to the death of Kabir indirectly. The following dialogue is recorded :

Pundit : This place, Benaras is considered to be very holy and auspicious. Here even the sinners gain liberation if they die in this holy place.

Guru Nanak : It is the Name of God that saves man. Such is the Name of God that no matter where you listen to it, and meditate on it, you are liberated there. Kabir left Benaras and went to Maghar a few years before his death. He acquired liberation there and through the holy congregation established by him at Maghar every one is liberated.⁵¹

This *Janam Sākhī* therefore clearly suggests that when Guru Nanak reached Benaras, Kabir was dead. The two never met each other.

(7) *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sākhī* This *Janam Sākhī* has a distinctive style of its own. Although those who corrupted the *Janam Sākhīs* did not spare this one also, but a scholar who gets used to the distinctive prose style of Bhai Mani Singh and his deep theological exposition, can easily distinguish the material originally written by Bhai Mani Singh and the corrupt material added later on. Bhai Mani Singh gives the historical incident quoted from

Bala's *Janam Sākhī* in his own inimitable language and believes that Kabir was dead when Guru Nanak reached Benaras.⁵² Kavi Santokh Singh in his *Nanak Prakash* bases his version of the incident on the two *Janam Sākhīs* mentioned above.⁵³

The historical evidence gleaned above makes it clear that Kabir, though a near contemporary of Guru Nanak, never met the Founder of Sikhism. Those Hindi scholars who bring down the dates of birth and death of Kabir to make him the guru of Nanak, and take him completely out of the life-span of Ramananda, who has been acknowledged as the guru of Kabir, try to contradict two well established historical facts; firstly Kabir was disciple and contemporary of Ramananda, and secondly Kabir and Nanak never met in life.

This confusion has arisen because our historians are interested more in the historical problems and achievements of the Sultans of this period than in the saints and scholars of this period and they take very lightly the historical problems and dates of Kabir and Ramananda. On the other hand literary scholars studying Kabir make quite an unhistorical approach to the historicity of Kabir. An intense historic study into the dates and life of these saints alone can finally settle the differences thus created by partial study of these great historical figures Kabir and Ramananda.

Sheikh Vajid, the Aristocratic Sufi Saint

Mardana, the bard, whose mind and character was a fine blend of Cervantes's Sancho Panza and Shakespeare's Touchstone, was always plain, blunt, and grimly realistic in his thoughts and actions. He loved Guru Nanak very much but he did not let

the spiritual idealism of his Master become a blind faith, which he must stubbornly follow. He did not accept anything till it satisfied his physical existence and his mind and conscience. He was never prepared to ignore the need of the body and the mind for the spiritual flights of the soul. He was not prepared to abandon his down to earth humanity and common man's logic.

While Mardana was travelling with Guru Nanak from Benaras to Patna he rested along with the Master under a shady tree. Soon came to the place an aristocratic Sufi saint, dressed in rich attire and carried by bearers in a palanquin. When the saint came out of the palanquin, he was asked to rest on cushions and some servants began to fan him, and others started pressing his body as if he was tired. On inquiry it was learnt that it was Sheikh Vajid, the Sufi saint.

Mardana was shocked at the sight. "Baba Nanak", said he, "tell me, is there one God or are there two gods? The question surprised the Master. Having lived with him so long, and knowing full well that he believed in one God he wondered why Mardana should ask such a question. "What makes you think, Mardana, that there are two gods, and not one.? asked Nanak.⁵⁴

"Is it possible, Master," remarked Mardana," that the same God could create so different type of human beings. One is dressed in rich attire and is carried in a palanquin and yet feels tired, while others who carry him on their shoulders in the scorching heat are bare-footed, naked, and sweat like the beasts of burden. Yet these poor slave labourers are not supposed to rest or feel tired. How can the same God create people of such widely different

status? I am tempted to think, Master, that the rich have a rich God while the poor have a pauper God." Guru Nanak burst into laughter.

"That is what appears to be, Mardana, but it is not so," said Guru Nanak. "Naked man comes to the earth and naked he goes; God judges the deeds of man. He is not influenced by the ill-gotten wealth of the rich. All men are born equal as human beings, but some who are clever succeed in exploiting the downtrodden and living on the labours of others. All the social laws of corrupt society are made by the rich and the strong only to exploit the poor. If the poor know their own divinity, destiny, and innate power, they will overthrow the rich. No one will go unpunished."⁵⁵

Guru Nanak then met Sheikh Vajid and reminded him of the life and ideals of great Sufi saints like Sheikh Farid. If he was really a man of God and a Sufi sage, he should not treat any human being as a slave, but should deem them as his brothers and share whatever he had with them. It was un-Islamic and inhuman to treat human beings in such a pitiable manner and to indulge in such luxury while claiming to be a Sufi saint. Poverty (*fakr*, non-possessiveness) was the foundation of Sufi idealism. Even Mohammed had said, "Poverty is my pride," and this had been the watch word of Sufism. By leading the life of the idle rich and by sucking the blood of the poor and exploiting the ignorant he was working his own doom. The Sheikh fell at the feet of Guru Nanak and assured him that he would give up the life of hypocrisy and display of wealth, and take up a truly religious and spiritual life according to the ethical ideals impressed by the Master.⁵⁶

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The origin of the Lodhis is this, that Sulaiman sent a party of Genni to Rum to purchase female slaves. On their return back, one of the Genii formed a connection with a girl named Lolia, who became pregnant by him. On King Sulaiman's hearing of this, he gave him the girl. The child was named Lodh, and his descendants generation after generation intermingled with Arabs, and at the time of the conquest of Sirhind came to dwell there.

Ali Sher Khan: *Tuhfat-i-kiram*

2. Bahlul, a full blooded Afghan was born posthumously in extraordinary circumstances. His mother, while close in confinement died suddenly on account of the falling of the house, and he was taken out by a Caesarian operation. Thus orphaned completely, he was taken as a month old baby to his uncle who brought him up as his son.

R.C. Majumder and others; *The History and Culture of the Indian People Delhi Sultanate*,
p. 151 f. n.

3. He won the devotion and esteem of his non-Muslim friends and feudatories and relied on them on critical occasions. He possessed a charitable disposition and never turned away a suppliant from the door.

Ibid, p. 141-2

4. *ibid* p. 147

5. It is unbelievable that Mardana alone accompanied Nanak on this itinerary. Mardana was a bard and could hardly perform any other service, like cooking food, or writing down the hymns of Guru Nanak. I believe that four or five persons were always with Guru Nanak out of which Mardana and Bala Sandhu were prominent. While Mardana appears to have accompanied Guru Nanak on all his major missionary journeys, Bala appears to have accompanied him only on some of them. Besides these two well known disciples, others whose names appear in the *Janam Sakhis* as frequent companions of Nanak are:

FROM DELHI TO BENARAS

Saido, Gheho, Hasu the black smith, Shihan the tailor and Jhanda the carpenter. Ishvar Das' *Chaitanya Bhagvat*, a Bengali Manuscript preserved in *Prachi Samati* (Oriental Society) Cuttack, mentions in *adhyaya* 61, Sarang, as the name of one of the companions of Guru Nanak.

6. *Nanak piyao*: Satgur Nānak Devji ne is khūh te jal kadhke trikhāvañt rāhiyañ nū pyāyā sī; eh asthān Karnal de kināre Sis Ganj toñ uttar pacham cār milhai.

M.K.

Gyani Thakur Singh in his *Gurdwara Darshan* says that the original name of this shrine was Pau Sahib. Here Guru Nanak humbled a very haughty *sannyasin*,

7. P.J. (MSS II) f. 43; J.M.S. p. 198

8. *Tarikhe-i-Daudi*

9. kahāñ lage nij deh updesā,
tum khudāe, tan dhar updesā,
dharm nīje kijai cir cāh,
kazi neh risvat kab lijai,

N.P. adh 21, 43-44

Meharban says in his *Janam Sākhī* (p. 114) that Guru Nanak arrived at Delhi during the reign of Emperor, Salem Shah which is quite incorrect. *Purātan Janam Sākhī* gives the name of the emperor as Sultan Ibrahim Beg. Ibrahim Lodhi came to the throne in 1517, over a decade after Guru Nanak passed through Delhi.

10. Badshāh ne kāzīan de kahe khudā dā hukam metan de zulam vic Bābejī nū sāthian samet phadke pīsan lā ditā, Bābe ne rabāb bajāi, sabad gāvīa.

T.G.K. p. 77

ethai jagat guru Nānak jī ate Srī Guru Hargobind sāhib virāje san, bādshah Aurangzeb de durbār vic rehan samai Bābā Rām Rai jī dā nivās bhī ethai hi rihā hai

M.K.

11. ihnā dī mehmā sunke Nizāmuddīn Auliya dā celā Hasan Abdullā jī san 966 Hij vic, te Miāñ Maduf jo san 947 Hij

GURU NANAK: FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

vic othe hī guzre han. Ragho Dās vairāgi Udai Nāth yogi, Oghar Nāth, Sayyed Madde Shah itādik anek pīr fakīr carcā karan āe, par Guruji dī bānīsunke sabh ne jidbād chad ditā, te rabde rāh dī carcā bārtā kar khusi ho ke gae.

T.G.K. p. 78

12. Bābājī othe jāe pipal heṭh āsan kītā, tān sidhān puchiā tusān kaun tap kītā hai jo sabh jagat tuhāde vas kītā hai.

J.M.S. p. 202

tabe sidhān ādes ādes kītā, jo eh koī mahāpurakh hai jiske baihan sātṭh bohad haryā hoyā bhandāre kā.

P.J. MSS f. 54

Kavi Santokh Singh writes in *Nanak Prakosh*, *Ut. adh* 20, that when the *Siddhas* saw Guru Nanak distributing everything to the people, and preaching that they should share everything equally so that the differences caused between the haves and have-nots may be eliminated, they came to the Guru and offered him a linseed and asked him to distribute and share it with all, contending thereby, that somethings cannot be fully shared. Guru Nanak ground the linseed and added water to it till it was completely dissolved in a large quantity of water. This water containing the linseed was equally distributed. Yogi Mangal Nath was deeply impressed.

13. N.P. *Ut: adh*, 20, J.M.S p, 207

14. Gorakhmatā hatāyo nāmu.
Nānakmatā rākh abhīramu.

N.P. *Ut: adh*, 20

tān sabhe sidh eho kautak dekhke ān astāṅg daṇḍaut kītā, ar kehyā kī age is jagā dā nām Gorakhmātā hai par hun isdā nām Nānakmatā hovaigā, ar jo koī eh terā pañjā patrān dā dekhe gā ar carcā tuhadī ar asādi sunegā usde sabh pāp nās jāvange.

J.M.S. p. 207

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15. phenal ko taru teh huto tab hī gur sidh māl
ek techno prabhū kī disā, ik siddhan dīs āh.
tehno apnī dis ko joū
srī gur pikh madhuro kīe soū

N.P. ut: adh 20

The soapnuts growing on these branches are still sweet. The writer has tasted them. Other branches have bitter soapnuts. Plants which grow from the seeds of sweet soapnuts also tend to grow sweet soapnuts.

16. bacan hoyā, guru tīn prakār de hain, jo ek puñdit guru
hain, aur ek audhūt guru hain, aur ek mahāpurkh guru
hain par jo puñdit guru haiñ, so auroñ ko updeś karte
hain, ar āp nahī kamāvte, jaise añdhā jo muhanā hai so
taran jāntā hai, par pār kandhā nahī āvtā.

J.M.S. (MSS) f. 256

17. jo mahāpurkh guru hain so vidyā kar bhī sampan hain
ar gyān ar jog kar bhī smapan hai, so oh āp bhī kalyān
aur jo un ko milte hain tinā kā bhī udhār hotā hai.

J.M.S. (MSS) f. 256

āp nā kare det updeśā,
puñdit gur jāno tum aisā,
bed purān kare bikhyān,
lobh moh mai bais bihānā,
pun milan ko jāñīai, hot na ride gyān,
pun jo hai abdhūt gur vidyā te añjān,
pun jo mahāpurkh gurū jāno,
sabh vidyā meh nipun māno.

N.P. adh: 10, 60-61

18. ik muñd muñdāe kar desañtar bhramte hain, ar ik nañge
hī rehte haiñ,, ik sañgal bāh kar phirte hain, ar ik
urdh tap karte haiñ, ik udyān mai rehte haiñ,, ik
nagrī mai nahī rehte, Sri pārbrahm kār kar miltā hai.
tumi kirpāl hoe ham ko samjhāe.

J. Mb. p. 128

19. Soī parmeśwar ar us hī kā parmeśwar hai jis ke añtar śabad parmeśar kā nām base; ehnā prem sāth kīrtan kare, soī pamesar ko pāvai.

J. Mb, p. 129

20. eh rājā mere milan sioñ tum ioñ nā hoe jī rāj chod kar tuñ bhīk māñgtā phireñ; nā, hamāre milne kā bisekh tāñ tuñ hī me parmeśar kā param pad pāvaiś; rāj jāñ mai jog hotā hai, parmeśar jī kā simran sevā kar tuñ; mai rāj hī mai tun muktā kiā hai. tab rājā guru Bābe ke carnī lagā, nām dān, sīl sañam doe bhau garibī guru bābe rāje ko didāyā.

J. Mb, p. 153

21. jo gośt janamsākhī pehlī pātsāhi dī jo hai, usde vic chote mel vālyān ne kāi ajugtā an banīyāñ pāe dityāñ haiñ jisno sun ke sikhāñ dā sidak guru valoñ ghat jāñdā hai; jaise dudh mo pāñī ralāe dice, te hams usno bhin bhin kar lai-dā hai, taise tusīn mahā-hams ho, kirpa karke guru ke bacan te, mīnia ke bacan bhin bhin kar devo.

The Minas (Prithi Mal and Mehraban) have added such undesirable material into the *Janam Sakhī* of Guru Nanak that the faith of devout Sikhs in the Guru is easily shaken. They have added water to milk, as a swan separates milk from water, so you being the supreme swan (the most learned and enlightened sage) please separate the true from the false." So said the Sikhs to Bhai Mani Singh.

J.M.S. f. 2

22. Bhai Gurdas in his *Var* 36, gives a scathing criticism of the *Mīnās* (Prithi Mal, Meharban and their followers); He says : "Black is the face of *Mīnās*" (36:1) "These wicked evil mongers will be chastised in the *dargāh* of God" (36 : 2) "Those who associate themselves with their evil company, will suffer damnation." (36: 5) "The creed of the *Mīnās* is *Narak Panth*, and to hell their teachings lead." (36: 6) "They are hypocrites and false-prophets deserving shoe beatings." (36: 8) "Without any moral or spiritual qualities in them, they call themselves gurus or divine teachers." (36: 9, 11)

FROM DELHI TO BENARAS

23. Bābā othe khadā hoyā; kabīr kahyā, “baṭhe rahīc, Hari bolīc ham aise kavan kahāvai, jin ko uṭh ṭhāñde bhae tum.
J. Mb p. 154
24. amar āc lokī kaun baiṭhe.
ibid
25. āgya pārbraham kī hai jī, tumāre piche jagat nistāre.
ibid
26. ibid p. 155
27. tab srī pārbraham kī āgyā sāth sabh bakhat mile, mil kar milne āc; Nāmā, Jaidev, Kabir, Trilochan, Ravidās Sain Sadhanā, Baini, Channā.
J. Mb. p. 190
28. Kartar Singh in his “*Life of Guru Nanak Dev*”, makes Namdev contemporary of Kabir, and says that like Kabir Namdev was also victim of the fanatic fury of Sikander Lodhi. Namdev died long before Sikander Shah Lodhi came to the throne. “In one of his own *Abhangas*, Nāmdev gives his own date of birth as 1270 A.D. (Saka 1192). Namdev tells us that a certain Brahmin, Bābāji by name, had cast his horoscope, foretelling that Namdev would compose a hundred crores of *abhangas*. (abg 1) : R.C. Ranade: *Mysticism in Maharashtra* (p. 186). Namdev died in 1350 A.D., about 138 years before Sikander Shah came to the throne. To make him a contemporary of Guru Nanak or Kabir is an unbelievable historical fantasy.
29. Kabirji kāshī nahī se, Rahgunāthpure vic jo Bijli Khān Nawab ināh dā sewak sī othe osde milan lai Gurujī Kāshī-ōñ cale tad odhroñ oh bhī āyā ate raste vic Puse piñd Katik mahīne sambat 1558 vic dohān mel hoyā.
T.G.K. p. 79
30. malechoñ kī des me dohī hai; bastī mai bālak, javān istrī slāmat nahī, much kar mārde haiñ; guru drohī bhī unāh de sañg mil gae han; Handāliye mil kar mukbarī karde han, sabh cak chod gae han.

The tyrants once more have acquired power in the country (Punjab). In the cities and villages no child, young man, or woman is safe. They catch hold of them and torture them to death. The enemies of the Guru have also joined hands with the persecutors. The Handaliyas betray the Sikhs into the hands of the blood-thirsty rulers. Almost all people have left Amritsar.

Bhai Mani Singh's "*Letter to Mata Sundari*"

They (Hindaliyas) were the most persistent enemies of the Sikhs and the most steadfast friends of the Durranis, although the sect itself is Hindu.

N.K. Sinha: *Rise of the Sikh Power*

31. G.H. Westcott in his, "*Kabir and Kabir Panthis* (p2) says, Nanak is said to have been 27 years of age when he met Kabir. As Nanak was born in 1469 the years of meeting will have been 1496, the very year in which Sikander Lodhi, the Emperor of Delhi, visited Jaunpur and other cities in the neighbourhood." Nanak did not leave Punjab till he was over 30 years of age. Handalyas and Kabirpanthis have concocted these dates to suit their legendary stories. Pundit Walmji Bhaj, a Hindu convert to Christianity and a Pastor of the Irish Presbyterian Church at Borsad (Gujarat) in his books, "*Hari Charitra* and a *Key to Adi Granth* goes a step further in an ingenious invention of history, when he says that Nanak was not only a disciple of Kabir but was also influenced by Christian teachings, and that Hari, the name given to the Sat-guru in the *Adi Granth*, was used as a synonym of Christ. Some Hindi writers on Kabir who have depended only on Westcott or Kaey's *Kabir and His Followers* have also uncritically accepted Kabir as the guru of Nanak.
32. Dr. Bhandarkar in his "*Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, Dr. Mohan Singh in his "*Kabir, a Biography*" dismiss the historical fact that Ramananda was the guru of Kabir without giving any convincing arguments.
33. pāne chade dae bahal,
jo srī Aṅgad Likhvāi,
teh ko tātparj sabh dīne,

adhik bacan apne likh dīne,
Sri Nanak jas khīr sam, bidat det ahlād,
chafīd caupai bañd jo mist sehat bhā svād.
je sākat kī kahī kusākhī,
khīr bīc so jāno mākhī;
kadhe mākhī dekhe jōū,
piveh pāe mist sikh soū,
dekh bujh mākhī jokhāvai
sram hovai tāñ pai nā pacāvai,
kīrat nirmal jo ur dhāre
kahī kusāknī so nivāreh.,

N.P., *pūr*, adh 37, 32-33

34. Nāmā chimbā, Kabīr julāhā, pure gur te gati pāi,
Brahm ke bete, sabai pachāne, haume jāt gavāi
sur nar tin kī bānī gāvai koī nā mete bhāi.

Adi Granth Sri Rāg p. 67

35. This fact is admitted by eminent exponents of Kabir's writings like Dr. Shyam Sunder Das (*Kabir Granthavali*) and Dr. Ram Kumar Verma (*Santbani*)

36. Kalijug nām pradhān padārath baghat janā udhre,
Nāmā jaideo Kabīr Trilochan sabh dokh gac camre.

Adi Granth, Māru p-955

37. sādhu saran pare se ubhre
Khatri brahmin sūd vais candāl candyiā
Nāmā Jaideo Kabīr Trilochan
au jāt Ravidās camār camyīā

Adi Granth, Bilāwal p-845

38. Dhanne sevyā bāl budh,
Trilochan gur mil bhaī sudh,
Beni ko gur kīo pragās,
re man tu bhī hoh dās.
Jaidev tyāgo ahañmev,
nāi udharīo Sain sev,
man dīg na dole kāhu jāc,
Kabir dhyiāio ek rañg,
Nāmdev base Hari jio sañg

Ravidās dhyāe prabhū anūp,
Guru Nānak Dev gobiñd rūp.

Adi Granth, Basant p-1192

39. hoe birakt Benārasā, rehñdā Rāmānanda gosāññ,
amrit vele uṭh ke jāndā gangā nāvan tāññ.
agoñ hī de jāe lamā pyā Kabīr tithāññ,
pairīñ tumbh uṭhālyā, bolo Rām sikh samjhāññ
jioñ lohā chohe cañdan vās nim mekhāññ,
pasu paretoñ dev kar, pure satgur kī vadyāññ,
acarañ no acrañ mile vismāde vismād milāññ,
jharnā jhardā nijhroñ, gurmukh bāññ aghaḍ ghaḍāññ
Ram Kabire bhed nā pāññ.

Bhai Gurdas *Var* 10;15

40. sun partāp Kabīr dā dujā sikh hoā Sain nāññ,
prem bhagat rāññ kare, bhalke rāj duāre jāññ.

ibid 16

This statement makes it quite clear that out of all the low caste disciple-saints of Ramananda, Kabir was the first to break the barriers of orthodoxy and compel Ramananda to accept him as his disciple. Sain the barbar was the second. Kabir was quite young when he met Ramananda.

41. Dr. Bhandarkar, Dr. Mohan Singh do not accept the theory that Ramananda was the guru of Kabir, but they do not give any convincing evidence in support of their theory. Wescott and Dr. Ramprashad Tripathi support the theory that Sheikh Taqi was the *pir* of Kabir. But Dr. Hazari Prashad Dwedi, Dr. Shyam Sunder Das, Dr. Ram Kumar Verma, Dr. Ramji Lall, Dr. Gobind Trigunayat and a number of other scholars accept Ramananda as the guru of Kabir. Other historical records which state that Ramananda was the guru of Kabir are, *Dabistan*, *Bhaktamal*, *Tazkirul Fakura*, Ghulam Sarwar's *Khajinat-ul-Asfiya*, Garib Das' *Granth*.
42. Rabindranath Tagore : *Kabir*, Intr. pxi.
43. pun harī Rāmānand ko karā
bheś bairāgi ko jin dharā

FROM DELHI TO BENARAS

kanthī kanth kāth kī dārī,
prabh kī kīriyā nā kichu bicārī.

Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachiter Natak*, 125

44. Bhai Gurdas *Vār* 10, 17

45. Kaliyug Nāmā bhaktā hoe pher dehrā gāe jivāi,
bhakta Kabīr vakhānīai bañdikhāne te uṭh jāi,
pairiñ pāi pākḥāk hoe gursikhāñ vic vadī samāi,
Alakh lakhāñ alakh lakhāi.

Bhai Gurdas *Vār* 17:15

46. Namdev mentions the incident in two of his hymns in the
Adi Granth

hast khelat tere dehre āyā
bhakta karat Nāmā pakar uṭhāyā,
hīndī jāṭ merī jādam rāyā,
chīpe ke janam kāhe ko āyā,
lai kamlī calio paltāe
dehri pāche baiṭhā jāe,
jioñ jioñ Nāmā Hari gun ucre
Bhakta janā ko dehrā phire.

Adi Granth, *Bhairon* p-1164

tu jo dayāl Kripāl kahiyāt hai atibhuj bheo aprālā
pher diē dehrā Nāmē ko pañdian ko pichvārā.

Adi Granth : *Malar* p-292

47. bismal gau deh jivāe,
natur gardan māron ṭhāe,
bādḡāh aisī kioñ hoe,
bismal kiā na jivai koc;
apne bhakt par karī pratipāl
garud caḍe āe gopāl
kahe ta dharn ikedī karoñ
kahe tā lekar upar dharoñ
kahe ta muī gaū deī jiāe
sabh koī dekhe patiāe
Nāmā pranve selam sel
gau duhāi bachurā mel.

Adi Granth, *Bhairon* p-1164

48. Nāmdev, Trilochan, Kābīr dāsrā
hari bhagat bhae gun gāyā
ustat sañt harinām tarāyā
hari sañt jānā bhakta jas gāyā.

Pran Sañglī p. 246

49. suno puñdit ji, parmeśwar kā nām kaisā kahe, bhāvaiñ
kise de same padhe sune othe hī mukt kartā hai; Kabīr
Bhakta Kāshī nu tyāg ke, Maghar des me jāe base,
uhān sādḥ sañgat kar jīv mukt hote haiñ; Bhagwān kā
nam muktā kartā hai, Kashi nahī muktā karti.

J.B.S. (LI) p 539

50. J.M.S. (L) p-212 (The text is nearly the same as in J.B.
(LI) f.n 49.

51. Jioñ Kabīr Kāshī that tyaga,
mag mai basā nām anurāgā
Satsaṅgat hovai rahi tahān hī,
bhae mokh taj deh uhān hī.

N.P. adh. 9, 93

52. tadoñ rāh vic Sheikh Bajīd Sayyed milyā; Sukhpāl vic
cadhyā jāñdā āha; tiske lakdyāñ nāl cheh kahār the;
tab oh jāe utrayā ik drakhat talē, te o lage cikan te thikan.
ate jhalan. tab Mardāne ākhyā, "ji Khudāe ek hai kioñ?"

P.J. (MSS) f. 34

53. arj kītū akhyos, jī patgāh o kis kīm paidāes, hai ate oh
kis kī paidāes hai, jo sukhpāl vic cadhyā āya hai., ate oh
pairāñ te upohāne bhī han te piñde nañge


Ibid

54. Ibid.

55. ibid; N.C. 163. The original name of Bajid was probably
Bayzid which in corrupt Punjabi form came to be
known as Bajid.

CHAPTER 11

GURU NANAK AT PATNA

 FROM BENARAS Guru Nanak wended his way to Gaya. On the way he met travellers, pilgrims, shepherds, mendicants and even highway robbers. Wherever he stopped he left consolation and hope. Through song and poetry he inspired the people with a new vision of life, a new consciousness of peace, humanity and equality. Peasants, craftsmen and journeymen and half-naked *fakirs* heard in his voice, the message and heavenly melody they had never heard before. With a poet's vision Guru Nanak gave meaning and purpose to their animal life, and made them feel that they were not lowborn, downtrodden, cursed creatures of nature, but human beings, each with a high destiny of his own. In the hearts of shepherd and the thief, the monk and the jeweller, the prince and the pauper, Guru Nanak's music and poetry awakened feelings of sublime powers, without which their life was miserable in material comforts, and depressing in sorrow and poverty. He did not assume the airs of a prophet or a messenger of God, and yet everything he uttered, and everything he did had the grace and moving effects of a prophet's message and deeds.

Shepherd Boy With a Princely Heart

One evening Guru Nanak met a shepherd boy on the outskirts of a village. While grazing his sheep and goats, he was roasting some green gram, plucked from the fields, in a fire made from dry leaves and shrubs. He offered some roasted gram to Nanak and his companions. Feeling that these wandering

fakirs must be hungry, he begged them to wait there till he brought some food for them from his village home, which was not far away. "No my child," said Guru Nanak, "we are in a hurry. You appear to be a poor lad but you have the heart of a prince; when you grow up you will, by the grace of God, become a prince with a noble heart. Work hard, live in the love of God, serve the poor and the needy. Your pious soul, filled with blessedness and charity will make you a prince among men."¹ The shepherd boy felt greatly blessed and it is said, that when he grew up he became the prince of some state, and ever remembered Nanak for his gracious blessings and inspiration.²

Vanity Fair

Guru Nanak stopped at a place where a trader was celebrating the birth of his son. The proud and vain trader invited all the rich and well-to-do people of the city and celebrated the birth of his son by spending lavishly on entertaining them. The poor, the needy, and the hungry who came to his door on this happy occasion were either ignored or rudely turned away. The bards were usually entertained and given money and food on such occasions, but when Mardana went there, in the hope of getting good food and gifts, he was completely ignored.³ Disappointed, he came back and complained to Nanak about the callousness of rich people who waste so much money entertaining the wealthy and affluent people, but would not give even a piece of bread to a hungry wayfarer.

"Wait and see" said Nanak. "The man is not celebrating the birth of his son, but is paying back his

debt to his creditor, who is born to him as his son." When the lavish celebrations were over, the trader's son died. The trader carried his dead child to the cremation ground weeping and wailing over the loss of his money.⁴ Those who sow iniquity reap vanity and misery. Mardana brooded over man's vanity of his possessions which he claims to be his. Mardana realized, as he never did before, the wise recognition of uncertainty of the future, which makes the present all the more important. The present is the only time at our disposal for doing good. Tomorrow is in God's hand and we do not know what it shall bring forth.

At Gaya, Rajauri, Nalanda and Rajgriha

Guru Nanak then visited Gaya and Buddha-Gaya. "Shut off in an artificial valley, the sanctuary rests, in a world of its own, in which every detail recalls the great days of yore." Buddhist influence was then on the wane in these holy places. Vaishnavism of the Madhavacharya school maintained a dominating influence in the place.

Neither in the *Janam Sākhī* nor in the writings of Guru Nanak do we find critical reflections on Buddhism or evidence of spiritual encounters with Buddhists, though there is a severe criticism of dirty Jain practices. It appears that apart from idol worship, Guru Nanak found considerable identity of views with ethical idealism of Buddhism. The Buddhists of his time and even the Muslims accepted the spiritual influence and doctrines of Guru Nanak much more easily than the orthodox Hindus and Nathpanthi *yogis* did. This explains the tremendous influence the Sikh Gurus and their teachings have

exercised on Tibetan Buddhism and some other Mahayana schools of thought. The fact that during his short stay of a few weeks, Guru Nanak was able to establish his *sangat* (church) at Buddha-Gaya, Rajgriha, and Rajauli, bears witness to the fact that the Buddhist sages of this area accepted the teachings of Guru Nanak and established permanent centres of Guru Nanak's school of thought in this region.

Most of the pilgrims came to Gaya and Buddha-Gaya to light the lamps on the altar of the great Buddhist shrines or to perform the *shraddhas* (Hindu rites for the salvation of the ancestors). When Guru Nanak was asked to light the lamp, he sang the following song :

*Divine Name is the only lamp,
Which ever burns at the altar of His Feet;
Into it I have poured the oil of suffering,
The oil is burning into blazing light of knowledge.
All fear of death has departed.
Why waste O people your life in useless rites.
The flame of divine Name can burn all your sins,
Just as a spark of fire burns tons of wood.*

Adi Granth, Rag Āsa. p-358.

"All darkness and delusion" said Nanak, "is dispelled from my heart and from the heart of my followers with the light of love. The blazing flame of the divine spark of his presence, ever illumines my whole being. The dream of heaven and the fear of hell is for those who live in ignorance and spiritual darkness. The light of the divine Name of God ever shines in my heart."

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When the Brahmins asked him to perform the Hindu rites of *shraddha* for the salvation of his ancestors, Guru Nanak said :

*Contemplating the Name of the Creator,
Is the only rite and ceremony I perform.
Now and in future, in this world or the next,
This is my sole rite and worship.
The praise of the eternal Spirit,
Is my only pilgrimage to the Divine.
One becomes pure, not by bathing in Ganges,
He who lives day and night in His love,
Truly bathes his mind in the Divine and becomes pure.
The food that is offered to ancestors goes waste,
I believe in the oblation seeking grace.
It is an inexhaustible treasure.*

ibid.

Guru Nanak rebuked the pundits for swindling and wasting the precious money of the poor pilgrims. He said : 'The food which you formally offer to the ancestors of the pilgrims is actually eaten by dogs and crows. The souls of the poor ancestors get neither the food, nor the merit of this utter wastage of food.'⁸ You have, O Brahmins, made legendary stories of the Puranas a trap to exploit the ignorant devotees and ensnare them in the net of your greed. I do not believe in the performance of the false and futile rites, nor do I allow my disciples to perform these useless rites. If you want to escape the doom that awaits hypocrites and swindlers then you must give atleast one-fourth of your priestly fee to the poor and destitute, otherwise the worst punishment is in store for your unpardonable sins.¹⁰

Bikkhu Devgriha of Buddha-Gaya became a devout follower of Guru Nanak and his great-grandson visited Punjab and met Guru Hari Rai, who named him Bhakta Bhagwan. Guru Nanak's shrine at Buddha-Gaya remained an active missionary centre upto this day.

Guru Nanak then went to Nalanda and Rajgriha. The three hot springs of water attracted many pilgrims. The people of Rajgriha asked Guru Nanak to give them a cold spring of water, as there was frequent shortage of natural water-supply. Guru Nanak had a cold-spring dug out and constructed and near it the Sikh *sangat* (church) was established. The Nirmala Sikhs hold an annual meeting there by hoisting the flag of Guru Nanak's mission, and delivering discourses on Sikhism and maintaining a free kitchen for the people for a number of days.¹¹ At Rajauli, the Sufi *fakir* Kalhan Shah became the disciple of Guru Nanak, and changed his *khanqah* into Guru Nanak's *sangat* which is still maintained by the descendants of the *fakir*.¹²

The place where Guru Nanak camped is called *Badī Saṅgat*, while Baba Kahlan Shah's *khanqah* is known as *Choti Saṅgat*. It is a beautiful building in which continuously burning fire is maintained ever since Guru Nanak visited this place, symbolizing that the Flame of Sikh faith continues to burn there.¹³

At Patna (Patilputra)

Guru Nanak then reached Patna, the city of 64 gates and 670 towers, which from ancient times to the seventeenth century, was famous for art treasures,

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courtesans, goldsmiths, terra-cotta and artistic pottery. When the city was first constructed by King Ajatasutra, mainly for war operations against his enemy, the Lachhavi Republic, Lord Buddha, the prophet of peace and non-violence, was invited to sanctify it by his presence. On this occasion Buddha is said to have made his pregnant prophecy that Patna, then called Patilputra, would one day grow to be the chief city of the Aryan descent, and the centre of trade and economic prosperity.

Almost two thousand years after Lord Buddha visited Patna, Guru Nanak entered it to establish his church (*mañjī*) in this flourishing city. The Raja and Rani of Patna had already come to know about the tremendous popularity and spiritual influence of Guru Nanak in Buddha-Gaya region. Both of them went to pay homage to the new prophet. According to Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sakhī*, they were the same prince and princess who met Guru Nanak at Kurukshetra, as exiles, after having lost their kingdom to their enemy. After Guru Nanak had blessed them, they had again acquired it by fighting for it. They now came to pay a thanksgiving homage to the Guru.¹⁶

Every evening Guru Nanak delivered sermons to the seekers of solace and peace. In one of the sermons Guru Nanak compared the seed of divine Light within man, to a precious gem. Mardana asked the Master, "If the divine Light within us is like a rare jewel, why is not everyone able to recognize it and why is not everyone able to acquire the maximum benefit from it?"¹⁷ Guru Nanak gave to Mardana a rare precious-stone, probably offered to

him by the ruler of Patna, and asked him to sell it to the highest bidder.¹⁸

Mardana took the rare jewel first to a vegetable seller, who offered him only one radish, when Mardana asked for two. He took it to a cloth merchant who offered him two yards of cloth for it. He then took it to a sweet-meat seller who offered a pound of sweets for it.¹⁹ When he went to the goldsmiths he was offered some money. But when he went to the jewellers he was offered large sums of money for it till one of them suggested that only the richest jeweller, Salis Rai could properly assess and pay its price.

Salis Rai was a middle-aged jeweller, who was not only a good judge of jewels but also of men. He was also a poet deeply interested in religious literature. He generally stayed at home while his jewellery shop was run by his sons, but more so by his most trusted servant, Adharka.²⁰ Adharka was an honest, loyal, hardworking youngman, whom Salis Rai trusted completely, and on whom depended the efficient management of his jewellery shop.

When Mardana came to Salis Rai's shop, he met Adharka, who took him to his Master, where the rare jewel was shown to him. Salis Rai was taken aback when he saw such a rare precious-stone. He found the jewel to be so rare and precious that he confessed that he was not rich enough to pay its real price. On the precious stone were engraved the words. "Whoever sees it must pay one hundred rupees as tribute money to the owner." So Salis Rai returned the jewel along with hundred rupees to Mardana through his servant Adharka.

"You are returning the jewel my friend, wherefore then this money?" questioned Mardana, and added, "If you want to give me the money, please keep the jewel. How can I explain this deal to the Master?"²¹ "This jewel," said Adharka,, "is so costly that even my Master, the richest jeweller in Patna cannot pay its price. This hundred rupees is the tribute money which must be paid by everyone who has the honour to examine the jewel. The instruction is engraved on the jewel." Mardana was puzzled. He took the money and the jewel to Guru Nanak who refused to keep the money. "If he is not keeping the jewel," said Guru Nanak, "I have no right to accept any money from him. Please return this money and let Salis Rai pay any price for the jewel which he possibly can." Mardana was confused.²²

When Mardana returned the money to Salis Rai, the jeweller wondered what type of a man the Master of this bard was. "He must either be a millionaire," he said to himself, "who has so vast treasures that he does not care much even for such a rare and precious stone. Or he must be a sage who has renounced *maya*, and does not feel tempted to make the maximum profit out of it." He asked his servant Adharka to make preparations to meet this unique man and to take with him gifts and offerings befitting a prince. Both Salis Rai and his servant Adharka felt enchanted by the youthful and dazzling personality of Guru Nanak. When the jeweller and his servant stood before him with folded hands, Nanak smiled. His smile changed to sweet words of benediction; his sermon changed to poetry; his poetry changed to a thrilling song; and his song was strung to heavenly *rāga*

(music). While Mardana the bard played on the rebeck, Guru Nanak sang the following song :

*In the clear water of the pond,
Resides the pure lotus flower;
In the pond also grow slime and weed,
The honey-laden lotus remains unsullied
By the dirty slime of the pond.
O frog, you can never realize,
That you are so close to the nectar-laved lotus,
And yet you eat slime and weeds,
While living in the clear water of the pond.
The honey-bee resides not in the pond,
And yet it goes there to suck the honey of the lotus.
The lotus in its pristine purity has realized love :
Even when it sees the moon from distance,
It blooms with joy and bows to the moon in a reverence.²³*

Guru Nanak : Rāg Māru p-991

The song had transmuting effect on Salis Rai and his servant Adharka. The gates of their hearts were flung open. They felt for the first time that the Light which appeared to be a distant dream of mankind was ever so close to them. They felt that the fount of eternal existence was always so near them as the lotus flower is to the frog in the pond, and yet they had ignored the honey and nectar of spiritual life in favour of slime and mire of desires. Like a honey-bee, man must go to the founts of spiritual life and drink the nectar of eternal wisdom. Like the lotus in full bloom, man must keep his face towards the moon of truth and ever bow in reverence to the peace giving light.

Guru Nanak stayed with Salis Rai for about

four months²⁴. Both the jeweller and his servant became the most devoted disciples of the Guru. They were initiated into the Sikh way of life, and when Guru Nanak made up his mind to establish his missionary centre (*manjī*) at Patna, he appointed Salis Rai as the first abbot of the centre, saying, "Listen Salis Rai, as long as you live, you will be the head of this diocese (*manjī*) which I am establishing, but after your death your servant Adharka will succeed you."²⁵

Guru Nanak gave to Salis Rai his own turban. When Salis Rai adorned the turban on his head he felt profoundly exalted and enlightened. It was a rare gift and an unusual honour.²⁶ Salis Rai turned his wooden bungalow into a shrine commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak, and it is believed that when Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Patna in 1666 A.D. he stayed in the same bungalow. Ghanshyam, the great grand son of Adharka was the *masand* incharge of the shrine at that time.²⁷

Salis Rai was a poet also. Some of his poems corrupted by the copyists of *Janam Sākhī* have come down to us. They show his love which Guru Nanak inspired in his soul. Writes Salis Rai in one of his poems :

*The true Lord, Guru Nanak,
Has inspired me with divine Name,
And he has opened my inner eyes.
I have traded in one precious thing,
My wealth is now ever on the increase.
Guru Nanak is the perfect Lord.
His Word is the Law and Truth.*

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*He has opened my inner eyes to the vision sublime,
He has shown me the Unseen and Unfathomable.
The whole world is a market place where men trade,
The one Lord alone is the sovereign Banker.
The divine Name is the wealth I seek
From the true Guru, the source of all treasures.
Day and night my mind is now fixed on the Lord.
Sayeth Salis Rai, O my Beloved,
Take away the colour of falsehood,
Dye my soul in the fast colour of Truth.*

Salis Rai, Rag Bilawl.²⁸

This and some other poems preserved in the *Janam Sākhīs* of Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Bala, and in *Nanak Prakash* show how great was the spiritual influence of Guru Nanak on Salis Rai. The great jeweller renounced everything and placed his home, his wealth and all that he called his own, at the service of humanity, in the name of Guru Nanak.

The Thugs Come to Kill Guru Nanak

After a stay of about four months, Guru Nanak left Patna for Bengal and Kamarup. The highway was surrounded by thick forests infested with robbers, thugs, and bandits. He first stopped at Monghyr and Bhagalpur where some newly inspired disciples were asked to preach Sikhism under the guidance of Salis Rai and Adharka. On the way to Malda, Guru Nanak was waylaid by a group of bandits who guessed from the grand personality of the Guru that he must be a trader disguised as a saint.²⁹

When Guru Nanak asked them what they wanted they frankly declared their intention of killing him and depriving him of his possessions. "All right" said

Guru Nanak, "go ahead, but do one thing for me before you kill me. Yonder, there in the forest, you see smoke rising out of some fire. Please bring some fire so that my companions may cremate me when you have killed me." "That is not our job," said one of them, but when they saw that he was not only indifferent to death but he was not in the least afraid, they decided to fulfil his last wish. Leaving one of them to look after him the others went to get some fire. When they reached the place they found that one of their companions, who had been hanged for his misdeeds was being cremated. Everyone was talking of his evil deeds, and the terrible fate that awaited such criminals in hell. The robbers were terribly shaken by the sight and saw their own impending death staring them in their face. They came back and fell at Guru Nanak's feet. They begged him to redeem them from their life of sin and wickedness. "Your sins will be redeemed," said Guru Nanak, "if you completely give up this wicked life of highway robbery and murders. Go home and take up farming and give to the poor and needy whatever you have acquired through murders and robbery."³² They placed all they had at the feet of Guru Nanak and begged him to distribute every penny to the poor. Guru Nanak initiated them into the essential discipline of his faith. Henceforth they became hardworking and virtuous men and lived by the sweat of their labours.

May Wicked Men Remain Established in one Place

Guru Nanak came to a village the residents of which were extremely notorious. They had completely forgotten God and goodness, and indulged in all the vices with the gusto of epicureans. They

laughed at Guru Nanak and his sermons about truth and virtuous life. Guru Nanak smiled at their misdoings and said meaningfully, "May you ever remain well established in this place."³³ Mardana was surprised when he saw that the compassionate Master had blessed even such wicked people.

May Virtuous Men be Uprooted

Then Guru Nanak came to a village the residents of which were extremely noble, virtuous and well-behaved. They were hardworking, polite and generous. They served the saints and monks who passed through the village with utmost devotion. Guru Nanak was delighted to meet such people. He imparted spiritual instructions to them, and while parting, blessed them saying, "May you noble people be all uprooted from this village. Mardana was shocked at the way Guru Nanak had blessed them. "I am surprised, O Baba Nanak," said Mardana, "at the injustice which the evil men of the village we left and the good men of this village have received at thy door. I can believe and understand why the Compassionate one has blessed the evil men, but I am at my wits end to understand why you have cursed the good men of this village. I hope you really do not mean what you said just now."³⁴ "I mean what I have said, Mardana," said Guru Nanak, "Wherever these good people will go they will spread goodness, virtue and truth. They will save misguided humanity from the path of sin. Wherever they go the light of pure living will shine but evil people should remain confined to a place so that evil may not spread and they may not corrupt the rest of the society. I have actually blessed the virtuous villagers so that the whole world may

become their home, and society at large may become their kith and kin in goodness. But I have cursed the evil ones so that they may remain confined to their village as criminals remain within prison walls."³⁵ "Strange are thy blessings, Master," said Mardana, "and strange are thy curses."

At Rajmahal and Malda

Guru Nanak then reached Rajmahal, which was for long the capital of Bengal and a great trading centre. Here Guru Nanak stayed for a week and so many people became his disciples that he established a *manjī*, missionary centre. A descendant of Guru Nanak's disciple, named Bhai Bhanu came to the Punjab to seek the blessings of Guru Hargobind some decades later.³⁶ The *sangat* of Rajmahal developed still more during the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh, when missionary activities in this area were intensified.

Malda was a great Sufi centre. The sufis of this place were very much impressed by the spiritual discourses of Guru Nanak and they found great mystic kinship of Guru Nanak's thoughts with Sufi faith and philosophy. A devotee named Rām Dev felt greatly inspired by Guru Nanak's teachings and gave his garden and home to build a shrine commemorating Guru Nanak's visit. The remains of the shrine and the garden can still be seen.³⁷

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. tab us pālī holāñ age ān rakhīāñ; tab Bābe Mardāne nu dito tāñ us ladke de jīa āī, jo kich ghar to lai āvāñ, fakīrāñ de mūh pāvāñ tāñ.
P.J. (MSS) f 57

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2. tab patśahī milī, caniāñ da muth sadkā.
ibid.

3. tab Mardāne nu bhukh lagī kharī bahut; ākhyos: jīve
 pātsah is tāñ sādī khabar kich nahī lai, es de ghar put
 hoyā hai
P.J. (MSS) f. 58

4. tab Bābā hasyā, ākhyos: Mardānyā, is de ghar putar nahī
 hoā, isde ghar ik karjāī āyā hai, cupātā rau, rāt rahegā
 bhalke uṭh jāc gā.
ibid

5. J.M.S. (all versions); J.B. (all versions)

6. asāñ aisi kiryā kītī hai, jo agyāñ dā añdherā sabh mit gayā
 hai, ate surg ar nark jo hai so agyāñ vikhe haiñ, tāñte
 jināñ nām rupī dīva bālyā hai tinkā udhār hoyā hai.
J.M.S. (MSS) f. 260

7. J.M.S. (all versions) J.B. (all versions)

8. pitar bhī bapure kāhu ko pāveh
 kāūā kukar khāhī;
Adi Granth. *Gaurī* p. 322

9. unāh hī galāñ nū vadhā ke tusiñ age logāñ nū sunā sunā
 apne jāl vic phasā rakhyā hai, asīñ eh jhūṭhī kiryā nahī
 karde karauñde; je kar tusiñ apnā bhalā cauhañde ho tāñ
 jo pun lauñde ho os vicon cauthā hisā garīban muhtājāñ
 nū kharyāt kitā karo, nahī tāñ tusiñ bhī dharam rāj dā
 dand sahāroge.
T.G.K. p. 84

10. othe jad Bābe te Mardane sabad gāvya tāñ othoñ dā
 mahañt Devgir Gosāiñ jagīrdar jo sarkār sadauñdā sī,
 mahañt ho Gurujī dī carnī lagā; gurūjī usno bhaktī gyāñ
 dā sacā raste pāc ramte bhae.
T.G.K. p. 85

is Devgir toñ tījī piḍhī de mahañt Srī Guru Hari Rai jī
 dī saran prāpat hoe ate apne asāñt man nū sukhī karke

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sikh bane; eh sañt jī tyagī hoe ke sādhu banke, sādhu ves vic vicre te Guruji de var nāl enai vade parupkāri hoe ke lakhān Nanakpañthī apne banāe te pūrab vic trai cār sau gurdhām banāe.

G.N.C. p. 190 f n

11. othe sivkuñd, brahmkuñd, visnukuñd, adik devtiān de nām par talāb bane hoe han, logāñ ne thañdā, jal pīn vaste Bābe age bentī kītī; tāñ guru jī sīre jal dā caśmā nikālayā, jis par hun hames mele vic Nirmalā sañt gurūkā jhandā khadā kar lañgar dete haiñ.

T.G.K. p. 83

12. Os samai Rajauli vic ik asthān te ik Musalmān fakīr Bāba Kalhan Shāh fakīr karke parsidh hoyā, baiṭhā tap kar rihā sī, Sri Guru Nānak Devji mahārāj ne is nū updeś de ke gyān bakhshyā.

G.N.C. p. 191

13. Rajauli vic os samai toñ do gadiāñ calyḍiān ā rahiyāñ han, jithe Bābā Kalhan Shāh baiṭhā sī, othe ik suñder asthān banyā hoyā hai, jo chotī sañgat de nām te prasidh hai, jithe gurujī baiṭhe san, os thān te bhī ik bhārī imārat khaḍī hai jis nū vadī sañgat ākhde han.

ibid p. 191

14. *Comprehensive History of India*, Longmans, p 502-3

15. *History and Culture of the Indian People : The Imperial Age*, ed. by R.C. Majumdar, p. 23.

16. Guru Nanak Dev jī unāh nū satnām dā updeś de ke āp Patne śehar nu gāe, tāñ jehdā rājā Kurukshetra Bābe nu milyā sī, tāñ sarikāñ nū mārke pher Patne dā Raja kītā sī, tāñ Rāja ān darsan lagā, ar nāle usdī istrī ar mātā dono āiyāñ.

J.M.S. f. 216

17. Mardane ne Bābe nū puchiā, sabh sañt te grañth manukhā janam nū amolak lāl kehañde hain, je sac hovai tāñ, visai vikārāñ vic kioñ kho chadan, bhaktī bhajan karke safal kar lain.

T.G.K p. 80

18. dusre dīn Mandane nū bhukh lagī tñ gurujī ne ik lāl de
ke ākhyā, es badle kich khān pīn nū lai ā.
ibid p. 80
19. mḡliān dekh os ratan badle do mūlian mange tñ māli
ik deve, pher halvāi de gayā tñ oh adh ser mathiyāi toñ
vadh nā deve, bajāj toñ lain lagā tñ do gaj kapḡā mile.
ibid
20. According to J.M.S. Guru Nanak met Salis Rai at Bisham-
bherpur, but all other historical records say that he met
him at Patna. Salis Rai's shop was managed by his
trusted servant Asharka, while Sails Rae generally
stayed at home: tñ lokāñ kehya, he bhai Oh apne ghar
hī rehañdā hai.
J.B. (LI) p. 189
21. Bhai lāl de upar likhyā hoyā hai ke jo koī eh lāl vecan
āvai tis nū sau rupiyā mehmānī devnī darsan karvāi,
ate lāl tuhādā amānat pyā hai.
J.M.S. p. 251
22. ibid p. 252
23. bimal majhār basīs nirmal jal padman jāval re
padman jāval jalras saṅgat sāṅg dokh nahī re;
dādar tū kabeh na jānas re.
bas jal rut vasat aliyal mirac cagun re;
cañdak madnī duroh nīv sas anbhau kāran re.
Guru Nanak Rag Maru Quoted by J.M.S p. 255
24. T.G.K. and G.N.C. say that Guru Nanak stayed here for
about 4 months while J.M.S. says that the Guru stayed
here for 2 years and 7 months which is quite improbable.
It is believed that Salis Rai died 2 years and 7 months
after Guru Nanak left and the period is taken by J.M.S
as the period of the Guru's stay at Patna.
25. ar duhāñ nu mañjī bahālyā ate ākhyā, sun Sālis Rai jitnā
cir tuñ jivaiñ gā tīnā cir terī mañjī ate jad terī deh
chute gī tñ Adharka ghulām bāhe gā.
J.M.S. p. 258

hoe prasan *manjī* teh dīnī
jab lau jivo rahī tumāre
pāche sañtat ko na bisāre
pun mañjī par baise dāsā
dījai nāhī ān ke pāsā.

N.P. Adh 52: 89

26. Salis Rai bāñdhyo sīs par śīghar khule kapāt
gyanañad pūran bheo thāt̄yo aur hī thāt̄

N.P. adh 52 86

Guruji ne apne sir thī Salis Rai nū angocha lahi ditā ate
pher guruji ne kihā, he Salis Rai ch angocha sir te ban
lai, tan Salis Rai ne angocha sir te ban lītā, ar sir te banan
sar hī Salis Rai de kapāt khul gae.

J.M.S. p. 257

27. Osne apnī dharmśālā kāth de bañgle vic cār mahine Bābe
nu rakhyā, ate prem dekh ke mahāraj tike rahe. Os
Adharke dī aulād Bhai Gulab Singh adik sikh othe de
pujārī han, es kāth de bangle vic Guru Tegh Bahadur ji
ut̄re.

T.G.K. p. 81

28. J.M.S. p. 258

29. painde vic thug mil gae; dekh kar akhyione" jisde muh vic
aisī jot hai, so khālī nahī; isde pāle bahut dunīyā hai,
par gujhī hai.

P.J. p. 37

30. asiñ thug hāñ, cere māran ko āe hāñ.

P.J. p. 37

31. ākhio ne " ji asāñ ko naudrik kar, asāde pāp binās kar;
asāñ mahā ghor pāp kamāe hain; tab Guru Nanak mehar-
vān hoyā; akhios " tusāde pāp tab hī binās hovan, ja eh
kirt chodoh ate kirsānī karoh, ate jo kich vast rehañdī hai
so parmesar ke nāe deh, atitāñ bhagtān ke mūh pāvo;
tab onā āgyā man lai, jo kich vast thī so ān age rakhī.,
gurū gurū lage japan.

Ibid p. 38

32. Mardane ākhyā, "ji ināh ke bāb kyā hukam hoā? tab
Bābe ākhyā Mardānyā, eh śahar vasdā rahe

P.J. p. 47

33. tān Guru bolyā” eh śchar ujād hovaigā ,athvāt hovaigā.”
ibid p. 47

34. jī tere dar bhalā nyāo diṭhā hai, jithe baiṭhnā nā mile so
vasāyā, ate jinā sevā bandgī bahut kītī so ujādyā.
ibid p. 47

35. tab Guru Bābe ākhya, “Mardānyā, os kā ādmī avar
śchar jāvai gā ta hor bhī bigḍan ge, ate is śchar dā ādmī
horat śchar jāvai gā tāñ onāh dī bhī gat karegā ate sumat
devegā.

Ibid p. 47

36. Bhai Mani Singh: *Sikhandī Bhagatmal* p. 188


37. The Raja of Rajmahal named Ram Dev Babu kept him
there for some time and offered him a garden, which upto
this day exists and is called “*Guru Ka bagh.*”

T.G.K. says that he met Ram Dev at Malda “Malde
nagar gae tāñ othoñ de Raje Ramdev Babu ne ati sradha
bhagtī kar Maharaj nū catur mās thehrā kar, ik bagh
arpan kitā jo hun tak guru kā bāgh sadaundā hai.

T.G.K. p. 84

CHAPTER 12

GURU NANAK IN BENGAL AND KAMARUP

 IN THE SIXTEENTH century the boundaries of Bengal and Kamarup were not clearly defined. Kamarup included nearly the whole of Assam and northeast Bengal. Both these states were undergoing great political and cultural changes under the influence of Muslim invasions from the western borders and Shan invasions from the Shan States of Burma in the east. In the religious and cultural field, the worshippers of Shiva and Shakti clashed with the Vaishnavas while the social and political influence of Islam was seriously disturbing the traditions and faith of Buddhism and Hinduism.

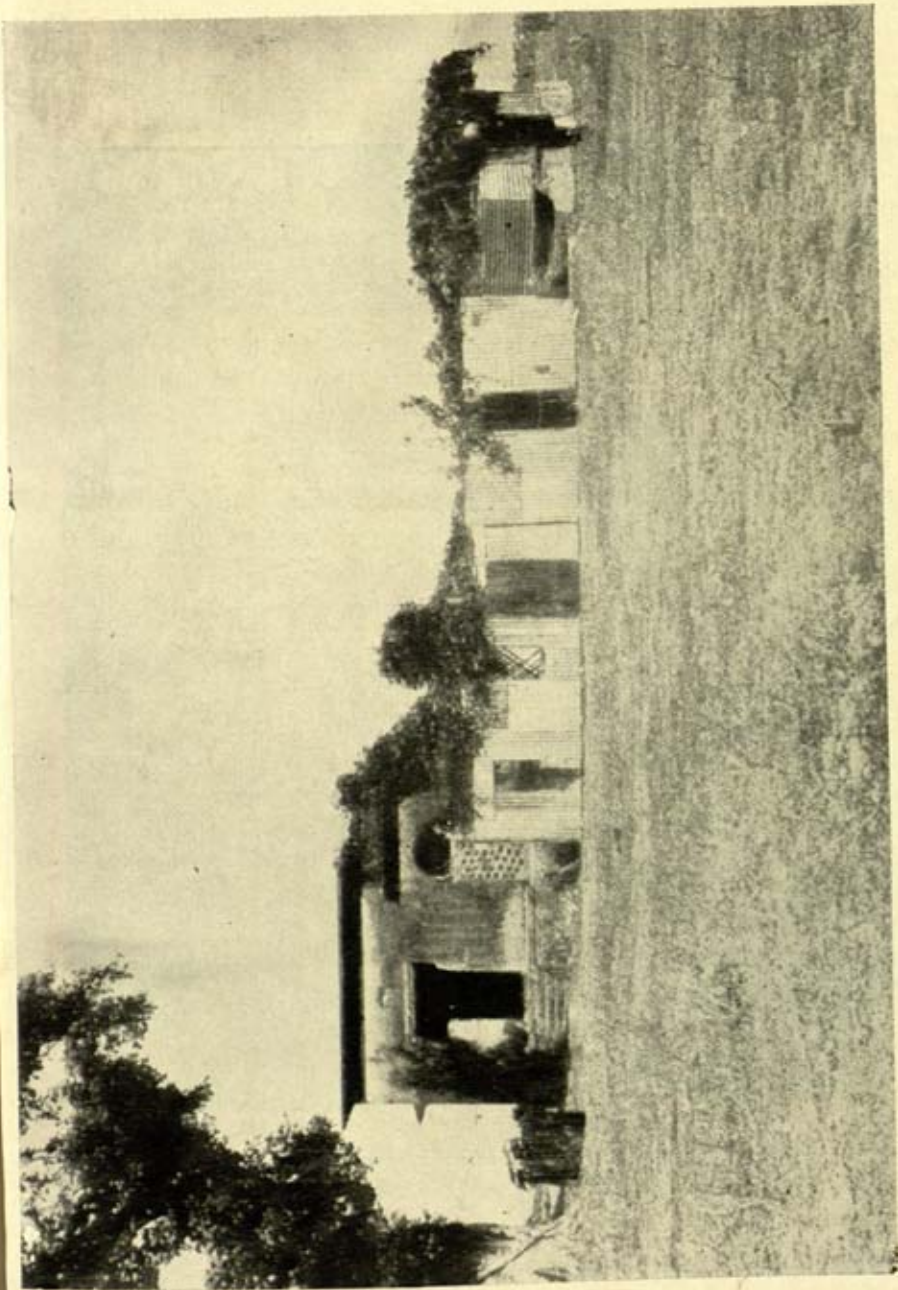
The Leftist followers of the Tantra Cult, *Vāmacara* or *Vāmamārga* (Leftist path) had taken deep roots in Kamarup and Bengal. The scanty information we have in the *Janamsākhī*s on Guru Nanak's visit to Kamarup and Bengal is based on hearsay stories, with some element of truth, the geographical and historical background of which is difficult to ascertain. Provincial and local historical records still available tell quite a different tale. A more intensive research into the religious and cultural history of these states may yield some startling facts. Our historians have concentrated their attention mainly on political events and personalities, and I am tempted to believe that a closer study of the religious movements of this period might give us much more information on the impact of Guru Nanak's missionary journeys on Bengal and Assam than we have at present.

After a short stay at Malda Guru Nanak went to Murshidabad, where a young poet named Shuja became his devoted disciple. He copied some hymns of Guru Nanak, and under their influence wrote some religious hymns giving exposition of Sikhism.¹ On his way to Dacca he stopped at Godagiri, Gopalpur, Krishanganj and Pabna. One day they met a *yogi* who took the Guru and his companions to their forest dwelling, where a number of *siddha yogis* performed *tapasya* (penance) under their leader Ram Deva. When Ramadeva saw Guru Nanak he stood up and was about to touch the Guru's feet when the Master embraced him and greeted him with the utmost respect.² Guru Nanak stayed with Ramadeva for a couple of days and after inspiring him with his thoughts and ideals went to Dacca.

At Dacca

European travellers identified Dacca with Bangalla. Dacca consisted of 52 bazars and 53 streets, and from these circumstances it was then named *Bauna Bazar and Tipan Galli*. One of these, Bangalla, is another old name of Dacca referred to by Rennel. It is not improbable that "*Bauno bazar and Tippan Galli*" was the city alluded to, and the name of Bangalla by which one of the many bazars was known was applied by Europeans to the whole town, from the circumstance perhaps of this bazar being the place on which trade was chiefly carried on with foreigners. What tends to confirm this opinion of the identity of Dacca and Bangalla is the circumstance that only one of them is ever mentioned by the same traveller.³ Bala's *Janam Sakhi* refers to it as Dacca Bangalla.⁴

Dacca was famous for the Dhakeswari temple,



Guru Nanak's Well: SIKHER MANDIR, Dacca (Pakistan). The well on the extreme right is 10 ft. in diameter and 30 ft. deep. Near it is the temple, a rectangular hall with a vaulted verandah. It is under the possession of the Pakistan Government.



Nanak Shahi Temple at Ramna, Dacca (Pakistan)

facing p. 195

a place of pilgrimage. The word Dhakeswari suggests that the place was at some early period covered with dense forests. *Dhaka-iswari* means goddess that remains concealed in the forests. This part of Bengal was then divided into a number of petty states which were dignified with the title of kingdoms. There appeared to be considerable scarcity of drinking water. During his short stay, Guru Nanak had a well dug here and a temple and tank were built by some local Raja to commemorate the visit of the Guru. In the month of March *Chaitra* people of all faiths used to gather here in worship and prayer to keep the memory of Guru Nanak's visit alive. The water of the well was believed to possess miraculous powers. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs came to drink the wish-fulfilling waters of this historic well until recent times.⁵ A greater miracle was performed by Guru Nanak by leaving the light of his faith burning intensely in the soul of the Bengalis of Dacca and other places visited by him.

Here in Dacca there were many religious centres of *Siddha-yogis*, Sufis and Vaishnavas. Lunya, a prominent *Siddha* of Dacca is said to have met Guru Nanak and received the light from him.⁶ Others whose names have come to us in historical records are Mailnatha, Revadas, Naraindas, Chandannatha.⁷ Not far off from Dacca at Sonargaon (svarnagaram: the Golden city) was the seat of *panch pirs*, who were living there at the time of Guru Nanak's visit. Other Sufis who were living at this period at Dacca or places closeby were Nusrat Shah (d. 1520 A.D.), Baba Salih (d. 1519) Hazrat Shah Ali who came from Baghdad with fifty saints,⁸ and Ahmad Shah whose name is found in Sikh historical records.⁹ These and perhaps many more Sufis met Guru Nanak and held

long discussion and they were deeply impressed by the Guru's thoughts and ideals, which though not Islamic were yet close to Islam in their ethical and metaphysical contents. Many people accepted Sikhism and a *manjī* was established. This *manjī* (diocese) was revitalised by Bhai Almast, an apostle of Guru Har-gobind and Bhai Mohan was the *masand* incharge of the Dacca *manjī* established by Guru Nanak.¹⁰ Close to Sonarnagar there is the *Damdama*, the place of rest. There are two Damdamas in Bengal and Assam, connected with the visits of Guru Nanak and Guru Tegh Bahadur, and the Sikhs from these places, who helped the Assamese armies to fight the English invaders, were called *Damdamyias*.¹¹

At Sylhet

We have letters of Guru Gobind Singh which are addressed to the *Sangat* (congregation) of Sylhet, Chittagong, and Sondip. The warrior Guru asked the Bengali Sikhs of these places to send him elephants, weapons, cloth and gold,¹² which indicates that the Sikh *manjīs* (religious centres) of these places were rich and highly developed. We have sufficient evidence in support of the fact that the *manjīs* were established in these places by Guru Nanak. Gyani Thakur Singh in his "*Gurdwara Darshan*" (p-33) says that Guru Nanak converted a *vamacari* named Devi Prashad Bose to Sikhism. This Tantric scholar and adept in occult powers misused his spiritual powers to annoy people. They flourished throughout the Guru period, but some of these centres became extinct during recent years when the Punjab Sikh leaders virtually severed their connections with Sikh congregations outside Punjab and turned all their attention and resources to politics, ignoring

important historical shrines and flourishing missionary centres outside Punjab.

Sylhet during this period was divided into three principal states, Laur, Gaur, and Jaintia. These three States covered Sunamganj, Khasia Hills, Habiganj, Amirganj, Nabiganj, Sankarpasah, Jaintia hills and the present town of Sylhet. The place became famous for miracle working Sufis and eunuchs. The first Sufi *Khanqa* was established here by Shah Jalala, contemporary of Nizamudin Auliya.¹³ As Guru Nanak personally knew the most eminent Chisti saints of Punjab and Delhi, it was not difficult for him to become popular and intimate with the Chisti saints of Sylhet. "Sylhet was the birthplace of Chaitanya, the great Vaishnava reformer of Bengal, and of Advaita, another Vaishnava divine, of Raghunatha Shiromani, the logician, Vaninatha Vidya-sagar, the grammarian, and other men of light and learning."¹⁴ Guru Nanak met Shri Chaitanya at Jagannath Puri about a year later.¹⁵

According to *Purātan Janam Sākhī* Guru Nanak met Sheikh Ibrahim a descendant of Sheikh Farid in *Asa des*, which Bhai Vir Singh takes to be Assam or Kamarup. There was absolutely no Sufi influence in Assam proper. It is quite possible that Guru Nanak met some Chisti disciple of Farid or Nizamudin Auliya here at Sylhet or at Dacca which were considered parts of Kamarup by outsiders. There is some possibility of Sheikh Ibrahim of Punjab having travelled to this place, but there is no historical evidence suggesting this, and as the Sufis did not interfere in the spiritual jurisdiction of other eminent saints, it is highly probable that this Shaikh Ibrahim who met Guru Nanak in Bengal was a different

person than the direct descendant of Sheikh Farid.

At Chittagong and Sondip

Janam Sākhī Bhai Bala and *Purātan Janam Sākhī* have recorded a few stories about Guru Nanak's visit to Chittagong (*chutaghalka*)¹⁶ and Sondip (*swarn-pur*). Chittagong, Sondip and about seventeen islands along the coast on the Arakanese side of Burma (which the *Janam Sākhīs* call *Braham dīp*) were ruled by petty rulers. Sudhar Sain the ruler of Chittagong and Sondip was the most powerful ruler.

When Guru Nanak visited the city everyone was so immersed in worldly affairs that no one appeared to be interested in religious or spiritual life. After two days a carpenter named Jhanda who was known in the city as a devout soul came to pay homage to the Guru. He cooked some food, and procured some fruit from a garden nearby, and placed them before the Guru as his humble offering. Guru Nanak smiled and said, "My dear friend, do you think I have travelled fifteen hundred miles only to take food from your hands?" Jhanda the carpenter was deeply moved by the meaningful question of the Master and said, "Master, thou knowest best the purpose of your visit to this distant place, and thou knowest best how to fulfil that purpose. Make this humble creature the instrument of thy great purpose. My mind, my home and my body are at thy service."¹⁷

Guru Nanak blessed Bhai Jhanda. It is said, that on receiving intuitional light from the Guru, Jhanda, the carpenter passed into ecstasy.¹⁸ Inder-sain the nephew of the ruler while passing through the forest was attracted by the unique personality of the

Guru. He was surprised to see that Jhanda the carpenter, son of Pakhar, whom he knew as a very pious soul was sitting in *samadhi* and had almost lost all body consciousness. Indersain was an enlightened young man well versed in religious lore. He asked Guru Nanak, "Master, thou all-seeing one, dispel my doubts, destroy the illusion that surrounds my weak and wavering mind." The Master answered, "He who has destroyed his evil passions, who is free from pride and avarice, who has overcome and subdued all earthly and celestial pleasures, he will see the way that leads to the highest spiritual state. He will know what truth and love is, and he will live the life of love and truth. He will achieve the presence of God and he will know His true Existence, which is His true Name."¹⁹

Jhanda remained absorbed in ecstasy of divine vision for a long time. He had to be given a bath to be brought to normal physical consciousness. Guru Nanak was so pleased with the purity of his heart, and the nobility of his soul that he declared that he was establishing a seat of the Sikh Church (*mañji*) in that country, and installing Bhai Jhanda as the chief missionary in the area.²⁰ Bhai Jhanda was overwhelmed by the gracious honour shown by the Guru to him.

The next day news went round in the city that Bhai Jhanda had been elected as an apostle by the new prophet who had come from the Punjab and had now established his Church in capital. The ruler of the state, Sudhar Sain was surprised to note that this strange visitor from a far off land, had attracted the attention of the rich and poor but he had not cared to pay homage to the ruler of the state.

So he sent some men and summoned Guru Nanak to his presence. Incidentally when the officers of the state arrived Inder Sain was there. Intervening, he said, "The ruler is my maternal uncle. I will accompany these officers and explain to him that he should not have sent such orders."²¹

Inder Sain explained to his uncle, Sudhar Sain, that, Guru Nanak, the prophet from Punjab was no ordinary saint. He was a sage who had attained supreme enlightenment, and whose very presence sheds light. His words of eternal wisdom awakened a new consciousness in the minds of the hearers. So exalted a sage must be approached with humility and reverence. He could not order him to come to his court. Nanak would not obey such orders. Sudhar Sain was greatly moved. He went on foot to meet the great prophet who had influenced his learned nephew so profoundly. He placed before Guru Nanak rich offerings which the Guru handed over to Bhai Jhanda to be used for the *sangat* (congregation). During Guru Nanak's stay there he showed such love and respect for the Guru that Nanak blessed him saying, "All small kingdoms around your state shall one day accept your benign rule. Whether a man is a king, a merchant or an artisan, he must live in this world of light and darkness like a lotus living in a marshy pond. The lotus lives in dirty water and weeds and yet it remains untouched and unaffected by water and weeds. Live in the world the life of truth, joy, and peace, and bliss will dwell in your mind."²² Jhanda, the carpenter, is said to have accompanied Guru Nanak in his missionary journey to the South and Ceylon.²³ In another island called Silmiladip, Guru Nanak met another ruler named Madhur Bain. He was attracted by the personality of the

Guru the moment he saw him and welcomed him to his palace. He asked Nanak what his concept of the true Guru, the Enlightener of souls was. Guru Nanak said: "He is the perfect Guru, who has attained the perfection, and whose soul ever rests on the Throne of God. On meeting the true Guru man becomes desireless, his virtues are illumined, his evil propensities disappear, and the presence of God is never forgotten."²⁴

Guru Nanak in Kamarup

The country known as Pragjyotisha (the land of eastern astrology) in ancient times, and as Kamarup (the land of Cupid)²⁵ in the medieval period came to be known as Ahom (Asam), when in the thirteenth century the country was over-run by a band of hardy hill tribe called Ahom, an offshoot of the great Tai (Thai) or Shan race of Burma.²⁶ This region came to be known as Kamarup during the Puranic times based on the legend that Kamadeva, the god of love was destroyed by the fiery glance of Shiva but returned to life in this country. Poet Kali Das refers to this region in his dramas as Kamarupa, and the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (7th century) calls it Kamalupo.²⁷ The Sikh *Janam Sakhis* call it Kamarup or Kaurodes.

The great Kamakhya temple at present near Gauhati was even then, as it is now, the centre of Kamarup creed and culture. "The country of Kamarup is about 10,000 *li* (17,000 miles) in circuit" writes Hiuen Tsiang and adds, "The land lies low, but is rich and regularly cultivated. They adore and sacrifice to the *devas* and have no faith in Buddha" "As its circumference was nearly 1,7000

miles it must have included the whole of Assam, (except perhaps Naga Hills, Lushai hills and Manipur) and also Bhutan, and North Bengal as far as the Karatoya and the part of Mymensingh which lies to the east of the old course of Brahmaputra."²⁸ The origin of Kamarup and Kamakhya shrine are explained by the following mythology: "When Sati died of vexation at the discourtesy shown to her husband, Shiva, by her father Daksha, Shiva, overcome by grief, wandered about the world carrying her dead body on his head. In order to put a stop to his penance, Vishnu followed him and lopped away the body piecemeal with his discus. It fell to earth in fifty one different pieces, and wherever each piece fell, the ground was held to be sacred. Her organ of generation fell on Kamagiri, that is, Nilachal hill near Guhati, and the place was henceforth held sacred to Kamakhya, the goddess of sexual desire."²⁹ Her eyes fell at Nainadevi near Anandpur in the Punjab, and other pieces at Jawala-Mukhi, Vindya Vasani, and Kalighat.

It was during the reign of Ahom King, Suhangmung (1497-1539 A.D.), who under the influence of Brahmins, assumed the Hindu title, Svarga Narayan,³⁰ that Guru Nanak visited this land of magic and beauty.

Nur Shah and Her Witchcraft

Tantric religion and witchcraft were deep rooted in Kamarup. Charms and witchcraft have their roots in Vedic religion, and it still exists even in highly civilized countries like England and Europe.³¹ "In the Rig Veda we come across utterances of incantations, and spells, charms and witchcrafts, hymns to inanimate things, devils and demons."³² The science

of demonology has existed ever since then, and has been developed into a highly elaborate study, full of philosophy and sorcery, by various Tantric schools. Kamarup and a good part of Bengal became the centre of its theory and practice.

"The people of the rest of India", says a Muslim chronicler, "consider the natives of Kamarup as wizards and magicians. They believe that every person who sets his foot there is under the influence of witchcraft and cannot find the road to return." Shihabudin Talish, who visited Assam in the middle of seventeenth century writes, "Narrow are the gates by which outsiders can enter, or issue from this country, and lame are the feet on which its natives can go to other countries. Every army that entered the limits of this country, made its exit from the realm of life; every caravan that set its foot on this land, deposits its baggage of residence in the halting place of death. And as no one who entered this country, like visitors to the realm of death, ever returned, and the manner of its natives were never made known to any outsider, the people of Hindustan used to call the inhabitants of Assam sorcerers and magicians. They say that whoever visits this country is overcome by charms, and never comes out of it."

"The beauty of the women of this place is very great; their magic, enchantment, and use of spells and jugglery are greater than one can imagine. By the use of magic, they build houses of which the pillars and ceilings are made of men. These men remain alive, but do not have the power of breathing and moving. *By the power of magic they also turned men into quadrupeds and birds, so that these men get tails and ears like those of beasts. They conquer the hearts of whom-ever they like.*"³⁷

Almost all the *Janam Sākhis* are unanimous in recording the story of Nur Shah, a well known Magic woman of Kamarup, who used her spell on Mardana, and was subsequently redeemed by the spiritual powers of Guru Nanak. What is puzzling in this story is that the name Nur Shah, is an Islamic name revealing Sufi influence. Islamic influence did not go far into Kamarup, and very few Kamarup women ever accepted Islam. Bhai Vir Singh in his *Guru Nanak Chamatkar* says that the name of this woman was Padma; she and her father, Narendra Nath, came under the strong influence of a Sufi of Dānpur, named Nurshah, about forty miles from Dacca, and when her preceptor died, she became her successor. People found that she was adept in occult powers, so they addressed her also as Nur Shah." Bhai Vir Singh does not give the source of his information, but the story is quite plausible. Sufi influence did extend to the area of about eight miles around Dacca and Sylhet. Beyond that even Islamic influence was negligible. Only those Muslims resided in Kamarup who were taken prisoners by the Ahoms and then chose to stay in that country. 'They were forbidden to chant the call to prayer and fasting, or publicly recite the "word of God."

Attracted by the charming speech and enchanting promises of a few disciple girls of Nur Shah, Mardana innocently followed them till he was brought to the presence of Nur Shah. Mardana talked of his great Master whose spiritual influence had won over to his faith princes and priests, Sufis and *yogis*, *siddhas* and saints. Nur Shah could not believe that there was any one more powerful than her in wielding occult powers. She felt slighted. By her spell, as the legend goes, she converted him into a lamb.

Perhaps it is the symbolic way of saying that Mardana came completely under her spell, and was a virtual prisoner like a lamb in the sheep-fold of a shepherd. Through some psychic powers they could make tender minds behave like submissive animals, and perhaps through some kind of hypnotism they could even make them forget their conscious self. Mardana appears to have become a victim of such a spell.³⁸

When Guru Nanak came to know about it he went to the coven of Nur Shah. As she saw Nanak, she used all her magic incantations, her spells and even the charms of her beauty and personality. As Guru Nanak came nearer, the satanic power of her spells faded away. Her incantations and magic formula failed. She had tied a magic thread around Mardana's kneck. Guru Nanak asked Bhai Bala to break it off.³⁹ Not only Mardana but all the victims of her sorcery, all the prisoners of her satanic powers were freed. The priestess of satanic powers who could control the lower nature of men and women was dazzled by the light of Guru Nanak's peacegiving spirituality. She fell at the Guru's feet and promised to give up the path of Tantric cult. According to Kavi Santokh Singh's *Nanak Prakash* she became an initiated disciple of Guru Nanak.⁴⁰ She asked Guru Nanak to leave some of his personal belonging with her. It is said Guru Nanak left his *burcha* (lance) which the Guru probably carried with him in his travels through the forests. The Guru marked a place with his lance where he ordered a pond to be dug. The water of the pond was used for drinking purposes. The place came to be known as *Burcha Sahib*. Gyani Gyan Singh visited this place in 1870 A.D. He saw the *burcha* and the shrine of Nur Shah built in commemoration of Guru Nanak's visit.⁴¹

Bhai Bhumia (Bhuyan), the Landlord.

During his travels in Assam, Guru Nanak, according to the *Janam Sākhī*s met Bhai Bhumia, the landlord. *Bhuyan* is the Sanskrit equivalent of the Persian word, *Zamindar*. There were about twelve Chiefs in Assamese history who administered the hilly portions of the Raja of Jaintias dominions, like the twelve state councillors in Nepal.⁴² The eminent saint Sankardeva was also the son of a Bhuyan of Nowgong.

When Guru Nanak came to this territory, he was told by the people that the Bhuyan did not allow any one to entertain any saint or monk. Any man of God who came to his territory or any trader or traveller who passed through that region could stay only with him. He entertained them well and impressed them by his free kitchen where many poor people took their meals. But he robbed them all, he tortured and killed those who refused to part with their wealth. Sometimes he even robbed the well-to-do peasants and petty shopkeepers. He was feared and cursed by everyone. When Guru Nanak met him, Bhuyan entertained the Guru and his companions and gave them comfortable lodging. When he brought some fruit and food for the Master, Guru Nanak asked him, "What is your source of income my man, out of which you have offered this delicious food?" Bhuyan was silent for sometime. Should he tell the truth? Was it possible to tell a lie to this strange visitor who seemed to see and know everything? What will he think of him if he tells the truth? He is now known as a great landlord, a great philanthropist; will not this image of his being a good man be permanently destroyed? "Why are you silent my man? Tell me the truth. From

where do you get all this wealth? How does it keep on multiplying?" asked the Guru again. Bhuyan felt that the Guru somehow knew everything. He wanted to confess. He had not feared anything in life. Why should he be afraid to confess? "Master," said he, "I steal, I rob this money from the rich; and when I do not get any money from the rich, I exploit, I purloin and swindle money from whom-ever I can get. All the wealthy people do it one way or the other. The Maharajas, the Rajas, the Nawabs the Zamindars, all live on the earning of others. I have adopted my own methods."

Guru Nanak was pleased that Bhuyan had told the truth. "My friend," said Guru Nanak, "a few virtuous deeds will not erase the stigma of the heinous crimes you commit in the name of charity. Whether it is the Nawab or the Raja, whether it is the king or priest, whoever lives by exploiting the labours of others, whoever causes suffering to the innocent people will ultimately suffer for it. When death knocks at his door he will be carried away on the carpet of his deeds, to stand naked, lonely and helpless, before the high Throne of Eternal Truth, whose existence we all feel. For every agony you have caused to innocent people, for every sorrow you have inflicted on the helpless victims of your crime, the great Judge will punish you. Take off this cloak of sin and hypocrisy and be a man."

Deeply influenced by the Master's inspired discourse, Bhuyan agreed to carry out the instructions of the Guru, but expressed his helplessness in not being able to change his habits so suddenly. Guru Nanak said: "Habits do die hard, but you can always unmake the habits you have made, when you have

the will to give them up. Remember and do three things : Firstly, always tell the truth; secondly, if you eat anyone's salt, do not cheat him, and do not commit any evil in his house; thirdly, let not any innocent person suffer pain or sorrow on account of you."⁴³ Guru Nanak went away. Bhuyan was a changed man now, but not yet a completely changed man. Lust for money, and the craze to replenish his decreasing wealth, tempted him to steal again. He dressed himself as a prince and entered the palace of the local Raja. He hid himself in a room where there were some eatables. He ate some preparations, sweet and saltish. In the middle of the night he broke open the treasury of the Raja and heaped up his jewels, gold, and precious stones and was ready to pack up and go, when he remembered Guru Nanak's first commandment, "Thou must not steal." His conscience woke up from its forced slumber, and put him to shame for disobeying the commandment of the Guru, who was so lovable, so truthful, and so divine. Then he remembered the second commandment : "if you eat anyone's salt, you shall not commit any evil in his house." He trembled before the horror of his own misdeed. In the darkness of the room, the light of his conscience, revealed to him that he was once more on the path of sin and disgrace. He left everything he had collected in the palace and without stealing anything he went away undetected.

The next day the ruler of the State was surprised to see that some thief had nearly deprived him of everything, but he could not understand why the thief escaped without taking anything. He could, as a matter of fact, take everything. He ordered that the thief must be caught. The state police arrested

many innocent people merely on suspicion and tortured them to confess who had broken into the palace. Bhuyan was shocked to learn that many innocent people were thrown into the prison on suspicion and some of them were being tortured and made to undergo terrible suffering for a crime they had not committed. He remembered the third commandment of the Guru: "Let not any innocent person suffer any pain or sorrow on account of you." He felt that he was responsible for the ill-treatment and suffering of so many innocent people. He went to the durbar of the Raja and made a clean confession of all that had happened. He also explained why he left the stolen goods in the palace. The ruler was surprised to know that one of the leading landlord of the state had confessed that he was a thief. The man who was known for his charity and philanthropy had confessed that he led the life of sin, and now while committing a sin he had made up a determined effort to give it up. He then explained that the prophet from Punjab who had influenced the witch Nur Shah had also changed his mind and soul. The ruler was deeply moved. He forgave Bhuyan and offered money to build a shrine in memory of the prophet from Punjab, who had left such a great moral and spiritual influence on men and women of the region.

The place where Guru Nanak met Bhuyan is not definitely known. Bhai Vir Singh thinks it must be in the vicinity of Dacca.⁴⁴ But the Bhuyans settled mainly in northern and central regions of Kamarup. The incident might have taken place in the northern region. It appears that the religious centres established by Bhuyan and Nur Shah lasted only as long as they were controlled by some worthy successors.

The political situation in India in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was such that the existence of these shrines became well-nigh impossible.

Kauda, the Man-hunter of Nagaland

The *Janam Sākhīs* mention that Guru Nanak went to *Basīar des*, which I believe is the same as Nagaland. The word '*Basīar*' and *Naga* mean "Snake". Another historical evidence in favour of this theory is that Guru Nanak and Mardana encountered Kauda, the man-hunter in Dhanaseri. Bhai Vir Singh thinks that this Dhanaseri in the *Janamsākhīs* refers to Tenasserim valley⁴⁵ of Burma. This actually refers to the Dhanaseri valley of Nagaland through which the Dhanaseri river flows. To the east and north-east of this river live the Lhota Nagas and Ao Nagas, to the south are found Kach Nagas. Dimapur situated on Dhanaseri river, was for a long time the capital of the Kachari kingdom, which was sacked by the Ahoms in 1536 A.D.,⁴⁶ that is, a few years after Guru Nanak visited this valley. By the year 1526 A.D. Suhangmung, who was the ruler of Assam, had conquered all the territory of the Chutiya kings and also the Kachari kingdom of Dhanaseri valley for a few years.⁴⁷

In this valley lived cannibal tribes of Nagas, and it appears that Kauda was one of such Nagas. Man-hunting was common among some Naga tribes until quite recent times. So when Guru Nanak and his companions came to the Dhanaseri valley, Mardana happened to be the first victim of Kauda, the man-hunter. In search of food, he was always separated from the Master, and now he became raw meat for a cannibal. Kauda was about

to roast him alive when Guru Nanak arrived. As soon as Kauda saw Nanak, he felt a strange influence of the Master on his mind and on his soul. The fires of his lust for man-hunting cooled down, and the fires that he had lighted to roast Mardana alive died down. "Why should a man kill another man to appease his hunger. Nature has given so much food in so many forms?"⁴⁹ questioned Nanak. "It is easy to hunt man," said Kauda. "Civilized people kill man for nothing. They kill them for pleasure. I kill man for eating his flesh."⁵⁰ No one in our tribe considers it bad. But now I realize killing is bad. Life you say is precious. It should not be destroyed. I do not understand why only man's life is precious, but I will not kill." The *Janam Sakhis* say that under the spiritual influence of Guru Nanak, Kauda not only gave up man-hunting, but he took up the life of contemplation and devotion to God and attained such illumination that after a year or two he discarded his body. According to another *Janam Sakhī* when Guru Nanak inspired him with the reality of spiritual life, he begged the Guru to pray for his death, so that he could lead a better life after rebirth. The story only indicates that Kauda did not live for long. If some research work is done in the early records and traditions of the Nagas of Dhanaseri valley, it would not be difficult to find the place where Guru Nanak met Kauda. Some traditional account of Guru Nanak's visit in some legendary form may still be found in the folk-tales of this region. The Muslim chronicler Mohammed Kazim writes: "There is another chain of hills, inhabited by a tribe called *Nanak*, who pay no taxes and revenue to the Raja, but profess allegiance to him and obey a few of his orders."⁵¹ It is quite possible that this chain of hills is in this region.

Guru Nanak's Meeting with Sankardeva

Although there is no written evidence available so far about the meeting of Sankardeva and Guru Nanak, there is a well grounded tradition among the followers of this great Vaishnava reformer that he met Guru Nanak and Kabir. Sankardeva (1449-1569) was in Assam when Guru Nanak visited the province and a meeting between the two was not only possible but also perhaps inevitable. There is a lesser possibility of his having met Kabir because by the time Sankardeva visited Benares, Kabir was either at Maghar or dead. Kabir did not visit Assam, or any other place in the East where he could have met this Vaishnava reformer of Assam. Guru Nanak spent a whole year in this region when Sankardeva was living and preaching his mission here. Two factors strongly indicate the personal influence of the Founder of Sikhism on Sankardeva: This is the only Vaishnava sect in India the mode of worship of which strongly resembles the one preached by the Sikh Gurus. Like the Sikhs they revere the Word of God, the holy Book. In the *Arati* of this sect Guru Nanak's name is mentioned. On the philosophical plane this is the only Vaishnava sect which has strong leanings towards monism, and has given up idolatory, caste-system, and the Brahmanical rites. So far a direct historical evidence of their meeting has not been found. With the encouragement of the study of regional languages, the study of Sankardeva, father of Assamese literature, has been intensified and yet the interest in historical research into the life and work of the great saint is lacking. It is quite possible that if some contemporary record is found it may throw some light on the details of the saint's life.

At Kamakhya and Dhubri

Guru Nanak visited all Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist shrines, on the occasion of some religious festival, when he could meet and address pilgrims coming from distant places. He must have visited the Kamakhya temple also, but there is no historical evidence or shrine closeby commemorating his visit. There is a *panda* there, called the Sikh *panda*, who tells of the traditional belief that both Guru Nanak and Guru Tegh Bahadur visited the historical temple to address the pilgrims but they did not stop there. He has a document related to Guru Tegh Bahadur's life which I have already published in my book, *Guru Tegh Bahadur: Prophet and Martyr*

Guru Nanak, however, visited Dhubri which was in that early period a place of strategic importance, and flourishing city. Guru Nanak appears to have rested here for some days. That is why the place is known as *Damdama* of the Guru. The Sikh community of this place maintained an army unit under some Sardar, which participated in the Anglo-Assamese Wars against the British. They are mentioned in Assamese records as *Damdanya* Sikhs of Assam. Ever since Guru Nanak's visit, the place was held sacred by people of all communities.

Rani Gaurjan :

During Guru Nanak's itinerary in Assam he met a devout prince and princess. They became his initiated disciples. The name of the princess is given as Rani Gaurjan.⁵² This family played a significant role in Sikh history and for two centuries maintained an unbroken link with the Sikh Gurus in Punjab and Assam. The grandson of this princess,

Raja Ram Rai was a devoted disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He went to Patna to receive the Guru in 1666 A.D. and not only accompanied Guru Tegh Bahadur in his travels in Assam but accompanied him back to Patna and the Punjab. By Guru Tegh Bahadur's blessings, Ram Rai had a son, named Rattan Rai who went all the way to Punjab to become an initiated disciple of Guru Gobind Singh.⁵³ He presented to the young Guru Gobind, a white elephant, a five-in-one weapon, still preserved in the Baroda Museum, and other weapons and gold. It shows that the seeds of Sikhism sown in Assam by Guru Nanak, flowered into a flourishing mission even during the most turbulent period of India's history, but the selfish, short-sighted, leadership of our day, has callously allowed these great centres of Sikhism to be destroyed and thrown into oblivion.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Bhai Vir Singh quotes one poem of Shuja in his "*Guru Nanak Chamatkār*" on p. 211, the free translation of which is as follows :

All sins have been destroyed
On meeting Satguru Nanak,
I have attained the divine Name,
All work is in tune with aspirations.
Nanak is the true Guru
Whose glory is sung in the Unknown realms,
I have been liberated by the grace of Nanak.
He has removed all false colours,
And dyed me in the lasting colour of spirituality.

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By the gracious mercy of the true Guru Nanak,
I have attained the state of immortality.

Guru Nanak Chamatkar p. 211

2. *ibid* p. 210
3. James Taylor : *Topography and Statics of Dacca* p. 92.
4. Dhartī Dhāke—Bangālle dī gae
J.B. III (1848 MSS) f. 85
5. "Beyond the Idgah further away from the city lay another centre of interest. Out of the waste half-hidden in bramble growth, a well and a broken arch are the only visible signs of a Sikh monastery, that once flourished here. The well is known as Guru Nanak's well after Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh Religion. There is a local tradition that the great teacher once visited Dacca and drank the water of the well, to the waters of which miraculous properties have ever since been attributed.

Bradley Birt; *The Romance of the Eastern Capital* p. 9

"Some three hundred yards to the east of Dara Begum's mausoleum there is a large deep masonry well named after Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh Religion. Tradition says that during his visit to Dacca the Guru once drank the water of the well. Since then the water is supposed to possess the properties of curing diseases. There was a monastery close by, one arch of which alone is standing now.

Sayid Aulad Hasan. *Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca* p. 2
Also see Ahmad Hasan Dani. *Dacca* p. 126-7;
Dacca Review, Vol. V, 1915 p. 226.

At present the historic shrine and the well is being used by a Pakistani Govt. servant as a living quarter. The author of this book saw it in 1959.

6. T.G.K. p. 85.
7. Lunya siddha, Semail Nath, Narain Das, Chandan Nath, Sheikh Ahmed adik samuh pīr fakīr jinān de hun bhī othe makān manīde han Babe sāth carcā karan āe; par suraj age tāryan dī camak nahī prakasdī.

T.G.K. 85

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8. Ahmad Hasan Dani *Dacca* p. 151-159
9. T.G.K. p. 85
10. Dhāke Mohan sev kamāni
Bhai Gurdas *Vār* 11; 31
11. S.K. Bhuyan *Anglo-Assamese Wars*
12. A letter of Guru Gobind Singh written to Dacca, Sylhet, Chittagong and Sondip *Sangat* reads as follows :

Sri Gurujī dī āgya hai, Bhai Hulas Chand, Bakshi Chand, sarbat Dhāke dī saṅgat, Chitgāñv kī saṅgat, Sondip kī saṅgat, Sylhet kī saṅgat, Sarbat saṅgat guru rakhe gā, achā hāthī jangī bhejnā aval, saṅgat nihāl hov.

The Guru sends his command to Bhai Hulas Chand, Bakshish Chand, and the congregations of Dacca, Chittagong, Sondip, Sylhet, to send first class war-elephant; the congregation shall be blessed.
Letter of Guru Gobind Singh to Dacca Sangat
13. Mufti Azhoruddin Ahmad: *History of Shah Jalal and His Khadims* p. 37.
14. Edward Gaite: *History of Assam* p. 287
15. See chapter 14 of this book.
16. Jhandā nāl nibhyā, nagar chutāghātkā
P.J. 54
17. J.B. (LI) p. 204-5.
18. Jhande de kapāt khul gae, Jhandā bideh hoe gayā, Jhande nū sabh kich visar gayā.
J.B. (LI) p. 206
19. *ibid* p. 207
20. Jhañde nū nhavāyā, Jhañde dī khumārī utrī tāñ
Jhandā Gurujī de pairāñ te pai gayā, tañ Guru Nānak kehyā Bhai Jhañdā, asīñ tainū manji bahāvnā hai, tan Jhande kehyā Gurujī tuhādī rajāe; tāñ Guru Nānakjī Jhande nu manji saupī.
Ibid p. 207

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21. tãñ Inder Sain kehyã: "Rajã jĩ merã mãmu hai, uskã kich bighan nã hoe jãe, mai us kĩ nisã kar ävtã hãñ,"
Ibid p. 208
22. Aþhãrã rãje tumre rayat kine
J.B. (LI) p. 209
23. In some MSS copies of *Prãn Sañglĩ* a work said to have been written in Ceylon, it is recorded, Likhat Prãn Sañglĩ. Baba kã bolnã Set Bañdh Rameshwar, Rãje Shiv Nãbh pãsoñ paidã mokhã lai äyã, tab Baba paunahãrĩ thã, Jhañdã bãdhĩ sãth thã.
24. J.Mb. p. 248 gives the name of the Raja as Mitter Sain.
25. K.L. Barua: *Early History of Kamarupa* p. 1, 9, 11.
26. Edward Gait: *A History of Assam* p. 70-71.
27. K.L. Barua: *An Early History of Kamarupa* p. 9, 11
28. Beal's *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. II. p.195
29. Edward Gait: *A History of Assam* p. 25.
30. Ibid 11-12.
31. A very illuminating study of the practise of Witchcraft in the West today is given in "*The Black Art*" by Rollo Ahmed "*Witchcraft in England* by Christine Hole; *The Devils of Loudun* by Aldous Huxley.

Petronella the maid of the notorious witch, Dame Alicia Kyteler in her confession declared that "Dame Alicia was the greatest sorcerers in Britain; that she offered sacrifices to the Evil One; and that she made unguents with the disgusting substances already mentioned, which has magic property of turning women's faces into those of horned goats."

Rollo Ahmed : *The Black Art* p. 220

The Government of Assam has published an ancient book of magic formulae and rites practiced in ancient Kamarupa entitled, "*Kamaratna Tantra*, with English Translation. There are interesting Tantric formula for subduing wives, controlling elephants, sexual potency, causing quarrels, seeing the invisible, causing rain. etc. Such

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literature still found in abundance should be preserved and studied scientifically. I believe that it is more of a science than magic.

32. Radhakrishnan : *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I p. 118
33. Mohammed Kazim : *A description of Assam: Asiatic Researches* Vol. I, p. 181.
34. Shihabuddin Talish *Fāthyā-i-inbraiyah* J.B.O.S. 1915 p. 194.
35. Sujan Rai : *Khulāsut-ul-Tawārikh*.
36. Bhai Vir Singh in his "*Guru Nanak Chamatkar*" p. 232 gives the name of Nur Shah's father Narendra Nath and her name as Padma.
37. Shihabuddin Talish: *Fatiha-i-inbraiyah* J.B.O.S. p. 195.
38. Under hypnotism people can be made to behave the way hypnotist wants them to behave. I have seen men under hypnotism being controlled in this way.
39. J.B. (1848 MSS) f. 74
40. pag pahul dīn kirtārath kīn, bhae agh hīn vade vadbhāge
dharmsāl bisāl racī teh kāl dyāl kī kīrat mai mat pāge
N.P. pur : adh 46: 46

Guru Nanak baptised Nurshah with the *Charan pahul* ceremony. A shrine was built in his honour and the Guru stayed there for five days, although in verse 47-50 Nurshah begs the Guru to prolong his stay.
41. pher unā ne bentī kītī ethe jal dī taṅgī hai, Bābe de hath
vic barchā sī, us dhar par māryā, tāñ jal dī dhār nikal āi,
us casme dā jal hun tak varī dā hai, te ose barche dī
pujā asthān da nām barchā sāhib hai.
T.G.K. p. 86
42. Edward Gait *A History of Assam* p. 38-39
43. In Bala's *Jonam Sakhi* the story is entitled: *Sakhi ik Zomindar Bhumie nal hoi*" (p. 358) Guru Nanak said : "sikhā jo tuñ, piche karam kare hain so tere tāñ bakhshe hain, āp ar parmeşwar dī dargāh vic asīñ teryāñ amlāñ de jāman hovāñge, prañtu tin bacan jarūr manane, "ik tu sac bolyā

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kar, dujā jiskā lūn khāvan tis kā burā nahī mangnā, tīje garīb mār nahī karnī.'

Guru Nanak said, "Your past sins are forgiven and in future I will save you in the court of God also but you have to do three things: first, tell the truth, second, do not harm to anyone whose salt you have taken, third, cause no suffering to the poor."

J.B.S. (LI) p. 359

44. dhāke dī ik vastī vic ik zamīndar rehndā sī, Jāpdā hai ch girāñ dhāke de kise ilāke vic kite sī. N.C. p. 236

45. Ibid.

46. uhāñ rākhaṣ ādmī bhakhta thā, Dhanāsirī deṣ kā, tahāñ Babā jāc pargatyā, nāl Saido Siho, the.

There in the Dhanasiri land they met a cannibal, named Kauda. With Guru Nanak were Saido, Shihan.

P.J. (MSSII) f. 120

Colebrooke's MSS mentions Gheho Jat also as one of the companions. The most surprising thing in both these MSS is that they do not mention the name of Mardana. They say that the Cannibal caught hold of Saido and Shihan. JMS says that Kauda caught hold of Guru Nanak and was ready to roast him alive in a cauldron.

47. Edward Gait: *A History of Assam* p. 91.
48. During his exodus from Burma in 1942, the author of this book passed through this region on foot. With him were some surveyors who had surveyed every inch of the territory and knew much about the Nagas. On inquiry it was learnt that man-hunting Nagas still existed in the thickly forested areas.
49. All *Janam Sākhīs* give the story in slightly variant manner.
50. This was the argument which the Cannibal tribes always give for their lust for man-hunting. During the world war the Chief of a cannibal tribe asked Dr. Albert Schweitzer: "Was it true that many people were killed?" "More than ten?" "Yes many more," answered Schweitzer."

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"What" exclaimed an Old Pahouin (a cannibal tribe),
 "More than ten? Why don't they have a palaver. They
 must be killing each other for cruelty, since they do not
 eat their dead.

George Seaver : *Albert Schweitzer*. p. 65

51. Mohammed Kazim *A Description of Assam Asiatic
 Researches*. p. 118.

52. Guruji de şabad updes nū manke bahut log parmeşwar
 ke bhagat ban gae, eh bāt sun ke othoñ dī rāñi Gaurjān
 ne Babe da updeś dhāran kitā. T.G.K. p 87


53. sadā dās mai satgur ghar ko
 sikhī bakhşo de kar bar ko,
 sunat mahātām upjio prem
 Sri gur dāta de gur chem,
 apno jān bhujā pakrījai,
 caran kamal kī pahul dījai,

Rattan Rai said to Guru Gobind Singh,
 "I am ever a servant of the House of the Guru. Give me
 the gift of Sikhism; Thou art ever merciful and compas-
 sionate. Baptise me with the *Charan Pahul* ceremony.
 N.P. Rt., Ans. 22 : 46

This clearly indicates that before the baptism of double
 edged sword was introduced even Guru Gobind Singh
 baptised Sikhs through the *Charan Pahul* ceremony
 introduced by Guru Nanak.

CHAPTER 13

HISTORIC MEETING BETWEEN GURU NANAK AND SRI CHAITANYA

 FROM BENGAL Guru Nanak followed the same highway to Puri by which the Hindu pilgrims went to this ancient holy place during the *ratha yatra* (chariot festival) held on the second lunar day of the bright fortnight in *Ashad* (June-July) every year. Crossing the Ganges at Pabna, and stopping at Murshadabad, Brahampur, Krishnanagar, Ranaghat, and coming down the Hooghly river, most probably by boat, Guru Nanak reached Calcutta.¹ Calcutta in the first and second decade of the sixteenth century consisted of three villages : Chuttanee, Kalikata, and Gobindpur, Hooghly was known by the same name.² No foreigner had till then set foot on this marshy river bed, and in the history of Bengal the area is mentioned as the least populated, infested with disease, and a God-forsaken region.

— The Hooghly river on which the village stood was subject to periodic changes of course. The actual sea coast was a dreary, inhospitable tract of mud and sand, and the area immediately behind it being cut up by numerous waterways, facilitated the operation of brigands and decoits, and had been largely depopulated by frequent incursions of pirates from neighbouring provinces of Arakan."³ When the officers of the East India Company tried to establish the first factory here a century and half later in 1670, they complained, "our ships do generally ride in a hard and dangerous roadstead, and many of our

oarsmen come to sickness and death by their constant labour or rowing far in such a rough sea.”⁴

Guru Nanak camped here in the second decade of the sixteenth century, when Calcutta was an unknown dark and dingy village. He was the first to divine the future geographical and historical importance of this little known village, Calcutta, located in the river-side of the swamp. Here, at the place now called *Badī Sangat*, Guru Nanak sowed the seed of Sikh faith which flowered into flourishing missionary centre. A *manjī* of the Sikh congregation was established here, under some Bengali disciple whose name has not been preserved in history. The historic shrine exists to this day as *Badī Sangat Gurdwara*. This *saṅgat* (shrine) established by Guru Nanak, was reorganised by Almast, a disciple of Guru Har-gobind (1595-1644), who placed it under the supervision of Dacca missionary, Bhai Natha, and then went to Puri.⁵ Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, founded another *Saṅgat* in Calcutta called *Choti Saṅgat*, in Tullapati, later known as Cotton Street, in the same year in which East India Company established its first factory here. A Kshatriya Raja, or perhaps a *zamindar* of the Behal caste is said to have accepted Sikhism during this visit of the Guru.⁶

From Calcutta Guru Nanak went to Burdwan, where the ruling family became initiated disciple of the Guru. Later they came to be known as the Khalsa disciples of the Guru, which indicates that some ruler visited Anandpur during the life-time of Guru Gobind Singh and became baptised Khalsa according to the New Dispensation of the tenth Guru. Or it may be that the rulers of Burdwan actively associated themselves with the Khalsa of Takhat

Patna as did the rulers of Assam. Guru Nanak's historical shrine is near the railway station.⁷

At Cuttack

From Burdwan Guru Nanak moved on to Mednipur, where there is still to be found a shrine known as Guru Nanak's home. Guru Nanak is said to have spent some days here.⁸ Moving on to Jaleswar, Rupsa, Balasore he reached Cuttack. The ruler of this place was a Shaiva worshipper of Bhairavi, the terrible consort of Shiva, and a disciple of the Shaiva priest of the Shakti cult named Chetan Bharati. On seeing that the ruler had become a devotee of Guru Nanak, he invoked goddess Bhairavi to rain havoc on Guru Nanak, an intruder into his spiritual jurisdiction. The satanic powers he invoked did not respond to his prayers *mantras*. His jealousy changed to fury, and fury into fiery vengeance. After hours of spells and incantations, both he and his terrible goddess felt helpless before the calm and undisturbed and even unconcerned attitude of Guru Nanak. The melodious songs of Guru Nanak, calmed his rage, and the haughty worshipper of the terrible aspect of Shakti felt humbled, shaken up and profoundly influenced by the moral purity and spiritual exaltation of the illuminating songs of the Guru. Chetan Bharati took a sapling, symbolic of the powers of Nature and Shakti, as an offering to the Guru. The powers of Shakti thus submitted to the spiritual powers of divine Wisdom, the Word of God. Guru Nanak used a small offshoot as a toothbrush and planted the sapling which grew into a large tree. This tree planted by the Guru still exists, so does the historic shrine. Uptil recently a descendant of the missionary appointed

by Guru Nanak looked after the historic shrine which has now been taken up and rebuilt by a local committee.⁹

The Āratī at Puri

Pratap Rudra Deva (1504-1532 A.D.), a learned man deeply versed in Hindu scriptures was the monarch of Orissa at this period. His reign was disturbed by theological discussions as to the merits of Buddhistic and Brahminical religions. Stories are told how sometime one, and sometime the other of these religions obtained supremacy over the mind of the prince, and how the followers of each were persecuted by turns. Later he came directly under the influence of Sri Chaitanya, who first reached Puri in 1510 and finally settled there in 1512.¹⁰

Sultan Hussain Shah of Bengal (1493-1519 A.D.) sent a large army in 1509 under Ismail Ghazi who it is said advanced as far as the town of Puri. The priests of Jagannath fled away with images into the Chilka lake while the Muslims desecrated the temple precincts.¹¹ In 1512 Krishna Deva Raya, the ruler of Vijayanagar occupied all the territory south of Godavari. Although Partap Rudra Deva's reign was marked by political decline, it was a period of great intellectual awakening. There was a galaxy of scholars who brought great intellectual and moral revival during their time. Prominent scholars who were living in Orissa at this period were: Virasinha, the Buddhist scholar; Lolla Laksmidhara, the famous commentator of *Sundarya Laharī*; Kavindama, the author of *Bhakti Vaibhava*; Rai Ramananda, the dramatist, and Pundit Godavara Misra, composer of *Yoga Chintamani*.¹²

From Cuttack Guru Nanak went to Jagannath Puri, when the annual *Ratha Yatra* (chariot festival) was drawing near. The Hindu shrine of Jagannatha, that is Krishna, has a peculiar origin. "Krishna was killed by a hunter, and his body was left to rot under a tree, but some pious persons found the bones and placed them in a box. A devout king named Indra-dyumna was directed by Vishnu to form an image of Jagannatha, and to place the bones of Krishna inside it. Vishwakarma, the architect to gods, undertook to make the image, on condition of being left quite undisturbed till the work was complete. After fifteen days the king was impatient and went to Vishwakarma, who was angry, and left off work before he had made either hands or feet, so that the image had only stumps. Indra-dyumna prayed to Brahma, who promised to make the image famous, and he did it by giving to it eyes and a soul, and by acting as High-priest of construction."¹³

"The great festival of the second lunar day of the bright fortnight *Ashāḍā* (June-July) is the *ratha yātra* (chariot festival), when the car journey of Jagannatha with Brahma, Subhadra and Balarama is celebrated with great *eclat*. A hundred thousand or more pilgrims flock to the small town of Puri. Three cars, constructed anew every year and draped with cloth, blue, red and white on Jagannatha, Subhadra, Balarama, respectively, and adorned with floral wreaths, flags and festoons, are dragged over the broad path with thick ropes by pilgrims of both sexes and of all stations in life, with the Raja of Puri, sweeping the road before the car. The return journey takes place amidst like splendour eight days later."¹⁴

For Guru Nanak it was an opportunity to meet and address over a hundred thousand pilgrims and to encounter saints and sannysins, devotees and divines of various Hindu, Buddhist schools of thought. In these large festival gatherings he first attracted the attention of the priests and pundits by doing something harmless but unconventional. Armed with the authority of tradition and rites, the inflamed priests generally pounced upon him with all the fanatic wrath at their command. Clenching their fists, and threatening with religious fury, they would come like hailstorm, bringing with them confused and bewildered crowds. The electrifying boldness, the terrible magnetism, the amazing spirituality and wisdom of Guru Nanak brought these stormy attacks to a halt, the moment the assaulters got the first answer of the Guru, embalmed in sweetness and light, to their first angry question. After these storms subsided came Guru Nanak's fearless, knife-edged attack on hypocrisy, false beliefs, idolatry, exploitation, ignorance, immorality, dirty practices in the name of religion or some imaginary gods and goddesses. His clarity of perception was not confined to condemnation alone, but with a sincere constructive purpose, motivated by his prophetic passion and faith in ultimate perfection, he offered new ideas and a new philosophy of life for curing the gaping wounds in the ailing body of Indian society. His sermons were neither crusades nor spiritless preachments, but he conveyed to the listeners, in the soft phraseology of the psalms, a clear, complete original and realistic way of life, and a consummate philosophy transcending narrow dialectic. He explained all reality in terms of life, and interpreted all life in terms of ultimate reality. His ideological encounter led to heated discussion, in which he was

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calm, services, realistic and every word he spoke was illuminating and convincing. After heat came the rains. The impassioned discussion ended with a melodious song, put in words of lyrical beauty and magnificent simplicity.

Guru Nanak camped about a hundred yards away from the temple of Jagannatha. He joined the congregation in the evening service, when the *ārati*, worship of the god with lamps, in tune with temple bells and dance of the devotees was being performed. When everyone stood up for the *ārati* before the idol Jagannatha, Guru Nanak kept sitting and murmuring something which no one could hear in the tinkling chime of the bells. The priests felt annoyed at the apparent discourtesy shown to the idol. As soon as the *ārati* was over they came growling towards Nanak like a man-eater finding himself face to face with a daring hunter sitting in his own den. "Why did you not stand up when the *ārati* (worship with lamps) was being performed before Jagannatha, Lord of the universe? What kind of a holy man are you?" they asked with all the ferocity at their command.

"I too was performing the *ārati*," said Guru Nanak, "before the Lord of the universe, my friend. The whole creation, the whole firmament joined me in my spiritual worship of the true Lord, only your mind and your hearts were turned against it. I worshipped the supreme Light, you worshipped the stone image. I worshipped the Spirit all-pervading, you worshipped the idol of your god. I sat in contemplation of the eternal Word (Logos), the *śabad*, while you were chanting the *mantras* without understanding them. My mind was fixed on the eternal

presence of the Lord, while your mind lingered greedily on the offerings before the idol, which you hope to enjoy. My mind was enchanted by the Unstruck Music of the universe and the fragrance of His presence in Nature, when your mind was lost in the noise of the temple bells, and the rythme of the dancers feigning ecstasy." "And may we hear your *Ārati* and see it performed before the Lord of the Universe", said the Vaishnava priests. While Mardana played the rebeck, Guru Nanak sang his *Ārati*, in the musical mode of *Raga Dhanāsārī*.

*In the salver of the firmament,
The sun and moon shine as lamps;
The stars are like pearls for offering;
The fragrance of sandal trees is incense,
The breeze blows as Thy royal fan;
The forest offers their flowers to Thee, O Eternal Light.*

*Thousands are Thine eyes,
And yet Thou hast no eyes,
Thousands are Thy forms,
And yet Thou hast no form,
Thousands are Thy feet,
And yet Thou hast not one foot;
Thousands are Thy noses,
And yet Thou hast no nose.
This wonderous play bewitches me.*

*In every heart is the same Light;
It is the Light of God,
Which illumines every soul,
And gives light and life to everyone.
Through the Guru's Word,
This Light is revealed within the soul.
What pleaseth the Lord,
Is the best *Ārati* : worship with the lamp.*

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*O Lord, my mind yearns for Thy lotus feet,
As the honey-bee for the nectar of the flowers.
Day and night, Lord, I am athirst for Thee,
Give to Nanak Thy water of mercy:
He is like the Sāraṅg: the hawk-cuckoo;
That drinks only heavenly rain drops;
And let me repose in the light of Thy Name.*
Guru Nanak: *Sohilā-Āratī*

Guru Nanak's *Āratī* etherialised all thoughts, all feelings, all emotions into the very perfume of devotion. The song brought in a flash the exalted insight of the Guru into the very essence of the universe, and the Almighty Spirit behind it and within it. The hearers felt the Immanent and Transcendent spirit of the Eternal mingling into one visible Presence of His timeless Being and Becoming. Guru Nanak, the singer of the *Āratī*, appeared to worship God from the centre of the universe. Music and philosophy, poetry and mystic illumination blended together into a strangely beautiful revelation.

This melodious song of Nature, dancing in the presence of the Eternal revealed to the listeners the objective testimony and the subjective interpretation of the One Universal Being working in Nature. Everyone who heard this song could feel and visualise that 'the heavens ceaselessly declare and disclose the glory of God and each day speaks to the following day, and each starry night makes Him known'. Whilst the heavenly bodies are themselves silent and inarticulate, their writing is blazoned everywhere.

The lyrical fragrance and the meditative mood of the poem inspired the listeners with the presence

of God, seen and unseen, conscious and unconscious which no idol could symbolise or visualise. The metaphysical reality stood over against physical reality revealing the implicit through unrecognised vision of God. Guru Nanak proclaimed through this song that not man made idols, but the living sun and moon, the stars and firmament, the wind made fragrant with sandalwood, and colourful flowers are visible revelations of the splendour, the wonder and the beauty of God. In this outburst of the incomprehensible grandeur, of the Light and celestial Music of the spheres, Guru Nanak stood like an Alpine peak in the spiritual landscape of humanity. Every object of nature and every meaning in creation was for him an act of worship of God.

In this *Āratī* Guru Nanak revealed the creative and transfiguring power of God, who transcends what seems to us to be His laws and who has definite relation with His creatures and works in the depth of their being. He is self-revealed through the white radiance of Nature, as well as in the soul of Man as divine Light and Music. Raja Krishan Lal, the Local Chief, and Panda Kaliyuga the priest of the temple fell at the feet of the Guru.

Panda Kaliyuga

The temple priest, Kaliyuga, was strongly influenced by the magnetic personality, and dynamic views of Guru Nanak. As High-priest of the historic temple, he got the major share of the offerings and was very rich. He had in his coffers of gold, precious stones and untold wealth. He offered everything to Guru Nanak and requested the Master to stay permanently at Puri. Above all he offered to build

a palatial mansion to house his living god, the prophet from Punjab, and assured him that the shrine would surpass all temples of Puri in splendour and beauty. All his resources and his disciples would be at his service.

“Listen Kaliyuga,” said Guru Nanak, “what you are offering me has not given you peace or joy. How can it be of any use to me? God has given me an inexhaustible wealth, the treasury of His lofty wisdom. His Word shines in my heart like the splendorous dawn, whose blazing fire has burnt all desires for material comforts.

*If palaces made of pearls,
Are studded with gems and rubies,
If the walls and floors are plastered
With sandal, musk and agar,
May I on seeing all these,
Never forget Thee, O Beloved
And remember not Thy Name.
When I cease to think of Thee, O Beloved,
May my whole being be burnt to ashes.*

Guru Nanak, Sri Raga p. 14.

Guru Nanak's song awakened strange thoughts and feelings in the mind of Panda Kaliyuga.¹⁶ He felt for the first time in his life the difference between men living by the fountain of life, and men whose mind is crushed under the weight of material wealth. The magnificence of the jewelled diadems of the high-priest of one of the richest temples in India did not attract Guru Nanak for they had no fragrance in their charmed lustre, and there was nothing of Him in them. Not in external treasures of the material world, but in the heart of God will man find that iridescent lustre, the absolute rapture of

which makes him immortal in flesh. Panda Kaliyuga begged the Guru to bless him with inner treasure and to guide him to spend his wealth in the proper manner. Guru Nanak established a *Sangat* of his own, and Panda Kaliyuga was given charge of it. There was no arrangement for good drinking water. Guru Nanak had a well dug, and it is said that for many centuries this has been the only well at Puri yielding pure and sweet water. Panda Kaliyuga did not have any child. By the blessing of Guru Nanak a son was born and his descendant Panda Bhagvan Das Kaliyuga met the eminent historian Gyan Singh in 1870 A.D. who stayed with him for about three months.¹⁸

Guru Nanak Stays With Sri Chaitanya

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the eminent Vaishnava Saint of Bengal was at this time staying at Puri.¹⁹ Some of his eminent disciples Rup and Sanatan, Jagai and Madhai were also with him and they had come to Puri for the *Ratha-yātra* (Chariot Festival) and to pay homage to their guru. On hearing that a prophet from the Punjab, who believed in the worship of God through *Nam-Saṅkīrtan*, and had cast a great spell on all by his scholarship and spirituality, he met the Guru and invited him to his humble *ashrama*. Shri Chaitanya not only reverently entertained the Guru, but asked his disciple Udyata to look after the personal comforts of Guru Nanak.

The first historical record that has given convincing proof of this meeting between Guru Nanak and Sri Chaitanya is the Manuscript copy of Ishvar Das' "*Chaitanya Bhagvat*" the two volumes of which

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are now preserved in the *Prachu Samiti* (Oriental Society) Cuttack. This rare historical record says:

*Srīnīvāsā je bisambhar,
kīrtani madhya bihār,
Nanak, Sāraṅg, eh doī,
Rup, Sanatan, do bhai,
Jagai, Madhai, ektār,
kīrtan karaṅti enritya.*

Sri Chaitanya the divine Lord, joined in kīrtan (congregational singing) with Nanak, who was accompanied by his disciple Sāraṅg. With them were Rup and Sanatan, the two brothers, and Jagai and Madhai. They all performed kīrtan and divine dance.

Chaitanya Bhagvat : adhyaya 61

*Nagar Purshotam Das,
Jangli, Nandni, ta pās,
Nanak saheli gehan,
Gopal guru saṅg tem
saṅgat mat Balram,
bihār nilgiri dhām.*

In the congregational singing led by Sri Chaitanya, and Guru Nanak, Nagar Purshotam was also there. Two disciples, Jangli and Nandni also joined them. With them was also Gopal Guru for whom Guru Nanak developed deep personal affection. With them was also Nityananda Prabhu, considered to be avatara of Balrama. They all performed kīrtan at Jagannathpuri.

Chaitanya Bhagvata : adhyaya 64

In Chapter 47 the author relates how Shri Chaitanya instructed his disciple Udyata to act as personal attendant of Guru Nanak, which shows the tenderness, personal affection which the great Vaishnava saint showed for the Guru. Taking the dates of Guru Nanak's movements and tallying them with the corresponding dates of Sri Chaitanyas life, the most probable year of meeting was 1512 A.D. or there about. The exact date can be found if the year of Rup Sanatan's visit to Puri is found. These disciples visited Puri to meet their Master only on the *ratha-yātra* festival. Two historical facts emerge from these records. The most important disciple of Guru Nanak mentioned by the author of *Chaitanya Bhāgavat*, is Sarang. He is mentioned because he was most probably a Bengali or a devotee from Puri, who continued to be the torch bearer of Guru Nanak. He is not mentioned in the *Janam Sakhīs*. The *Janam Sakhīs* show a great deal of ignorance about Guru Nanak's travels in this area and not only are the accounts based on hearsay but some shrewd interpolator of the later period, changed the name of Kaliyug, the High priest to Kaliyug, the Devil who haunted Christ and the Mara who tried to overpower Buddha. The same legend of Mara (devil) trying to mislead the Guru is imported from Buddhist legends and introduced verbatim into all *Janam Sakhīs*. These people who corrupted the *Janam Sakhīs* to build Guru Nanak's personality in the image of their inventive fancy failed to see that of all the periods of Guru Nanak's life, and of all the places this was the most inappropriate where such a legend could be introduced. Most of the prophets had such experiences of temptations hounding them before they received the call and before they ex-

perienced illumination. Had such a legend been introduced, when at Sultanpur, Guru Nanak was undergoing an inner revolution and was about to take surprising decisions of leaving his home and family to carry the torch of Divine Light all over the world, there was some reason to accept such a story symbolic of the inner struggle. But when he had travelled over the whole of Northern India and established his *Sangats* (missionary centres) in every major city from Delhi to Dacca, in the North and from Dhubri to Puri in Eastern India, the chances of *Kaliyuga* (devil) coming to tempt him were remote. This *Kaliyuga* was the Panda or the priest of the temple.

The impact of Guru Nanak's meeting with Sri Chaitanya appears to have been deep and profound, and its memories lingered for over hundred years in the minds of Vaishnava scholars. Ram-Narayan Misra a contemporary of Guru Arjan, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, wrote a Bengali commentary on *Dasam Sikandha*. (Guru Gobind Singh's *Krishna Charitra* is based on *Dasam Sikandha*). In his invocation to his Bengali Commentary, Ram-Narayan Misra pays homage to Guru Nanak as follows :

*bañde Sri Nānak Gurūñ
satra bodha, Guru guruñ.*

Salutation to Guru Nanak, who is the Enlightened and learned in all Scriptures, and is the Guru of all gurus. His disciples, are known as Sikhs of the great Guru.

Bhavabhavika (Invocation)

Ram Narayana Misra gives us the belief still current amongst the scholars and seekers of truth a

century and half later, that Guru Nanak was a great scholar, enlightened in all scriptures, and was accepted as the Guru of the gurus. Many teachers of various schools who acted as gurus of their sects accepted him as their Guru. Vaishnavas, Shaivas, Sufis and Yogis who had large following of their own accepted him as their Divine Master.

Guru Nanak perhaps looked at Puri differently than the common devotees of the day, or of even of the present days. This was the place, where, "in the uncertain dawn of Indian tradition, the highly spiritual doctrines of Buddha obtained shelter and the *Golden Tooth* of the Founder remained for centuries at Puri, then the Jerusalem of the Buddhists, as it has been for centuries of the Hindus."²¹ Vaishnava influence began to overpower Buddhism with the influence of such great Vaishnavites as Ramanujan. The *Ratha-yātra* (Chariot Festival) also owes its origin to Buddhism. The Chinese traveller Fa Hien gives a wonderful account of the yearly procession which also took place in June-July, when the *Golden Tooth* of the Buddha was carried from its regular chapel to a shrine some way off and of its return after its stay there."²² This was in the fifth century A.D. The account applies so exactly to the Chariot Festival of the present day, that one of the most accurate of the Indian observers pronounces the latter to be 'merely a copy'.²³ Buddhism was replaced by Vaishnavism, although the struggle in the scholastic field was still intense when Guru Nanak visited the place, and the Chariot Festival of the Golden Tooth was replaced by the Chariot Festival of Jagannatha.

To this place came later Ramanuja, Ramananda,

Kabir and many more reformers. Among the disciples of Sri Chaitanya who became deeply attached to Guru Nanak was Gopal Guru, a well known figure in Vaishnava history, who because of his piety and greatness as a Saint was deemed an *avatara* of Balama, the elder brother of Lord Krishna. Contemporary account about this great Saint, or some work by him may throw greater light on the impact of Guru Nanak's visit to Puri. The shrine where Guru Nanak established his centre is still preserved by the Udasi descendants of the missionaries, along with the Holy Book they have placed the idols of Sri Chand (Guru Nanak's son) and some Udasi Saints, to satisfy the image worship instinct of the Hindu pilgrims.²⁴

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Guruji shehar Agartala Lakhipur Chandpur, me thehar thehar logān nū sumat lā daryā Padma nū lañghke shehar Faridpur Kasabpur Barvast Damdam adkik, caubis parganya da sail kar Bengal des nū jañde hoe Hooghly daryā utar Burdwan Hatura, Sairampur hunde Morganj dī dhadi vic aneka sañtāñ bhagtāñ nū darsan de Alwara nadi pār ho Baleswara vic ja thetre.

T.G.K. p. 87

2. Breasted: *Calcutta Past and Present* p 2.

3. "Job Charnock Chief of the English Factory at Patna was the first Englishman to establish himself in Chuttunattee near about this period".

R. Pearson: *Eastern Interlude* p 7

4. *Ibid* p. 7.

5. Almast ws born to Brahmin couple of Srinagar, Kashmir in 1553 A.D. His father Bhai Hari Datta and mother Prabha were devoted disciples of Sri Chand elder son of Guru Nanak.

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Almast became one of the four leading *Udasi* missionaries who after the death of Sri Chand worked under the Pontific and spiritual guidance of Guru Hargobind.

6. This place Calcuta was then known as Kalighat. It was a small village under a Kashatriya Raja of Behal clan. He entertained the Guru for nearly two months and offered him many gift.

T.G.K. p 217

7. Guru Nanak's shrine is a furlong from the Burdwan Railway station. see *Gurtirath Sangreh* by Gyan Singh

8. *Ibid*

9. G.N.C. Vol: p 304

10. Pratap Rudra Deva (1504-1534) reigned 28 years. He was a learned man deeply versed in *Shastras*. His reign was disturbed by theological discussions as to the merits of the Buddhistic and Brahmanical religions. At first he became a strong supporter of the Buddhist but the Rani helped the Brahmins to reveal miraculously what was in a jar, while the Buddhist monks could not. Under such organised propaganda he became so bitter towards the Buddhists that he expelled them out of Orissa and burnt all their books except two *pothis* called *Amar sinha* and *Bir Sinha*. When he died in 1534 he left 32 sons. His Minister Gobind Bidyadhar murdered all the 32 sons within five years and occupied the throne.

A History of Orissa, Ed: N.K. Sahu Vol I p201, Vol II p24-7B

11. J.A.S.B. Vol LXIX, 1900, p. 186; see also *Madalpanji* Ed. by Prachi Samiti p 53.

12. *A History of Orissa* Vol II Ed by N.K. Sahu p 386

13. John Dawson: *Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion* p 129

14. *The Cultural Heritage of India* ed Haridas Bhattacharya Vol IV p 483

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15. (i) J.M.S. (All versions) say that Guru Nanak asked Mardana to stay outside and he went into the temple alone: *Mardane nū bahar baiṭhāe kar Baba ji Jagannath ke duāre par jāe baiṭhe.*" This was quite obvious, as they would not have permitted the low caste Muslim bard Mardana inside the temple. Then the *Janam Sakhī* says that while the *Āratī* was being performed Guru Nanak sat wrapt in *Samadhi*: *Pañde Jagannath kī ārtī lage karne, ate Baba Samādhi tae ke baiṭh rahe.*" A very interesting feature of this *Janam Sakhī* are the interpretations of this *Āratī*. One is as it appears in the translation, and the other is esoteric interpretations which says: "Supreme Consciousness is the firmament the body is the salver, the eyes are the sun and moon, the teeth are the ear the vital breath is scented air, and the fragrance that emanates from His contemplations are the flowers and the Unstruck Music which one hears in the *Turiya* state is the Music and the Light of God which is seen within is the Light of Truth." This is the *Āratī* of Self. The other interpretation gives the *Āratī* of Nature. The second interpretation is ingenious but not accepted by theologians.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 262

- (ii) *Janam Sakhī Meharban* in his zeal to be different from Bala's *Janam Sakhī* introduces the story of Bharatari Hari Yogi which in other *Janam Sakhīs* is correctly given in the Shaiva centres of South India. While making this dangerous alteration Meharban perhaps did not know that Puri was a Vaishnava religious centre and the presence of Yogis of the Shaiva cult here was unimaginable and highly importable.
 - (iii) Kavi Santokh Singh, Gyani Gyan Singh, Bhai Vir Singh give more or less the version of Bhai Man Singh. *Puratan Janam Sakhī*, does not mention it. It has missed nearly half the *Sakhīs* of other *Janam Sakhīs*.
16. Gyani Gyan Singh was the first to unearth the fact that Kaliyuga was the name of the Panda, the High Priest of Jagannath and it was not the devil who tempted Guru Nanak. In 1870 A.D. Gyani Gyan Singh stayed at Jagannath

Puri and met the the descendent of Panda Kaliyug, named Bhagvan Das Kaliyug. The mischievous anti-Sikh falsifiers of *Janam Sakhis* have taken out this historical Skāhī and replaced it with the Buddha legend of Mārā. This has been introduced into all the *Janam Sakhis*.

17. Guruji ne apne āse nāl jo hath vic rakhde se, mithe jal dā casmā kadha ditā.

T.G.K. p 90

18. es śupde nū sun ke sabh log Bābe de sevak ban gae; Bābe ji ne Pānde Kaliyug nū ākhyā: taiñ sanū manya hai, tainū sari Punjab te mere Sikh manan ge, usde aulad nahi si, Bābe akhya aulad hove gi par eko hi rāhe gā..... Pande Kalyug ne othe Babe de some te ik bauli, ik Dharpmsafa bana diti ...hun othe Panda Bhagwan Das Kaliyug hai.

T.K.G. p 91

19. Sri Chaitanya was born in 1485 A.D. at Navadwip in the Nadia district of Bengal. Navadwip has been a famous centre for Sanskrit *tois* (Sanskrit Schools of Grammar, Logic and Hindu Shastras). Even Sikh scholars and theologian like Pundit Tara Singh Nirotam were educated here. Sri Chaitanya became famous as an erudite scholar, logician and learned exponent of Hindu metaphysics, but when he was initiated into Krishna Bhakti by a monk of the order of Madhavacharya he abolished his Sanskrit *tol* and abandoned himself to extremely emotional Bhakti. He devoted some years to going to various places of pilgrimage and then spent the last 18-20 years at Puri' Giving the characteristics of a true Vaishnava, Sri Chaitanya writes:" He is compassionate, spiteless, essentially true, saintly, innocent charitable gently pure, humble, a universal benefactor, tranquil, solely dependent on Krishna, free from desire, quiet, equable victor of six passions, self-controlled, honouring others, yet not proud himself, grave, tender, friendly, learned skilful and silent.

Sri Chaitanya was all this and more.

See "Krishna Das' "Life of Chaitanya' Translated by Jadunath Sarkar; and Vaishnavite Reformers of India by T. Rajagopalachariar.

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20. Rup and Sanatan were two brothers who met Sri Chaitanya at Benaras and became his disciples. They were descendants of a Karanata prince who had settled in Bengal. They served a Muslim Governor in Bengal, where they began to be treated as outcasts for mixing with the Muslim rulers. They settled at Benaras and later at Vrindavan and they became the greatest exponents of Chaitanya's philosophy. Rupa Goswami wrote two works, *Bhaktirasamirita-sindhu* and *Ujjvalanilamani*. Sanatana wrote an annotation of *Dasman Skandha* of the *Bhagvata*. Jagai and Madhai were two notorious characters, who first behaved as enemies of Sri Chaitanya but were overpowered by his saintliness and spirituality.
21. *Datha Vasma*, Ed by B.C. Law; *Indian Antiquary* 1926 May pp 94-98.
22. Vide James Legge: *Fa Hien*, pp 18-19.
23. James Fergusson: *History of Architecture* ii, 590
24. This hitherto unknown historical fact of the meeting of Guru Nanak and Sri Chaitanya was first unearthed by the author of this book in 1963 and briefly published in *Sikh Review*, and reported by all leading English Dailies of the country.

It is to be regretted that Dr. Ganda Singh has plagiarized the whole of this research material and used in his article published in the *Punjab Past and Present* Vol III, Part I & II (P. 334-339). Although he asked me for a copy of my research-paper published in *Sikh Review* in 1963 and thanked me for it, he has bodily lifted the material out of my paper without acknowledging it. He does not quote a single line from the author's mentioned in the impressive bibliography. To be slightly different from my findings he has made the following untenable changes in historical facts:-

1. Basing his information on *Khan Singh's 'Mahan Kosh'*, a dictionary, he says Guru Nanak was there from April 1509, March 1510. Dr. Ganda Singh goes still further and makes Guru Nanak wait at Puri till Sri Chaitanya comes and meets him in June-July 1510. Guru Nanak obviously acts as

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host to Sri Chaitanya. *Ishwardaschaintanya Bhagvat* makes it quite clear in Chapter 47, that Sri Chaitanya was already there and the Vaishnava saint entertained Guru Nanak as his guest. He makes it also clear in Chapter 47 that Sri Chaitanya appointed his disciple Udyata as the personal attendant of Guru Nanak.


2. Secondly, Dr. Ganda Singh suggests that Sri Chaitanya arrived in Puri early in 1510 A.D. alongwith his disciples Rup and Sanatan. No biographer of Sri Chaitanya says that Rup and Sanatan had met Sri Chaitanya before the saint came to Puri in 1910 for the first time. Actually they met him after 1910 when the saint went on a pilgrimage to Benaras and Vrindaban from Puri after 1910 A.D.

The presence of Rup and Sanatan when Guru Nanak and Sri Chaitanya met clearly indicates that the meeting took place some time after March 1912 A.D.

* Thus, both the ingenious alterations of facts by Dr. Ganda Singh in my findings are untenable and historically incorrect.

CHAPTER 14

GURU NANAK IN SOUTH INDIA AND CEYLON

 ALL HISTORICAL RECORDS are unanimous in stating that Guru Nanak first went to the East, then to the South, then to the North and then to the West. This has led many later writers to believe that Guru Nanak came back to Punjab after completing his eastern tour and then went to South India. But the internal evidence of all major *Janam Sākhīs* reveal that the eastern missionary tour ended at Puri and his missionary tour to the South and Ceylon was a continuation of the eastern tour. He did not come back to Punjab from Puri but continued his journey South to Srirangam, Rameshwaram, and the Jaffna Peninsula in Ceylon along the highway which Sri Chaitanya and other savants and pilgrims traversed in their pilgrimage south to Rameshwaram.

According to *Janam Sākhī Bhai Mani Singh*, Guru Nanak goes straight to Rameshwaram and Ceylon from Jagannath Puri. After having influenced the saints and priests of Puri, and particularly after his legendary encounter with Kaliyuga, Guru Nanak says to Mardana: "Do you remember the trader, who helped you in performing the marriage of your daughter. He is now in Singladip (Ceylon) trading in the kingdom of Raja Shivanabh. We must go there."¹ This clearly indicates that from Puri Guru Nanak went South to complete his Southern journey. There was no point in coming back thousands of miles and then going again as is

imagined by later historians. In *Janam Sākhī Meharban* also Guru Nanak goes to the East and from the East he goes to Deccan and from there to Rameshwaram along the sea coast."² Meharban, who was responsible for a number of interpolations and falsifications of the *Janam Sākhī* contradicts himself by saying in another place that he came back and then went on his second *Udāsi*. But if we follow the historical sequence of his *Janam Sākhī*, we find that Guru Nanak goes from Puri along the sea coast to Daccan shrines, and thence to Rameshwaram and Ceylon. In his zeal to be different from Bala's *Janam Sākhī* he interchanges the historical events that take place at Puri and Shaiva centres of the South. He says that at Puri Guru Nanak met Bharathari Hari Yogi, not knowing that this alteration would become unbelievable as Puri was then a staunch Vaishnava centre, and Buddhism and Shai-vism had long been eliminated from that place.

Bala's Janam Sākhī (MSS 1848 copy) says that from Dacca and Kamarupa Guru Nanak went along the sea coast to Shiva Nabh's kingdom in Ceylon, and stayed there for five months."³ So this *Janam Sākhī* also makes the Southern tour of Guru Nanak a continuation of the Eastern tour. Bhai Gurdas in his *First Vār* gives a brief outline of Guru Nanak's life, stressing and detailing events on which the *Mīnās*, Meharban and his father had thrown some doubt and given them perverted twist, as is done by him to the Mecca story. Bhai Gurdas clearly indicates the eastern and southern journey as one trip, and after that he mentions the Guru's journey to the eastern Himalayan retreats and then his visit to the Middle East, Mecca and Baghdad.⁴ *Purātan Janam Sākhī*, which follows partly *Bala's Janam Sākhī*

and partly *Mehārban's Janam Sākhī* does not mention the visit to Puri but it says that from Dhanaseri (in Assam) where Guru Nanak met Kauda, the Guru went South along the sea-coast to a Shaiva centre where he met great Siddha Yogis, and from there he went to Ceylon. Thus there is a very clear indication that the Southern journey of Guru Nanak was a continuation of the Eastern journey.⁵ From Puri to Vishakapatnam Guru Nanak might have gone by boat but the *Janam Sākhīs* indicate that he went along the sea coast. He most probably followed the old highway that goes from Puri to Chilka Lake, Ganjam, Chatrapur, Kalingapatam, Srikakulam to Vishakhapatnam.⁶

In Vijaynagar Kingdom

The prophet from the land of Five Rivers in the North now entered the "land of Five Rivers in the South, which was not in any way less productive of poets, philosophers, saints and musicians, than the land of Vedic Rishis. Tyagaraja proudly sings of the Tanjore region as the '*Chola-sima*,' the beautiful land in the world. He calls it Nadapura, the "Abode of Music". Compared to Punjab in the North it is called *Panchnad kshetra*, the granary of grain and brain.⁷

Only a year or two before Guru Nanak visited the South, Krishnadeva Raya (Raja) was crowned king of the vast Vijaynagar empire which ruled the whole of South India below the Krishna river. It had towards the North the dwindling five principalities of the Bahmani kingdom: Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkonda, Berar, and Bidar. "The reign of Krishnadeva Raya was the period of Vijaynagar's

greatest success, when its armies were everywhere victorious, and the city was most prosperous." The Portuguese chronicler Domingos Paes who met him says, "He is the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry : he is one that seeks to honor foreigners and received them kindly. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice but subject to sudden fits of rage."⁸ All South India was under Krishnadeva Rayas sway, and many quasi-independent Chiefs were his vassals.

When Guru Nanak was touring the Vijayanagar kingdom, Krishnadeva Raya had started campaigns against the Orissa ruler, Prataprudra and between 1512 and 1516 Krishnadeva had occupied Udayagiri Kindavidu, Virabhadra and Kondapalle. Prataprudra's two sons, one queen and seven principal nobles were imprisoned. R.D. Banerjee in his *'History of Orissa'* attributes the defeats of Pratap Rudra to the damping of his martial spirit under the pacificatory influence of Sri Chaitanya's emotional idealism. Prataprudra sued for peace and ceded all territories South of the Godavari to Krishnadeva Raya, who also took the hands of one of the Orissan princesses, named Jagmohini.

In Srirangam and Tanjore

Guru Nanak followed the same travel route down South which was traversed by Sri Chaitanya and other eminent pilgrims and travellers. The road led to Vidyanagar (modern Rajahmundry), on the Godavari, and Vijayavada on the banks of river Krishna. It is unbelievable that Guru Nanak, who stopped and camped at every place of pilgrimage

did not stop and deliver any sermons in the very important historical places through which he passed on his way to Srirangam. Local records of these temples or some provincial historical records might reveal some startling facts. Utter lack of missionary activities in the South for nearly three centuries, and preoccupation of the Sikh people with everything except historical research and organised missionary activities, has led to the complete elimination of the missionary centres that were courageously maintained by the Udāsī saints.

As was his habit to stop and meet the religious heads of all historical centres of Vaishnavism, Shiavism, Buddhism, he might have stopped and left some moral and spiritual influence in such great religious centres, as Simachalam, Bezwada, Mangal-giri, Sri Sailam, Mahanandni, Tirupati, in the present Andhra State. From here Guru Nanak probably followed the road that goes through Udayagiri to Tirutani, the hill temple also called Neelagiri and from there he went to Kanchipuram (Conjeevaram), the place which attracts all visitors. Kalidasa considered Jasmine the sweetest among flowers, Rambha the most beautiful among women, *Grihas-thashrama* (householder life) the best among four ashramas, Kanchipuram the best among the cities." As regards learning it stood second in glory only to Benaras. The Buddhists, the Shaivas, the Vaishnavas had their centres here. Research work into the local records might reveal Guru Nanak's encounter with some learned men, but so far we know no more than that he passed through the city. The temples of this place are almost the Museum of Vijaynagar Art and Sculpture. There are 108 Shivite temples and 18 Vaishnava temples.

After attending the *ratha-yatra* in June-July at Puri, Guru Nanak reached Srirangam, a small town now on the outskirts of Tiruchirapalli, the city of the famous Rock temple, sometime in November when the festival of *Vaikuntha Ekadeshi* is held here. The festival continues for 20 days, and Guru Nanak must have found good opportunity to meet the Vaishnava saints and seekers from all parts of India. Here at Srirangam he established a *manji* (missionary centre) which lasted upto the end of the last century. It was there when Gyani Gyan Singh, and Pundit Tara Singh Nirotam visited it.¹² Srirangam is spoken of as the paradise on earth (*Bhoolokavaikuntham*) and some or the other festival is always taking place throughout the year.

From here Guru Nanak went to Tanjore, the Tamil name of which is Tanjavoor. The Punjabi historical records to which we will frequently refer in this chapter, call the whole of South India, Bidar-Tanjavur, indicating it by two very prominent Capitals of that period. There was Sikh *Sangat* at Tanjore upto the time of Guru Arjan. Punjabi traders stayed in the Dharamsal on their way to Ceylon.¹⁴ The Saraswati Mahal Library one of the biggest in India possesses about 33,433 manuscripts in Sanskrit, Marathi, Tamil and Telegu, and it would not be a surprise if some manuscript relating to this period has some important historical information about the visit of Guru Nanak to the South, or his meeting some divines of this area. This library according to Dr. Fernall houses the largest old manuscripts in the world, and most of them are very rare and unique.

*At Madurai and Kaliyar Koil (Kodikottai or Kodikulam) :
Tilangji*

From Tanjore Guru Nanak went to Madurai, the oldest temple city of the South and truly representing Dravidian culture. "European scholars have compared it to Athens and Greece, and has been since long the seat of Tamil Academy."¹⁵ This has also been the Capital of the Pandyan Kings who intermarried with the Ceylon rulers, and even upto the time of Guru Nanak, religious, cultural, and linguistic dominance of Madurai spread upto the Jaffna peninsula, where Guru Nanak is said to have met Shiva Nabh, the ruler of a principality in the Jaffna peninsula. The great sage Agastya is said to have acted as spiritual guides to the Pandyan kings who were Shaivites.

From Madurai Guru Nanak wended his way to Kodikottai, also known as Kodikulam.¹⁶ In the *Janam Sākhis* the place is called, Tilangji.¹⁷ This is one the 14 important shrines of Shiva worship. The place is associated with Sage Agastya. The shrine is actually known as Kaliyar Koil. It also came to be known as Kodikottai (Kodi means flag, Kotai means fort). It is also known as Kodikulam (*kulam* means tank). In the month of *Chaitra* (February-March) a flag hoisting ceremony was usually held by the Shaivite Yogis.¹⁸ Guru Nanak went there and set up his own flag, and under the new flag he started singing congregational songs. All the offerings that were made by the people to the Guru were used to open a free-kitchen for the pilgrims in which the Brahmin and *parhia*, the rich and poor, monks and laymen could sit and eat in a group as one human family. Under Guru Nanak's

flag the caste barriers fell, the gap between the holy people and laymen disappeared, and the high and low sat in one congregation of seekers of truth (*satsang*), to meet in the unity of the worship of One God, and the service of Man who is dedicated to the love of humanity and God.

The Yogis, the Shaiva priests, the Nathapanthis were seriously disturbed, on seeing the crowds that gathered around Guru Nanak, attracted by his dynamic personality and his unique Path. Proud of their knowledge and yogic powers, and confident that they would demolish and drive this strange intruder out of their realm of Shaiva-cult by debating with him on metaphysical doctrines, and on the mysteries of inner life, which they thought they knew best, they came to Nanak in a group each representing his sect or school. One of them asked Guru Nanak: "Every-day you distribute amongst the people everything that comes as offerings to you. Can you distribute among ten or twenty of us what we offer you? We do not believe it is possible or even wise to share whatever you are offered by the devotees with all the common rabble sitting around you."¹⁹

"You can share everything you have with the needy," said Guru Nanak, with all the conviction of his faith in social idealism, "if you have the will to do so, if you have the feeling that the needs of other human beings are as important as yours, if you really believe that God is our Father and we are all his children, and as members of human family we have a responsibility towards those who have less than, us, or those who have nothing, while we roll in wealth. You can share every thing if you believe that the

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Light of God shines in all human beings and by serving others we are serving God."

A Yogi of the Gorakh Nath school offered a linseed to Guru Nanak and asked him to distribute it among all those sitting there, and prove by a practical example that everything can be shared and his views of charity, equality can really be put into practice. Guru Nanak asked his disciple Bhai Bala to grind the linseed thoroughly and dissolve it in a bucket of water, and then distribute the linseed dissolved in water to all sitting there."²⁰ Yogi Mangal Nath was profoundly impressed. He said, "Every saint who came here was overpowered by the knowledge and occult powers of the Yogis, but everyone felt powerless before you. What is wrong with Yoga as we practise it, and how does your philosophy differ from that of the Yogis?"²²

Guru Nanak replied, "Yogis have become self-indulgent and slaves to lower passions and degrading pleasure-seeking, yet they preach self-restraint, and renunciation to others. They dwell in lonely forests and even spend their nights in graveyards, yet they covet worldly vanities, and sensuous pleasures and go from door to door, begging for their food and seeking association with women. Alas, these Yogis are neither pious recluses nor worldly men. If you are a real Yogi you should spend your days in contemplation of God and depend on Him to send your food where ever you are. But you Yogis have neither that deep faith, nor have you any control over your desires, and driven crazy by cravings, you knock from door to door, begging for food, begging for money and searching opportunities for sensual pleasures. As a Yogi you must not hanker after material

gains and pleasures but should accept what comes to you naturally. Your heart and soul, your mind and thoughts are burning with the fire of lust and low passions. The fire in your heart finds inflammable material in abundance : ignorance and hatred, pride and jealousy, lust and attachment keep the flames raging within you. Let the cooling stream of divine Word flow in your hearts, and only with a pure spotless mind wedded to truth can you attain enlightenment. Outward forms of holiness which you assume by matted hair or by smearing the body with ashes, do not constitute religion or affect the mind. What use is wearing the ascetic garb of a Yogi when your mind is immersed in worldliness. A Yogi who dwells in forests and caves and yet covets worldly pleasures is a worldling, while a lay man who leads a pure life and contemplates God can achieve enlightenment. In your efforts to escape error and illusion, you Yogis have built around yourself another ascetic prison of error and illusion. True religion is to get out of these nightmares. No Yogi can attain liberation till he attains the Wisdom of the Word (*Sabad*). Without compassion and charity, purity and nobility in your heart you cannot attain any peace, joy or enlightenment, What use are your tattered clothes, your begging bowl, and your display of ascetic habits while your mind is always worried about your next meal, and comforts of worldly life? How can anyone attain *mukti* without pure living, charity and contemplation. Wear the ear-rings of divine knowledge instead of those of stones, and metal. If after, taking the vow of asceticism, the Yogis run for satisfaction of physical desires, in what way are they better than animals. He alone is a true Yogi who is disciplined in self-restraint truth and devotion to God.²²

Mangal Nath asked: "Can the mind be controlled better through Yoga or Knowledge?"²³ "It all depends," said Guru Nanak, "on what type of Yoga you practice and what type of knowledge you aspire after." "Divine knowledge is a bird having two wings, the wing of Love and the wing of spiritual effort, which I call Yoga. For flights into the realm of truth both the wings are necessary. With only one wing the balance will be lost."²⁴ Through divine love you can attain knowledge if you live a life of self-restraint and contemplation. "Is it easier to love God, as an ascetic or as a householder?" asked the *Siddhas*.²⁵ Only that love of God is fruitful which is free from hypocrisy, pride, vanity, selfishness and low cravings. A Yogi loves God through penance, and yogic practices; a householder loves Him through service and contemplation."²⁶ "But," interrupted the Yogi, "the mind cannot be controlled or purified without Yoga."²⁷ "The mind can be purified", said Nanak, "by bathing it in the ambrosial nectar of the divine Word. This is true Yoga. There are four ethical doors to this path of purity and enlightenment: *satsang*: communion with the enlightened; *sat*: speaking the truth, keeping the mind in truth, and acting in conformity with truth; *sañtokh*: contentment, peacefully accepting the Will of God and complete absence of cravings; *samdām*: control of the mind by completely identifying the mind with the light and music of the divine Word. Whether a man is a Yogi or a householder, he must pass through these four doors of ethical conduct in order to reach the realm of Truth."²⁸ The *yogis* reverently bowed to the Guru. Nanak established his missionary centre here which lasted till recently, when Gyani Gyan Singh visited it.

At Rameswaram

From Kodikottai Guru Nanak went to Ramanadapuram where he was shown great reverence by the people. The local Raja is also said to have paid homage to him. Upto the time of Guru Arjan there was a *Sangat* here also. Traders from Punjab generally camped here. From here the Guru went to Rameswaram, the second most holy place in Hindustan. Every Hindu who can manage to do so makes the pilgrimage to this place after going to Benaras. "The temple city is an island of 31 miles length and 7 miles width in the shape of Vishnu's conch. According to mythology the island is described as Gandhamdana Hill. It is said to have been connected with the mainland of India in the past, but was subsequently damaged by storm and the land was cut off to form an island. It exists as such even now, being connected by a railway bridge at Pamban junction to Rameswaram in the mainland."²⁹

The place has historical associations with epic heroes Rama and Sita. Sita here proved her sinlessness by undergoing the fire ordeal while Rama expiated his sin of killing the great Brahmin, Ravana. Ravana the ruler of Lanka was the grandson of the Brahmin sage Pulastya and Rama felt remorseful for having committed the sin of killing a Brahmin (*braham-hatya-papa*).³⁰ So he performed some acts of penance before the image of Shiva. Says Count Keyserling, "The whole of India seems to be represented here. I can see every colour, every costume, every type, from the dusky Tamils to the white-skinned men from Kashmir; I find proud Rajputs on the one hand and *sannyasins* on

the other, whose hair has turned into a mass of felt. Languages and dialects without number resound in the air; a hundred different traditions speak from the different faces; caste rubs shoulder with caste and prejudice with prejudice."³¹

Here Guru Nanak came with a number of his disciples. Here, after an encounter with hierophants and Hindu temple servitors he established a strong religious centre of his own, which has survived till this day in spite of the fact that no central Sikh organisation cared to look after it. Some one asked him here: "There are two distinct faiths, Hinduism and Islam. Have they been created by two different gods or is there only one God. If there is one God why are they so bitterly divided and pitted against each other."³² Guru Nanak replied:

*The Will of One God pervadeth all,
From the One has emanated the creation;
The Paths are two, but the Lord is One.
The Guru's Word revealeth His Will.
He is in all forms, all minds and creeds,
Sayeth Nanak, glorify the One Lord.*

Adi Granth: Nanak, Gaudi, p 223.

Within a century after Guru Nanak's visit, Ceylon had been occupied by foreign powers and the Portuguese criminally destroyed the religious shrines and centres of the Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. At that time Rameswaram became the headquarter of Sikh missionary activity in the South. After the death of Guru Gobind Singh Nanded acquired greater importance because the fourth major pontific seat of the Khalsa was established there. About three decades

ago some local Sadhus tried to forcibly oust the legal hierophant of Rameshwaram Temple but with the help of local Sindhi and a Sikh Sardar he fought the case in the High Court and proved that the temple and all property attached to it, worth lakhs, belongs to the Sikh Community, whom he represented as legal hierophant of the earlier *Udasi* missionary. Proving it from the centuries old records in his possession, he established that Guru Nanak stopped here on his way to Ceylon and also on his return journey.³³

Guru Nanak in Ceylon

Lanka, the Sinhalese name for Ceylon is first used in Ramayana. The Tamils call it Elankai. Vijaya, a hero king named it Tambapanni, because his hands were reddened by touching the dust of the earth. From this name the Roman and Greek historians as well as Ptolmey an Egyptian of second century called it Taprobane."³⁴ The Ceylonese name for the island in its correct transliteration is, *Singhaladvip*. The *Janam Sākhīs* call it by this correct name and in all the *Janam Sākīs* it is called Singhaladip. It is also called Lanka and in the Sikh scriptures it is referred to only by the name of Lanka. Even Guru Nanak refers to it as Lanka in his writings.³⁵ The Arabs called it Serendip. From the Arabs, the Portuguese and Dutch acquired their names of Celiao and Zeilan which in English and French was converted into Ceylan and Ceylon. The Chinese called it Si-lan.

Although many Ceylonese scholars call Ravana of the Ramayana a myth of the Hindus, "all over the Central uplands of Ceylon, amid gorgeous setting

of thickly wooded hills and glorious valleys, there are spots intimately associated with stories of Ravana and his deeds and of Sita and her sojourn in Lanka. They suggest irresistably the identity of Ravana's Lanka with the island of Ceylon." The names of Rama, Ravana and Sita are perpetuated in many places e.g. Rameswaram, Ravana Ella cave, Ravana waterfall, Sita Eliya, Ashoka Vana (where Sita spent her days in captivity), Ravana Kotiwa, Sitakanda, and Sitawaka, which according to Sikh historical records was a great religious centre of Guru Nanak's mission upto the end of sixteenth century. Ravana is pictured in the well known classic *Sudharma Lankavarta Sutra* as a lay Buddhist. He is also called *Vaidya Siromani* and two medical books are attributed to him: *Araka Prakasika* and *Kumara Tantram*. He is also said to be author of *Sivatandava Stotram*. The association of Ravana with this book shows that he was a respected patron-king of the Shaiva Cult and a hero of the Dravidians who had retreated to the Ceylon as their stronghold. In modern terms Ceylon became the Farmosa of the ancient Dravidian and Shaiva Culture which the Aryan-Vaishnava culture tried to eliminate. "Rama-Ravana War is said to have taken place 1884 years before Buddha."

Lanka which had once proudly carried the power and culture of the Sinhalese to India and the Far East, had fallen on evil days. Her riches, which had long attracted merchants from many parts of the world were at the mercy of the strongest exploiters.

"After the death of Parakrama in 1816 A.D., there were no more Sinhalese kings of note. South Indian invaders again became dominant, not only in the

northern kingdom of Pihiti, now called Jaffna, but in the South-eastern stronghold of the Sinhalese, the kingdom of Ruhuna. Twenty-nine years and fifteen kings after Parakrama a fierce Malabar warrior named Magha invaded Ceylon and laid waste the splendid city of Polonnaruwa, persecuting the Buddhists and desecrating Buddhist temples. His troops and those of his Tamil successors, more interested in loot than in development, did not look after the irrigation tanks, some five thousand in number at the time of Parakrama. The rich fields around Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eventually became parched and unproductive. The Tamils retreated to Jaffna peninsula, which remained more often than not a part of one or another of the South India kingdoms. The division of the Tamils in the North from the Sinhalese in the South, emphasising differences in religion and language, has continued to this day.

Thus the Ceylonese kings were under the domination of the Pandyan and Chola kings, the Emperor of China, the King of Malaya and the Burmese King of Pegu. One of the weak Sinhalese kings of the 15th Century whose capital was in the Kandyan hills was captured and carried off to China for maltreating Chinese envoys. Three times the humiliated Sinhalese paid tribute to China between 1436-1459.³⁸

The Tamils occupied a prominent place in Ceylon from 11th to 16th century. They succeeded in establishing themselves permanently in the Jaffna Peninsula. In older works on Ceylon the inhabitants of this part of the island, apart from Jaffna were often referred to as *Wanniyas* "dwellers in wild country. One of the principalities mentioned

in Sikh historical records is called Kajliban, and at the time of Guru Nanak was ruled by a woman. Even during the life time of Guru Arjan a woman was the ruler of this kingdom.³⁹ The Ceylonese of the Jaffna peninsula came from many parts of mainland including Chola (ancient name of Tanjore) and Pandya (which include a greater part of the modern Madura and Tinnevely district.) Thus it is clear that when Guru Nanak arrived here the Jaffna peninsula was ruled by Shaivite Dravidian rulers, and this is what the *Janam Sakhis* clearly indicate.

Even before Guru Nanak came to Ceylon, a disciple of the Guru, named Mansukh, according to another *Janam Sākhī* named Bhagirath,⁴⁰ came to Ceylon as a trader and spent four months in the kingdom of Raja Shiva Nabh. Being a Sikh not believing in idolatry, or worship of any gods and goddesses, and never observing any Hindu rites, fasts or ceremonies he got into trouble with local Hindus.⁴¹ Some took him to be a Buddhist, others considered him a Muslim in the garb of a Hindu and politically dangerous. He was produced before the Raja who asked him why he did not offer any homage to any god, and why did he not observe fasts and Hindu rites?" "Because," said the trader Sikh, "I have achieved without doing all these things what you are trying to achieve by fasts, ceremonies and worship before gods and goddesses."⁴² He then described to him the doctrines and tenets of his religion founded by Guru Nanak. He read to Raja Shiva Nabh some hymns of the Guru and explained them to him." The Raja was profoundly impressed and expressed an eager desire to meet Guru Nanak," "Have faith in God and His grace.

If you remember the Guru he will certainly come here. He has already left Punjab for missionary tours., so I hear", said the trader Sikh.

The trader Sikh went away to Punjab and the Raja anxiously waited for Guru Nanak to come to him some day. Knowing the profound respect the Raja had developed for the Guru, many saints and sadhus posed as Nanak. The Raja was shrewed enough to put them to test. He sent them money and to articles of luxury. He sent young and beautiful girls tempt them with their beauty and nudity. They all fell victims to these temptations and were driven away. The Raja's idea of a true saint was that he should have conquered his mind and should be free from all temptations. Monks and *yogis* who were ensnared by these temptations were in his eyes, no better than ignorant worldly men.

The Hatha Yogi of Jaffna

From Rameswaram Guru Nanak went to Jaffna by boat. Jaffna is called Japapatam (Jaffna-patnam) in the *Janam Sakhis*. The boat is called *mach* (fish boat or Indian canoe). It is still used to cross rivers in Punjab and Himachal and is called *mach* (canoe). In Jaffna lived a Hatha Yogi who boasted of his occult powers and claimed to be the greatest *yogi* living in the country. One of his feats of Yogi which impressed everyone was that he remained in a closed cell for a month. When he came out of it the occasion was celebrated with great festivity (*mela*), and people offered money, and all that he demanded from his devotees and disciples.

When Guru Nanak arrived at Jaffna he attracted

the attention of all types of people. They flocked to him to hear his musical songs, his enchanting sermons, and to take food in his free kitchen. He did not ask for anything but gave to the people what was offered to him. The Hath Yogi was greatly disturbed, and challenged the Guru to prove that he was superior to him in controlling his breath and in occult powers. He boasted of his *siddhis* (miraculous powers.)⁴³ "How can you control the mind without Hatha Yoga?" he asked Guru Nanak replied :

*O ignorant Man,
Why livest thou in delusion and error?
Thou hast not realized within,
The supreme Recluse, Lord of bliss.*

*Control the fires of lust,
By burning them to dust;
Destroy the indestructible greed,
Leave this hankering after subtle desires;
Drink within the inner self,
The immortal nectar of life.*

*Control the mind, so restless like a fish,
Train it to swim against the current,
Thy body will not collapse,
Thy soul will know eternity.*

*Sayeth Nanak: if you sing the Name of God,
With every breath your mind shall drink nectar,
Control the mind, restless like a fish,
Thy body will not collapse,
Thy soul will know eternity.*

Guru Nanak: " Maru p 44

"But I have such powers and so great control over my body, that no one is a match to my achievements" said the Yogi. "These miraculous powers which you call *siddhis* are thy bondage. They are the chains of vanity around your mind. There is a limit even to your control of your body. How long can you sit with sustained breath? And what do you gain from it but delusion, darkness and death." The Yogi felt slighted. He publically announced that he would get into his cell and remain there for six months. He would prove that he was far superior to Nanak, who was misguiding everyone with his songs and sermons. He entered a cell and sealed its door.

Some of his disciples became anxious about him after a month. When about forty days had passed, Guru Nanak asked them to open the door and see what his condition was. He was found dead.⁴⁵ All his disciples felt that he had met this fate because he had not heeded Guru Nanak's warning against trusting Hath Yoga techniques beyond certain limits. Some of his prominent disciples, became the followers of Guru Nanak. One of them was a rich trader from Punjab of the Bhatḍa clan. A shrine was built commemorating the Guru's visit.⁴⁶

Nanak in Shiva Nabh's Kingdom

The kingdom of Shiva Nabh was one of the seven semi-independent states of Ceylon, located located probably in Jaffna peninsula. The name of his queen is given by *Puratan Janam Sakhi* as Rani Chanderkala, while *Bala's Janam Sakhi* (MSS 1848) gives the name of his *Vazir* as Paras Ram. Guru Nanak camped in a garden which had been deserted.

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Now it blossomed with congregational singing, sermons of the Guru on piety, purity and God, and existential charity which people saw in operation, when they saw the Guru distributing food to the hungry, and attending to the personal sorrows and troubles of the devotees. Raja Shiva Nabh asked his minister Paras Ram to put him to test. Some offerings were sent on behalf of the Raja which Guru Nanak refused. At night some beautiful damsels were sent, who displayed their beauty and nudity to win over the handsome Master from Punjab. Guru Nanak smiled sadly and compassionately, and then in a melodious voice said :

*A woman desires to be lovely,
And to abandon herself to passions.
She reddens her lips with beetle leaves,
She adorns her body with scented flowers,
The more she enjoys these sensuous pleasures,
The more she sinks in sorrow.
She who seeks the Love of God,
Her vital desires are fulfilled.*

*Go my daughters go,
Go lovely princesses go;
Contemplate His Name;
Live in Truth all day,
Serve the One Beloved.
Make His love your sustenance.
Dispel all poisonous passions,
Through nectar-laved Word of the Guru.⁴⁷*

Guru Nanak: Basant p 1187

Their smiles, their naked beauty, their disentangled hair, their bewitching charms failed to tempt

Guru Nanak. Only Guru Nanak could quench the thirst that leads to dead waters. Only he who stood in Light could give a hand to those tender and helpless slaves of princes who were stumbling in darkness. The deep and gentle light of the Guru's eyes fell on them like a benediction, and their pride and passion to conquer by tempting him was changed into shame and sorrow. "The compassionate words of the Guru resounded in their hearts: "*Go my daughters, go lovely princesses, live in remembrance of God who is Love, Beauty and Truth.*" Shiva Nabh was unnerved. The real Nanak had at last come. Instead of showing reverence to him he had sinned against him. He sent his Minister Paras Ram with jewels and offerings. Guru Nanak refused to accept them. "I do not need any such thing" he said. Then Rani Chanderkala went with rich offerings to pay homage to the Enlightened One. Guru Nanak blessed her but refused to accept any offerings. "Give them to the poor, the destitute, the needy," he said. Then Raja Shiva Nabh went in all humility and begged forgiveness for all he had done to test him. "I have been groping in the dark, searching for thee, Master, and my eyes beclouded with ignorance could not see thy Light. Forgive me, and make me thy humble disciple," said Shiva Nabh.

Shiva Nabh became an initiated disciple of Guru Nanak.⁴⁸ As the Guru refused to go to his palace and stay with him, he built a lovely temple and some rooms for the Guru's stay, which later came to be known as Guru Nanak's *dehra*. The Guru disciplined him into the Sikh code of conduct saying: "Rise up early in the morning and contemplate the Name and Presence of God. In the day time when ever you get opportunity serve the poor and holy,

recite the word of the divine Guru, and ever seek truth and live in purity and humility. You will then attain liberation.”⁴⁹ Almost every day Raja Shiva Nabh came to the Guru and questioned him on the mysteries of inner life. He was a learned scholar and well versed in Yoga and Shaiva philosophy. So all his questions and the Guru’s answers were in the same terminology. These sermons were recorded by a companion of the Guru, and a compiled volume called *Pran-Sangli* (The Doctrines of Life-Breath) were left with Shiva Nabh. Copyists have distorted a good deal of the original language. It is not a composition of Guru Nanak in the sense *Japji* is, but it is decidedly based on the sermons of the Guru and being recorded by a companion, it carries much of Guru Nanak’s thought in its pristine originality. When Guru Arjan started compiling the *Adi Granth*, he sent Bhai Paḍa to get the copy of *Pran Sangli*. As Guru Arjan found it either to be a composition of a Sikh and not of the Guru, or he did not consider it to be the original version, he did not include it in the *Adi Granth*. Bhai Paḍa recorded his journey which was briefly included in Bhai Banno’s *Granth* and is found in many old recension of *Adi Granth*. It is called *Haqiqat Rah Mukam Singhladip*, *Raja Shiv Nabh ki Rajdhani*. The copyists have ignorantly distorted the original version. They have changed Sitawaka to Sitawada, because Punjabi *k* can easily be misread as ‘d’ in old manuscripts. Mayadunne has been changed to Mayadauni and Kavi Santokh Singh changes it further into Maya Medni.

Raja Shiva Nabh did not have a son. Guru Nanak blessed him saying, “You will have a son under whom all the seven kingdoms of *Singhladip* will united into a most powerful rule. Keep the

Light of the Guru's mission burning and maintain a free kitchen wherever possible." After five month's stay with Shiva Nabha Guru Nanak left his kingdom. "Master I would like to be in your presence day and night. I would like to listen to your ambrosial words every day. Tell me how is it possible for me to live in company with thee. If you permit I will renounce my kingdom and follow you to the end of the earth. I shall deem myself most fortunate if you kindly stay here and make Lanka your permanent abode". "Guru Nanak replied," Know me in two forms. My physically manifest form (*sarguna rūp*) is this body. It is like your body. I will discard it some day, when God so wishes it. My other and real form is the *nirguna rūp* (the Formless Spirit), my real being and personality. My formless Spirit is also manifest in the Divine Word which I imparted to you. When you remember God through the Word, I shall be ever with you. The Word is the Guru and the Guru is the Word."⁵²

Guru Nanak's prophecy was fulfilled. His son Maya dunni and grandson Raj Sinha conquered all the territory in the north and were the only non-Buddhist King of medieval Ceylon. With their capital at Sitawaka, they stood as a formidable foe of invaders, and symbol of national unity of the Singhalese. "One brave young Sinhalese leader stands out in the sordid story of treachery and bloodshed that marked the ascendancy of the Portuguese in Ceylon. His name was Raja Sinha I, King of Sitawaka, his capital from 1554 to 1593 in the foothills of Central Ceylon's high mountains, thirsty-six miles from Colombo. He dethroned king Dharmapala, defeated the Portuguese in open battle, drove the Kandyan king into exile and raised

a formidable army. At one point he was the master of Ceylon with the exception of Colombo."⁵³

In *Haqīqat Rāh Mukam* it is clearly indicated that Bhai Paidi met Mayadunne and his son Raja Singha (called Rai Singha by Janam Sakhi) *Haqīqat Rāh Mukām* says : "When Guru Nanak went there, 1400 cities and villages comprised seven kingdoms. By the blessing of Guru Nanak it all came under one ruler of Sitawaka. At present the ruler is Mayadunne, son of Shiva Nabha. Raja Sinha is grandson of Shiva Nabha. The Sikh traditions are maintained there. The community kitchen feeds thousands of people every day⁵⁴. This indicates that the King had opened many *langars*, free kitchens, to feed the monks and the poor. Further says the *Haqīqat Rāh Mukām*" In South India, "there is the rule of the Aravati ruler, the real power is with Rama Raja.⁵⁵ This fact is also borne by historical evidence. After Krishna deva Raya of Tuluva dynasty for some time the titular heads were his nephews, Venkata and Sadasiva (1542-76), but the whole power passed on to his son-in-law Rama Raja husband of Tirumaladevi and this rule is classified as the rule of Araviti (Tamil : Aravidu) dynasty. Says the historian of the Vijayanagar kingdom" For the first seven or eight years after his coronation Sadasiva was the only king; but the real power was always in Rama Raya's hands and in due course Rama Raya assumed the Royal titles. Sadasiva was kept under close guard although Ram Raya and his brothers Tirumala and Venkatadri went on one day every year and prostrated themselves before their lawful sovereign in token of his rights over them. Farishta says that Rama Raya destroyed many of

the ancient nobility and raised his own family to the highest rank, a point which is confirmed by the evidence of other writers and of the inscriptions.⁵⁶ Thus the Aravati ruler Ram Raja of Sikh historical records is Ram Raja of Aravati dynasty of South Indian History.

Shiva Nabha : Vijayabahu VII

One of the oldest copy of *Haqīqat Rāh Mukām Shiva Nabha kī* states : *tahān sat rajē the, Guru Babe ke bacan ik rāj hoā, Shiv Nabh Raja kī santal Satawad šehar hai*". Here the careless copyist has changed Sita waka to Sitawada. The old style Pankabi 'k' and 'd' did not differ much and some copyist misread an older version. The correct translation of this statement is : "There (in Ceylon) there were seven kings (at the time of Guru Nanak). By the blessings of Gurn Baba (Nanak) they were united into one kingdom."

Haqīqat Rāh Mukām then states "takht gah tahan ab raja Mayadaune (Mayadunne) ki hai, Raja Rai Singh (RajaRaja Simha), tis ka beta, Raje Shiva Nabha ka potra." The present ruler there (in Ceylon) is Raja Mayadunne. Raja Raja Simha I is his son and is the grandson of Shiva Nabha." In the later versions of the text of this statement the word *tis* has been eliminated as an oversight error. The meaning without this word changes completely. It becomes Mayadunne son of Raja Simha and grandson of Shiva Nabha. Mayadunne was father of Raja Simha and not his son. Later copyist carry on this error.

The geneology of Raja Simha is given to me by

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learned historians of Ceylon as follows:⁵⁷

	A.D.
1. Dharma Parakramabahu IX	1506—1529
2. Vijayabahu VII(brother of No. 1)	1528—1259
3. Buvanakabahu VII(son of No. 2)	1529—1550
4. Mayadunne (son of No. 1 and brother of No. 2) ruled from Sitawaka	1535—1581
5. Raja Simha I (son of Mayadunne) ruled from Sitawaka	1581—1593

Even in the Ceylon's historical records there are variations in dates. Sometimes kings ruled simultaneously in different capitals. There are four main kingdoms of Kotte, Sitawaka, Kandy and Jaffna at the time of Guru Arjan. After Raja Simha's death Sitawaka was reannexed to Kotta. Raja Simha did not have any surviving son to succeed him.

Who was Shiva Nabha in Ceylonese history? It is now not difficult to answer *Haqiqat R-h Mukāṁ* rightly states that both Mayadunne and Raja Simha ruled from Sitawaka a Capital founded by them. It also states that Shiva Nabha was Mayadunne's father and Raja Simha's grandfather. This leads us to the inevitable and positive conclusion that Vijayabahu was Shiva Nabha. Shiva Nabha was his original name, but when he ascended the throne of his brother he took up the royal name Vijayabahu VII. This is an old practice in India and many kings have been assuming the name of Vikramaditya.

At the time of Guru Nanak Shiva Nabha (Vijayabahu VII) ruled over a small kingdom the history of which should not be difficult to trace if we go into the early life-history of Vijayabahu VII. His brother Dharma Parakramabahu IX died in 1528, and Vijayabahu who was already old ruled over his kingdom for one or two years. He was succeeded by his eldest son Buvenekabahu VII but his second son Mayadunne established his Capital at Sitawaka.

After winning over Shiva Nabha (Vijayabahu VII) Guru Nanak went to the kingdom of Dharma Parakramabahu IX whose mind was wavering between Hinduism and Buddhism. Brahmanical Hindus dominated his court but a very learned Buddhist monk Dharma kriti-sthavira who was known as Sangharaja exercised a great influence on the mind of the monarch. The king expressed his willingness to accept the religion of Nanak if he defeated the Buddhist divine in debate. Guru Nanak accepted the challenge.

A slab bearing a Sanskrit inscription preserved in the Archeological Museum at Anuradhapura (Number in Museum Register M 111) gives a vivid account of this encounter of Nanak with the Buddhist Bhikhu in the court of Dharmaparakarmabahu IX. The slab inscription has been located and desciphered by eminent archeologists and historians Dr. Sadhamangala Karunaratna and Dr. Paranavitana. I am indebted to these learned historians for all the information in this connection and the information of these Ceylonese kings.

“In the fifteenth year of King Parakramabahu (*i.e.*, Dharma Parakramabahu IX) a religious teacher

named Jnanakacarya (Nanakacharya) is said to have come to Jayavardhana from a village in the vicinity of Samantapattana (Sammanturai). He met the king, expounded his doctrine to Parakramabahu and requested that monarch to embrace it. Dharma-parakramabahu promised to embrace Jnanakacarya's (Nanakacharya) creed if the latter defeated in debate Dharmakirti-sthavira who was Sangcharaja or Sangharaja designate.

A public discussion was held in the pavilion in front of the royal palace and the debate between the Buddhist hierarch and the religious teacher from abroad was conducted on the subject of a Supreme Personal Deity and an eternal soul. It is said that Jnanakacarya (Nanakacharya) was able to silence Dharmakirti-sthavira. It is said that the Brahmans who were very powerful at the court did not like Dharmakirti-sthavira and desired to have him disgraced and absent from the capital. They also were in agreement with the religious teacher from abroad on the topics discussed. The outcome of public debates of this nature held at Jayavardhanapura was decided by a majority of the votes of these who formed the audience. The Brahmans therefore saw to it that there were in the hall a majority of people who would vote in favour of Jnanakacarya (Nanaka-charya).

After obtaining this victory, Jnanakacarya (Nanakacharya) saw the king and having informed that he had defeated Dharmakirti-sthavira and requested the king to keep his promise. The king replied that he would inquire about the result of the debate from the authority concerned and give a reply later.

In the meantime, the Brahmins had come to know that Jnanakarcarya insisted in his creed on the acceptance of monotheism and that he was against image worship. These doctrines, were not to the liking of the Brahmins. But what the Brahmins were mostly concerned was the attitude of Jnanakarcarya (Nanakacharya) against the supremacy of the Brahmins in a society divided into castes. They therefore became anxious about this position in the event of the king embracing the creed of this new religious teacher.

In this predicament they enlisted the support of Dharmadhwaaja pandita who had been a bhiksu and had a good knowledge of Sanskrit and Pali languages as well as the doctrines of Buddhism and Brahmanism. At the request of the Brahmins, Dharmadhwaaja pandita (who by the way was the father of the poet Alagiyavanna) saw Jnanakacarya (Nanaka-charya) and challenged the latter to a debate with him. Jnanakacharya accepted the challenge and arrangements were made for another public debate in the pavilion in front of the Sumangala Prasada (the Royal Palace at Kotto).

The Brahmins on this occasion saw to it that the majority of the people assembled in the Mandapa to listen to the dispute were favourably disposed towards Dharmadhwaaja-pandita who was himself a much more adroit and well informed debator than Dharmakirti-sthavira. The subjects taken for debate were image worship and the pretensions of the Brahmins. At the end of the debate the votes were taken by secret ballot of those assembled and the outcome was declared by the President as a victory for Dharmadhwaaja-pandita. After this Jnankarcarya (Nanaka-

charya) left Jayavardhanapura and the promise given by Dharmaparakramabahu become invalid. Dharma-kirti sthavira also left Jayavardhanapura and lived at his temple at Gadaladeniya. The Brahmanas thus made good use of the visit of Jnanakacharya (Nanakacharya) to get rid of Buddhist hierarch and by forcing Jnanakacharya (Nankarcharya) himself to leave the capital to make their position at court invulnerable.⁵⁷

True to their inherent trickery the Brahmins of the court of King Dharmaparakarmabahu IX first used Guru Nanak to destroy the influence of the Buddhist monk. But as Guru Nanak was against caste system and idolatry they feared that if Guru Nanak's doctrines were accepted their faith would disappear from the court. So they used dishonest means to muster Brahmanical votes to give opinion against Guru Nanak. The king died without any surviving son and the throne passed on to his brother Vijayabahu VII (Shiva Nabh).

Guru Nanak is also believed to have visited Kurukkal Madam a vilage 12 miles to the south of Batticaloa on the eastern Coast of Ceylon. There is a modern Hindu shrine at the ancient site of Nanak's shrine there. Originally it seems to have been a Buddhist shrine because a Bodhisatva image has been unearthed from there. Other places which seemed to have been visited by Guru Nanak are Jaffna, Kotte & Colombo⁵⁸.

At Kajliban

Guru Nanak is then said to have gone to the kingdom of a woman ruler, here the population was

still predominantly of women folk. This place is called Kajliban. Gyani Gyan Singh thinks it is in the South India, while the indications of *Haqiqat-Rāh-Mukām* are that it was somewhere in Ceylon. Most probably it was one of the seven kingdoms in Ceylon mentioned in *Haqiqat Rāh Mukām*.⁵⁷ The queen of the land was a Shaivite and there were many prominent Yogis practising occult powers and trying to impress the queen. When the queen came in all her pompous pride and vanity she refused to bow before Guru Nanak. The brief dialogue between Guru Nanak and the queen is said to be included in this sloka of the Guru:

*Be sober and of humble grace,
O beautiful and proud young maid,*

*Ah, my breast is high with passion,
How shall I bend low in adoration,
To touch the feet of a Sage.*

*I have seen huge mountains and mansions,
Built of high rocks, bricks and mortar,
Crumbling to dust out of pride,
Be not proud of your youth O maid.*

Guru Nanak: Sloka Vadhik 1

The queen and her maids felt disarmed by the kingliness of this strange sage. They spoke of their mastery over yoga techniques, of their wealth and of their Shaiva Gurus, the *Siddhas*. They wanted to know the Guru's views about yoga and spencial discipline he preeched. Guru Nanak replied:

*O maid with bewitching eyes,
Listen to the thoughts of deep wisdom;*

*Recognize the moral worth of a thing,
Before trading in it for your life.
Drive away evils: thy enemies,
Welcome the virtues: thy friends;
Discard all sins, imbibe purity.
The essence of happy life is to give,
One's mind, body, soul to goodness: real friends;
Love not the transient joys of sins.
Nanak is a sacrifice unto them,
Who have realized this great truth.*

Guru Nanak: Sloka Vadhik 2. P. 1410

The Shaiva priests and Yogis of Kajliban were seriously upset by the spiritual influence of Guru Nanak. They came to him and tried to cow him down by their occult powers. With his spiritual powers Guru Nanak suspended and destroyed their will to perform any occult miracles. They felt as helpless as a Lilliputian felt in the grasp of a giant.⁵⁸ "They fell at the feet of Guru Nanak, and begged for spiritual enlightenment." Guru Nanak asked them to devote their precious energy to *Sahajya Yoga* of a life of self-restraint and love of God.

*He who has not known Love,
Nor the beauty of the Beloved,
Is like a guest visiting empty house,
He departs disappointed as he comes.*

Guru Nanak Suhi 790

"If you want to attain real Yoga, the Yoga of union with God, control the five passions, maintain tranquility in the mind. Your egoism (I-am-ness) has manacled thy mind. If you remember not God

you cannot attain liberation. Contemplate the Word of the Guru, your egoism will depart. True Yoga will be realised in your own self. Says Nanak Yoga lies not in living in graveyards or forests, Open your eyes, realize your Self: This is the path that leads to true Yoga.⁵⁹

In Ashoka Vana :

According to *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh* Guru Nanak first went to a Pushkar dvip, a small island, then went to Ashoka Vana where Ravana had kept Sita in captivity. The people here led a very peaceful, contented and economically advanced life. As the *Janam Sakhi* puts it, streams of milk flowed there.⁶⁰ One of them said, "He who is proud and vain and considers himself superior to others is treated with contempt by us. He who considers himself to be our equal is respected. We are proud of him who is humble and gentle."⁶⁰ Probably this was a Buddhist area in the Shaiva surroundings. Guru Nanak said to them: "Know God to be a living Presence in every heart and every soul. Contemplate His divine presence through His Name. Your duality of mind will disappear. You will treat all equally. Build the temple of God here. Let it be the temple of true worship. Let it be the temple of self-less service. Look after the needs of travellers, the homeless, and the monks and saints."⁶⁰

The Portuguese and then the Dutch wrought havoc all over Ceylon. All the important religious centres were destroyed by them with vengeance Sitawaka, the place where Guru Nanak's missionary centres flourished for long was completely destroyed,

and now practically no sign of its past glorious history is left. Almost all the old capitals of Ceylonese kingdoms, were brought to tragic ruins by the invaders from the North, East and West.

An intensive research work into the records which give the history of the kindgoms of Jaffna Peninsula, and the Sitawaka empire of king Raj Simha is likely to throw some light on Guru Nanak's visit to Ceylon and his impact on medieval Ceylonese history. More of this information is likely to be available from the Tamil historians of Ceylon and South India. As the foreign invaders occupied Ceylon the Sikh missionaries withdrew bag and baggage to Rameswaram and other centres of the South.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. J.M.S. (MSS) f 267-8 The whole story is given after the encounter with Kaliyuga ends.
2. tab Guru Babe Nanak jī tin baras pūrāb kī dhartī sabh dekhī,
pher pūrāb kī dhartī te dakhan kau rame:
Guru Nanak toured the East for three years. Then from the East he went South.

J.Mb p 203

3. Kāru deś thī Guru Nanak jī age cale; age Singhalādīp te gae;
Sehar Raje Shiva Nabh kī nagri dedh mahine vic āgae.
From Kamarup Guru Nanak went to Singhaladip (Ceylon).
He reached the kingdom of Raja Shiv Nabha in one and half month.

J.B. (MSS 1848) p 73

4. Bhai Gurdas *Var I: Pauri* 25 to 27; He won all the Siddhasanas, according to pauri 27, which were mostly in the Shaiva world of the South India.

5. P.J. (MSS II) p 123.
6. T.G.K. p 103
7. Dr V. Raghavan: *Introductory Thesis* to "*The Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja* by C. Ramanujachari p 9—10
8. Dominngos Paes quoted by K.A. Nilakanta Shastri: *A History of South India*. p 278.
9. *Mangalagiri Inscription Epigraphia Indica* Vol. VI p 110-11
10. Sewell: *A Forgotten Empire* p 320; "*A History of Orissa*" by Hunter and others: Vol. II 385.
11. R.D. Banerjee: *History of Orissa* p 325.
12. T.G.K. p 103
13. *Haqīqat Rāh Muqām* Nagapatan—Bidar-Tanjavur (this is how the Vijayanagar kingdom is summed up)
Bala's Janam Sakhi (L I) says "tis te pare Bijapur patan hai, tis te pare asī kos Nagapatam bandar hai, on bandar Tanjavur shah ka hai:

Beyond that (Buhranpur) is Bijapur. Beyond that 80 kos is Nagapatnam, a port. This is the port of the Ruler of Tanjore.

J.B. p 345

also see J.M.S. (MSS) f 248'
14. *Haqīqat Rāh mukām*
15. R.K. Das: "*Temples of Tamilnad* p 57
16. oh log os jagā nū Kundikottal bolde han te pothiāñ vic Tilgañjī likhyā hai. T.G.K. p 101

The legend due to which the place is known as Kaliyar Koil, Devi Kottai, Kodikulam, or Kodikotai is described indetail by R.K. Das in his "*Temples of Tamilnad* p 85.

17. J.M.S. (MSS) p 348.

18. hun bhi ose pahadi par guru ji da jhanda jhulda hai; Chaitra di punya nu os dande kunde da darsan kar bheta dekar, sukhana sukhde hsn, oha log us jagah nu kundi kotal bolde han te pothian vic Tilganji likhya hai.

Even now the Guru's flag is hoisted there, on the full moon day of the months of Chaitra (Feb-March). Even now the stone mortar an the wooden pestal with which the linseed was pounded and dissolved in water is shown. It is preserved as a relic.

T.G.K. p 101

19. J.M.S. (MSS) p 348.

20. Bale nū āgyā kitī isnū ghoto; ghot ke jal da kundā bharpūr karke sbhana sidhan vic prasad vartāyā. Sidh is kautak nū dekh ke bahut bhaimān hoe.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 348

21. Mangal Nath bolyā: Nanak jī age ehthe bahut tapvān āe haiñ; siddhān dā bal sabhnā te rehayā hai; tudh siddhān te apnā bal pāyā hai; tūñ hāḍā saciār purkh nadar avādan hai.

ibid

22. The sermon quoted by Bhai Man Singh is based on the following hymn of Guru Nanak:

jag parbodhe maḍhī badhavai
āsan tyāg khāe sac pāvīā.
mamtā moh kāman hitkāri.
nā audhūtī na samsāri,
jogī bais raho dubhdā dukh bhāgai,
ghar ghar māṅgat lāj na lāgai;
gāvai gīt na cinai āp
kioñ lāgi, nivrai partāp.
gur kai śabad racai man bhāe,
bhikhyā sehaj bhikhāri khāe,
bhasam cadhāe kare pākhañd
māyā moh sahe jam dañd.

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phūte khāhpar bhikh nā pāe
bhañdan bādhyā āvai jāe.

Guru Nanak : Ramkali p 903

In the text I have given the capsule translation based on Bhai Mani Singh's interpretation.

23. siddhāñ puchya, jog karkai vāsnā turt khin hundī hai ke gyān karke.
24. gyān rpūi pañkhi de bhāgti, jog, do pāñkh han, je dono prāpat hunde han ta gyān asthit huñdā.
ibid.
25. atīt vic bhagat višekh hundī hai ke grihsth vic.
ibid p 353
26. mahārāj dī jis vic niśkapat bhagat hovai soī višekh hai.
ibid p 354
27. tāñ siddhāñ kehyā : jog toñ binā añtehkaran śudh nahī hotā.
J.M.S (MSS) f 354
28. man nū gurāñ, de śabad vic jodnā, eh jog hai; is ke karke añteh karan śudh hotā hai; cār daure hain mahārāj de milan de, prithme ta satsaṅg hai, bahudo satya hai, sac bolnā; te tījā sañtokh hai, cauthā samdam.
ibid.
29. R.K. Das: *Temples of Tamilnad* p 70
30. *ibid* p 73
31. Count Hermann Keyserling: *Indian Travel Diary of a Philosopher* p 1
32. Babaji salāma, eh je doe rāh hoe Hindu ar musalmān tin kā kavan bicār? joīñ rāh doe haiñ, ke nā, eko hai? eh bāt jioñ hai tioñ batāīai.

sunho purkhā rāh dovai haiñ, parmeśwar Hindu Turk kā

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khasam eko hai, karnī ekā hai, sa eko hai, binā sac te
nā Hindu chutātā hai nā Musalman chūtātā hai.

J.Mb. p 216

33. Maharaja Ripduman Singh received the news when he was interned at Kodaikanal in South India. He sent Sardar Mul Singh Majithia to fight the case for the Udasi. Sardar Mul Singh's grandson Sardar Narinderpal Singh, now on the Staff of G.P.C., the publishers of this book accompanied his grandfather and stayed with him at Rameswaram. He informs me that the Udasi missionary presented a good deal of evidence to show that it was the historical shrine of Guru Nanak, established when he stopped here on way to Ceylon, and won the case. Baba Nidhan Singh of Manmad and his successor have been good enough to look after it since then. It is still there in a dilapidated condition.
34. Elsie K. Cook: *Ceylon: Geography, Resources and People* p 14
35. Lankā lūtī dait sañtāpai,
Rāmchand māriyo eh Rāvan, Guru Nanak: *Siddh Gosh* 40
36. M.D. Raghavan: *India in Ceylon History, Society and culture* p 36
37. Argus John Tresidder: *Ceylon: An introduction to the Resplendent Land.* p 92-3
38. ibid p 94
39. S.A. Pakeman: *Ceylon* p 244-45
40. According to *Nanak Prakash* and Bhai Vir Singh's *Guru Nanak Chametkar*, it was Mansukh, but according to J.M.S. it was bhagirath.
Puratan Janam Sakhi also says it was Mansukh. J.M.S. f 73
41. N.P. adhyaya 44, 247

42. P.J. (MSSI printed version) p 88 This *Janam Sakhi* says that Mansukh had copied a good many hymns of the Guru and carried them with him to Ceylon. Mansukh says to Shiva Nabha: jis karan tum vart nem sañjam karte ho so vastu mai pāi hai. p 89

43. bahudo Japapatan shehar mai jāe prāpat bhae; uhāñ ik jogī kī pūja hotī thī, jogī ne kihā: mai jis vele dasven duār prān cadhāvtā hañ sārī trilokī kī mujh ko khabar hundī hai eh mulk mera jītā hoya hai.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 278

44. mīde kēce bharam bhulānā,
na . cīnya parmanañda bairāgi;
nār gahu jār lai, pmar gahu mār lai,
onrañt taj chod tau apio pījai.
min kī capal sioñ jugat man rākhiai,
udai neh hañs na kañdh chījai.
bhanat Nānak jāno rāvai je harī mano
man pavan sioñ amrit pījai,
min kī capal sioñ jugat man rākhīai
udai neh hañs neh kañdh chījai'

Guru Nanak *Maru* p

45. ta kyā dekhan ke jogī cde prān chūt gae han.

J.M.S (MSS) p 276

46. cangā Bhātaḍa jogī dā sikh sī, oh bhī carnī āe lagā.

ibid

47. The first line of the first stanza is: kāman cāhe sunder bhog
The first line of the second stanza is: gacho putrī raj kuār.
I have translated only two stanza fromt his long hymn.

48. Raje Shiva Nabha jog ik mañjī milī; Rāje Shiv Nābh jog Gurū kī khushī hoi.

P.J. (MSS II)

49. pichlī rāt uṭhke gurān dī bāñī padhnī, isnān karke pher je gḍin hovai kise samai kirtan karna kise spmai bāñī padhnī,

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kise vele sana kī tehal karnī, ar apne man aṇḍar haumai
nā lyāvnī. eh bhaga og hai'

J.M.S (MSS) f 306

singlādip kī rehrās, jab rāt pave ta sabhe ikathe āe behan
dharmsāl; ik sikh rātī praśad keh jāvai, bhalke ikathe keh
jāvan, ikīs am lūn raoi pāvia.

P. J (MSS II) f 127

50. tahāñ prānsaṅglī hoi Saīdo Sīhain likh lītī, Raje Shiv Nabh
og

P.J. (MSS II) f 163

This Janam Sakhi suggests that the *Pran Sangli* was first
recited at Gorakh-hatdi, probably some Shaiva Centre in
the South or Ceylon. We have seen Guru Nanak met the
Shaiva *Diddhas* in a number of places, and even at Jalfā.
So this composition was recorded by Saīdo and shihan two
companions of Guru Nanak, and the first copy of the work
was left with Shiva Nabh

Tān Bābe othe Prān Saṅglī ka ucār kītā tān pothī likh ke
Rāje Shiv Nabh de hath dītī.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 287

tithe Guru Nanak ji prān Saṅglī ucari ik sau terah dhyāe bole.

J.B. (MSS 1848) f 75

bhūpat yog den ke kāja, pran saṅglī grañth sū sājā ek saū
tera dhyāe bakhāne; jeh pādḥ yog kalā sabh jāne

N.P. adh 42:6

51. Kavi Santokh Singh : *Suraj Prakash*; Rās 3, Aṇsū 32
All the printed versions of *Prān Saṅglī* have different ar-
rangements of Chapters. I have not as yet come across
some very old manuscrip. Some Chapters given in Cole-
brook's manuscript of *Purātan Janam Sākhī* differ from
the chapters found in the Complete Manuscript of *Purātan
Janam Sākhī* which I have, and is referred in this book.
Some chapters of *Prān Saṅgalī* indicate that they are a
dialogue between the various schools of Yogis. A few
Chapters appear to be presented as sermons. There are

very few chapters even in the printed version which drift away from the original doctrines. Such chapters which bear the heading: *Nanak-Bharthar Gosht hoi; Gorakh Vac.* etc are later editions. Some chapters are historical reproductions of *Siddha Gosht* giving almost the same questions and answers as are given in *Siddha Gosht*. It would be possible for scholars to work on it if some one takes up old Manuscripts and edits a readable version. Sant Sampuran Singh's version is the best so far available.

- 52 asñde do rūp hain, jo sargun rūp sarīr hai, ar nirgun rūp sñbad hai, par sarīr dñ darśan sadiv nahi hotñ, ar sabad da darśan sadiv hota hai.

J.M.S. (MSS) 287

- 53 Argus John Tresidder: *Ceylon: Introduction to Resplendent Land* p 97 "For most of the sixteenth century the Portuguese were content to trade using the Sinhalese kings as puppets, particularly one unfortunate monarch who was a convert to Christianity. More than once they were in serious danger of being driven out in particular by the rulers of one of the adjacent kingdoms, Sitawaka by name of Raja Sinha I who was unusually warlike and showed definite military skill.

S.A. Pakeman: *Ceylon*, p. 42

- 54 *Haqiqat Rah Mukam*

- 55 tahññ kā rāja Airpati Nāyak hai; tahān valāyt Ram Rāje kī hai.

Haqiqat Rah Mukam

- 56 K.A. Nilakanta Sastri: *A History of South India* p 289

- 57 Dr. Saddhamangala Karunaratna and Dr. Paranavitana: "Guru Nanak in Ceylon" a paper read at International Seminar Punjabi University Patiala, September 1969.

- 58 Dr. Saddhamangalai Karunaratna's letter to the author dated October 22, 1969.

- 59 Kajli ban kos asī hai, tiryā rāj hai; tahāñ bhī Guru Bābe

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kā dehrā hai; Saṅgat Bhatadyaṅ ke judātī hai; Othe Guru siddhān nāl gosht karke pūjā khic lītī su. tab siddh Guru kā jor ajmāi ke pairiṅ ae pae. us thau kā nau Kajliban triyā raj hai.

Haqīqat Rah mukam

58 *ibid.*

59 guršabad bicāro āp jāe,
sac jog man vase āet
jin jio piṅd ditā tis ceteh nāhi,
maḍi masāni mūde jog nāhit
Guru Nanak bole bhali ban
tum hoh sujākhe leh pachān.

Guru Nanak Basant p 1189

60 *Ashoka vana*: puskar dīp mai baḍe baḍe kautak bāg te phul hai. Uhan te age Asoka ban hai; dūdh dian nadiān vagtiān han.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 366

"The modern trunk road between Nuwara Eliya and Uva Valley below runs between Sita Amman Koil, a small shrine which has sprung up in the past few decades with the Hakgalla Gardens in the vicinity, an area of entrancing scenic beauty, which may well have been a cross section of the Ashoka Vana where Sita is said to have spent her days in captivity guarded by Rakshashis. It is locally held that the best part of Ashoka Vana must ever elude the search of man, though it is believed that it might be in the immediate vicinity of Hakgalla Gardens. Here the trees are laden with fruits, there branches bending with the weight of luscious oranges and other fruits. It may not take away any with him, which seems to indicate that the ancients knew the spot and enjoyed the fruit grown there.

M.D. Raghavan: *India in Ceylonese History, Society and Culture* p 3

61 ethe āp soṅ jo vadā janidā hai us nāi Irkhā karīdi hai; te āp te jo apne j ha janda hai us nal barbri karīdi hai jo ap te te chotā hotā hai us te abhīmān karidā hāi.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 366

62 *ibid* f 367

- 63 Sitawaka, the Capital of son and grandson of Shiva Nabha and said to be stronghold of Sikhism was brutally destroyed by the Portuguese. When Bhai Paidā visited Ceylon he found Shiva Nabha's son Maya Medni, son of Raja Sinha I ruling at Sitawaka.

Sivanābhā pravesan kīnā
nirtpat prasaṅg būjh sabh līnā
Māyā Mednī tis ko nām,
calit pañth subh gun gan dhām
punvān raja dharmagya
gur ko sikhī bisālat tatagya
Sri Nānak sikh nrtp Shiv Nabh
tis ko eh potā jas labha.


N.P. Ras 3 Ansu 32

Kavi Santokh Singh calls Mayadunne—Maya Medni

CHAPTER 15

BACK TO PUNJAB

MARDANA OUT OF WILDERNESS

 FROM CEYLON Guru Nanak came back to Rameswaram and stayed here for a few days. Gyani Gyan Singh says that the Guru visited Nagappattinam and Kumbakonam, an early capital of the Chola Kings and a place known for its historic temples.¹ If he did so he must have gone from Tanjore when he was on his way to Ceylon. When Gyani Gyan Singh went to the South, he found Guru Nanak's shrine there, run by the *Udasis*. These Sikh shrines at Kumbakonam and Nagappattinam survived because traders going from Punjab to Ceylon generally stopped here. From Nagappattinam they took a boat to Jaffna. It generally took three days and three nights to reach Jaffna.²

From Rameswaram Guru Nanak went to Kanyakumari, the southern most tip of India, which attracts travellers and religious missionaries for its beauty and holiness. He first crossed the Vagai river and reached Palyamkottar. Guru Nanak camped here and established a missionary centre because the place was close to many historical religious centres where the Sikh missionaries could go on their festival gatherings and preach to the pilgrims the Word of God. Kaliyar Koil was also not far away from here. The Sikh shrine flourished upto the end of last century.³

From here Guru Nanak went to Krishnapuram, Nagercoil and reached Kanyakumari, the seat of divine

virgin, Mother Mary of the Hindus. She remained virgin so that her Shakti could put down the demons. The god who wanted to marry her, could not do so as he did not turn up at midnight, the auspicious, time fixed for marriage. Here at the feet of Kanyakumari the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian sea, and the Indian ocean meet. We do not know how long Guru Nanak stayed in these enchanting surroundings. From here he commenced his northward journey through the rich Malabar coast. On the Malabar Coast he met a rich Raja who was the owner of many Sandalwood forests. His name is given by Gyani Gyan Singh as Raja Ram but the place where he lived is not mentioned. Gyan Singh says that he saw the remains of Sikh shrine there, and local traditions confirm that as the people were very poor Guru Nanak urged this rich landlord to open free kitchens for all his labourers and the destitute. He is believed to have started 360 free kitchens. The Raja and many others gave up idolatory and people here still do not worship any gods or goddesses.⁴

Guru Nanak in Mysore and Maharashtra

What we now call Mysore and Maharashtra was at the time of Guru Nanak partly Vijayanagar Kingdom, but was mainly divided into Bidar, Baijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Berar Sultanates ruled by Shiah rulers. Guru Nanak went straight to Udipi and Sringeri, the great Vedantic centres founded by Madhva and Shankara, the two great intellectual and spiritual giants of the South who were profoundly original and powerful. As usual Guru Nanak lighted his lamp quite apart and yet it was close to these places. A research work into the contemporary records of these Mutts, or the history of these religious

centres is likely to reveal exactly when Guru Nanak came there and what was the impact of his visit. At Sringeri there was Guru Nanak's shrine maintained by the *Udasi* priests when Akali Kaur Singh and Gyani Gyan Singh visited it.⁵

Guru Nanak then visited Nanded where Guru Gobind Singh later built the fourth and last *Takhat* of the Sikhs, and ended his glorious career by handing over the spiritual and political leadership of the Sikh people to the Panth (Universal Community). The Word of God, democratically elected Enlightened Five, and the *Sangat* (congregation) were to be the everlasting Triumvirate to sustain, guide, and lead the Sikh people in their future history and destiny. On the proper working of this Triumvirate depended the progress of the Sikh people. Whenever the balance in this Triumvirate is lost, the Sikh community is lost in the wilderness, and becomes a victim of decadent leadership of the type the Sikh Gurus condemned as dangerous during their own time. The place where Guru Nanak stayed at Nanded is called *Gurdwara Mal Takdi*. When Guru Gobind Singh got this place dug for camping, some buried treasure was found which was used for building a shrine. Here Guru Nanak had met an eminent Sufi saint named Lakhad Shah.

Guru Nanak then visited Golconda and Bidar which were capitals of small Sultanates. Here he met Kanpatta Yogis with whom he had a lengthy discussion. Yoga to them was the only system of meditation. But when Guru Nanak described to them better, more enlightened, and more illuminating system of meditations of the divine Word they were profoundly impressed. About a mile from the

city was the *khanqah* of Pir Yakub Ali and Pir Jalal-ud-din who were respected by the local people and the Sultans. They accepted Guru Nanak as an apostle of Truth and entertained him for some weeks.⁶

There was an acute shortage of water in this area which seriously affected the life and economic condition of the people. The wells that were dug up either yielded saltish water or dried up soon. Guru Nanak asked them to dig up a spot out of which water came out as from a permanent spring. The water was sweet and clear and it provided sufficient water for the complete needs of the surrounding area for centuries to follow. The place is still called Nanak Jheera. The people of the surrounding area visit and pay homage to this spring of water which still slakes the thirst of the wayfarer and gives a healing touch to the faithful, as in the water they feel the touch of the Master. Close to this place came a woman missionary of Guru Gobind Singh, Mai Bhago, after the death of Guru Gobind Singh and kept the torch of Sikh faith burning for many years. Mai Bhago had fought in the battle of Muktsar in which she was the only survivor. She had accompanied Guru Gobind Singh to Nanded, and after the Master passed away she conducted active missionary work in this area.⁷

In Maharashtra Guru Nanak stopped at Kolhapur on his way to Pandharpur. Kolhapur is the abode of goddess Mahalakshmi. It is also known as *Dakshini Kashi* or Kashi of the South. This is one of the most outstanding shrine of Shakti cult in the South. Guru Nanak was highly critical of the Shakti cult, and we do not have the historical details of his encounters with the scholars of this Kashi of the

South. From here he went to Pandharpur, the haven of Maharashtrian saints and the seat of Vithal deity which is a typical symbol of Marathi religious life. When Gyani Gyan Singh and Akali Kaur Singh visited it there was Guru Nanak's shrine there, looked after by the *Udasis*. The Chief entrance into the Vithal temple is known as Namadev gate, after the famous saint. "The gate is reached by a flight of twelve steps. The entire first or the lowest step and the front face of the step above it are plated with brass and on brass plated face of the second step are carved fourteen small standing figures supposedly members of Namadev's family. The first figure is that of Namadev, holding a tambourine in his hand and performing *kirtan*. Close to the steps is placed a brass bust of Namadev. The step on which this mask is placed is called the Namadev step and no one touches it with his feet. It is to be crossed without touching it. The spot is worshipped as the *samadhi* of Namadev."⁸ It is here most probably that Guru Nanak met some of the immediate successors of Namadev and collected from them forty of the oldest *abhangas* of the saint which are now included in Granth. It is here in this itinerary that Guru Nanak collected the hymns of Bhakta Trilochan, a companion of Namadev, and of Pipa and barbar saint Sena of Bedar. No subsequent Guru came to this region and no disciple could have done this work of searching rare manuscripts. These *abhangas* of Namadev and Trilochan are of great historical values as most of them are autobiographical.

From Pandharpur Guru Nanak wended his way to Ahmednagar and from there he went to Nasik and the historical religious centre at Tryambak. This place is the source of the Godavari river and Hindu

mythology has spun highly imaginative stories about the place. This region of Tryambakeshwar, Godavari, Nasik, Panchvati are well known in ancient Indian history. Here the great Yogi Gorakh Nath is said to have performed penance. "Today a small crevice is pointed out as Gorakh Nath gumptha." This cave is associated with two more eminent saints. When Gorakh Nath's disciple Gahin Nath was living here in prayer and meditation, a small boy, who was frightened away, while going around with his father, by a tiger came to this cave for refuge. He met the great Yogi and became his disciple. This boy was no other than the great yogi mystic Nivirttinath. His younger brother Gyandeva, a rare genius in Indian history and a companion and teacher of Namadev, became his disciple and has left a good account of his Master and brother. Namadev also came to this place and has mentioned it in his lyrics, *Tirathavali*. There still is a Sikh shrine here commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak, and is managed by *Udasis*.⁹

Nanak in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan

From Nasik Guru Nanak went to visit the holy places in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Passing through Burhanpur he reached Sevani close to which is Ramteka said to be one of the capital cities of Raja Ambarisha. One can still see forts, ponds and old gardens. Gyani Gyan Singh who visited this place in 1869 A.D. reports that Guru Nanak stayed here for four months. He asked the local devotees to give up idolatory. People here carried the stone images of their deity constantly around their necks.¹⁰ From here he went to Khandwa to visit the famous Omkareshwar temple.

Om̐kar the Temple and Om̐kār the Song

About 53 kilometres from Khandwa is a small township called Mandhata on the Narmada river, which is considered sacred because it is believed to have sprung from the body of Shiva. A small streamlet named Kaveri forms a loop and encircling around merges back into Narmada forming a small island. This island resembles the mystic word *Om*. The place is known as Omkareshwar and the main temple in it is known as Om̐kar. The island is also known as Shivapuri while the section on southern bank is divided into Brahmapuri and Vishnupuri, bringing the whole Hindu trinity there, but identifying Shiva with the Supreme Being." "The principal temple at Mandhata is situated partly on the bank of Narmada and partly on Shivapuri island, which is very rich in natural beauty. The charm of the landscape lies in the picturesque gorge cut into the horse-shoe slate rocks of greenish hue belonging to the earliest rock systems. According to tradition, the *linga* representing Shiva was installed here by King Mandhata Chakravarti who gave his name to the town.¹¹ This *linga* is called Parameshvara (the Supreme Being) and is considered to be one of the most sacred of the twelve *lingas*. Guru Nanak was surprised to note that profound metaphysical reflections had been reduced to a strange polytheistic worship of the Hindu trinity. He composed here his famous composition *Om̐kār* in the *Rāga Rāmkalī Dakhanī*, in which he gave his own interpretation of *Om̐kāra* and its relation to the Absolute. The opening verse of this composition gives the Guru's views on *Om̐kāra*.

*From Om̐kār Brahma was created,
From Om̐kār was created mind and spirit;*

*From Omkār, Time and space were created.
From Omkār, Books of Wisdom were created
Omkār is the Word of liberation.
Reflect seriously on the Word Om̐,
The Word Om̐ is the essence of three world.*

Guru Nanak : Omkār, Ramkalī Dakhānī 1

It appears that some learned Pundits opened a debate on the subject and most of the comments of Guru Nanak are recorded in the form of an Acrostic. They are thus addressed to some scholars: "Listen, O Pundit!" The Guru pointed out that out of the Hindu trinity, even Brahma was not the creator. He was a created being, an instrument of God's creation. He was created from one creative Light, *Omkār*, the immanent spirit of God, "In the three world one Light of God pervades." (*tīn bhavan iko jyotī*, 2) Glorious is the sustainer who is Unborn, Perfect, Truthful" (*dhan dharnī dharāp ajonī tol bol sac pūrā* 3) You also say God is one and call it Shiva. Not so. Shiva like Brahma is a creation of God. Mere intellectual belief in the One God will not reveal Him. He who discards pride and egoism, and sees the One God within and without, alone can know and visualise the One God. He alone has the right to say God is one. (*eko ek kahai sabh koī haumai garbh vyāpē, āntar bāhar ek pachāne ion̐ ghar mehal saṇyape.*) Deem not God to be far away in heaven. The One Absolute God: *Ekam-kār* pervades all. There is none other. The One pervades all." (5) Let not your mind and faith be divided by false conception and false deifications of gods. Do not be deluded by the belief that Brahma and Shiva who have been created by God are in any way supreme. Do not be misled by false prophets either. (*kete gur cele phun hūī, kāce gur te mukti na hūa*).

Guru Nanak added, "The pre-requisite of every spiritual discipline is that the mind should be controlled. Fight in the battle within your self and control the mind. (*ran mai lūjhai manūā mār*) and control your lust and lower passions :

*Lust and wrath waste the body,
As borax melts the gold.
But the gold that can stand the test of fire,
Is valued highly by the goldsmith;
So it is with souls.
Man is an animal,
And egoism is the butcher.
In the hands of the Creator
Is the saving grace.*

Om̄kār Rāmkalī p 931

In this long and interesting composition *Om̄kar*, based on his sermons to the Pundits of Omkareswar, Guru Nanak comments on *maya*, *karma*, *sin* (*pāp*), education, love that is true and love that is based on distrust. A love based on distrust is like a broken arm that can never be the same again. (28)

Mardana Out of Wilderness : Dark Night of the Soul and Illumination

From here Guru Nanak went to a region where there was scarcity of water and food. Mardana the companion of Guru Nanak could stand anything except hunger and thirst. He had faced many hardships, many difficulties which he felt acutely, but his faith in the Guru, and the Guru's trust in him, impelled him to follow the Master to the end of the world. But Mardana was human all too human. Feeling tired and exhausted he almost fainted. He

compared his own miserable plight with that of the Master, and revolted against the unbearable situation. "Master", said Mardana, I will not go a step further with you. Direct me to the road that leads to our little village in the Punjab,". "Be brave, my dear Mardana," said Guru Nanak, I will not let you die for want of food and water. Let us go a little further."¹² "I have suffered much for you Master, and now when I am dying you ask me to be brave." said Mardana pathetically.¹³ "You know Mardana", said Guru Nanak, "I have a deep affection for you. You have been my most devoted companion. All my blessings are with you." "God bless you for showing so much brotherly affection even for downtrodden and poor minstrel like me, but your blessings have not helped me in any way. You take me through God forsaken places, and keep away from palaces, and rich dwellings. You go without food and even without water for long, but I need three square meals a day. You forget yourself in your songs, while I play the rebeck with my thoughts fixed on the next meals."¹⁴ Happy was I at my village when by playing the rebeck I could at least beg my food. You are so different my Master, so full of wisdom, so full of sweetness, and so full of life and light. I am just flesh and bone, hunger and thirst, unable to understand why I have followed you and cannot get away from you. Now I feel I must make an effort to get away from you Master. Pity me, and let me go home. You can go on changing the world but let me spend my last days in peace said Mardana with a heavy heart."

Guru Nanak was deeply moved. His dearest disciple was searching for the meaning of life, hunger and death. He was questioning him, the Master, who

had transfigured and given a new life and new birth to many souls. Mardana was questioning his own existence, his own past and present. Tenderly and compassionately Guru Nanak asked, "Is there any condition, my dear Mardana, on which you will continue to travel with me. Tell me frankly and I will fulfil that condition. I will do anything for you my brave Mardana. To me you are music of heaven and what would be my songs without your music."¹⁵

"If you really want me to accompany you my noble Master, it will be only on one condition: Just as you do not feel hungry and feel contented with your spiritual sustenance, destroy my physical hungers and make me like yourself. While you remain undisturbed by hunger and fatigue, why should I groan under its burden like an animal? While you do not feel pain or suffering, mental agony or cravings why should I be crushed under their weight. Make me mentally, spiritually and physically as exalted and divine as you are." The dark Night of the soul in Mardana's agonising and tortured inner being was now searching for intense Light, the light which could illuminate his whole inner being. Guru Nanak was very happy that his devoted disciple had at last asked for the gift which he had always wished he should ask. He had asked for keys to inner treasures, and he readily flung the door of his inner portals open. He blessed him with Light. He blessed him with the vision of the Divine within. He blessed him with all the spiritual powers such a devoted disciple deserved. With a remarkable single minded devotion Mardana at last sought the knowledge of Life and Light within him." Mardana touched the feet of the Master and the Master's

touch blazed within him an inner illumination.¹⁶ The lowliest of the low, Mardana, a begging bard of a village became the godliest among the godly." This is how Mardana became the Enlightened One : a *Gurmukh*, the God-illuminated.

In Ujjain and Ajmer

According to *Janam Sākhī Meharban* Guru Nanak stopped at Ujjain. Here he met *Vairagis* of the Bharatarihari school of Yogi, and some Vaishnavas. He is said to have reached there on his birthday the full moon of *Kartika* which according to this holy place was considered auspicious and a large gathering of pilgrims came to acquire the merit of performing the pilgrimage of *avantika*. They were lighting little lamps and floating them on the river in the hope of lighting the path of their dear ones who had departed. Guru Nanak asked them to light the lamp of devotion within their body, keep it burning with divine consciousness and float it on the stream of life."¹⁷ Ujjain was once the Capital of King Vikramaditya, and there is a Mahakalika temple having Shiva's *linga* which Altamash carried to Delhi in 1231 A.D. To the *Vairagis* he said : "He is a *Vairagi* (recluse) who turns his mind to God. Concentrating his mind within, he, day and night contemplates the firmament in the soul. Such a *Vairagi* is a true saint."¹⁸

From here Guru Nanak proceeded to Ajmer. On the outskirt was the Pushkar lake. People came there to get rid of their sins by bathing. This celebrated tank is about five miles outside the city and considered to be one of the seven *dvipas*. Guru Nanak said to the pilgrims that they would not be

able to get rid of their sins by merely bathing in the holy tank. They must also bathe their mind in the Word of God. Unless their mind is cleaned bathing alone will not wash away sins. At the festival of Pushkar lake Guru Nanak became so prominent that the Sufi Saints who were the *sajjadanashin* of the well known shrine of Hazrat Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti felt that this man had come not only to ween away Hindus from Hinduism but also Muslims from Islam. Little did they know that Nanak had developed the profoundest and most intimate spiritual ties with Chisti saints of Pakpattan and Delhi.¹⁹ Proudly and angrily they challenged Guru Nanak and rather threateningly asked him to leave the place atonce. Said Guru Nanak promptly but calmly :

*nafs saitān, gusā harām,
kac dunyā, sac darvēs,
adal bādsahān, fazal faqirān
manzil musāfirān, gazal kōfirān
mehar pīrān, šehar kirān
faqirī sabūrī, nā saburi tān makr*

*Lust is satan,
Anger is base-born,
False is the world,
True is divine life,
For kings justice,
For dervish virtues,
For travellers the goal,
For heretics sensuousness.
For pirs compassion,
For charlatans magic
For a saint patience,
If he has no patience
He is a hypocrite.*

The pirs of *durgah* at Ajmer were taken aback by electrifying boldness, the incisive reply, a magnificently simple sermon of about 25 words speaking volumes in their soft phrasology and giving a weirdly beautiful approach to life. It was knife-edged attack on their anger and their pride, teaching them in the same breath compassion, understanding, brotherhood, charity, the true vocation of their calling as Sufi *fakirs* and *dervishes*. They stood face to face with a philosopher, an artist and a unique apostle of God.

From here Guru Nanak went to Bikaner, the stronghold of the Jains. The local Chief was their disciple and was proud of calling himself an atheist. The Jain monks boasted of their piety and purity and their cult of non-violence which they carried to the extreme. Commenting on these practices Guru Nanak said.

*Fate has misguided these Jains,
They are lost in wilderness.
They utter not the Name of God,
Living in places of pilgrimages, they bathe not;
They shave not but pluck their hair;
Day and night they remain dirty,
They like not the Word of God.
Without position, honour and good actions
They waste their life.
Polluted are they, and polluted is their food;
Without any prestige and position are they.
Without the ethics of the Word,
No one can attain Him.*

Guru Nanak, *Vār Malār* 16. p 1285

Yet these Jains boasted of their great renunciation, of their learning and knowledge, of their vows

of *ahimsa* non-killing, and of their virtues to which Guru Nanak attached little importance. With a moving intensity the Guru said "What a shameful life are you all leading? You are afraid to use water, you remain unclean, eat polluted food, and put dust on your head like a sheep. Do you call this purity and piety? You leave your homes, while your wives and children weep and wail and curse you for neglecting them. Do you call it renunciation? Look at the sky, the rains fall, the whole nature is bathed and feels afresh. The flowers, the grass, the animals, the trees are all happy and cheerful, but you crouch into your holes and sit like mourners around a dead body? Do you call it religion?"

Never was Guru Nanak so bitter about the social practices of any faith or creed as he was with that of the Jains. Their atheism, their dirty practices, their unclean living, their pessimism, all appeared to him serious dangers to Indians society. The Jain monks ran away from there. Only one of them stayed on. He fell at the feet of the Guru and promised that he would give up the dirty habits, he would give up idolatory, he would give up atheism, but he begged the Guru's permission to live with the outward robes of Jain monks. Guru Nanak did not mind what robes he wore. He was accepted as a disciple and placed incharge of the shrine which the people built to commemorate the memory of the Guru's visit.

At Hissar, Sirsa and Sangrur

On the way back to Punjab Guru Nanak stopped at Rohtak, Hissar Sirsa, Sangrur and Sunam. Some

of these places were the stronghold of Sufis of the Chisti Order. Sheikh Farid had preached his message for many years in this region. At Rohtak the Guru's shrine is near the canal and was managed by the *Udasis* uptil recently. At Sarsa Guru Nanak met five eminent pirs who spent their days in meditations in five different cells. They offered one cell to Guru Nanak for his stay and meditations. According to the *Bhatta Vahis* Guru Nanak stayed here for four months and eleven days. The Sufi saints Abdul Shakur entertained him with great devotion. This Sufi was gifted with some spiritual powers. Guru Nanak asked him not to misuse them. He stopped at Sarsa where there is Guru Nanak's shrine commemorating his visit. He was now back in his homeland, the Punjab.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Othoñ Gurujī Trichnopoly, Nagapatam, Kumbhokone de mele par jā pahuñce. Babe dī sakti nāl sabhnā de man phir gae, carnī āe lage.

T.G.K. 102

2. *Haqīqat Rah Mukam*: says: tahān te jahāj caḍtā hai, tīn dīn tīn rāt vic Japāpatan pār kī bandar hai, tahān jāc utarte hai so Singhaladip hai.

3. Bikāhī nadi sāi pār ho Palyamkota vic pahuñc ke bahut logān nū parmeswar dī bhagti vic joḍte bahe, eithe bhī dhārmsāla Bābe dī hai.

T.G.K. p 102

4. Mālābar des de rājā Ram nāmī ghumār jāti de rāje nū prītma puja toñ hatā ke prabhu bhakti vic lāyā, hun bhī usdī santān pratimā nāhi pūjdi. Os Ram raje de pās deaulat bahut sī, Babe ne uste 360 sadāvart lagvā dite. Sadāvart hun tak jāri han. Usde mulk vic canāñ de jāñgal bahut han.

ibid p 103

5. *ibid* page 103
6. Akali Kaur Singh: *Hazurī sathī*; Gyan Singh: *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa* and *Tirath Sangreh*. A small pamphlet giving the background of the historical shrine has been published by the local committee also.
7. When 40 Sikhs of Majha had deserted Guru Gobind Singh during Anandpur siege, Mai Bhago, wife of one of them put them to shame and brought them back. They faced an overwhelming army which was about to attack Guru Gobind Singh near Mukatsar. All the forty died. Badly wounded, Mai Bhago alone survived. She accompanied Guru Gobind Singh to Nanded, and after his death set up a missionary centre at Bidar. Bidar being capital of a flourishing State this missionary centre was also very active.
8. Dr M.S. Mate: *Temple and Legends of Maharashtra* p 201.
R.D. Ranade: *Mysticism in Maharashtra*: p 187
9. Dr M.S. Mate: *Temples and Legends of Maharashtra* p 159
10. T.G.K. p 99
11. *Bhavan's Journal*: Feb 9, 1969; *Omkareshwar Mandhatta* by Amār Nath Khanna p 25
12. Tān Bībe ākhyā, hauñ tainū binā āi te maran nahī dendā.
tān Bābe ākhyā taun bājhon bāni rās nahī auñdī
P.J. (MSS II) f 77
13. hauñ kioñ kar husiār hovān, hauñ mardāñ hāñ jivne kī gal nahī, jī mainū dukh nā de.
ibid f 77
14. suhān terī bhagat nu te terī kamaī nū, asīn dūm mang pin khada loḍ hāñ, tūñ attit mahāpurkh khāh pīvaiñ kich nahī, ate vasdī vaden nahī, hauñ kioñ kar tudh nāl rahāñ.
ibid f 79
15. merī bahut khusī hai tud upar, tūñ kioñ vidā māngdā hai, tāñ Mardāne ākhyā, suhān terī khusī nū par mainū vidā kar, hauñ apne ghar jāvan. māñg pin khānhge
ibid. f 79.

16. Babe ākhyā: jā ve Mardānyā, tūn din dunī nihāl hoyā, tab Mardānā ubhar pairīn payā, gurū Babe itnī vastu dityān, mathai upar hath rakhdyān agam nigam dī sojhī hoe āi, tān Mardana Babe nāl lagā phirantab Udāsī karke ghar āe, barīn varīn

ibid f

The above statement of this *Janam Sakhi* says that Guru Nanak came back home from his Eastern and Southern *Udasi* after twelve years.

17. *Guru Nanak* by Sir Jogendar Singh and Raja Daljit Singh 129
18. so bairagī je ulte brahm,
gagan mañdal mai rope tham
ahnas añtar rahe dhyān,
te bairagī sat saman.

Guru Nanak *Var Rāmkalī* Sl p 953

19. Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chisti and Bakhtyar Kaki were 'both preceptors of Sheikh Farid. See an excellent monograph on "*The Life and Times of Sheikh Farid*" by Khaliq Ahmad Nizami. On the life of Muin-ud-din Chisati see the biography of the Saint by Mirza Wahiddudin Beg.
20. This sermon was recorded by Guru Nanak in his famous hymns beginning with: *sir khohae, pīe malvānī, jūṭhā mañg mañg khāhi: Adī Granth, Var Majh p 149*
21. hor srevḍe uth gaī, ik srevḍa carnā te dig pāyā, ar kehyā ji mai isnan bhī karañ ga, te ishwar nū bhai manān gā, ar sikhān dī tehal bhī karān gā par bāhar bhekh unañ dā de rakhān gā. carnā da dhyān kareñ gā tañ tera bhī udhār hove gā.

J.M.S. (MSS) f

CHAPTER 16

SECOND PUNJAB TOUR

❖❖❖❖❖ MANY YEARS had passed since Guru Nanak left for his missionary tours.¹ His noblest admirer Rai Bular, his father Mehta Kalu, his mother Tripta, his wife Sulakhani talked now and then of unforgettable Nanak. He was so far away and yet so close to their hearts. He was wandering in far off countries and yet he was living and whispering his musical songs in their souls. Travellers from the East and South, mostly pilgrims, *yogis* and *sannyasis* brought now and then a tale of their great son's encounters with the religious heads of various centres of pilgrimage, and his moral and spiritual victory over them. These unbelievable feats of Guru Nanak gladdened their hearts, but saddened them too. Was Nanak, their only son lost to them? Had he completely renounced his little home, his wife and children who had now grown up? Possibly not, because Nanak always preached against such renunciation. It was over six years now, he had not come. Have his views changed, and has he completely given up his home and family. Everyone suspected this, but Nanaki, his sister, who knew him and understood him as much as Nanak knew himself, was sure that he would come back. For her, Nanak was not a mere man of flesh, blood and bones. He was more than that. He was a pillar of fire, a wandering cloud of divine wisdom and it was his mission to go and illumine every dark corner, where in the name of religion, hypocrisy, ignorance, immorality, hatred, and corruption prevailed.

Suddenly one day Mardana entered Talwandi all alone. The whole township was astir. "Mardana, the shadow of Guru Nanak, the most devoted companion of our beloved Baba Nanak has come back all alone. What has happened to Nanak and Bala? Why has he come alone? Where is Nanak? Everyone who met Mardana asked him this and only this question. He was silent. Guru Nanak had asked him to remain silent on that question. He wanted to tell everybody where Guru Nanak was, but he could not disobey his Master Nanak. He had never disobeyed him.

Mardana's difficulties arose when he went to Guru Nanak's house to pay his respect to Mata Tripta and Mata Sulakhani. He was deeply moved by their tears and when they made anxious enquiries about Nanak he was on the point of telling where Guru Nanak was. But he could not disobey his Master. Whenever he had disobeyed him he had courted trouble. "Do not worry holy Mother about Baba Nanak. I have no words to describe to you the great things he has done. It took me years to know him, to understand him. He is as mysterious as God Himself. To know him and understand him I had to follow him and still I had to wait. You have waited for him. He will surely come to you." said Mardana.

"But surely you know where he is. Have we not waited long enough? Can I not see my dear son, my only son, even after so many years? Tell me Mardana, where is my son, my Nanak?" asked Tripta impatiently. Deeply moved Mardana said, "Holy Mother, at Lahore we were together but then we parted. I wish I could

tell you where he is.” After waiting for about an hour, he sought Mata Tripta’s permission to go again, saying “I must find out the Master”. As he left the house Mata Tripta said to her daughter-in-law, “Listen Sulakhani, Guru Nanak cannot be far away from here, that is why Mardana has left so suddenly. Get some sugar cakes and some dry-fruit. I must follow him and where he meets Nanak, there I will meet my son.” Along with Sulakhani, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand and many other women and children she followed Mardana. On the outskirts of the village she saw Nanak sitting and talking to the peasants who had seen him and recognized him. Guru Nanak stood up when she saw his mother. He moved forward and bowed low to touch her feet. “She embraced him and kissed him. Tears flowed down her eyes as she embraced and blessed her son. With a voice choking with joyous emotions she said, “I am a sacrifice unto thee, my son, I am a sacrifice unto thy great name, my son; I am a sacrifice to thy divine presence here and wherever you have been. Blessed is the land where you have been, blessed are the people whom you have exalted; blessed am I to whom you have at last come.” There were tears in Nanak’s eyes and a smile on his face. Sulakhani, his wife devoutly touched his feet. He embraced his sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand. His father Kalu and Rai Bular came on horseback to receive him. They brought a horse for Nanak but he preferred to walk home.

For Nanak the world was dwindling into a small space for his mighty spirit which had broken all barriers of race, culture, language and geography. His fame had already spread far and wide. It was not

possible for him to remain confined to the little township, Talwandi. We do not have accurate details of his second tour of Punjab. The few anecdotes that are preserved in the *Janam Sakhis* indicate that he first went to Lahore and Sultanpur and then to a number of places in West Punjab.

Lahore : Duni Chand

A millionaire of Lahore named Duni Chand was giving a great feast to Brahmins and holy men, when Guru Nanak arrived in the city. The moral degradation of the city depressed him. Duni Chand came to the Guru to invite him. The Guru politely refused saying that his place was with the lowliest of the low. He also did not believe that by feeding the greedy Brahmins Duni Chand was in any way helping the departed soul of his father in the other world." But Master," said Duni Chand, "Can I do anything for you ?" "Yes, " said Guru Nanak, "Since you have so much money, power and you can do almost everything, do one thing for me. Take this needle and keep it in your house. When you die, and go to the other world where your father is, carry this needle with you; I will collect it from you there". Puzzled and confused he carried the needle home and gave it to his wife saying, "Keep this needle as the Guru's relic and when I die remind me that I am to carry it to the other world, where, Guru Nanak says, he will collect it from me."

His far-sighted wife told him that the Guru had either put his wisdom and common sense to test or he had posed serious riddle for him. When people die they leave the world with empty hands. How could he carry the needle, or even anything smaller

than that. He came back to the Guru saying. "Master it would not be possible for me to carry the needle to the other world." If you cannot carry even a needle," said Guru Nanak, "how will your millions of silver and gold coins help you there. If they are of no help to you in life beyond death, why are you hoarding money, and depriving the poor of their needs, and wasting on feeding the gluttonous Brahmins to ease your conscience. This wealth has been hoarded by you by depriving the poor labourers of their legitimate wages or by extracting undue profits from your merchandise. If you fear God, if you love charity and humanity, distribute all your surplus wealth. Keep what is absolutely necessary for your needs, and lead an enlightened life of love of God and service of the poor and suffering."

Duni Chand and his wife now saw life differently. They realized that in their zeal to collect material wealth that had missed the most precious things of life. They distributed their wealth for building charitable institutions. Duni Chand even changed his house into the temple of God, where he kept the light of Guru Nanak's faith burning as long as he lived."

He visited Chahal, the birth place of his mother and his sister Nanaki. It is near Burki. He stopped at Alpa and Manga where still are shrines commemorating his visits. At Jhaman not far from Burki there is a pond built by a saint devotee of Guru Nanak named Surya Baba. Some Jains are said to have accepted Sikhism under the influence of the Guru. Not far from here at Ghavandi a purse proud man learnt humility and thought of the sufferings of others only when he lost his only son. At Kanganpur in the Lahore district he was shocked at the

misbehaviour and characterlessness of the villagers who made fun of holy men, and even insulted them. There was not a single virtuous man in the village. Guru Nanak spent the night under a tree, which is still called Mal Sahib and prayed that the people of that village may remain confined to the village.

At Sultanpur

After all these years Guru Nanak was once more at Sultanpur. He had come to meet his dear sister Nanaki, Both Nanaki and her husband, Jai Ram were extremely happy to meet him again. Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi came to pay homage to the Master whose spiritual influence and glory had been accepted by princes and priests, the divine and the *pirs* of so many religious centres in India. The Guru blessed Daulat Khan and his sons, and asked them to devote their life to justice and service of the people. As Bhai Gurdas confirms, Daulat Khan always treated Nanak as his *pir*, spiritual preceptor, his Master. Both Daulat Khan Lodhi and Jai Ram wanted Nanak to stay at Sultanpur longer, but the Master had still a greater part of his mission to be fulfilled.

In a Pathan Township

From Sultanpur Guru Nanak went to Vairo-wal; from here to Jallalabad, and from there to an exclusively Pathan township called Kidyan Pathana. The Pathans felt so greatly inspired by the Guru that they began to sing of Nanak Shah, the great apostle of God, the bestower of love and peace. Some of the popular folksongs which have been preserved are still sung by Suthra

fakirs. Some poems have been written by Poet Nazir.⁹
Here Nanak composed the following hymn :

*He alone is said to love Him,
Whose heart has truly united with Him
No one can attain Him by mere talk,
However hard one may try.*

*There is a garden in the house,
But the ass knows not its value,
He who has aesthetic sense of fragrance
Knows the flowers by their smell.*

Guru Nanak, *Tilang* p. 724

From here he went to another city. The sun was about to set. He knocked at the door of a poor carpenter's hut and asked him if he and his companions could rest there for the night.¹⁰

The Carpenter's Cottage Destroyed

The poor carpenter was surprised at Guru Nanak's request and he did his utmost to serve his strange guests within his means. There was a dilapidated cot, which was offered to the Guru. A simple food, which a poor carpenter like him could afford was prepared for all. He was extremely delighted to see that a great man had honoured him, for reasons best known to him. When Guru Nanak woke up next morning, he asked the carpenter if he would obey him and fulfil one of his wishes. "Most certainly said the carpenter." "Then, said the Guru, "get out of this hut. I am going to destroy it," He broke his cot. He broke his earthen vessels. He set fire to his cottage. "Follow

me," he said. Mardana and Bala were stunned. "Is this what the poor carpenter got for extending hospitality to us," said Bala softly. "Strange are the ways of my Baba," said Mardana. The frightened Carpenter asked, "Master, have I offended thee? I seek your forgiveness Master if I have." "No my man, it is not you who have offended me but your strange fate, and the society which has reduced a hard working, truthful, charitable and noble carpenter like you to such a hopeless condition. You, my man, have the heart of a king. Why should you live in such a miserable dwelling? You have within you the royal blood of lovers of Truth, why should you sleep on such cots? You are so hardworking, why should you be so poor? I cannot tolerate this. I cannot change the whole society but I can certainly change your lot."

When Guru Nanak went to the heart of the city, people recognised him. Some of them knew him as the great Nanak Shah who had won the hearts of Hindus and Muslims all over India. They brought rich offerings, clothes and gifts of money and precious things. Guru Nanak offered all of them to the carpenter, and asked him to start life afresh and spend all his precious income for the uplift of the downtrodden. The cottage of this labourer changed into a mansion. He lived according to the noble expectations of his Master.¹¹

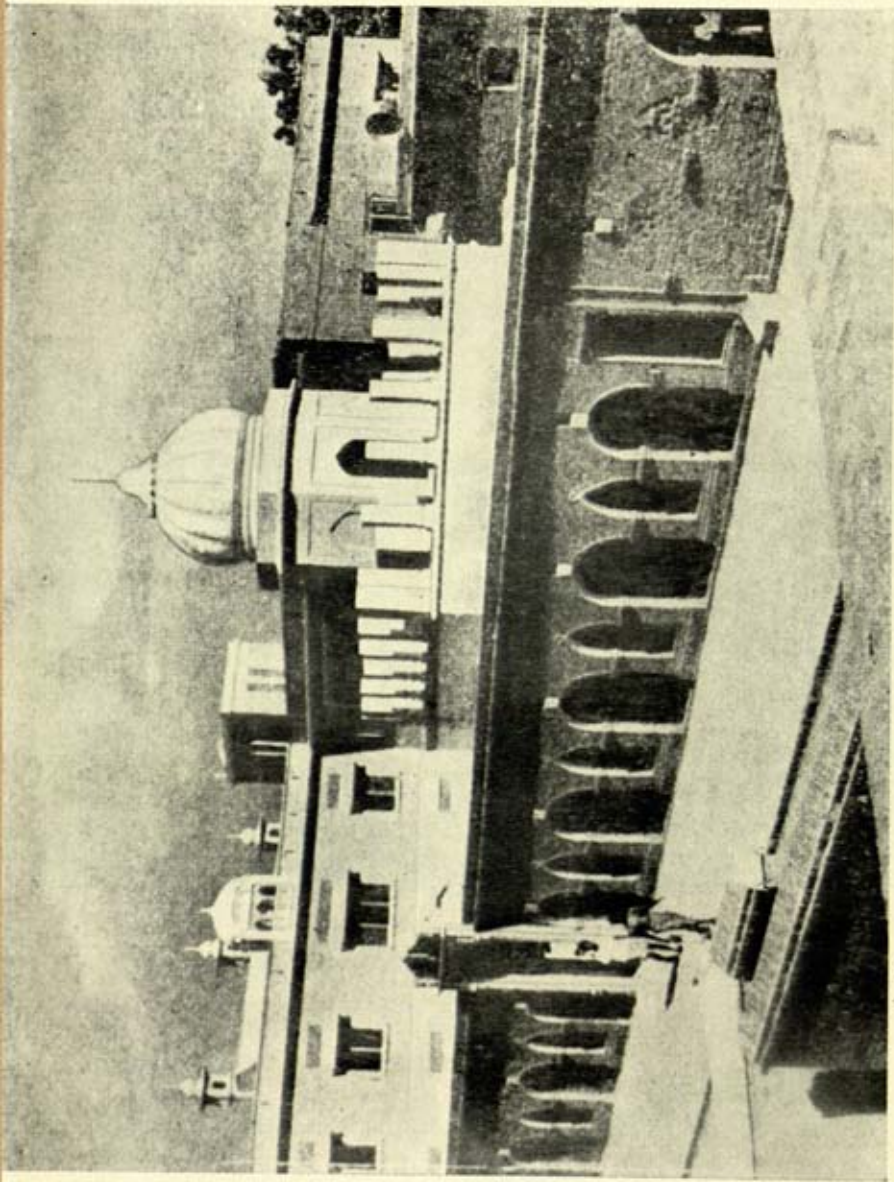
Sailkote: Mulla, the Shopkeeper

Guru Nanak reached Sialkote, the city of saints and sinners. There were a number of sufis here, proud of their piety, and powers to work miracles and looked down upon all city dwellers as sinners. Guru



Guru Nanak's Shrine at Sialkote

facing p. 312



Guru Nanak's Shrine at Harappa

SECOND PUNJAB TOUR

Nanak camped under a tree outside the city. He gave four *paisa* to Mardana and said, go into the city and ask for two *paisa* worth of truth, and two *paisa* worth of untruth. Mardana went from shop to shop. Some laughed at his requirement, some wondered in amazement. No shopkeeper would give him either truth or untruth. He came to the shop of a young and flourishing shopkeeper named Mulla and asked him for two *paisa* worth of truth and two *paisa* worth of untruth.

Mardana heaved a sigh of relief when Mulla offered to give it. He took a piece of paper and wrote on it: "Dying is truth, living is falsehood." (*marnā sac te jiunā jhūth*). He gave it to Mardana for four *paisa*. Guru Nanak was delighted to know that in the city was a young man who understood the meaning of life and death, and realized that life was vanity, and understanding death was truth. He met him and asked him to accompany him. Mulla is said to have accompanied him on this Punjab tour.

Hamza Gaus, the Pir of Sialkot

A few days before Guru Nanak arrived at Sialkote, the city was in the grip of a serious situation. A Sufi named Hamza Gaus exercised great influence on the people. A local Hindu had sought the blessings of the *pir* for sons, promising that if he had more than one son he would offer the first son to the *pir*, to be made his disciple for life. When this Hindu had three sons he offered ransom money for the eldest son, but refused to give his son to the *pir* as he had promised. The *pir* would have nothing but the son.

The *pir* cursed the city. He considered the whole city to be full of sinners and liars who never kept their promise. He locked himself in a room, saying that he would perform penance for forty days and with his prayers and meditations invoke the wrath of God to blow up the city to pieces. The people feared that something was bound to happen. All efforts to persuade the *Pir* to give up his disastrous resolve failed. Guru Nanak was camping under a plum tree, called *Babe kī Ber*, where the historical shrine still exists.¹⁴

Guru Nanak asked the people not to worry about the threat of the *pir*. He knocked at the door of the *pir's* room but the *pir* refused to come out. He was determined to carry out the curses.

A fortnight passed. Every day Guru Nanak asked people to have faith in the saving grace of God. Suddenly one day it rained heavily. The sky thundered and the lightening flashed. People feared the curse of the *pir* was working. The raging storm shook the whole city for two days. On the third day a thunderbolt fell on the dome of the room in which Hamza Gans was meditating and it ripped open from side exposing the *pir* to a terrible situation of being buried alive under a crumbling building. He ran out for his life. The rain stopped. The clouds disappeared and the wrath of the *pir* was humbled. He realised that an apostle more powerful than him and closer to God had come and undone all his power. In utter humility he went to Guru Nanak, and became one of his most devoted admirers. The dome in which he meditated, with the crack caused by Nature is still there.¹⁵ "Do not take the Law of God into your own hands my friend. He

knows when to punish the sinners and when to save them," said Guru Nanak.

Mian Mitha

A few miles from Sialkot there lived another Sufi Saint who on coming to know how Guru Nanak had overpowered the pride and powers of his friend Hamza Gaus, said to the man who brought him the news, "If Guru Nanak comes to me, I will churn him and take the cream out of the milk within him." When Guru Nanak came to know, he retorted, "Tell Mian Mitha, if he comes to show off his powers, I will squeeze all the juice out of him, as one squeezes a lemon." When Guru Nanak was close to the place where he was staying Mian Mitha came to meet him bare foot. When someone asked him why was he going to Nanak against his wishes, he replied; "If I take some cream out of the milk, there will still be some milk left. but if he squeezes me like a lemon, what will be left in me.¹⁸ On second thought I better not take the risk of such a dangerous confrontation. He greeted Nanak respectfully and said :

*First think of Allah,
Second to him is the Prophet;
O Nanak, God will bless in His court,
If you recite the Kalma¹⁹*

Replied Guru Nanak :

*First think of Allah,
The Prophet is His servant,
O Sheikh, control your mind,
You will be blessed in His court.²⁰*

But asked Mian Mitha, "*Without oil the Lamp burns not in the nitch*".

Said Guru Nanak :

*Study the Wisdom of the scriptures,
Make the wick of reverence,
Light it with the understanding of Truth,
Light the Lamp thus;
This lamp will light thy path to God*

Guru Nanak Sri Rag.²¹

"And may I know" said Mian Mitha, "in which scripture do you have faith? What are your daily prayers? What is your profession of faith?". Guru Nanak replied: "The Wisdom of God is my scriptures: His service in utter humility is my prayer; His Word is my article of Faith."²²

Nuri the Leper

From here Guru Nanak moved south-east towards Sindh. On the way he stopped at Dipalpur. He rested under a pipal tree, and asked a villager if there was any *fakir*. (saint) in the village. The man ironically remarked, yonder there lives a *fakir*. It was the hut of a leper. Guru Nanak knocked at the door of the hut, and when the door opened he asked, "Is it the hut of fakir Nuri ?" The man trembled from head to foot and strange emotions changed the colour of his face; "Master," said the leper, "Some one has misguided you. I am no *fakir*, I am no *dervish*, I am a miserable leper, who is hunted, hated, driven away from the streets, slandered, railed at, spat upon, cursed, and thrown out of the society

and the village. I have a feeling that many people believe that they have a right to despise and insult me. For everyone of those people there, I have the face of the damned, a sinner crushed under the burden of his sins. But thank God, Master, I have never hated anyone myself. Here in this cottage I spend my days in the isolation of hatred."²³

"The suffering of your body, dear Nuri," said Guru Nanak, has ennobled your soul. What matters if disease has damaged your body; you have preserved your mind and soul, you have kept your heart spotlessly clean. You hate not those who hate you. You curse not those who rail at you. In the loneliness of your isolation, you keep the flame of God's remembrance burning in your heart. You shall be healed. The grandeur of your soul will shine forth. The suffering of your body will depart." The enchanting words of the Master healed his inner wounds. The inspired hope of the Guru enlivened him. It gave him a new life, a new vision. He was transfigured, physically, mentally and spiritually. He began to be respected as a *dervish*, who kept the Light of the Master burning for long at Dipalpur. The temple which Nuri built still stands. Not far away from the peepal tree and the shrine is the grave of *dervish* Nuri.

Sannyasi's Individualism

In Dipalpur there lived a *sannyasi* who boasted of his powers to bless and curse people. Guru Nanak met him and asked him, what was the purpose of his life as a *sannyasi* (Hindu monk). The *sannyasi* said: "A *sannyasi* should renounce his home and family, renounce all desires and perform pen-

ance.”²⁴ “But,” said Guru Nanak, “as long as you live in the bondage of ambitions and desires of occult powers, you cannot be a true monk. Only when you have controlled all your destructive passions and ambitions, can you become a sannyasin, in the true sense of the word.”²⁵

“But you are also wearing the robes of an *Udasi* (recluse.) May I know what is the creed of an *Udasi* ?” asked the sannyasi. Said Guru Nanak, “An *Udasi* is a missionary who does not renounce the world. He lives in the world and yet remains completely detached from it. He does not consider anything to be his own. Everything he has is the gift of God and he uses it for the creatures of God, without letting his ‘I and mine’ involved in it.”²⁶ He is a seeker of Truth and God, and to that extent he is an individualist. But individualism is not his creed. He lives in society and for the society. As an individual he is a Sikh. He meets other Sikhs for more knowledge and enlightenment and meeting of two Sikhs “communion with holiness” (*Sadh Sangat*) Where there are three, four, or five Sikhs, who are genuine seekers of truth, there is the Spirit of God.²⁷ There is the Light and inspiration of God. A *sannyasi* remains a victim of individualism from first to last, and he remains cut off from society, but an *Udasi* Sikh is an individualist only so far as he makes efforts for self-perfection, but the purpose of his life is to serve God through humanity.” “The individualism of a *sannyasi* is his misfortune. For food he has to run to other people’s homes. For shelter he has to seek refuge in the homes of worldly people.”²⁸ The *sannyasi* fell at the feet of the Guru, repented over his vanity and egoism and became the Guru’s disciple.

Sheikh Ibrahim : Second Meeting

While in this area, Guru Nanak visited three places not far from Dipalpur-Okara, Harrapa and Tibba Baba Nanak Sahib.in Chak I(EB), now in Pakistan.²⁹ Guru Nanak's shrines commemorating his historical visit still exist in these places. He stopped for a few days with his friend and admirer Sheikh Ibrahim at Pakpattan. Unfortunately all the discourses of the two great personalities have not been recorded by history. But the subject must have been the revival of the spirit of the great Sheikh Farid, poet and mystic, whose couplets were on the lips of every Punjabi. Guru Nanak had already collected the Slokas and hymns of Sheikh Farid. They were sung in the Sikh shrines by the devotees, just as they were sung in the Chisti *khanqas*. To identify the best that was in Sikhism with the best that was was in Islam, Guru Arjan included it in the *Adi Granth*.

Guru Nanak in Sindh

The people of Sindh were very religious, as they are even now. Yogis and Sufi *dervishes* excercised a great influence on the people of this place, and they were revered both by the Hindus and Muslims. While a detailed research work into the area might reveal many unknown places which were visited by Guru Nanak, the *Janam Sakhis* mention Shikarpur, Sukhar and Bhukhar. According to *Janam Sakhi Bhai Mani Singh*, the *pirs* of Sukkhar and Bhukkar had set up schools of Sufism as a rival school of the Multan *pirs*. Like them they performed penance and prayed to God for occult powers. Guru Nanak asked them to desist from

this extremely narrow objective of religious life as it was neither the purpose for which Islam was established nor a noble purpose for any higher religion.³⁰

From there Guru Nanak went to Shikarpur and on the outskirts of the city met a shepherd named Nur Nusrat. This pious looking shepherd was impressed by the divine personality of the Guru. He milked some of his nanny-goats and offered the milk to Guru Nanak and Mardana. They drank the milk and Mardana asked him what he could do for him. The shepherd said: "I am a very poor man. I hear that the blessings of saints can even remove poverty.³¹ Pray for me that I may become rich so that I may be able to do something for the poor." Guru Nanak asked Mardana to give spiritual instructions to Nur Nusrat, after the Master had told him that if he loves and worships God sincerely all his wishes would be granted." Mardana instructed him, saying, "If you wish to be a disciple of Baba Nanak you must do three things: (1) Keep hair and beard, (2) Rise up early in the morning and contemplate the Word imparted to you by the True Guru now. (3) Serve the holy, the noble, the virtuous who come to you with reverence and devotion".³²

The next day a weaver named Daud brought a warm carpet which he had weaved with his own hands. Offering it to Baba Nanak, he said, "Honour me Master by sitting on this carpet and always use it for your personal use." Said Guru Nanak, "This fragrant earth, with pleasant grass spread by nature on it is the only carpet I would like to use. I accept your gift, but I would be happy if you use it as I wish. There closeby a bitch and her little ones are dying

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of cold. Spread this carpet on them, and bring them some food and milk. I shall be happy if you can do something to save them from dying of cold and hunger."³² The weaver obeyed and felt blessed.

Here at Shikarpur lived a disciple of *Sakhi Sarwar*, a saint of Lahore of Ghuri period. His disciples are still known in Punjab as Sultani. He was performing *chilha*, continuous penance of forty days—and had acquired considerable popularity. Guru Nanak urged him to desist from the path of performing *yogic* penance for the sake of occult powers and to seriously aspire after the love and grace of God. After completing the tour of Sindh, where the Guru must have visited many places he came back to Talwandi.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Janam Śakhī Bhai Mani Singh*, say Guru Nanak covered and Southern journey in 12 years. Janam Sakhi Meharban suggests it was completed in about five years. Guru Nanak took about six to ten years to cover these two missionary journeys.
2. In *Purātan Janam Sākhī* he says, "Guru Nanak was with him upto Sultanpur, after that he parted." Had he stopped at Sultanpur, Bibi Nanaki would have atonce informed her father and mother.
3. tab Bābā ubhar mātā de pairī payā, tab mātā lagī baiṭag karan; sir cumios; ākhyos: hauṇ vārī betu hauṇ tudh utoṇ vārī; tere nāveṇ vitoṇ vārī; tere darśan vitoṇ vārī; , jithe tūṇ phirdāṇ, saiṇ tis thāveṇ vitoṇ vārī; tud nihāl kītā mainū pāpan nū darśan ditā.

P.J (MSSII) f 81

4. tãn Bãbã Mâtã kã hit dekh kai lagã bairãg karnai.; pher hasyã.

ibid

5. Jab Kãlu ne sudh ioñ pãï,
baisyo vehãr tãt mam ãi;
tat chin zïn turañgan pãvã,
hvai arũdh tũran tab ãvã;
pitã bilõk uñhai dukh kañdan,
pad arbiñd karat bhai bañdan,
badvã te utrioñ tatkãlã
gar sioñ lagãyio prem bisãlã.
jan bahu bhukhe milio ahãra.
marte pyãse pãyio barã,
nĩr bimocat locan dar te,
gad gad bolio jãe na gar te.

N.P. adh 5, 23—25

6. N.P. ut. adhy, J.M.S.
tab Duni Chand sũ trĩmat pãs lai gayã; ãkhyios, eh sũ
rakh, gurũ diti hai, ate ãkhyã haisu, ju age mañg leñhge;
tadoñ trĩmat ãkhyã; eh parmesar ke; eh suĩ tere sãth
calai gĩ agai. tañ Duni Chand ãkhyã, 'kyã kariai?', tãñ
trĩmat ãkhyã, jah de ão.

P.J. p 83

7. tab Duni Chand sũ pher lai ãyã, Babe pãs; ãe ãkhyos, eh
sũ mere pãs age calne kĩ nahĩ, pher lão. tab Guru Bãbe
ãkhyã eh dhajãn pahuncãven gã.

ibid

8. Duni Chand changed his house to Guru's temple. It is
close to Wazir Khan's mosque and not far away from Delhi
gate, in Lahore. During my life time, Bhai Harsa Singh
nephew of Gyani Hazara Singh was the priest incharge of
the temple. (Gyani Hazara Singh was maternal grand-
fater of Bhai Vir Singh)

Bhai Vir Singh G.N.C p 490

9. Sultanpur vicdi Vairawal, Jallalabad vicdoñ, Kidyan
Pathãnã diãñ vic ãe nikle. Othe pathãn lok murĩd kityas.

P.J. (MSSII) f 93

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10. jo dil milyā so mil rehyā
milyā kehīai re soī
je bahuterā locīai,
bātīñ mel nā hoi

pānāvādī hoe ghar,
Khar sar nā jane,
rasyā hovai muśak kā
tab phūl pachāne.

Guru Nanak Tilang P 724. quoted by P.J. *ibid*

11. Saido Sikh bentī kītī: ākhyos jī, sārē šehar vic koī jagā nahi
sī dendā, is bādhi thaud dītī, tis kiān vastū bhī gavāiyāñ,
ik jhugī te mañjī thī so bhī dhāh bhan calyo, oske bāb kyā
vartī. Bhai Saido who was with Guru Nanak said: He was
the only man who have us shelter, You have deprived him
of all that he had, you have broken to pieces his cot and
his cottage. Just think of the miserable plight of the poor
man.

P.J. (MSS II) f 163

12. us jhugī ke mehal usāre haiñ, us mañji ke palañgh hoe haiñ.
ibid

13. Baba jī te Mardana te Bala tine Sialkot dī ber heth jāe
baithe; tāñ Guru Nanak jī Mardāne ūñ ik takā dītā ate
kahyā: Mardānyā ik paise dā sac te ik paise dā jhūth
kharīd lyāo, te ik paise dā sac lyāo.

J.M.S. (MSS) f 312

us ne takā apne pās rekh lyā te kāgat te likh dītā jo mārñ
sac te jiwan jhūth.

ibid

14. The Gurdwara lies in the western skirts of Sialkot City at
a distance of about one furlong from Sialkot-Daska Road.
The baoli Sahib (a large well with a flight of steps descending
down to the water level) was built in memory of Guru
Nanak who visited the place on his return from Afghanistan.
Mohammed Waliullah Khan: *Sikh Shrines in Pakistan*:

p 24

15. T.G.K p
 Khazan Singh: *History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion*
 Vol I p 75
16. asāñ no mile gā tañ ioñ tāri lehñge jioñ dudh uproñ malāi
 tār laīdī hai.

P. J. (MSSII) f
17. Jāñ Mithā asāñ nū mile ga tañ ioñ nicod lehañge jioñ nimbū
 vicoñ ras nicod ididā hai.

ibid
18. tāñ Mian Mitha bolyā: dudh kā kuch nā javaiga milāi utāri
 jāe gī ate nimbu nicodyā phog hove gā.

ibid
19. aval nāu khudā dā, dujā nabī rasūl
 nanak kalmā je padhe tañ dargah paveh kabūl

ibid
20. aval nau khudāe dā dar darwān rasūl
 Sheikḥā nīat rās kar tañ dargāh pavai kabūl

ibid
21. pothī purān kamāiai
 bhau vatī ta tan pāiai
 sac bhujhan ān jalāiai
 eh tel divā ioñ jale

Sri Rag p
22. ibid p
23. According to *Janam Sākhī* Bhai Mani Singh and *Puratan Janam Sakhī* Guru Nanak asked the leper to allow them to rest for the night in his cottage; The leper Nuri answered: Sire, even the animals run away from me. Blessed am I that by the grace of God I have today seen the face of a man near my cottage. (P.J. p 65)

Enroute to Multan, Baba Nanak stayed at Dipalpur under a withered pipal tree which, however turned green, produced leaves and blossoms to provide shade to Baba Sahib. At this very place a leper named Nuri was also cured. The pipal tree is still green and Nuri's grave can also be seen nearby. The Gurdwara built here is known as Nanakyana.

M. Waliullah Khan: *Sikh Shrines in Pakistan* p 12

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24. us kahyā: ghar bār chadnā ar sarīr de ras chadne, ar tap
karna so ihī sannyas hai

J.M.S (MSS) f

25. jab lag āsā kā bañdh padā hai tab lag sannyās nahī hotā
ate jab ride kiāñ vasna khai hovai tu sannyasi hota hai

ibid

26. us kahyā Udasi dā kī dharm hai? Bābe kahyā: jagat dī
vartan sabh rakhanī, ar apnī nā jānāni, vahgurū jī dī jānani;
ar jagyāsā sadā vāhgurū dī rakhanī

ibid

27. je jagyasi ikelā hotā hai tāñ us kā nām sikh hotā hai; are
sadā parmesvar nāl judyā rehtā hai, ar je doe hote haiñ ta
oh āpas mai carcā karte haiñ so tis kā nām sād̄h sañgat hai;
ate je tīn car pañc ikaṭhe hote haiñ, tāñ parmesar kī kathā
ar kirtan hotā hai. tāñ oh gurmukh gurū kā rūp hote haiñ.

ibid

28. sannyasi ikelā hi bhalā ate je dusrā us ke sāth hotā hai tañ
oh grehsthī kahitā hai, so khāvan ar pīvan kar pmesvar
bhul jāñdā hai

ibid

29. *Gurdwara Nanak Jagir: Tehsil Okara:* This place is said to
have been visited by Guru Nanak. The present gurdwara
was later built to commemorate the event. Repairs to
gurdwara had been carried out by the Rehabilitation
Department, Government of Pakistan.

Gurdwara Nanaksar at Harappa: Guru Nanak during
one of his journeys went to Harappa. The ruler
of this place was a tyrant and injustice prevailed in the
country. Guru Nanak advised him to be merciful and
kind to his subjects. During this visit the Guru stayed
under a Jand tree and distributed water among those present
there. A gurdwara and a tank were constructed here to
commemorate the event.

*Gurdwara Tibba Baba Nanak Sahib at Chak I/EB, Tahsil
Okara:* Guru Nanak is said to have visited and stayed at
this place. A fair used to be held here annually.

M. Waliullah Khan: *Sikh Shrines in Pakistan* p:

30. J.M.S (MSS) f

31. ik Nūr Nusrat nām rāiñ bakriāñ cārdā sī su us Bābe nū vekh kar lotā dudh dā age ān rakhyā ar Srī Babe jī ne kahyā ke Mardānyā dudh pio tāñ Mardāne dudh dudh pītā ar Mardāne kehya ki bhāi tūñ kis bhāvnī kar dudh lyayā tañ us ākhyā: mai dhan hīn bahut dukh pāyā hai, mai sunyā hai ke fakīr patśayyāñ bakshśde hain.

ibid f

32. (i) Sir par kes rakhne

(ii) pichlī rāt dā jāgnā te sver same satnām dā jāp japnā.


(iii) sādḥ sañt āuñde jāñde dī sevā tehal karnī

33. ik Daud julāhā sī so oh galica banāe kar lyāyā ar Babe jī nū dekh kar kahyā heth vachāiai; tāñ Babe kahyā; Maharaj aisā galicā dhrtī dā galicā vichāyā hai jo kade purānā nahi hūñdā; eh kutī jo sūi paī hai, ar sīt kal paī kambdī hai so in jalica is upar pau te cūri nit is nū khavāyā kar.

J.M.S. (MSS) f

CHAPTER 17

GURU NANAK IN KASHMIR AND LADAKH

 AFTER HIS RETURN from Sindh, towards the end of winter, Guru Nanak made up his mind to go to Kashmir. With him were Bala, Mardana, Hasu, the blacksmith, and Shihaan, the tailor. ¹This itinerary also covered his visit to North-West Punjab. In the Punjab Guru Nanak's name was now a house-hold word. Although the orthodox Hindus and fanatic Muslims still resented what he was doing, over sixty percent of the Hindus who had never had any religion, except to slave under superior castes and classes, and a good many Indian Muslims who had accepted Islam under political terror, admired Guru Nanak. The seekers of truth, who were confused by doctrines and faiths, and by the disparity in theory and practise of religions, were also profoundly attracted by all Guru Nanak said and preached.

Mardana Collects Gifts

"I know," said Guru Nanak to Mardana "that you must be hungry, and you are itching to go to town. There, in that city lives an Uppal Kashatriya, who is my disciple. Go to his house. You will be received with great honour. Do not tell anyone, I am here. We are in a great hurry and you must come back as soon as possible. Hindus and Muslims will come and touch your feet, and offer you many things. Take only what you need. Distribute the rest."

When Mardana went into this city, the name of which is not given in the *Janam Sakhis*, he was received

with great reverence. People offered money, fruits, and clothes. Guru Nanak waited anxiously for him for some hours. Then, to his great surprise, he saw Mardana coming. He was carrying a huge bundle on his head. He had collected everything the people had offered him. Guru Nanak laughed so heartily, that he abandoned himself to laughter, says the *Puratan Janam Sakhi*². When Mardana came closer, he said half innocently and half ingeniously, "Master, you perhaps think I could not overcome the temptation of trying to collect these things for use in our journey. Actually, I have brought them because they were offered to you, and I felt that they must reach you before they were dispensed with."³ "But if you had given them to the needy, the poor, they would have reached me", said Guru Nanak and he laughed all the more at the ingenious excuse Mardana put forward. Guru Nanak asked him to carry them and offer them to the wayfarers.

When the Guru reached Sialkot he asked Mulla the shopkeeper to accompany him to which Mulla at once agreed.⁴ He was about to get married, but he thought the girl's parents would wait till he came back.

The Bride of The Lord

Guru Nanak and his companions reached a township, the name of which is not recorded by the *Janam-Sakhi*. A pious old woman invited them and gave them shelter and food. Early the next day when this lady was about to serve supper, Guru Nanak heard a great festive hubub throughout the city. The Guru asked the lady what was up in the town. She said : "Here in the city lives a *der-vish* who calls himself, "the Bride of God (*Shauh Suhagan*). He says every full-moon night, the be-

loved Lord comes to meet him and in this spiritual wedlock he calls himself the Bride of God. He remains indoors, but does not allow anyone to enter inside, because no one is entitled to see the Lord. He alone is the Bride of God."⁶ Wait noble lady," said Guru Nanak," I would like to see the Bride of God."

When the Guru went there, some people who stood guard at the door prevented him from going inside.⁶ Guru Nanak asked the servants who guarded the door to go inside and tell their Master that Nanak had come to see the beloved Lord just for a moment. The people who were bringing offerings were delighted to know that Guru Nanak was amidst them. They had heard of him but not seen him. Many of them came forward to touch his feet and placed their offerings at his feet. In the meanwhile the servant went inside and came out after some time only to report that no one could be allowed to see the Lord. Only the Lord's Bride could see him.

Addressing the people Guru Nanak said, "This man has never seen the Lord, and the Lord never comes to him. There is nothing here and he is only misleading you."⁷ The people went away. Some of them took back their offerings. The hypocrisy of the Bride of God was exposed.⁸ When the next moonlight night came, no one went near him. He repented over what he had done. When the Bride of God came to know that Guru Nanak was in the city again, he quietly came to the old lady's house at midnight and fell at the feet of the Guru." "You have opened my eyes, Master. Guide me on the right path. I take a vow now that I will spend the rest of my life in the true service of God. I will atone for my sins." Guru Nanak smiled and

said, "When you mislead others, you try to mislead God, who can never be misled; You mislead yourself, and suffer for it. God is within you, be His Bride in the true sense of the word, and He will really come to you, not only on full-moon nights but even in the darkest hour. Approach Him with a clean heart and you will achieve your purpose." Guru Nanak blessed him and he went away, completely a changed man.

The next day a man who had been crippled by some unexpected ailment, came to Nanak and begged for the healing touch. Guru Nanak healed his mind, soul and body, but asked him to tell everyone that it was "*Shauh Suhagan*: the Bride of God" who had healed him. When the rumour spread in the city that the "Bride of God had healed a cripple, people once more began to have superstitious belief in him. The Bride of God was himself surprised to hear this rumour. He came to know from the man who had been healed that Guru Nanak wished to give him the credit for it. He was overwhelmed by the generosity, compassion, and godly greatness of Guru Nanak.

In Jehlum District

Guru Nanak stopped at Rohtas. Here there was some acute shortage of water. There was however a small spring of water close to the fortification wall of Rohtas Fort. Guru Nanak asked the people to direct the water of that spring for public use and they were successful. The shrine built there is called Gurdwara Choa Sahib.⁹ From here he went to a stronghold of the Yogis called Bal Nath's Tilla. The Name of Balnath yogi was Lachman Yogi.¹⁰ When

he came to know that some saints have camped in the open about half a mile away, he sent a yogi to invite them to his mutt. He had arrangement for the stay of wayfarers, wandering monks and he entertained them well. Guru Nanak refused to go. As clouds were gathering and it was about to rain, Bal Nath went personally. "We are used to every climate and every condition of the winds and storm. Now fortunately your mutt is close by; but supposing it were not there", Said Guru Nanak. On being persuaded by the Yogi, Guru Nanak went there and stayed with him for a few days. Bal Nath was so deeply impressed by the Guru's discourses that he kept with him the Guru's foot-prints which are said to be still retained there.¹¹

Hasan Abdal: Wali Qandhari:

Moving along the Jammu-Kashmir border, Guru Nanak reached a small hillock on the top of which lived a fiery Sufi saint. "The place is now called Hasan Abdal. Baba Wali Qandhari, also known as Baba Hasan Abdal was a descendent of Sayyids of Sabzwar, who visited Punjab with Mirza Shah Rukh, son of Taimur, sometime between 1408 to 1447 A.D. Even today there is a small whitewashed shrine *baithak* attributed to this Muslim saint."

When Guru Nanak and his companions came to the foot of this hillock they felt thirsty. Guru Nanak sent Mardana to the top of the hillock to get some water from the water-reservoir close to the shrine of the Sufi Saint Wali Qandhari. Mardana introduced himself as disciple of the well known apostle Nanak who was revered both by the Muslims and Hindus. "If he is such a great man," retorted Wali Qandhari, why cannot he dig out a spring and draw

water through his spiritual powers¹². Mardana came back sorely disappointed.

Guru Nanak sent him again. He asked Mardana not to question the greatness of Wali Qandhari, but to beg for some water in the name of God and beg for a little service to his fellow men who were thirsty. But Wali Qandhari still refused. He expected Nanak to come to him and accept him as his Master. Guru Nanak asked Mardana to start digging from a place on the side of the hillock. Out of the place came out water, first in small quantity and then it gushed forth like the water of a mountain spring. Everyone drank water and they started singing hymns of praise to God who had answered their prayer. While water flowed down from this newly created spring, Wali Kandhari's little reservoir on the top of the hillock began to dry up. He was enraged. Mustering all his occult powers and flaming vengeance on these intruders, the obstinate Wali Qandhari rolled a boulder of stone down the hillock, to kill the intruders. So suddenly and unexpectedly was this missile hurled that Guru Nanak had no other alternative but to raise his hand in prayerful wish to stop it from and crushing him and his companions. By the grace of God the stone was held up at the point where it touched Guru Nanak's hand. The hand of the Master was imprinted on it.¹³ Wali Qandhari felt unnerved and terribly shaken. He felt, here was one far greater and more powerful than him in spiritual powers, yet so sweet and humble. He came down and bowed in reverence to the Master.⁶⁰ "Your life, my friend, should have been that of a true Sufi like the great Sheikh Farid. Without humility and compassion a saint is worth nothing in the eyes of God and society," Said Nanak. Wali Qandhari became so devoted a disciple of the



The *Panja Sahib* (Hand Impression of Guru Nanak) at Hasan Abdal (Pakistan).

facing p. 332



The Panja Sahib Shrine (Hasan Abdal)

Facing p. 333

Guru, that hence-forth he preserved the place as Guru Nanak's shrine, and lived there as the torch-bearer of the Guru's mission of unity and peace. His successors remained true to his mission, and although the place was cut off for long from the seat of central authority of Guru Nanak's successors, they preserved the place and maintained its sanctity upto this day. It is now known as Panja Sahib (or the Shrine of Guru's Hand Imprint)¹⁴

"The site of Panja Sahib is a sacred spot from the Buddhist times. During the early part of 7th century. A.D. when Hiuen Tsang 'the Chinese traveller, visited this place, here stood a tank of limpid water sacred to the Naga King, Elapatra, and also a Buddhist monastery, the remains of which still exist, and as in the case of all ancient places imbued with sanctity, this site continued to be sacred although the creeds went on changing."¹⁵

Jahangir camped here on his way to Kashmir. So impressed was he by the water of the cistern at this sacred spot that he writes: "On Wednesday, our camping ground was Baba Hasan Abdal. About a kos to the east of this place there is a cascade, over which the water flows with great rapidity. On the whole road to Kabul there is no stream like this. I asked the inhabitants and people acquainted with history who Baba Hasan Abdal was, but no one could give me any specific information. *The most noted spot there is where the spring issues from the foot of the hill. It is exceedingly pure and clear, and the whole verse of Mir Khusru may well be applied to it.*" *The water is so transparent that a blind man in the depth of the night could see the small particles of sand at the bottom.*"

There still exists the hillock of Jahangir's time

and the emperor's statement makes it clear that it was a small hill and near the foot of this hill there was the spring, as indicated by records of Sikh history. The people of the place were perhaps reluctant to tell the emperor of the association of this place with the Founder of Sikhism, because only a few days earlier Jahangir had ordered the brutal execution of Guru Arjan and expressed his hatred of the whole Sikh movement. *Tuzke-Jahangir* however makes it clear that travellers and emperors went to Kashmir through this route, and it is from here Guru Nanak trekked on to Jammu and Kashmir.

In Jammu

In Jammu Guru Nanak is said to have camped near the Legendary Jambavati cave associated with Lord Rama and Krishna, and Jambavati, the daughter of the King. The ruler of Jammu came to pay homage to the Guru barefoot, and sought spiritual instructions. "Guru Nanak instructed him saying: "Your first duty is to do justice and look after the welfare of the people by sacrificing your own interest. Be charitable and look after the needy. Serve the holy, and ever be virtuous. If you contemplate the Name of God a day will come when your rule will spread on twenty-two mountain ranges (22 dhārās) Who this Raja possibly could be, is as yet unknown?

In Kashmir

Guru Nanak then went to Kashmir, the land of pundits, shepherds, streams, valleys, lakes and flowers. He rested one day in a sheltered place on a hill when a Muslim shepherd who was grazing the *yaks* (*Jambu*: cross-breed of Indian cow and Tibetan *yak*) of his master saw him. Talking light

heartedly to Guru Nanak and his companions he asked : "Are you mendicants or thieves; if you are *fakirs* why do you not go to the city." "Why do you worry as to what we are, my friend," said Guru Nanak, "you better take care of your herd." "From your face," said the shephred, "you seem to be good men." When he went away Mardana played the rebeck and Guru Nanak sang one of his newly composed songs. After an hour the shephered came lamenting the loss of all his yaks and goats. He did not know where they had disappeared. He felt that he had insulted holymen and he had been punished for it.

"Come", said Guru Nanak, "we will help you in the search." The *yaks* and goats had strayed into a neighbouring valley, and after some search they were found. So deeply moved was the shepherd by the kindness of the Guru that he refused to go home. Late at night, the worried owner of the herd came there and was surprised to find his servant sitting close to some saints, and his *yaks* and goats resting nearby. Both the Master and servant became disciples of the Guru and entertained them for some days.

At Muttan, about forty miles South of Srinagar, there lived a learned Pundit, who had camel loads of precious library and was proud of his learning. He led a formally orthodox life to the point of carrying an idol of his deity around his neck. His Name is given as Brahm Das by *Janam Sakhī Bhai Mani Singh* and *Purātan Janam Sakhī*, and *Chattar Das* by *Bala's Janam Sakhī*. He asked Nanak, to which school of thought he belonged. Guru Nanak replied : "Some read Sanskrit and are proud of having mastered a classical language, and all the literature in it; others

read Puranas and boast of their knowledge of ancient history; there are still others who practise incantation and spells through *mantra japam*, but I believe in living in His Love, and in His presence by remembering His Name. I crave not for such learning as you boast of. I seek the grace of God rather than be crushed mentally and morally under the burden of empty knowledge :”

*One may read cart loads of books,
With caravan load of books to follow;
One may read ship loads of volumes
And study pile on pile of classics,
And heap them in a cellar;
One may read for years on years,
And spend every month of the year in reading only;
And thus read all one's life,
Right upto his last breath.
Of all things, contemplative life
Is really what matters;
All else is fret and fever of vanity.*

*When a man writes and reads, reads and writes,
He only falls into perplexities;
When he wanders from one holy place to another,
He only becomes a clever ranter;
By adopting odd religious garbs.
Man only causes suffering to his body.
Endure poor souls the sorrows of your misdoings.*

*A man in communion with the Lord,
Attains spiritual bliss and happiness,
He enshrines His Name in his heart;
He is the blessed one, says Nanak,
On whom he bestows His grace.
Such a one is free from hopes, fears and doubts.
He burns his egoism with the Divine Word.*

Guru Nanak : *Āsa-dī-Var*, 9 : i, ii

Pundit Brahm Das felt that under the burden of bookish knowledge he had missed the real inspiration and vision of life. Knowledge without contemplation was as dangerous as contemplation in ignorance.

Near Srinagar another group of Pundits belonging perhaps to Sri Shankaracharya school met Guru Nanak. They had heard how he had influenced Brahm Das, the leading Pundit of Kashmir. They came to the Guru in a group, and asked him what acts of piety did he perform for his salvation. They recounted the *nitya karmas* and the *namitya karmas* which they performed according to orthodox Hindu tradition. "Your formal deeds and acts of worship will not bear much fruit," said Guru Nanak, "until you ennoble your mind and soul by contemplating His Name. Give up greed for possessions and the habit of living on the labours of others. God is everywhere and in every soul. He cannot be won over by mere formal rites and acts of piety which are quite unrelated to inner moral and spiritual progress."²¹

"But," said the Pundits, "you recite the Name of one who is outside you. What is the use of reciting the Name of a God who is within us?"²² "You no doubt can carry a looking glass in your own hand, if it is in your possession, but can you see your face in it, if it is covered with dust and mud. You must clean it before you see yourself in it. In the same way the Self (*atma*) of man must be washed of its dirt of sins and evils, before it can be used to see life and to reflect the spirit of God in its perfect form and Being,"²³ replied Guru Nanak.

They bowed before Baba Nanak, accepting his

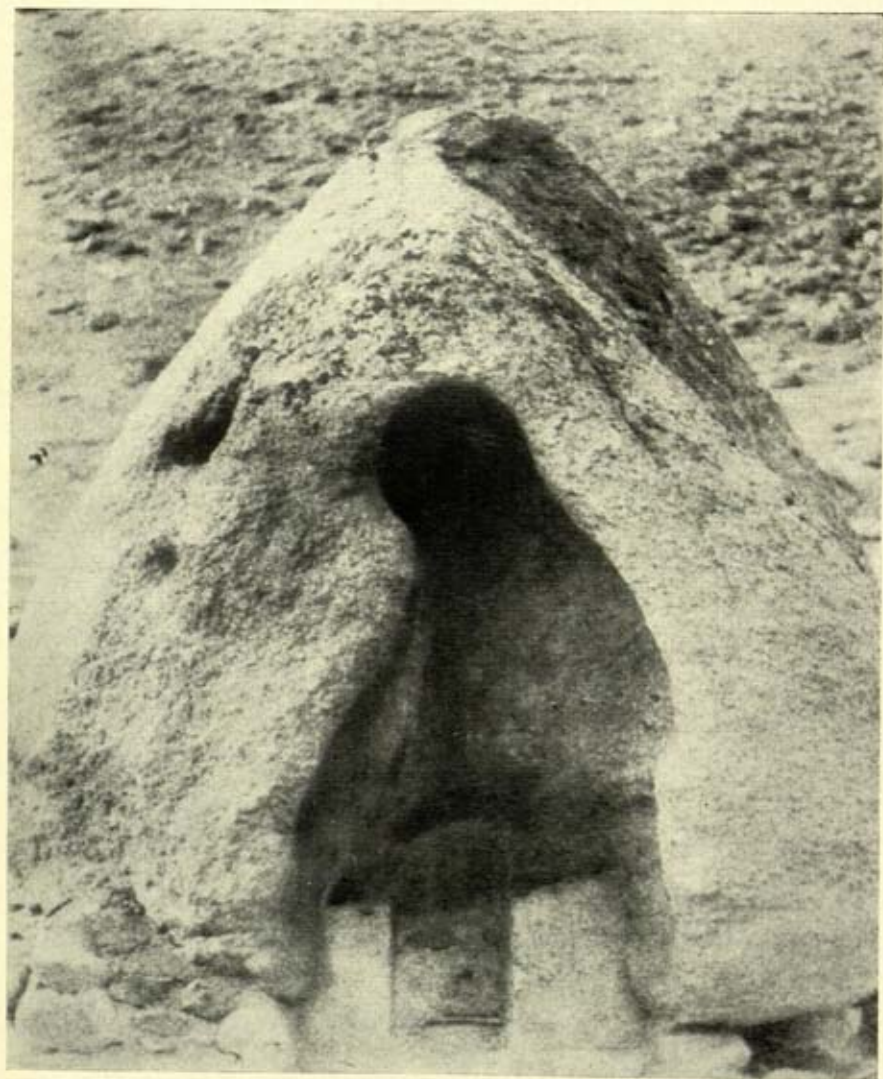
inspired suggestion and asked for spiritual instruction. Guru Nanak said : "Build the temple of worship and service here. Contemplate His Name in congregational communion with the seekers of truth. Serve the holy, the divine, the pious no matter to which caste, creed or religion they belong."²⁴

From Srinagar Guru Nanak went to Ladakh, where there is still a tree shown by the Tibetan devotees of Guru Nanak, under which Guru Nanak rested.²⁵ Guru Nanak travelled by the following route to Ladakh : Pehalgam - Amarnath - Sonamarg - Baltal - Dras - Kargil - Khalsi - Ladakh (Leh). Not far from Leh there is one Tibetan monastery in which is enshrined the picture of Guru Nanak and the inmates claim that Guru Nanak visited that place. The mystic Word they recite is *Om, aham bhadra Guru param siddhi ham*.²⁵ By Bhadra Guru they mean, the Great Guru, that is Nanak. Guru Nanak has left such a deep spiritual influence on the whole of this region and inner Tibet, that all the year round, Tibetans come down to Amritsar, after trekking hundreds of miles on foot, only to pay homage to their great Guru Nanak. This they have been doing for centuries past. During this journey Guru Nanak must have addressed pilgrims at the Amar Nath Cave.

"A few miles outside Leh there is a boulder, a little away from the highway. Legend has it that a few hundred years ago when Nanak Shah was returning from Yarkhand he halted there for some time. His fame had spread far and wide. Becoming jealous of Nanak Shah's great virtues a local *deo* or some *fakir* rolled down a huge boulder from above to kill Nanak Shah. But by a miracle the stone became plastic as (if) of wax and enveloped the body of the saint. Nanak



The Stone that enveloped the body of Nanak Shah near Ladakh (side view)
facing p. 338



The Stone that enveloped the body of Nanak Shah near Ladhak (front view)
facing p. 339

Shah walked out of it unhurt and unscathed leaving a deep impression cast in the stone. The impression as I have myself seen and photographed is big and deep enough and appears to be that of a human figure sitting in a meditating posture.³²⁷

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. J.M.S (all versions), JB (all versions), *Nanak Prakāsh* mentions Bala and Mardana are companions in this Journey, while P.J (all versions) mention Hasu and Shihañ?
2. jāñ gayā tāñ sārā šehar pairīñ àe payā; pañjihe kapde pañd ban ke lai āyā; Bābā hasdā hasdā nīlet ho gayā. tāñ Bābe ākhyā Mardānyā kyā āñdā hī, tab Mardāne ākhyā jī sace pātsāh, tere nauñ dā sadkā sārā šehar sevā nū uṭh khaḍā hoyā; jīo pātsāh.
ibid
3. mai ākhyā je eh vastū, kapde paise, rupae Bābe pās lai vaiñdā hāñ; tab Gurū bolyā, Mardānyā āñdo su bhalā kītos, par asāde kite kam nahī.
P.J. (MSS II) f 38
4. tañ bacāñ hoyā tūñ asāde nāl cal, tainū sac dīdāñī gā, tāñ us ākhyā bhalā jī, ohen Mulla hatī lutāe kar Bābe nāl tyār hoyā, tāñ Bābā jī othoñ ramte ramte Kashmir gae.
J.M.S. (L I) p 276
5. tāñ us būdhī māī ne praśād tyār karke srī Gurūjī de age hath joḍ ke kahyā, Gurūjī praśād tyār hai, tāñ srī Gurūjī ne kahyā Maijī praśād bhī pae lavañ ge par šehar vic dhūm kehī hai, tāñ us budhī ne ākhyā, ethe, ik šauh suhāgan fakīr hai jo ākhdā hai, mere cañd rāt nū šauh āñvdā hai, so aj usde badī šādī haigī.
ibid p 542
6. jab Gurūjī usde didār vāste āñdar cale tāñ lokañ ne Gūrujī nū āñdar jāvañ nā dītā, tāñ Gūrujī ne darvāñ nū kihā ki bhai tusī āñdar jāe kar kaho ik fakīr hai, tumēre draśañ didār vāste bāhar khaḍe haiñ, tāñ šauh suhāgan ne kihā aj maiñ apnā didār kise nū nahī denā kioñke mai apñe šauh dā didār karnā hai.
ibid p 543

7. Nanak jī ne kīha calo Bhai Balā te Mardana ethe kujh nahī;
eh sabh jhuṭhā hī sāṅg hai; is nū apne śauh kā didār nahi
hoyā.

ibid

8. mele vic badī ladāi hoī, kaī āpas vic lad moe, ar koi jhañde
baīṭhkā uṭhāe kar lai gaya, ar melā us fakīr de lagno reh
gayā, ar lok bol upṭhe eh fakīr jhuṭhā hai; ar jhuṭhā ka
saṅg kardā hai.

ibid p 543

The whole story is given in almost the same in words in
J.B.; and Nanak Prakash also. subsequent statements are
also translation from these record.

9. A spring used to flow close to the fortification wall of
Rohtas Fort. Guru Nanak is said to have ordered the
spring to emerge and flow for the public use. A gurdwara
was built close to the spring.

K.M. Saliullah Khan: *Sikh Shrines in West Pakistan* p 19.

10. Bāl Gudāiñ dā nām Lachhman sī

G.N.C Vol II p 250 (f.n)

11. pās tikāne vic āp diāñ carn pādikañ han

ibid (f.n)

12. Mardāne sabh kehyo britāñt
tapā Gurū Nanak bikhyāt
des Punjāb lakhe sabh koī,
bicare jīt kit thal avloī,
Hindu Turk sarab hi manch
in Gur keh ik pīr bikhāne

kīrat jad sri Guru ucārī
seh nāh sakio ur Wālī Kandhārī
kahai: ju tāpā azmatī aisai
kioñ nā mangāvai jal meh baise.

N.P. Ut: adhy 14

13. hutī lastakā hath majhārī,
tis gir kī jhar mai tab mārī,
sītal jal nirmal tis kālā
niksat behyio pravāh bisālā
Wali Kandhārī ko jal jeto,
gir mai pravis suśak ga teto
pikh acaraj ko ṭhānyo dhyānā

GURU NANAK IN KASHMIR AND LADAKH

tap bal te sū britant pachānā.
tis chin bhārī silā bisālā
azmat te prahār tis kālā.
srī gur ne tab hāth pasārā
tis avat ke kīn agāra.

ibid

Guru Nanak coming to the place asked one of his disciples to fetch water from the spring. The water was however refused by the saint. Thereupon Baba Guru Nanak miraculously made the spring to abandon the place and to flow from the spot where he was standing. The Muslim Saint was much annoyed with the intruder and rolled down a rock to crush him. Guru Nanak, however gently stopped the missile by the push of his hand. The Hand left an impression on the rock. Subsequently this rock became an object of great reverence for the followers of the Guru who started calling it Panja Sahib.

K.M. Saliullah Khan; Sikh Shrines in Pakistan p17 Kavi Santokh Singh visited the place sometime before 1830 A.D. He says some attempts were made to eradicate the impression of the Hand but failed: *rahe mitae jatan te kai; rehio su cin harge tei*

14. he prabhu khatā bakhśko mohe,
nahī mahātam jānio tohī,
hoe pralok sahac biseśa,
as mokī kijai updeśa.
tab srī gur updeś bakhānā,
taiñ matsar dukh nāhak jānā,
jis mai prāpat kichu nā hoe,
harkh ride kar tyāgo soe,
hardam yād khudāe karījāi,
mānukh tan saflo kar lījai.

N.P. Ut: adhyae 14: 96, 98

Bakhshi Gurcharan Singh, Supreme court lawyer, and scholar well versed in Sikh theology has sent the following comments on Panja Sahib: "I have seen much of Panja Sahib and the terrain around. The cement factory two miles away is fast consuming the entire hillock. Earlier for nearly four centuries stone had been quarried for building the town of Hasan Abdal. Hence the flattened appearance of the hill earlier. The entire bazar and streets of Hasan Abdal had been paved with stones. The stone lends itself to carving and sculptor.

15. K.M. Waliullah Khan: *Sikh Shrines in West Pakistan* p 18

16. *Tuzke-Jahangiri*; The Memoirs of Jahangir: The Posthumous papers of H.M. Eliot, ed by John Dawson P 69

17. jāe bhūp dhig bain sunāe,
vehar tapā sri Nānak āvā
jisko jas jag mai bahu chāvā,
sunat nagan pag turan dhāyio,
utam bahut upāyan lyāio.

din hoe pad baṇdan kīnī,
bine bhanī bhetain dhar dinī.
pūran sri satgur tuhī dīje nij updeśā
gahi caran kī saren mai sikh karo jagtes,

kijai sada dharam ko myāū,
lobh dhar neh kar ku nyāu.
jagat jaio supan samānā,
sat atma ek pachānā.
seva santan kī cit dījai,
nagan chudit par karunā kijai.

N.P. Ut: adh: 3 66-71

18. J.B. (LI) p 482, N.P. Ut: adh 14

19. *ibid*

20. i) koī paḍtā sehaskritī koi paḍeh purānā
koi nām japāi japmalī lagai tīsai dhyānā
abhī kabhī kichu nā jānā tera eko nām pachānā.

Guru Nanak: Ramkali p 876

- ii) Bhai Mani Singh's also gives sermon based on this hymn
- iii) The remnants of the Platform in the centre of the lower tank of the Twin Springs at Muttan indicates the spot where the Master had sat, while some ruins of the pillars of the causeway leading up to the platform from the left side of the Spring are also visible. In 1908, when the present writer visited Kashmir, he saw one of the seven Gurdwaras, which had been built on three sides of the twin springs, still standing, and he read a sermon from the Granth Sahib to the assembled audience in that Gurdwara. That Gurdwara also has gone in

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ruins, and a new one seems to have recently been constructed, not on that site but along the South Western corner of the lower spring. It is difficult to say who is responsible for this act of vandalism.

Sewaram Singh: *The Divine Master*: p 144

21. unā kihā asīn nityā, namityā karma karde hañ; Babe kihā tusī nām japo tuhāde karm pavitar hoñge; tuhāde karm nehphal hoñge lekhe koī nā pāvai gā.

J.M.S. (L I) p 276

hor pundit kashmir de āe baithe tān unā kihā, he sañt mahāpures jī asīn nit ved pāth sunde hañ, par sāda hankār nahī mitda.

J.B. (L I) p 486

22. tān unā panditān kihā : ki nām tān usdā japitā hai jehdā aptoñ bhin hove., ar jo apnā āp hai is kā kyā nām japnā.

J. M. S (L I) p 277

This statement shows that they were *advaitist* Vendantists.

23. tab Bābe kehyā jaise ārsī ko jañgāl Cadh jātā hai so jab usko sudh karitā hai, tab vicoñ apnā mukh bhāstā hai, so taise man ko haumai kī mail lagī hai, ar tis mail kar ātmā kā darśan nahī hotā; so je mahārāj kā nām japitā hai ta haumai kī mal dūr hotī hai, tab ātmā ka darśan hotā haī. so eh bāt sun ke sabh Bābe jī ke carnā par gir paḍe.

ibid p 276

24. je tusīn ethe raho tān asāde khote karam sabh mit jāvan tān bacan hoyā ke merā sargun rūp deh hai, ate nirgun rūp śabad hai, śabad dā abhyās karyā karo tān tusāde sābh khote karam mit jāvan ge.

Master, if you stay here, then in holy communion with you all your sins shall be washed away. My manifest form is the body, which will not last, but my eternal Spirit is in the Word. Contemplate the Word: All your sins shall be washed away.

ibid 276

tān oh pandit Guru de sikh hoc;

J.B (L I) p 487

25. I am indebted for this information to the late Sant Didar singh who visited this area twice, while I do not know about

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the exact location of this tree, but the fact there are some monasteries in this area commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak here has been ascertained by some military officers who were stationed here.

26. This exact route also was shown on the map by the Sikh military officer who does not wish to be identified. Because of the extremely short time at his disposal he did not take detailed notes of the religious services of the monastery.

Guru Nanak: *Siddha Gosht*. 18

27. K. M. Vaid, *Hindustan Times*, October, 25, 1969

CHAPTER 18

GURU NANAK ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

❖❖❖❖❖ GREAT MEN CREATE history, culture and
❖❖❖❖❖ civilization by superhuman efforts. Time
and barbaric revolutions throw them
into oblivion, and thankless generations ignore them,
doubt them, disbelieve them, or at best let them linger
in human memory as legends. An agnostic and
sceptic attitude of denying forthwith what they
cannot understand, decipher, or interpret old historical
records, has been the safest refuge of some of
the historians and scholars writing on Guru Nanak.
They brush aside as unbelievable what they are
linguistically, intellectually and spiritually unable
to grasp. By not applying their mind seriously
to the analytical and comparative study of old and
more reliable manuscripts of *Janam Sākhī* and other
Sikh records, or local evidence, and by depending
only on discursive logic they have gone to the extent
of saying without disproving available historical facts
that Guru Nanak did not go outside India. If
logic could make and unmake history, they might as
well prove that Guru Nanak did not go outside
Punjab.

Guru Nanak visited both Eastern and Western
Tibet and the impact of his visit on this region is so
profound that even long before Chinese occupation
of Tibet there never has been a time when Tibetans
did not trek hundreds of miles to pay homage to
the ever-living spirit of Guru Nanak at the Golden
Temple. They consider Nanak to be the eighth
incarnation of Buddha, and the sacred pond near
the Golden Temple is considered to be the place of

spiritual birth of Rimchope (Precious Teacher), a name which they use for Guru Nanak and some earlier Siddhacharyas.¹

In 1960 I saw a Tibetan sitting in the precincts of the Golden Temple and reading some Tibetan Manuscript, as if he was invoking some prayer to the Lord of the Golden Temple. A little distance away a group of Tibetans were sitting. Out of curiosity to know what he was reading I took the risk of disturbing him and asking him what was the book about. Unfortunately he did not know even Hindustani. An educated Tibetan from among the other group came there and helped me as an interpreter. The man in tattered clothes told me that the book was about the ten Sikh Gurus, and each Guru had a Tibetan name. Guru Nanak is known as Guru Rimchope, and all the ten Sikh Gurus had a different Tibetan name. To my surprise, he gave in correct order the Indian names of all the Gurus as well as the Tibetan names. Unfortunately I did not have my notebook with me, and the piece of paper on which I scribbled the names has been lost. But this incident and the readings from that Tibetan book convinced me that there is considerable literature in Tibetan not only about Guru Nanak but about the other ten Gurus also.

I asked this Tibetan to sell this manuscript copy of Sikh history in Tibetan for any sum between a hundred to five hundred rupees. He refused to part with it even for five thousand rupees. "This is more important to me," he said, "than any other possession. It appeared at that moment that this half-naked Tibetan was richer than any of the glamorously dressed Sikhs of Amritsar. I asked this Tibetan whether there were other manuscripts about

the Gurus, and whether he could tell me in how many Tibetan monasteries the Word of Guru Nanak is studied. His look of extreme surprise seemed to say, "You Sikhs of Punjab do not even know this much about your Guru, when we know so much about holy shrines in Punjab." "There are more than six hundred monastries that I know of, where Guru Nanak's *Dhamma* is studied. In every monastery there are some scriptures about the Gurus and also large size pictures of Nanak. When Guru Nanak went to Tibet he put on Tibetan dress. Our pictures are in Tibetan dress," said he.

Six months later I met an officer of Tibetan army for a short while at Delhi. He surprised me by asking me, "Have you been to Sapta-Sring Hem-kunta?" "No?" I said, "How are you Tibetans interested in Hem-kunta?" "It is the place where the tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh performed *tapasya* in his earlier life. Do you not know that?" he asked "But this is a fact," said I, "stated only in Guru Gobind Singh's autobiography, *Bachiter Natak*. Have you read it?" "No", he said, "but this fact is stated in our books and every Tibetan, who worships the Gurus as the incarnations of Buddha, knows this fact. I have been to Hem-Kunt twice." Unfortunately I was never able to contact him again. But I am convinced that the Tibetans know much about the Guru that we do not know.

The third surprise information came to me from the Everest hero Mr. Sonam Gyasto who till recently was Principal of Mountaineering Institute, Sikkim. Mr Sonam Gyasto was in the second team of two who reached Everest peak in the 1965 expedition. He gave me a vivid portrayal of the places visited by Guru Nanak in Sikkim, and Bhutan and the

stories connected with them. He gave me the address of Karma-pa Guru Rimpoche, the direct successor of Guru Nanak's mission in Tibet, and he proudly said he was himself his disciple. And then he said, with a strange glow on his smiling face, "It was Rimpoche Guru Nanak who helped us in our mission to the Everest. It was he who saved my life at a very critical moment." Mr Sonam Gyatso had been frost bitten while coming down from Everest Peak to the last camp under almost impossible conditions. It was his unswerving faith in prayers that enabled him to carry on.

Guru Nanak's visit to the inaccessible heights in Western Tibet had a distinctly different purpose than his itinerary to Sikkim, Bhutan and Eastern Tibet. His visit to Sumer mountain was to encounter the eminent Yogis living in inaccessible snowy retreats as Snowmen. His visit to Eastern Tibet was to carry the torch of his Faith in Tibetan monasteries. His visit to Sumer mountain is recorded in the *Janam Sakhis*, and his dialogue with the Yogis is described in his famous composition, *Siddha Gosht*, which took place on Sumer mountain and not at Achal Batala, as some present day scholars think. Historical records also indicate that Guru Nanak went to Sumer mountain via short cuts and routes passing through Himachal and not through Kashmir. In view of the sporadic evidence available it is not possible to present a positively certain connected narrative of the Guru's itinerary in this region, but whatever is available is presented in historical sequence.

In Shiwalik Hills and Himachal

Puratan Janam Sakhi says Guru Nanak went to Shiwalik hills³ on his way to Sumer mountain. Old

manuscripts of *Bāla's Janam Sākhī* support this theory by saying that he passed through Himachal, which means the same thing as Shiwalik hills.⁴ We find a number of historical shrines of Guru Nanak in this region, notably at, Pinjor Kiratpur, Gopal mochan near Paonta, Srinagar, Badrinath, Triloknath, Palampur, Ghumren, Kangra, Rawalsar, Johadsar. There are shrines commemorating Guru Nanak's visit in all these places.⁵

At Kiratpur he met the famous Sufi Buddhan Shah. His name was different, but this is how he is remembered in Sikh history. He lived a quiet and contented life on a small hillock in Kiratpur. He was so delighted to meet the Guru, that he begged Nanak to come again and accept the milk from him with the same joy as he had accepted them. "I will come," said Guru Nanak, after many years, in a different form but in the same spirit. One of my successors will meet you again. Baba Gurditta, who was not only born on *Kartik Puranmashi*, but looked so much like Nanak that many people thought him to be *avatar of Guru Nanak*, was the first to meet him almost a cenury later⁶. A few month after Baba Gurditta's meeting Guru Hargobind met the divine Sufi, and his wish that he should meet his preceptor Nanak once more was fulfilled in this way.

Sumer Mountain : the Olympus of the Hindus.

Sumer according to Sikh historical records is a mountain peak in the Himalaya range, somewhere beyond Kailash. It is also known as *Hemadri*; 'golden mountain, *Racnasanu*; jewel peak, *Karnika-thala*; lotus mountain, and *Amarapuri* or *Deva-paravata* a or the mountain of gods. One Purana identifies it with the hills beyond, Hem-kunta, and Sapta-sring

where the Pandavas and Guru Gobind Singh in his earlier birth lived in yogic meditations. This is quite possible, but the exact location of this retreat of the Yogis cannot be guessed. The difficulty arises from the fact, that Tibetans have their own names of these hills, our more recent geographical surveys have given them different names, and there is no book or map available on the Puranic geography either of India or of these regions. The *Janam Sakhis* and the medieval Sikh records give only the Puranic names.

Bala and Mardana accompanied Guru Nanak on this journey upto certain heights, but he asked them to stay on at an unnamed place, and went further on to Sumer all alone.⁷ The region where Bala and Mardana were left had abundant of gold and the people were youthful and cheerful.⁸

East of Manasarowar and Ladakh range is the Himalayan water-shed; west of Manasarowar it is an independent Tibetan chain and has no connection with the Himalaya. The Kailash range in which the Sumer seems to be located runs parallel to the Ladakh range 500 miles to the north of it, Near Manasarowar it contains a crowded cluster of peaks, several of which exceeds 20,000 ft and the highest of which is Kailash, 22, 028 ft., and 19 miles north of Manasarowar. From Kailash to Hemkunt is a Himalayan range which has attracted saints and *yogis* for a quiet meditative retreat. Many of them went there not only for peace of mind but to prolong their life and live from hundred to five hundred years. The *yogis* believe that the mind controls the senses and the breath controls the mind and life-process. They also long, by the art of yoga, entering another's body a technique which perfect *yogis* appear to have mastered.⁹

Alberuni, in his book on India, written in about 1030 A.D. gives different accounts of the location of Sumeru or Meru mountain. He rejects the views of Brahmagupta and commentator Balabhadra and quoting Matasya Purana says : "It (Sumeru) is golden and shining like fire which is not dulled by smoke. It is 86,000 *yojanas* high and 16000 of these *yojanas* lie in the earth. There are rivers of sweet water running in it, and beautiful golden houses inhabited by spiritual beings. Also *asuras*, *daityas* and *rakshasas* are living in it. Round the mountain lies the pond of Manasa (Manasarover) and round it on all sides are Lokpalas. Mount Meru has seven knots i.e. great mountains. The great mountains round Meru are the following: *Himavant*, always covered with snow; *Hemkunta*, the golden; *Nishada*, *Nila*, inhabited by siddhas, Brahmrishis and anchorites; *Sveta* and *Sringavant*. Not far to the north of the mountain there are mountain passes full of jewels. The region between *Himavanta* and *Srigavant* is called Kailash."¹⁰

Both Mahabharata and Guru Govind Singh refer to *Sapta-sring* and *Hemkunta*. In the *Adi-purva*, chapter 119, slokas 47-50 Mahabharata says :"

"The Kaurava Rajakumara Pandu, living on fruit and roots as his diet went with both his wives to Nagshat mountain. There they stayed for some days. Then he crossed the Chatrath, Kalkut and arrived at Gandhmadan. The *siddhas* and *maharishis* of the mountain attended on him. From here they reached Indra-dyanum sarover. A little beyond Hanskut (afterwards called Hemkunt) Maharaja Pandu arrived at *Sapta Sringa* where he performed *tapasya*.

Guru Gobind Singh also performed *tapasya* here. In his autobiography he writes :

*Now I will tell you my own story,
How from a life of austere contemplation,
I came here in this world;
Where there is the Hemkunta mountain,
There is a place called Sapta-sringa,
Sapta sringa is the name of the place,
Where Pandu (father of Pandavas)
Went to perform tapasya.
In this place I meditated deeply on God.*

Guru Gobind Singh : *Bachiter Natak*

We now come to the conclusion that Sumeru is one of the inaccessible peaks out of these seven great mountains of the Himalayan range from Kailash to Hemkunta. Unfortunately no Indologist has done sufficient research work on the geography of ancient India and located these peaks exactly. Sumer is one of these peaks situated to the North-East of Kailash. The tendency to call anything a present day scholar does not understand, dubious and legendary, has done considerable harm to the study of Guru Nanak's travels. Some scholars have found this negative criticism a convenient instrument of their so called rational methodology, but all rational methodology in history should be based on correct knowledge, understanding and evaluation of old historical manuscripts, in the light of historical and geographical names of persons and places of the period. It should not be a negative thesis based on imaginary doubts, motivated dissent and the so called scientific scepticism. Agnosticism in religion may make an individual a fool, but agnos-

ticism in history destroys some thing that is precious and important, and it consciously or unconsciously damages geographical and historical facts. This is the method that has been followed by obviously unsympathetic scholars from Dr. Trump to Dr. McLeod whose works and dubious comments have done more harm to their fair name and motivated scholarship than to Sikh history and theology. If they do not understand what Kamarup, Dhancesari, Sumer, Japapatnam (Jaffnapatnam) are in the *Janam Sakhis* they dismiss them as legendary. If they cannot probe into the authenticity of historical facts of *Janam Sakhis* by additional research work, they condemn it as doubtful and unbelievable, and call this game methodic research work in history.

Here on Sumer mountain lived Gorakh's companions, or perhaps his direct successors, Loharipa, Charpat and others.¹⁰ They were surprised to see a youngman from the world of men among them. *Ādes, Ādes*: (Hail, all Hail to thee) said Guru Nanak. Charpat was the first to ask: "Who are you? What is your name? By what powers have you come to these inaccessible heights of our caves?" "My name is Nanak," said the Guru, "I have dedicated my life to the love and contemplation of God, and it is through His grace I have come here."¹¹ As they were quite old and mature and Guru Nanak was comparatively young, hardly forty-five, they addressed Nanak as *Bala*: Child, Son. This is how they addressed him, says Bhai Gurdas, and this is how Nanak says in his *Siddha Gosht* the Yogis addressed him.¹²

These *Siddhas* had been long away from the world of men. They did not know what social and political

changes had taken place during this long period of their retreat. They therefore asked Nanak what were the political, social and cultural conditions in *mataloka*, the world of men in India.¹³ "Truth, in the world is like a full moon," said Guru Nanak, "which has disappeared behind the clouds of sin and falsehood. The darknight of falsehood has enveloped the whole world. Enlightened sages and Yogis like you who could redeem the world have retired into mountain retreats and have hidden themselves. I wander here in search for Truth. To know and establish Truth I have travelled to the farthest countries."¹⁴

Giving vivid details of the utter degradation and decadance that was plaguing the whole society Guru Nanak said: "The age is like a drawn sword, the kings are butchers; goodness has taken wings and disappeared."¹⁵ The rich are like street dogs that live in these dark times on the blood and bones of exploited ones (the poor and helpless: *murdar*). The kings live in vice and sin and instead of protecting the people they have brought pestilence to the country, and the fence is swallowing the garden."¹⁶ "The rulers are blood-thirsty tigers, the ministers are like blood hounds. They torture and insult the conscience of humanity. The officials bleed the innocent people with their claws of greed. The ministers like blood hounds, lick and drink their blood."¹⁷ "The Yogis of your schools, have become hypocrites and cheats. They put on ashes and go about showing miracles. The *sannyasins*, and *yogis* have become cheap gurus, and they run to the houses of people for food and money and degrade themselves and degrade their teachings. The Qazis, openly accept bribery and give perverted judgements, and

if any truth loving person protests, they swear by the Koran and rosary and terrorise them. The human relation between man and wife has been reduced to the lowest level. If a man can provide ample money, the wife pretends to be loyal, otherwise she forsakes him for her personal luxury. There is no moral discipline left in family life."¹⁸

The Yogis thought that if they could win Guru Nanak to their school of thought they could score a great victory for Yoga and its future. One of the Yogis gave him a bowl and asked him to fetch some water from the valley below, after which they would serve him with some food. When Guru Nanak went down to the valley he found no water. The valley was a mine of gold and gems.¹⁹ The Yogi thought that the wealth of those treasures would attract Guru Nanak and he would do anything to be so rich and powerful. Unmoved and undisturbed, Guru Nanak came back and said, "Nātha ji, there is no water there. What I found there, did not interest me."²⁰

Then started a discussion on metaphysical questions. They put question after question and on each problem they gave their own point of view. Guru Nanak gave his views, sharply criticising some of their thoughts:

Lohariṇa : *Understand the way of Yoga,
Keep away from cities and highways,
Live in the forests and detached in retreats
Roots and fruits should be his food.
Thus must the yogi live,
A life of pure contemplation*

Guru Nanak : *Even while living
In cities and near highways,*

*The mind should be alert;
Covet not anothers' wife;
Without divine Name
No peace can be achieved;
Nor the desires silenced.
The divine Enlightener has shown.
The real life of the cities,
The real life of market place,
Is within us, in our hearts and soul.
We must trade in truth.
We should eat but little.
We should sleep but little*

Guru Nanak : *Siddha Gosht* : 7,8

Loharipa and other Yogis felt that all efforts should be made to win Nanak to *yoga* and he asked him to accept the leadership of one of the twelve sects of *Yoga*.²¹

Loharipa : *Accept the garb of Yoga Daršana,
Its symbols are patched coat,
Ear-rings, a beggar's wallet,
Out of the six systems,
Adopt the supreme system of Yoga,
Out of the twelve sects of Yogis
Enter curs, the leading one,
Though thou say it, only those
Whom God hath enlightened
Have truly grasped God,
Control thy mind by my rules,
And then you can attain Yoga.*

Guru Nanak : *My own system is constant
Contemplation of the Word;
My way of wearing ear-rings;
To discard pride and attachment.*

*My patched coat and beggar's wallet :
Are seeing God in all things,
Only God can make me free.
The Lord is the Truth,
Truth is His Name, says the Guru,
He who will may test this.*

Siddha Gosht : 8,9

When Guru Nanak condemned all types of renunciation, Loharipa asked him a pertinent question : *kis karan greh tajo udāsī, kis karan eh bhekh nivāsī*. Why have you left and renounced your home, and why are you putting on *this* garb of a recluse (*Udasi*)²² To which Guru Nanak answered :

*In search of God-illuminated Men
I have left home like a recluse;
I have put on this garb
To gain access to the sanctuary of Divine Men.
I am a trader in Truth,
With the grace of God,
I have crossed the ocean of saṃsara.*

Guru Nanak : Siddha Gosht. 18

Then followed a profoundly deep discussion. The Yogis put forward nearly twenty metaphysical and mystical doctrines of their own. On each of them Guru Nanak commented., giving a critical view of their approach and establishing his philosophy and mysticism as distinct and more illuminating. Bhai Gurdas sums up the outcome of this great historic dialogue, saying : "Guru Nanak minted a new coin of his Faith and proved distinctive philosophy of his Religion." He won the *Siddhas* in debate with the doctrine of the Word.²³ Guru Nanak ended his *Siddha Gosht*, the great dialogue

with the Yogis by giving the essence of his doctrine of the Word in the last two verses.²⁴ Those who wanted Nanak to become their disciple accepted him as the Master, the True World Teacher.²⁵

Guru Nanak had gone to these inaccessible heights alone. If Bala or Mardana had accompanied them, Nanak would not have gone to fetch water. This could have been done by one of his companions. The evidence furnished by Bhai Gurdas, *Bhai Mani Singh Janam Sakhi*, and the internal evidence of *Siddha Gosht* proves this theory. Guru Nanak then came back to the place where Bala and Mardana were waiting for him.

Guru Nanak's Visit to Eastern Tibet

When we present historical evidence about the visit of Guru Nanak to Eastern Tibet, the first question, an average scholar or laymen is tempted to ask is: "Why is the Dalai Lama silent about it? To-day we naively associate the whole past and present of Tibet with the Dalai Lama, but when Guru Nanak visited Tibet, the institution had not come into existence. Nor was Lhasa the capital of Tibet. Even when the Dalai Lamas came into power, they remained the strongest political and spiritual rivals of the sect which has faith in Guru Nanak and which has devoutly preserved his life records, his relics, his footprints and his works."²⁶

A great part of early Tibetan history is wrapt in myth and legend. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Tibet was divided between uncertain number of chiefs, religious leaders, and laymen who ruled by right of succession. Impressed by the knowledge of a Tibetan Lama, Kubla Khan (1260-

94) made Lamaism the national religion of his empire. When Guru Nanak visited Tibet there were two sects, the Karmapa sect (Red Caps) and Gelupa sect (Yellow Caps). A bitter political and spiritual rivalry was raging between them.

In 1578 (long after Guru Nanak's death) a leader of the Gelupa sect named Sonam Gyatso visited Mongolia and converted to his own faith the leading prince Altan Khan, together with a large number of his followers. The Khan gave Sonam Gyatso, the title of *Tale* (*Dalai*) meaning ocean and the title has later applied retrospectively to his two predecessors who were considered to be his incarnations.²⁷ For a century or more the Dalai Lama had no temporal influence but they soon became the rivals of Karmapas. It was in 1640 A.D. that the Dalai Lama sect defeated and killed the Karmapa king, displaced the Karmapa Lamas from their high estate and set up the fifth Dalai Lama whose name was Ngawang Lobzang Gyatso.

During the first two centuries of the existence of the dynasty of Dalai Lama the residence of the pontiffs was at Debang and not at Lhasa. Lhasa was only a resort of the devout. Lhasa became the focus of sanctity in 1577 and it was in the middle of seventeenth century that Lhasa became the residence of Dalai Lama. It was in 1641 that the fifth Dalai Lama built his palace on the rock site and gave it the name of Potola.

Earlier many attempts were made by the Karmapa sect to capture Lhasa but they failed. Towards the end of fifteenth century, Donyo Dorje wanted to

build a monastery in Lhasa on behalf of Karmapa sect, but Gelupa sect did not permit him to do so. When he built a monastery outside Lhasa and put Palkhang Chozay in charge, the monks of the neighbouring Gelupa monastries descended on it one night and razed it to the ground. The Karma-pa Lama narrowly escaped being killed.²⁸ Later on supporters of the Karma-pa sect were not permitted to attend the Lhasa ceremonies. Such has been the tragic political and religious rivalry between the Dalai Lama's followers and the Karma-pa sect which has preserved the teachings of Guru Nanak, and reveres him as the eighth incarnation of Buddha.

The Chungtang Monastery of Rimpoche Guru Nanak

About a hundred miles away from Gangtok (Sikkim Capital), towards the north of Sikkim there is a monastery which has preserved the memory and relics of Guru Nanak's visit.²⁹ A metalled road now connects the capital with the shrine. The local people call the place Nanak-Tang. "In the middle of the valley there is a mound about 30 feet high and about 200 feet in circumference. The village people have raised a 4 feet high stone wall around it to maintain the sanctity of the place. The stone mound has cave inside, whose mouth has been walled up with stones. On the top of the mound are what the people believe to be the sacred footprints of Guru Nanak. People at times offer coins to these footprints of the Guru. On the side of the mound there are crevices a few feet about the ground level through which the water was trickling. The crevices are a few inches deep suggesting that the water has been coming out of these for the past few centuries. The story that has come down from



Footprints of Guru Nanak preserved at Chungtang Monastery in Tibet.

facing p. 360



Top: The Mound at Chungtang Monastery on which Guru Nanak rested on his way to the Interior of Tibet.



Bottom: Water trickling out of the Mound at Chungtang Monastery
facing p. 361

generation to generation is that Guru Nanak stayed here in the cave under the mound, on his way to Tibet. As the water in the river was very muddy due to the rains, he produced water from the side of the mound and since then water keeps on coming out of the side of the mound."³⁰ Orchids grow around the mound, and no one is allowed to pluck them. The story of the footprints and the spring is an exact parallel of the Panja Sahib story.

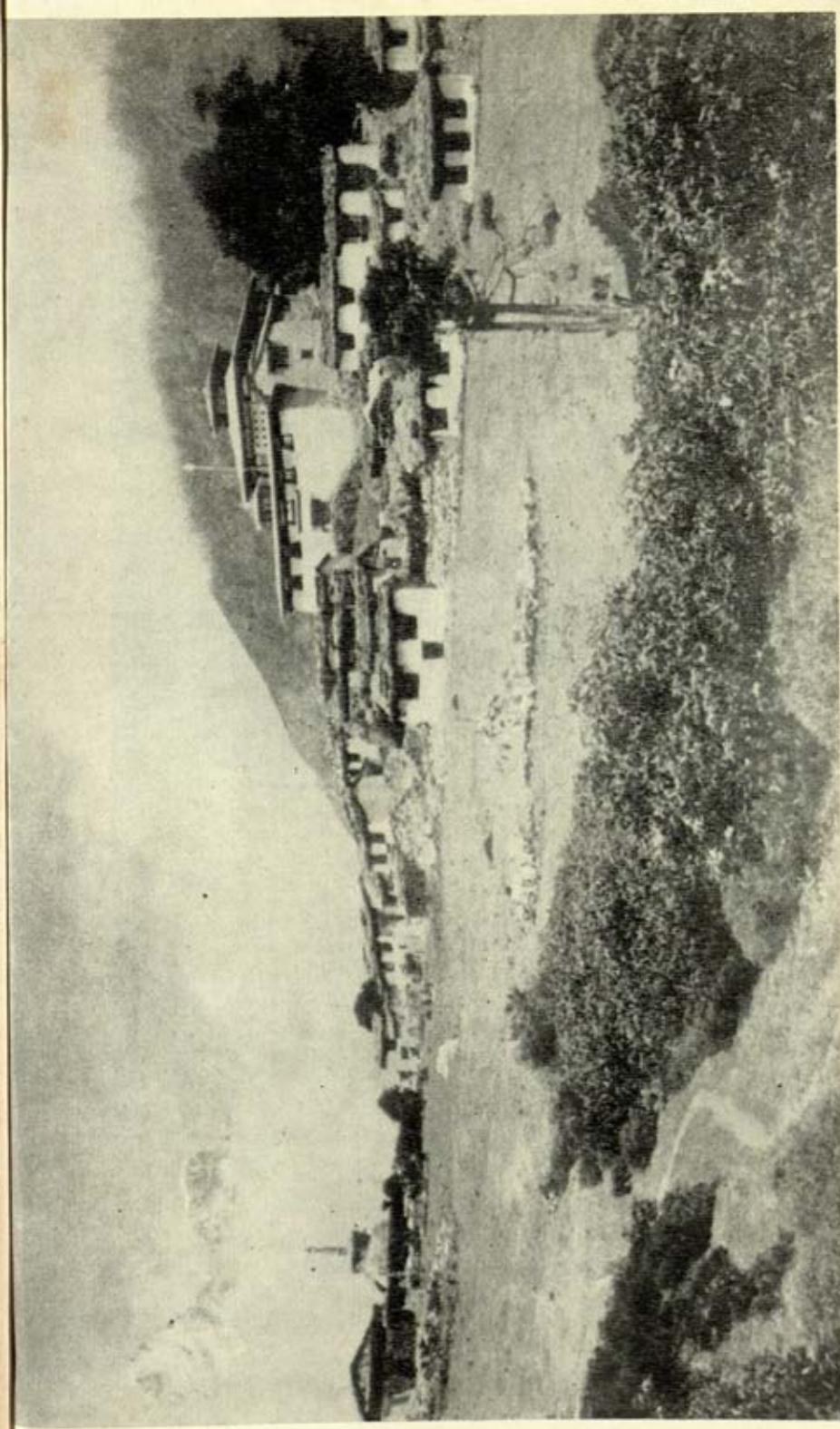
"When Guru Nanak came here he brought his rice meals packed in banana leaves, (a custom still prevalent in Tibet and Burma.) The two commodities were unknown to hill folks. The Guru having noticed their inquisitiveness bestowed them with a share of this strange cereal."³¹ He asked them to sprinkle some of it all over the meadow and to bury the banana packing in a corner. From that the place got its first rice harvest and plantains.³² The people still believe that they owe their rich harvest of rice and banana to Guru Nanak's far-sight and gift. This is one of the few places where rice and banana grows in the land of maize and apples. The Everest hero Mr. Sonam Gyatso, believes it to be a miracle of Guru Nanak.

Thyangboche Monastery

On the road that leads to Everest Base Camp there is Thyangboche Monastery which has preserved not only the pictures of Guru Nanak, but also some writings which they believe to be the writings of Guru Nanak. Describing the monastery the leader of the Everest expedition writes: "The atmosphere in the room was deeply religious and mystical. There were colourful frescos on the walls, and the ceiling bore mythical motifs with a display

of exquisite idols of varying sizes in bronze and other materials. There were a large number of sacred texts, presumably the original hand written manuscripts, stacked in pigeon holes. The idols were of the founder and the later incarnate Lamas and of the venerable Gurus and the like. We were shown one of Guru Rimpoche, the Tibetan name of Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikh religion, who in his truth-seeking wander lust, had covered great distances for pilgrimages to the seats of religious learnings and held debates discussion in places as apart as Tibet, Mecca and Benaras.³³ The manuscripts preserved in the monastery have some vital information about Guru Nanak and some of them are alleged to be Guru Nanak's writings in his own hand. If they are contemporary records they are likely to throw great light on Guru Nanak's intencary in this region.

In the Paro valley of Bhutan there is another Tiger's Nest monastery built almost into perpendicular cliffs "which is supposed to be the heavenly abode of the Guru Rimpoche. It is possible that Guru Nanak rested here during his visit to Bhutan. It is difficult to assess by which route Guru Nanak went to Tibet. He might have gone through Khathamandu where there is Guru Nanak's mutt commemorating his visit and through Thyangboche towards Eastern Tibet in Sikkim and Bhutan. Or he might have entered Sikkim through Nathu-La pass and come back from Tibet through Kathamandu. He might have even followed the Tibetan Highway from Manasarowar to Lhasa side which was followed by Heinrich Harrer author of "Seven Years in Tibet. There is no doubt that Guru Nanak visited Tibet and his impact on the religious and cultural life of the people has been considerable.



The Monastery of Thyangboche (13,000 ft.) Shrine built to commemorate the visit of Guru Nanak. facing p. 362



His Holiness the Lama Incarnate of Thyangboche
(In one of the closet behind him, the Lama claims to have preserved the wirtings of Guru Nanak written in his own hands.)

GURU NANAK ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The great Siddhacharyas who introduced Buddhism into Tibet and China are known as Guru Rimchope or Precious Teacher. He is called the Lotus born and his spiritual birth is connected with the Holy Pond around Golden Temple, Amritsar.

Bhikshu Sangharishite: *A Survey of Buddhism*

2. I have discussed this in detail in my article, "*Siddha Gosht dā Itihāsik pichokad*", published in the Punjabi Magazine "*Sis Ganj*" May-June 1966. The arguments are repeated in the footnotes below, wherever there is an internal evidence to prove this theory.
3. savā-lakh parbat lañgh ke age Sumer jāe cadhyā jahāñ Mahadev kā asthān thā, tab age, Mahādeo ate Gorakh Nath ate Bhārthari, Gopi Chand, te Charpat baiṭhe the.

P.J. p 109

Bhai Vir Singh considers Sawalakh to be Kailash. Prof Sahib Singh in an article in *Punjabi Duniya* interprets Sawalakh to be 1, 25000 hills and he sarcastically remarks that so many mountains cannot be found in the whole world. All that the author of *Janam Sakhi* means to say is that Guru Nanak crossed the Shiwalik hills, in the present Himachal State. The Shiwalik hills are the lower Himalayan range made out of debris coming out of the Himalayas. It does not mean 1,25000 hills as Prof Sahib Singh explains, nor Kailash as Bhai Vir Singh suggests

4. tāñ Himachal nū udārī lītī; jāe Himachal upar khade hoe.
J.B. (MSSI 1848) f J.B. (Dacca MSS) f 130
eś taran Shiwalik parbat dā sair kar Gangodadī jā pahuñce.
T. G. K p 116

5. T. G. K. pp 116, 117
6. Kavi Santokh Singh in his *Suraj Prakash* says, because Baba Gurditta was born on *Kartik Purnamashi* and because his face resembled that of Guru Nanak, he was called *avatar* of Guru Nanak.

kitak lok im karat bicār
Sri Nānāk ko eh avatar.

Suraj Prakash Ras 5 Ansu 37

7. so unānū othē chad ke Babajī Gorakh Nath pas Sumer parbat gae.

J. M. S (MSS) f 370

8. othoñ updeś karke Sumer parbat de pās ik nagar sabh svarn kā utam sã, ar rājā parjā othoñ ee sabh hamesā juān rehañde se so othoñ de manukh mahāñ hī suñder rehañde se. jab unā ne sunyā sabh ān pairiñ pae.

ibid 367

9. See (i) *Tibetan yoga and Secret Doctrines* p 26

(ii) Maurixe Bloomfield: "On the Art of Entering Another's Body"

(iii) Hemchandra's *Yoga Shastra* (VI, 1)
The art of entering another's body (*parāpurakā-yāpravesa*) is preceded by the art of separating soul from body called *vedhaviddi*.

10. Edward C. Sachan: *Alberuni's India* Vol. I 246-7

11. pher jā cade Sumer par, siddh mandalī driśtī āi,
Caurāsī siddha Gorakhādi man aūdar gintī vartāi.

Bhai Gurdas, Vār 1: 28

pher Sumer te jāe cadhe; Siddhāñ dā jā darśan kītā;
caurāsī siddh jo ahe Gorakh thī adī, tinā de man gintī āi;
jo eh Bālā Sumer parbat te kioñ kar āyā hai

(J. M. S. (MSS) f 381

Guru Nanak according to Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Mani Singh met Gorakh, Charpat, Loharipa on the Sumer Mt. These are the characters of Siddh Gosht. At Achal Batala he had met Bhangar Nath a leader of the worldly type Yogis. His name does not occur in *Siddha Gosht*.

12. sidh puchan sun Bālīā, kauñ sakat toh ethe lyāi,
hauñ japyā parmeśro, bhau bhagat sang tādī lāi;
ākhan siddh sun Bālīā, apnā nāu tum deh batāi;
Baba ākhe Nāth jī, Nanak nām jape gati pāi.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1: 28

kavan tumai kavan nau tumārā
kaun mārāg kaun sūao.

GURU NANAK ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

sac kahoñ ardās hamārī hauñ saḍt janā bal jauñ
keh baisoh keh rehīai Bāle keh āvo keh jāho
Nānak bole sun bairagi kyā tumārā nāu.

Guru Nanak : *Siddha Gosht* 2.

Only the *Siddhas* of Sumer mountain who did not know what was happening in the world could ask such a questions: What is your name? where do you live? what is your faith? The *yogis* of Achal Batala already knew Guru Nanak and they could not have asked any of these questions. (Achal Batala is only a few miles from Kartarpur) In the dialogue between Bhangar Nath of Batala and Guru Nanak, quoted by Bhai Gurdas, it is quite clear that Batala *yogis* knew who Guru Nanak was. So this proves *Siddha Gosht* is Sumer Dialogue and not Achal Batala Dialogue.

13. sidh ākhan sun Bāliā
kiv darśan eh leve *Bāla*

Bhai Gurdas: 1.31

keh rehīai *Bāle*

Guru Nanak Sidha Gosht. 2

The Achal Batala Yogis became jealous and bitter as soon as Guru Nanak arrived because all the people started paying homage to Nanak. They address him in bitter terms and Guru Nanak gives replies in equally sarcastic tone. This again is an internal evidence that *Siddha Gosht* is Sumer dialogue.

14. phir puchan sidh Nanakā matlok vic kyā vartārā.

Var 1:29

sidh puchan lage ji mātlok da kī vartārā hai

J.M.S. (MSS) 382

15. Babe kehyā Nāthjī, sac candarmā kūd aṇdhārā
kūd amāvas vartyā, hauñ bhālan cadhyā saṁsārā
pāp girāsī pirthamī dhaul khaḍā dhar heṭh pukārā.
sidh chap baiṭhe parbatīn kaun jagat kau pār utārā.

Bhai Gurda *Vār* 1 : 30

16. kal kātī rāje kasāi dharam pañkh kar udar gayā
kūd amāvas sac caṇdramā dīse nāhi keh cadīā
hauñ bhāl vikunī hoī.

Guru Nanak: *Majh* p 145

17. kal āi kute muhī khāj hoā murdār gusāiñ
rāje pāp kamāvde ultī vād khet ko khāi,
parjā āndhi gyān bin, kūd kusat mukhon alāi,
Bhai Gurdas Var 1 30

18. rāja śiñh mukadam kute
jāe jagāen baiṭhe sute,
cākar neh dā pāen ghau,
rat pit kutoh cat jāh.
Guru Nanak, *Malar*: 1288

19. istrī purkhe dām hit bhāveñ āe kiṭhāun jāi,
Bhai Gurdas Vār 1: 30
istrī purkhā dā māyā nāl pyār hai, so bhāveñ purkh āve
bhāveñ jāve
J.M.S (MSS) f 382

istrī purkhe kḥate bhau
bhāven āvae bhāven jāo

Guru Nanak : Var Ramkali p 951

20. Almost parallel to the Ganga Chhu at a distance of a mile on the south, there is a line of gold deposits extending from the Rakshasha lake right up to the Manas. During the last mining operation it was said that one gold nugget as big as a dog was found. At the place where the nugget was found a Shhorten was constructed and is called Serko-Khiro. Swami Pranavananda: *Holy Kailas and Mansarowar* p 74-5

21. khapar ditā nāth jī pānī bhar laivan uṭh cālā
Baba āyā pāniai, diṭhe ratan jawāhar lālā
saṭgur agam agādh purkh kehḍā jhale gur kī jhālā.
phir āyā gur nāth jī pānī ṭhaud nahī us tālā.
Bhai Gurdas, Var 1; 1

22. siddhīñ mane bicāryā kiveñ darśan eh leve bālā
aisā jogī kalī mah hamre pañth kare ujīālā
Bhai Gurdas, Var I: 31

darśan bhekh karoh jogiñdra muñdra jholī khñthā
bāreh āntar ek sarevo khat darśan ik pañthā.

Guru Nanak: *Siddh Gosht* 9

GURU NANAK ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

23. *kis karan greh tajyo udāsi*
kis karan eh bhekh nivāsi
 Why have you renounced the world and put on this garb
 of an Udasi?

This question could be asked at Sumer meeting where Guru Nanak was putting on the garb of an *Udasi* and not at Achal Batala where he had come with ordinary clothes. At Kartarpur he had given up the *Udasi* dress. *Baba āyā kartarpur bhekh Udāsi sagal utārā*. When Baba (Nanak) came to Kartarpur he put off all robes worn in Udasi (travels) Bhai Gurdas : Var I, 45

Prof Sahib Singh in his Zeal to prove that the dialogue took place at Achal Batala interprets this line: "Why did you wear Udasi Bhekh then at Sumer?" I do not know how a question asked in the present tense: *kis karan eh (this) bhekh nivāsi* could be given such a grammatical twist, I do not know why the well known grammarian throws all the rules of grammar to the wind while explaining it. The whole question is directly asked in the present tense and *eh bhekh nivāsi*, means this Udasi garb which you are wearing now. This question clearly proved that the *Siddha Gosht* is a record of the Sumer dialogue.

24. *Śabad jitī siddh mandlī kitos apnā pañth nirālā*
 Bhai Gurdas *Var* 1 : 31

māryā sikkā jagat vic Nānak nirmal pañth calāyā
ibid 1: 45

25. *śabde kā nibedā sun tūñ audhū*
bin nāveñ jog nā hoī,
 Guru Nanak: *Siddh Gosht* 70


26. These Yogis were hated by the Tibetan Buddhists, and were even called *Rakshashas*. The *Rakshasha* lake near Mansarowar seems to be one of the place where these Yogis resided. With the growth of Tibetans as political power they could not freely move in the Tibetan territories. They lived in some far off caves away from the people. The snowmen are probably these groups of yogis who live in isolated Himalayan retreats.

GURU NANAK : FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

27. A letter from Dalai Lama states that there is nothing about Guru Nanak in the records of his office. Mr. Sonam Gyatso the Everest hero first revealed to me that the Tibetan sect to which Dalai Lama belongs is different from the sect which believes in Guru Nanak. I then studied the early history of Tibet and it became quite clear to me that the doctrines of Gelupa sect out of which Dalai Lama cult emerged, and the Karma-pa sect which is a follower and believer in Guru Nanak are as different from each other as orthodox Vaishnavism is from orthodox Sufism. The ignorance of the Dalai Lama who generally remains confined to his palace and is strictly disciplined in the history and theology of his own sect is quite obvious.
28. H. E. Richardson: *Tibet and its History* p 41
29. ibid Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa: *Tibet: A Political History* p 107
30. The information about the Chungtang monastery was given to me in detail by Mr. Sonam Gystso verbally. He is a devotee of the Karmapa-Rinchompe and has visited the place many times. This meeting with him was kindly arranged by CDR M.S. Kohli the leader of the Everest Expedition I am grateful to the Editors of the Sikh Review for sending two articles, one published, by Major N.S. Issar and the other of Sardar Sudinder Singh IDAS as yet unpublished. All the three statements are eye witness accounts.
31. Sudinder Singh IDAS: *Guru Nanak in Sikkim* (Unpublished)
32. Major N.S. Issar: *Rimpoche Nanak Guru: Sikh Review* Jan: 1965
33. When I suggested to Mr. Sonam Gyatse that it might have been uncooked rice he insisted on believing that it was cooked rice. Guru Nanak was a great prophet he said, and for him everything was possible.
34. M. S. Kohli : *Hindustan Times* : April 1965
35. I have not been able to get any first hand account about the monastery as yet.

CHAPTER 19

GURU NANAK GOES TO MIDDLE-EAST

 FOR OVER FIFTEEN years Guru Nanak, had travelled East, North, and South. Even though he wished to meet and reinspire human beings living in the remotest corner of the world, the thoughts that were uppermost in his mind were to plan, to consolidate his mission, and to centralize it. He was not leading a bizarre life of a wandering prophet. His travels were not self-imposed exiles from home and family. In his soul was burning restlessly the supreme Light in full effulgence of the perfect knowledge of God. He approached the darkest corners of ignorance and moral disorder to save a dying civilization by giving it new life and new thoughts. While the pundits and mullas roared like the sea, their lives were shallow and stagnant like the rotting marshes. He showed them the path to reality through poetry and music. Wherever he saw greed and evil, cruelty and crime, woe and misery, caused by the rich he stood there like a rock, and his sword of justice and truth fell heavily on the proud and the vain, the selfish and the cruel. Every blow from his flaming words was a blow of death to the old order and proclaimed rebirth of a new one. Wherever there was slavery, he gave a thundering call for freedom. Wherever there was idolatory, superstition, and ignorance, he went there as the torch bearer of eternal Light and living God, Who spoke to every man in his heart.

On the Banks of Ravi

On the way back from Sumer mountain and Shiwalik hills, Guru Nanak stopped on the banks of

river Ravi about 21 miles from Batala. The first to see him was a peasant woman. She was carrying some milk home. Being desperately poor she required every drop of milk for her home. But she was so impressed by the saintly looks of Baba Nanak and his companions, that she offered the milk to them. "Take it home young maid, your children will need it," said Nanak. This extremely poor woman had a very rich heart. She said, "I have no child, Babaji. Please accept this milk. I will bring more if you need. You seem to have been praying and meditating for long. I will feel greatly blessed by giving this humble offering."¹ "I accept the milk, blessed maid, and may God give you many sons and abundant of milk. May you be as rich as your noble heart and soul are," said Nanak. She went home and told how exalted she felt after meeting a great saint named Nanak. The name was known to all. Everyone had heard of Guru Nanak of Talwandi who had travelled to distant lands and had been acclaimed as an *avatara* by the Hindus and as an apostle by the Muslims. People flocked to have a glimpse of him and to seek his blessings. The next day Doda, husband of the peasant woman, also came. Guru Nanak asked him to be truthful and ever remember God. If he remained true to his conscience, and if he always avoided committing evil and indulging in falsehood God would bless him.²

The *zamindar* of this region, a Hindu Chowdhary named Karodi Mal, was seriously upset about the importance the people gave to Guru Nanak. To his utter chagrin this strange man, Nanak, had not even come to make a courtesy call on him. He had camped in his land. He was holding congregation without his permission in his land. The

crowds were swelling from hundreds to thousands, and people were even offering him money in abundance. He was distributing food and clothes among his labourers and spoiling them. Was he a magician, a mad man, or a saint as the people called him. Whatever he was he was no greater than him and he would show him who he was. "I will go and have him arrested for trespassing and occupying my land. I will make him fall on his knees before me," said he to himself.

When he proceeded towards Guru Nanak with some of his attendants he met an accident. He had to come home. The next day he again proceeded on horseback. He had not gone far when he fell from his horse and suffered serious injuries. His hardened conscience cracked. He had a feeling that some power beyond his control has given kick to his pride. If he tries again he may suffer still more. Someone advised him to approach Nanak with humility. Apostles of God are great in Spirit, and even the vanity and power of kings fade into nothingness before their power of Wisdom and inner power. Karodi Mal went on foot and with tears in his eyes fell at the feet of the Guru saying, "Master, have pity on me. Forgive my transgressions. Take all my riches. Take all my lands. They have made my soul sick and hardened my heart. Pity me, take them all and make me a sane and whole man. Dispel the pall of ignorance that has crushed my soul. Give me the peace of your wisdom and bless me that I may get rid of my greed and arrogance."³

Karodi Mal became one of the most devoted disciples of Guru Nanak. On his insistence Guru Nanak laid foundation of a new city which he named Kartarpur: the abode of the Creator, and the

creator of Sikhism made it the seat of his apostolic mission. Duni Chand of Lahore and other eminent disciples helped to build this city. While Kartarpur was under construction Guru Nanak planned his missionary journey to the Middle East.

On the way to Mecca

From Kartarpur Guru Nanak went to Sultanpur to meet his sister Nanaki. From there he came back to Talwandi. Rai Bular was delighted to see him, but he was pained to know that Guru Nanak had decided to shift the whole family to Kartarpur soon. "My son," said Kalu, "in your songs you always talk of inner treasures, and the precious jewels within us. You talk of the wealth that lasts beyond death. Why have you kept us deprived of that wealth? I am your father, and there is your mother. We gave everything we had to you. You have shared your spiritual wealth with everyone, my son, but we who are old and not far from the grave are still living as paupers." "All that I have, father, is the gift of the Divine Father and it is yours as much as it is mine," said Nanak. He imparted spiritual instruction to his father and mother.

Guru Nanak left for Mecca along with Mardana. He could not take any Hindu companion, because many Sufi saints had warned him that even his going to Mecca was fraught with dangers. The orthodox Muslims of Mecca might not tolerate him. The very sight of non-Muslims in the precincts of Mecca was likely to cause trouble. Sometime after Guru Nanak left for Mecca, Kalu's family and Mardana's family shifted to Kartarpur. On the day they left Talwandi, Rai Bular met Kalu and said "Now that you are also leaving Talwandi my sorrow is

great. When you were here I had some opportunities to meet Nanak, and now I do not know whether he will be able to come here at all.”²⁴ “Nanak has always loved you, Rai ji, more than anyone else. You recognised his greatness when my eyes were clouded with ignorance. He has always been much more your son than mine. He will always come to you when you remember him,” replied Kalu.

Every year many Indian Muslims went to Mecca on the Hajj pilgrimage, and the shortest route was by a ship which sailed from Porbandar or Dwarka. A very important historical document, *Makke-di-Gosht* (Guru Nanak's Dialogues at Mecca and Medina) clearly states: *Baba (Nanak) te Mardana, nagar Dw-rkā te hoe kar pascam disā ko gavan kītā*. It is during this itinerary to Dwarka that Guru Nanak stopped at a number of places in Gujarat and established his *Sangats* in these of places. Guru Nanak's historical shrines can still be found in Anjar, Kutch, Junagadh, Jain centres of Mt. Abu and Palitana and at Ramda twelve miles away from Dwarka. To the Yogis, Jains and Brahmins of Mt. Abu shrines he delivered the following lesson of purity:

*O Nanak, ablution will not purify thee,
Yogis, should clean their mouth with divine wisdom
A Brahmin with contentment and peace.
A householder with piety and charity,
The rulers with justice and mercy.
Water will not clean you heart
It might only slake your thirst.*

Guru Nanak Sarang: p-1240

On Girnar Mt. he met the *Siddhas* engaged in the

loveless game of *Haṭha Yoga*. This hill was associated with the story of lovers, Sorath and Bija, who died for each other's love. Here Guru Nanak spoke of the love of God :

*He who has not known Love,
Nor the beautitude of the Beloved,
Is like a guest visiting empty house.
He departs disappointed as he come.*

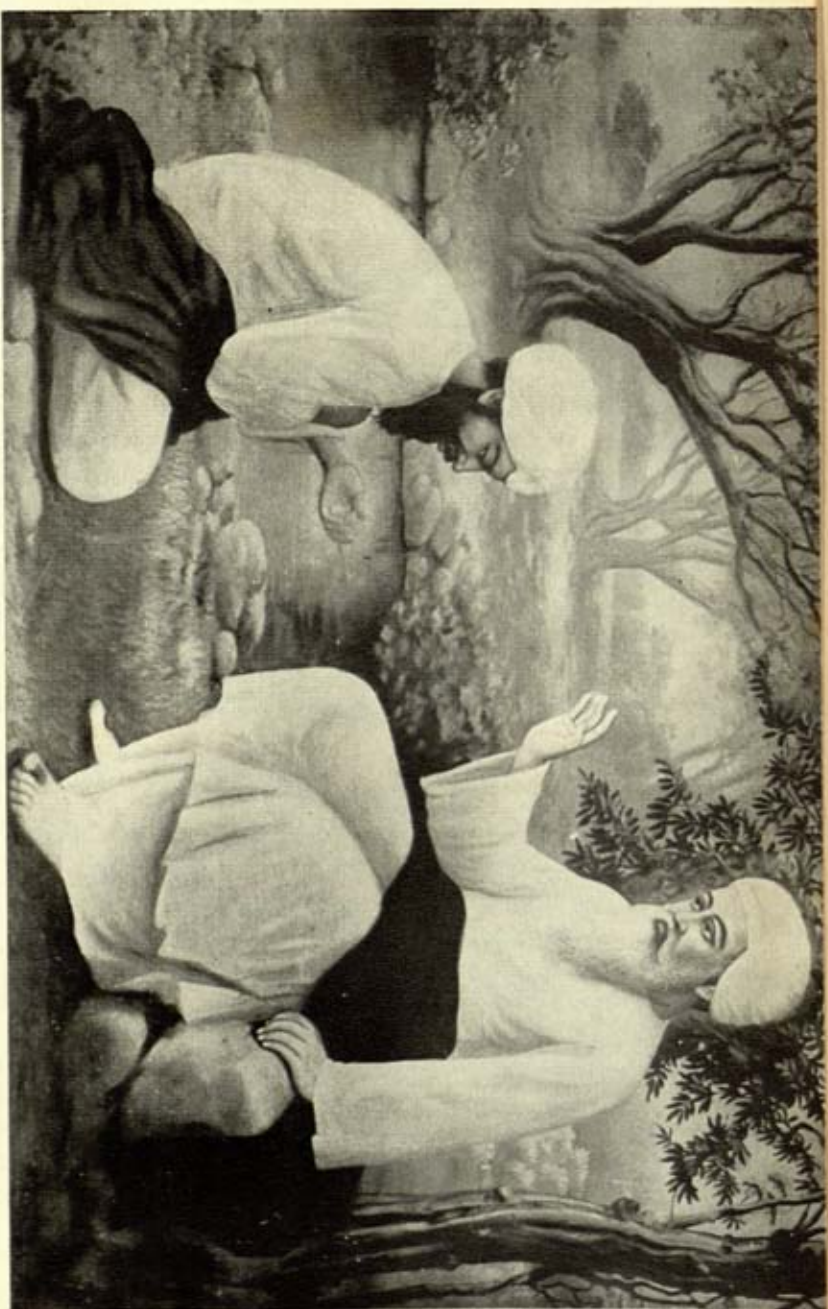
Guru Nanak, Sūhī p 790

Girnar was also visited by the Vaishnava saint Ramananda, whose footprints are preserved here. At Anjar he stayed with a man named Raghu Bhat who changed his residence to Guru Nanak's *dharmasala*. At Dwarka many pious Hindus were carrying stone images of their deity around their necks. About such pilgrims who wandered from place to place, paying homage to idols of various deities he said. :

*He worships stones,
And goes on pilgrimage,
In sorrow he wanders,
In forests and wilderness.
With a mind impure,
How can he attain purity.
He who realizes truth,
Attains honour and glory.*

Guru Nanak : Dhanasari p 696

He asked them to look within for the true image of the One God, and not let their mind wander in useless and lifeless beliefs and abstract symbology. As soon as Guru Nanak left India for Mecca he changed his dress to that of a Muslim divine going on Hajj. He wore blue robes, carried *āsā* (staff), a



Guru Nanak dressed as a Sufi pilgrim to Mecca

Upon this simple slab of granite didst thou sit,

discoursing of fraternal love and holy light, O Guru Nanak,

Prince among India's holy sons.

What song from the source of seven waters didst thou sing to cheer the soul of Iran,

What peace from Himalayas & lonely caves and forests

didst thou carry to the vine groves and rose gardens of Baghdad! Facing page 374

prayer carpet, and his own Book of Prayers (*Kitāb*). Mardana also wore the same dress. With his profound knowledge of Islamic thoughts and traditions, he looked like a very impressive a *Muwahid* or Sufi dervish.

From the shores of India Guru Nanak went by ship along with other Muslim pilgrims to the port of Jedda in Red sea. From here Mecca was not far off. The injunction of the Koran is: "Perform the pilgrimage (*Haj*) and the visit (*Umrah*) to Mecca for God. And if you are prevented, send such gifts as can be easy for you to obtain, and shave not your heads until the gifts have reached their destination." During the actual pilgrimage "one must not shave or anoint his head, remove his nails or kill any living being. He must not even stretch his body lest he may kill a vermin. He must take the vow to abstain from worldly affairs and continuously call on God."

In a Mosque in Mecca City

There is a narrow tract of land about 875 miles long on the eastern coast of the Red sea, with the tropic of cancer passing through its centre. It is called Hijaz (barrier). The Serat mountain runs parallel to the Red sea. Between the volcanic peaks of Serat there are depressions, and in one such basin stands the Ka'ba. For Adam this stone was a symbol of his own soul. Abraham, the prophet of the Jews laid the foundation of Mecca. For him, the Ka'ba was a symbol of One God. The first building made by Abraham was irregular in shape and without a roof. The building actually appeared cubic in shape and was therefore called Ka'ba, the Cube. God said to Abraham: "Associate naught with Me and purify

My House for those who make circuits, and stand and bow and prostrate themselves.”⁸

The House of Abraham's One God then became the house of many gods of pagan Arab tribes. The Jews tried to protect the sanctity of the place but failed to do so. The holy shrine of Mecca looked like a modern Hindu temple. Pagan polytheism and idolatory overpowered monotheism and the Book of Wisdom.

Centuries later the cause of One God and crusade against polytheism and idolatory was again taken up by a great and inspired prophet of the Almighty, Muhammed, the Trustworthy. His life was quite a contrast to that of the rich tribal leaders. “His clothing,” says a contemporary, “consisted of two pieces of cloth about four *ells* long, one of which was draped round him, while the other, called a *rida* was thrown across his shoulder like a toga. With the Light of God visibly shining in his heart, he fought for his revealed faith in One God relentlessly.”

“As his people were poor he lived like the poorest and the lowly. The smallest luxury seemed to him a theft from the fragile ones. He had no house of his own, but lived in turn in the modest huts that belonged to his wives. He did not even permit himself the expense of an oil lamp. “If we had oil, we ate it,” said the outspoken Aishah. He had no bed; he slept upon the mantle, which was folded twice and laid on the earthen floor. A scrupulously clean person he washed and mended his own garments and sandals. The touch of silk seemed to him a brand of fire, burning the self-indulgent wearer while others went in rags. He

would starve for days at a time so that the mendicants who surrounded him might have enough to eat. He would tie a stone on his stomach to allay the pangs of hunger as poor Arabs so often did. "The Apostle left this world.," said one of his companions, "without once eating adequately. He fought the battles of reconsecration of Mecca with the only weapon of God's assurance and grace, and he fought the inner battle of his life with humility and poverty."

Outside the precincts of Ka'ba, and its outer walls there was a mosque where the pilgrims from India rested when they came for the Hajj pilgrimage. The keeper of this mosque was an Indian whose name has come down in Sikh records as Mulla Jiwan.⁹ It was his duty to keep the mosque clean, look after the pilgrims, and to wake them up in the morning for prayers. Some prominent Sufis and divines from India had also come there but on the day of arrival no one considered Guru Nanak and his companion in any way different from other pilgrims. The names of other Sufis from India as given in some records are Pir Bahauddin, of Multan, Pir Jalal-ud-din of Uch and Gauns Kutab Din.¹⁰

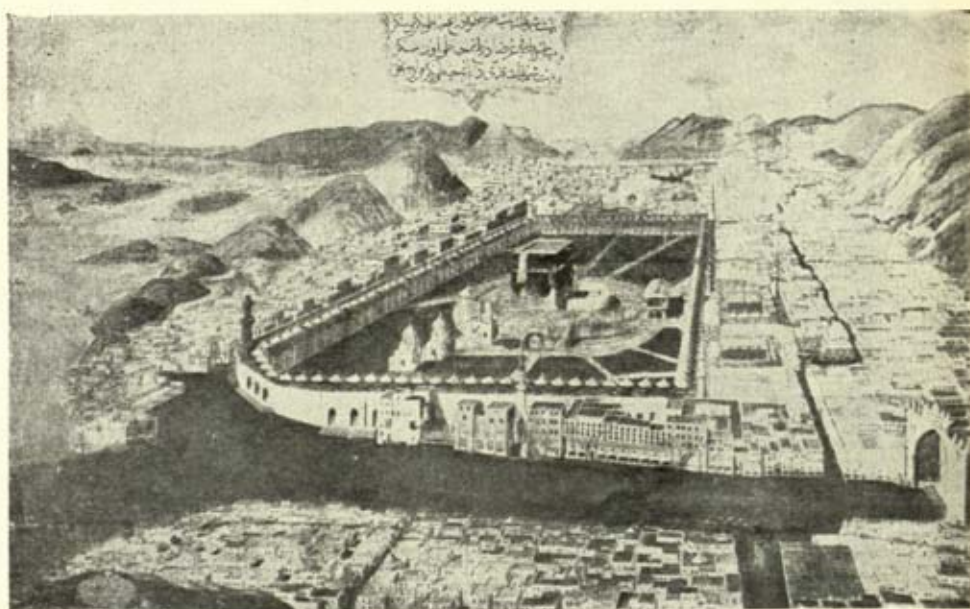
All the Indian pilgrims went to sleep in this mosque soon after the evening prayers. In the dark hours of dawn Jiwan got up and lighted his lamp. As he passed through the corridor his eyes fell on a pilgrim who was sleeping with his feet towards the Ka'ba. How dares this man sleep with his feet towards the Ka'ba? If he does not know the etiquette he must be a *kafir* (heretic) and not a pious Muslim. If he knows it and is doing it consciously or unconsciously, he is worst. It was Guru Nanak, sleeping with his feet unconsciously

turned towards the Ka'ba.¹¹

Like a ferocious tiger Jiwan rushed towards Nanak and gave him one kick. His shouts and curses woke up everyone. The frightened Mardana sat up terribly confused. "You *kafir*," said Jiwan "how dare you sleep with your feet towards the Ka'ba." Having kicked Nanak, he caught hold of him and dragging him from his feet, turned them in another direction. To his and everyone's amazement, Ka'ba, the House of God turned in that direction. "My friend," said Nanak, "Muhammed the Apostle has said: "Unto Allah belong the East and West, and whosoever direction you turn there is Allah's countenance." (Koran 2 : 115). In every direction is the House of God. Turn my feet in the direction it is not."¹² Jiwan thought that his eyes were deceived by an apparition. He turned the feet of the Master all round. He saw the Ka'ba, the House of God in all directions.¹²

Awestruck, by this subjective experience of an objective reality, terribly shaken by this *muajza* (miracle of God) to exalt a divine Apostle, Jiwan and the Hajjis who were awake by now, fell at the Master's feet and sought his forgiveness for treating him so recklessly.¹⁴ Guru Nanak got up and without uttering a word performed ablution and then burst into a thanksgiving song, to the Lord who had by the saving of a miracle protected him from physical harm. The Qazis, the Hajjis, and the Mullas grouped around him and started questioning him.

Guru Nanak is said to have described this experience at Mecca to his admirers in Baghdad, which was allegedly later recorded and inscribed by some Muslim disciples of the Guru. The following is the



Mecca in the Middle Ages

facing p. 378

من مذكرة في ملكهم
 بينما كنت جالساً على ملكهم روي قدني امام الحرم الشريف اذ جاءني خادم
 اليّ صارخاً يقول يا رب ابراهيم الفقيه ربي رافع اعداءك عن
 باب الحرم فاجبته بهدوء مهلاً لماذا تزجرني بكلام مزيج وقد
 صولت قدس عن الباب واذا الباب تسعيراً يا عايناً وحررت قدس
 فلما رافقهم بعد ذلك اشفه الشريف اقبل مقتدياً عليّ في استقبال
 ربي يقول يا الشيخ الفاضل اعذرني بما استمر من غلبتي الكلام
 وذلك من فضل رب العالمين وتبركاً بالبيتي عليه السلام

Inscription Plate I

"Suddenly thereafter the door of the Haram began
 to turn in the direction in which my feet were moving."

facing p. 379

the statement attributed to Guru Nanak, the last words of which appears to have been added by the Muslim scribe who recorded it:

"When I was in the revered Mecca with my feet towards the sacred Harem, a servant of the shrine suddenly rushed out and irritatingly said, 'O Fakir, withdraw your feet from the direction of the holy Haram and sit properly.' I asked him composedly, why should he speak so harshly and I withdraw my feet, and suddenly thereafter the door of the Haram began to turn in the direction in which my feet were moving. The servant apologised when he saw this extraordinary happening and the Light dawned on him. He kissed my hand and apologised for his harsh language. All this happened was due to God's grace and prophet's blessing, on whom be God's mercy." (Plate I)

This appears to be the version believed by all Muslims who had met and revered Nanak even after his death. The last words, 'prophet's blessings on whom be God's mercy' are typically of some Muslim devotee and have been written in the manner Muslim divines and medieval Muslim scholars generally wrote. Whenever they mentioned the name of the prophet, they added to it such words "on whom be God's blessings." Guru Nanak has never mentioned any prophet or *avatar* in his writings, genuine or apocryphal, in this way. He accepted Mohammed as a great apostle of God worthy of the same reverence as other great messengers of God, but he did not accept him as *his* prophet.

The scribe who has written this statement appears to be a pious Muslim who has recorded it in the typical Muslim style. There is no reason to doubt the rest of the statement recorded either from previous written record or from oral statement passed

on by a contemporary. Just as Buddhists see Guru Nanak as an *avatara* of Buddha, the Hindus call him *avatara* of Janaka, these pious Muslims considered Nanak as an apostle of Islam. This only shows that Nanak was considered apostle of Truth by all higher religions. This inscription however brings out three important facts : (1) Guru Nanak not only visited Mecca and Baghdad but he was respected as an Apostle and Messenger of God even after he left, and the miracle that took place at Mecca was strongly believed. (2) The story that the Ka'aba turned in the direction his feet moved, symbolising that God is in all directions, as even the Koran states, was believed by the Muslims of Baghdad for nearly a century later. (3) The most important fact it brings out is that Guru Nanak did not claim it to be a *his* miracle but declared it to be a miracle of God, It was a miracle which enlightened the Muslims of that place of the all pervading spirit of God, and saved Nanak from meeting the fate any other non-Muslim might have met there.

In the law of Islam (*shari'at*) the first act among the rights of God is *Imān* (Faith) and the Qazis and Imams of Mecca questioned him about his *Imān*.¹⁵ They saw Guru Nanak was carrying some Book of Wisdom of which they knew nothing, they asked "Open thy Book of Wisdom and tell us who are greater in matters of religion : Hindus or Muslims?"¹⁶ "Listen Hajjis," said Nanak, "Without virtuous living both are doomed. Hindus and Muslims who quarrel on the question of faith each thinking their God to be exclusively their own and superior to that of the other, lead a life of false faiths, which like fading colours have a deceptive brightness. To quarrel in the name of God and religion, to think *Allah* and *Ram* are different, to hate and condemn others through wilful misunderstanding is the path of

Satan (*rāh-shaitānī*) and not the path of Truth."¹⁷

"There is One God, and there is One Prophet," said Qazi Rukn-ud-din. You do believe in One God but do you not believe in the One prophet (Rasul)? How can any one be saved without the prophet?" Guru Nanak replied: "There is but One God and His Wisdom (*kalam*). In the creation of God there are many prophets. Your faith can save you only if your intentions are pure, and your heart is sincere."¹⁸

The Qazis and Hajjis addressed Guru Nanak as "*Nanak Hindvi* or *Nanak Hindki*"¹⁹ If he was neither a Muslim nor a Hindu according to their notion of a Muslim and Hindu what was he? Why had he come to Mecca all the way?" With his characteristic humility he replied, "I have come all the way to meet noble divines of this holy city, and feel blessed."²⁰ Qazi Rukn-ud-din of Mecca then put a pertinent question: "Do you not think there is sufficient religious wisdom here in the holy place of Mecca? Do you not think Muhammed, our prophet, has said the last word about *Allah*? What have you to teach us?"²¹ "A prophet is one who brings a message of divine truth from God. Muhammed was a true prophet and he did bring the message of truth. Had you been practising the truth he preached, and lived the exalted life he lived, I would not have come. Because people even in this holy place have forgotten the true message of God, I have come to fulfil the Will of God, in the same way, prophet Muhammed came."²² "What are the fundamental principles of divine Faith (*Imān*)?" asked Rukandin. "There are four fundamental principles of true faith in God", said Guru Nanak:

1. Reverence and association with divine sages (*bazurg*)
2. Charity by paying tithe (*zakāt*)
3. To keep away from sins and evils,
4. Remembrance of God

The Qazi said, "We believe that a holy man should live in silence, perform penance, keep vigil all night, give charity, be regular in fasts. What is your opinion about our spiritual discipline?" Guru Nanak replied :

*Live in silence for a thousand days,
Perform penance for a thousand days,
Give in charity a thousand bag fulls,
Keep vigil for a thousand nights
Fast for thousand days at a stretch,
If you cause injury to anyone
You will not be accepted in the court of God.*

And may we know said a Sufi saint, your opinion about the four paths : *shariat*, *mārfat*, *tarīqat*, and *haqīqat* (Law, Knowledge, Spiritual discipline, and Path of truth). Guru Nanak said "Just as people come from all directions for the pilgrimage to God, so the House of God, the ultimate Truth can be approached from many directions. The fundamental thing is that there should be sincerity of purpose, and consistent effort to reach the goal."

"Tell us Baba Nanak," said Rukn-ud-din, "What are the characteristics of a divine Sage (*bazurg*)" Guru Nanak replied :

*A Sage (bazurg) is absolutely pure and free in his motives and intentions.
A Sage seeks the company of the holy and enlightened.*

GURU NANAK GOES TO MIDDLE-EAST

A Sage delights in the good qualities of others and tries to benefit from them.

A Sage contemplates God. This is his spiritual food.

A Sage covets not any woman except his legal wife. His relations with other women are governed by profound respect.

A Sage respects those who are intellectually and morally superior to him.

A Sage does not make a foolish display of his spiritual powers. He keeps them concealed and lives in utter humility.

A Sage keeps away from evil men.

J.M.S. (MSS) f. 469

Rukn-ud-din and other Sufi saints, Qazis, and Mullas were profoundly impressed. As the pilgrims were to soon move to Medina, they asked Guru Nanak to leave one of his personal possessions as a sacred relic in the city of Mecca. Guru Nanak gave them his wooden slippers.²⁶ These wooden slippers were preserved as relics of Nanak Shah the apostle from India for a long time. They were still at Mecca during the life time of the fifth Guru Arjan, as Bhai Gurdas bears witness to its historicity. Who kept them and what happened to them is a fact shrouded in mystery.

From Mecca Guru Nanak went to Medina. There again there were long discussions with Guru Nanak with a number of pilgrims and divines. They are recorded in *Makke dī Gosht*. Later interpolations by some *Udasi* copyists can easily be detected. These dialogues show two things. Firstly they reveal a very close affinity between monotheism and ethical and spiritual doctrines of Islam and Sikhism, a fact which has been clouded by the unhappy political relations between the Sikhs and Muslims of Punjab for

some time past, and serious estrangement after partition of the country. Secondly they reveal Guru Nanak's profound knowledge of the doctrines of Islam. He was able to establish that his religion was something quite distinct and different from the popular orthodox Hinduism. As it had a close affinity to Islam, they also felt he was reviving the original Spirit of Islam in his own way. These dialogues also show the immense spiritual powers he exercised over the people of that period.²⁷

In the Arab world there are still some tribes, notably the Sabian tribes and Abid *fakirs* who acknowledge Guru Nanak to be their prophet. They keep hair and beard and observe a code of conduct which is close to that of Sikhism.²⁸ If the divines of these tribes are contacted and their history investigated, a good deal of historical information can be acquired.

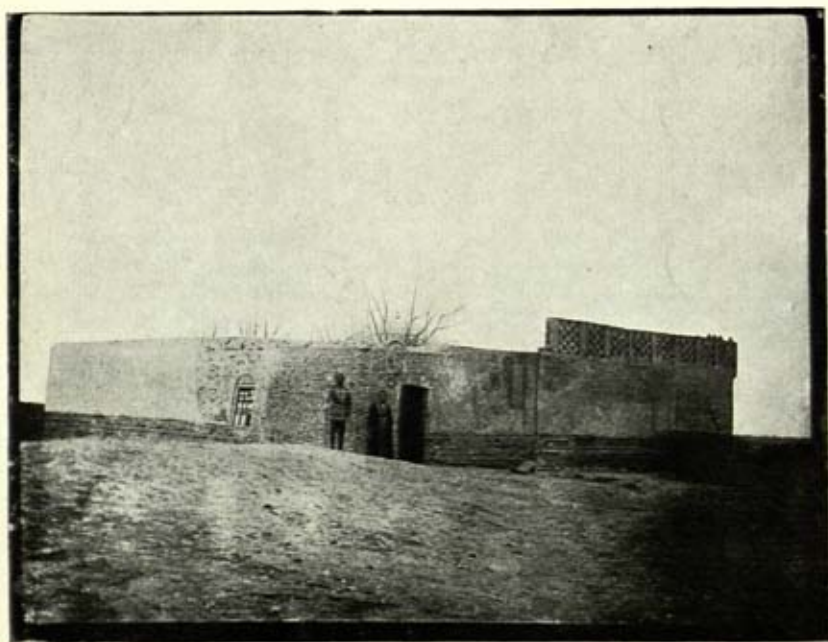
Guru Nanak in Baghdad

From Medina, an old highway goes straight to Baghdad. This lovely city, situated on the banks of Tigris was summer retreat of Kings during Persian monarchy. Yakut says it was, "the capital of Islam, the eye of Iraq, the seat of empire, the centre of beauty culture, and arts." The city was circular in shape, surrounded by a strong wall and a deep moat, pierced by four gates with massive iron doors. Each gate was surmounted by a gilt copula, and was of sufficient height to allow the passage of a horseman holding aloft his lance. Inside, and at some distance from the centre of the city, came the inner walls, within which arose majestically the imperial palace with its golden gates. Not far from the residence of the Caliph and with the enclosure, stood the Cathedral Mosque, and the



Guru Nanak's Shrine in Baghdad (front view)

facing p. 384



Guru Nanak's Shrine in Baghdad (side view)

facing page 385

mansions of the princes and nobles.”²⁹ In this city of marble palaces there were many colleges and Sufi *khanqas*, and the most important among them was the college of Qadiriya School. The founder of this school was Abdul Qadir of Gilan in North Iran. At the age of 18 Abdul Qadir studied at Baghdad and was principal of a Hambelite school of law. By his spiritual influence and liberal outlook he converted many Jews and Christians to Islam. He was greatly respected for his piety, toleration, learning and powers of speech. He died in 1166 A.D. at the age of 91. One of his *sajjadanashin* had established a college of this most important liberal order of the Sufis and like the founder was also addressed as *Dastgir Pir*.

When Guru Nanak reached Baghdad along with Mardana and some other Sufi companions he camped on the outskirts of the city. Early in the morning, when the whole city was asleep, and the time of call for prayers was drawing near, Guru Nanak climbed a minaret and gave a shrill and sensational call. It was recited in the same way as the Muslims give their call in the quiet hours of dawn. The throbbing and melodious voice of Nanak woke up everybody. It was a human voice but never had they heard such a thrilling and stunningly enchanting voice. It was the call, yet the meaning was not clear to them. Even though they did not catch the words, the call had a magnetic and gripping effect on all who heard it. Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sākhī* records the call as follows:

*gur bar akāl,
sat sirī akāl,
cit caran nām,*

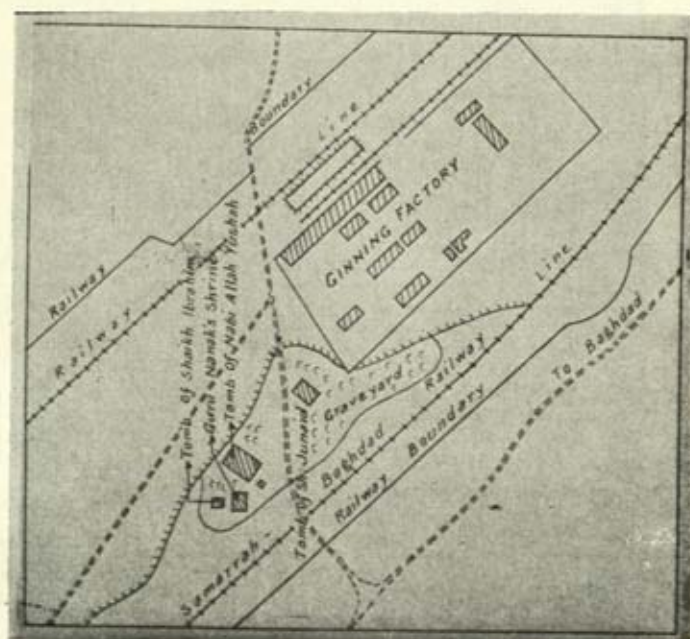
GURU NANAK : FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

*ghar ghar pranām,
prabhu kṛpāl,
jo sarba jiwāl.*

*Lo, the Eternal is Enlightener Great,
Lo, the Eternal is Truth Ultimate,
Remember His Name in every heart,
Bow to Him in every home,
Compassionate is the Lord.
Giver of sustenance to all.*

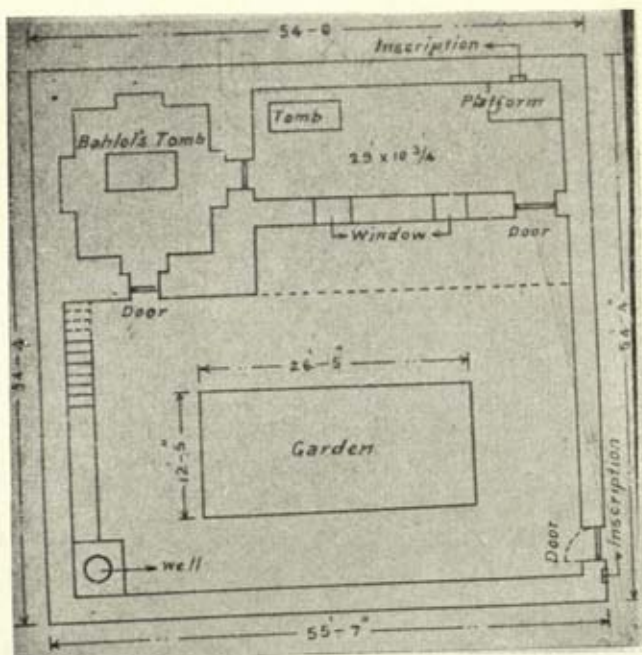
J.M. S. (MSS) f. 479

The whole firmament was filled with throbbing strains of some celestial music. The *Dastgīr Pir*, the *sajjadanishin* of Abdul Qadir of Gilan, the Qazis, the Mullas, and Sufis woke up and felt drawn towards the divine Man who had given such a call. The call was repeated again and again. People, says the *Janam Sakhi*, stood like statues, dumb in enchantment as if they silently wanted to hear it again and again.³⁰ When the call ended every religious divine of Baghdad went in search of this strange person. Was he a human being or an angel? When the *Qadriya* Saint saw him, he asked: "Who is this strange God-intoxicated *fakir* and from where has he come? What apostolic grace is there around his face glowing with mystic intoxication?"³¹ "He is Nanak the *dervish* from India," said a companion who had followed him from Mecca. "He recognises but one God and says all apostles are created in His image and in every heart shines the Light of God equally. He says God is in every place and in every direction."³² Another Sufi saint who was profoundly attracted was Pir Bahlol Dana. While others asked Nanak one theological question after



Site of Guru Nanak's Shrine in Baghdad

facing p. 386



Ground Plan of Guru Nanak's Shrine in Baghdad

(It measures 54 feet and 4 inches on the East and West; 54 feet and 6 inches on the North; and 56 feet, 7 inches on the South)

facing p. 387

another, he remained silent, and listened to every word of the Master. Every word Guru Nanak said went down to the depths of his soul and there he wanted to preserve it and contemplate on its mystery and wisdom.

Guru Nanak sang a song. In that song he sang the glory of God and His creation in which there were many universes and in each universe there were countless planets with human creation and super-civilizations like ours on them. These ideas became the subject of discussion with *Dastgir Pir* of Baghdad. Said the *Dastgir Pir*: "The Quranic belief of a Muslim is in seven firmament and fourteen regions but you say that there are countless regions and earths and many have intelligent beings as our earth has; can you prove it?"³³

To everyones surprise Guru Nanak agreed to do so not only theoretically but practically by showing a super-civilization on another planet to his young and pure minded son. It is recorded that not only did Guru Nanak show the *pir's* son, one planet with advanced super-civilizations on it, but brought some concrete material evidence of the highly civilized human beings on the other planet so that this daring experimental revelation could not be dismissed as magic or hulloination of the young boy.³⁴ The first hand experiences of this young lad were able to convince everyone about the existence of super-civilizations on other planets, though not on the moon. The sun and moon according to Guru Nanak serve a specific purpose of the civilizations on this earth.³⁵ Their purpose is to regulate day and night and all that is associated with it. They are two lamps of the earth.

Guru Nanak's theory of super-civilizations which can be heavily documented from the writings of the Gurus and Sikh apostles, can be summed up as follows: "The universe or what the scientists call galaxy, is not the only universe in space. There is a universe beyond universe and in each universe or galaxy there are innumerable planets or earths like ours and of these earths some have living beings. Earth has its own sun and moon and they serve as the lamps of the earth. (*cañd sūraj doe dīve*). The civilization of each inhabited earth is evolving very much on the same pattern as ours. Some civilizations are very advanced while others are behind us. Some are far behind us. A very important common factor between these space super-civilizations and our own civilization is that the moral, political and spiritual evolution of the living beings of these civilizations is progressing through a succession of prophets, saviours, *boddhisatvas*, *avatars*, thinkers and sages. The moral and spiritual life of all the living beings on all the earths in the universes is similar. The prophets, the sages and men of genius have not only the task of redeeming this earth but also many other earths. This was the theory proved by Guru Nanak sometimes in 1517 A.D. or there about. It is for science to search the truth. Man may sometime land on some super-civilization in the next three or four decades. It is also possible that some people from other planets may land on our good earth, and prove that it is neither so good nor so civilized as we think.

Mian Mir, a devoted friend of Guru Arjan was born and brought up at Baghdad among these Qadiriya saints, and it is quite possible that as Guru Nanak's son lived upto the time of Mian Mir, the *Dastgir Pirs*'



Top: Distant view of Inscription Plate II



Bottom: Close view of Inscription Plate II

"A wish has been fulfilled by the Holy and High Providence; that this happy murid of God (Baba Nanak) has started a fountain of grace issuing new waters in the land."



Inscription Plate III

This Inscription stone was on the outside of the Baghdad Shrine. Worn out by weather, all words are not decipherable. It is probable that Swami Anandacharya commented on this Inscription in his book "Snowbirds".

facing p. 389

GURU NANAK GOES TO MIDDLE-EAST

son might have been living up to the time of Mian Mir and gave him first hand account of Guru Nanak's spiritual influence. I believe that even before coming to India Mian Mir had been strongly influenced by Guru Nanak's faith and beliefs. That accounts for the deep reverence in which he held Guru Arjan and his son, and also for the decision of Guru Arjan to ask, Mian Mir to lay the foundation of the Golden Temple at Amritsar. This actually accounts for the close relations and the profound friendship between Mian Mir and Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind.

There was a stone not far away from the Tigris, on which Guru Nanak sat everyday and delivered his inspiring sermons. Every day, the *Dastgir Pir*, and Bahlol Dana, another Sufi saint, sat near the Master, imbibed every word of his wisdom. There were illuminating discussions, inspiring songs, and mystic communion between the Master and his admirers. When Guru Nanak came away Pir Bahlol Dana never forgot that vision and mystic illumination and he sat there in front of the stone with a few personal relics that the Guru had left, for sixty long summers and winters. When he died he asked to be buried near the place sanctified by the holy feet of his Master, Baba Nanak. On the stone his disciples engraved the story. There were two inscriptions one outside the shrine and one on the stone. The one on the stone is still there and the other has faded away or gone with the demolishen of the wall. The present inscription is in Arabic and Turki. Its free translation is: "*Behold, a wish has been fulfilled by Holy and High Providence. That the building of Baba Nanak has been newly built with the help of seven aulat (great walis). That the happy*

murid of God (Baba Nanak) has started a fountain of grace issuing new water in the land" 917 Hijri (Plate II). Rukn-ud-din was so impressed by Baba Nanak's learning, moral and spiritual greatness that he is said to have accompanied Guru Nanak to India and gone back just before or after the death of the Guru. At Baghdad he continued writing about Guru Nanak and preaching his intensely human ideals of peace and unity. Fragments of his writings have come down to us as follows: "*He who has effaced himself has found everlasting life. Whoever practices piety in this world, in the next life he shall find peace in both eyes. When a man dedicates his acts to God, God takes him among His chosen slaves. He received as God's gift, felicity, intellect, treasure of love and grace, knowledge and honour in both the worlds.* (Plate IV) *All religions should be studied to discriminate good from evil. Tour round the world should be undertaken in the spirit of a faqir or a poor man, He (Nanak) spent most of his life in Hindustan.* (Plate V)

After summing up Guru Nanak's views, Rukn-ud-din pays the following glowing tribute to Nanak's learning, scholarship, fearlessness and character. "*Nanak Faqir attained proficiency in all knowledge and especially in the literature of Islam, and the commentary on Koran, the religious beliefs and Arabic and Persian literatures, and was thoroughly advanced in them. He fought to finish oppression which was prevailing in the world. He was the standard-bearer of Truth and eradicator of the false. He would get the poor his rights and smash the vanity of the proud. He was the best specimen of piety and of a traveller.*" (Plate VI) *His morality was like a pure soul containing chosen and transparent gems, and his soul was so transparent as if it was unconcerned, having no connection whatever with the insipid and tasteless things of the world.*

سليم من المحن ومن زهد في الدنيا مرة عيناه في مودة عند دار السلام
العبد المورث الى الله تعالى جعله من عباده المخلصين لم يقبل كثر العباد
وكثير الازفاده العلم شرق في الدنيا ومودة

Inscription Plate IV

"He who has effaced himself has found life everlasting."

fa cing p. 350

افکار و انساپه

الطلع الى علوم كل دين من كليات ليميز الخبيث من الطيب
ولا يرضى لنفسه الا ان يكون سائحا في كلور كمسكين
ادعاهر بيل ر بقدر قصه اعظم حياه في هذه سنان

عن

Inscription Plate V

"All religions should be studied to discriminate good from evil."

facing p. 391

من مذكراته وحياته
 قال لا دين يحكم عن حياة نال فقير انه وضع بيان العلم
 وراسيا علومه بالسلامة وتفكيره كلام الله تفرق لعظم وعقايده فيه
 وقد وب في اللغة العربية والفاصلة تقدم تقدما باها وكافح
 في كل جماع الظلم التي كانت منتشرة في البلاد معلما
 لوالحق زهقا للبال فقير للطعيف حتى كان الحق في حياته
 مدد للفقير في اعتدائه واستراكه للومات معطيا في مثال
 للغة والنزاهة والبياعة في البلاد

Inscription Plate VI

Nanak Fakir attained proficiency in all knowledge He fought to finish
 oppression which was prevailing in the world. He was the Standard
 bearer of Truth and eradicator of the false. He would get the poor their
 rights and smash the vanity of the proud.

facing p. 390

اخلاقه

روح زكية جمعت من جواهر نفيسة شفافه خلقت
 من كل شيء له علاقة بالمثل النافه الدينيه اذ اني
 لوانني بين صدره الحنون وطالما يزور المرصع
 رحمة الفخر وكدر بار والفضل والعلما

Inscription Plate VII

His morality was like a pure soul containing chosen and transparent gems. The Baba's charming and animate talk still rings into my ears.

facing p. 391

GURU NANAK GOES TO MIDDLE-EAST

The Baba's charming and animate talk still rings into my ears. He would cure the sick, and serve the fakir and the learned. (Plate VII) "He used to compose poems in Arabic and liked men of letters and poets. His thoughts provided basis to every literature and every poet, the glory of which is reflected in his poems. The rhyme itself was attracted towards his thoughts as if they were a magnet." (Plate VIII)

It appears Rukn-ud-din wrote a fairly detailed account of Guru Nanak's itinerary and these are fragments from it. Upto the second decade of this century there was in the Baghdad shrine of Guru Nanak a book in Arabic containing some information about Baba Nanak, but it has disappeared. A search in the libraries of the Middle East and the records of the *khanqas* is bound to yield some research material. No one has ever tried.

It appears Guru Nanak expressed a great love for the beauty and grandeur of Baghdad, and the love between him and the sufi saints like Bahlol Dana and the Dastgir Pir, *sajjadanashin* of Abdul Qadir Gilani, was so deep and profound that whatever expression Guru Nanak gave to it took the form of apocryphal literature. The gist and the spirit of what Guru Nanak might have said is certainly there, but it is difficult to accept the suggestion given by these that our inner voice dictated Nanak to go all the way to Baghdad and meet Bahlol Dana, or that Nanak accepted Mohammed as his prophet, or that he paid homage to the tomb of any saint. Guru Nanak's views are well known from his own writings to be against such worship of *avatars*, prophets and tombs. It is however but natural that some centuries later Muslim scribes should believe Nanak to be an orthodox Muslim Sufi just as the Buddhists in Tibet believe

him to be *avatara* of Buddha and Hindus either believe him to be *avatara* of Janaka or to denigrate him, assert that he was the disciple of Kabir. Yet the following inscriptions convey the poetic fervour of Guru Nanak, his love for the beauty of Baghdad, and his personal affection for Sufis who became his most devoted friends; On Baghdad his views are expressed through the following poem:

*"O Baghdad, the land of Islam,
Why have you been taken away from me
As you were like mirror to me,
When I think of Bahlol,
My eyes get wet and my heart beats rapidly
I wish I had met you in India
Sight can never be compared to blindness
I reject all tradition and hearsay,
Hearing can never compensate for vision. (Plate IX)*

The following three inscriptions are attributed to Nanak. No one who has read even hundred poems of Guru Nanak can ever accept them to be wholly his. They have been given too much of an orthodox Islamic colouring and there is an implied suggestion that he hated the Hindus and wanted to keep away from them. This is certainly not true. For the purpose of further investigation we are giving these apocryphal statements below:

"In all countries I am greeted as a faqir. I have travelled to far off lands. I came to Baghdad, the holy city, to see Bahlol Dana who has been told by a voice from the Unseen that Nanak Faqir who has great affection for you is coming to you in the hope of seeking forgiveness (from God) (Plate X) The goodness of the people blossoms in travel who under-

شعاره وشعوره
 يعلم الشعر العربي يحب الشعر لا يبارك لعل اريب بوجه عام
 رلعل شاعر بوجه خاص فكرة اساسية تتجلى في كل ما تولده
 صريحة ما المكنز المعنا طيس يجلب القوافي لا فغار و كاسية
 وترجيه الرأفة البشار

Inscription Plate VIII

He (Baba Nanak) used to compose poems in Arabic and liked men of letters and poets. The rhyme itself was attracted towards his thoughts as if they were a magnet.

facing p. 392

من كلامه بعد قرعة بغداد

اذا به بغداد يا دار السلام .. المبعثني عني امرأة على الطريق

اذا ذكرت بھلول احيى سفتي .. رطبي ونودي صار في الطريق

لكن وصلك بهدشان مجبوا .. فأت عتي ومن العمى كالنصراني

دع الرويات واهجارها طبع .. فان ليس عينا من السوء كالخبري

Inscription Plate IX

When I think of Bahlol my eyes get wet.

facing p. 393

take it for God Himself, like a rose flower which cannot be plucked. The misguided of India call me to themselves. Thanks to Almighty, the Master of Heavens that I am a man of faith. The Creator has enabled Nanak to stay away from the hordes of Satan and he cleansed our hearts. They equate Satan to God; but our Creator is pure and no one is like Him." (Plate XI) "The above verses were composed when I came to the mausoleum of Bahlol Dana 'Abbasi' and stayed at 'Abhasiya Takiyah in Mullah Sihayat-ul-Khizran' on my way back from Mecca on 17th Rab-ul-Awwal, 917 Hijri. I stayed up to the month on Rajab and then in the company of my dear friend Rukn-ud-din I started towards Hindustan.' (Plate XII)

The date given in these inscriptions if accepted upsets all our dates. Even the pattern of *Udasis* will change, if this date is really correct. I have given all these records for further investigation. They do not leave any doubt that our *Janam Sākhīs* are quite correct in stating that Guru Nanak visited Mecca, and the miracles mentioned were believed to have taken place even by the people of Baghdad, and that he met Rukn-ud-din a well known saint who came to India along with Baba Nanak and then went back. During the time of Guru Arjan, when Mian Mir came to India, some direct descendants of Pir Bahlol Dana came to India to meet Guru Nanak's successor, Guru Arjan. They did not go back. They stayed at Sialkot where there descendants are still living. It is quite possible that they came along with Mian Mir.

In Turkey, Cairo, and Istanbul

Bhai Gurdas indicates in his *Vārs* that after his visit to Baghdad in the Middle East, there was no

place of importance which Guru Nanak did not visit. There are some indications that he visited Cairo where, during the war the Sikh soldiers were shown a place on the outskirts of the town where there was a stone memorial.³⁷ Guru Nanak might have visited Jerusalem. No direct evidence is available at present. But in Jerusalem there lives a tribe which still deems Nanak Shah as their Apostle. The name Nanak Shah is even inscribed by them on some of their costly utensils and possessions.

In Turkey, Egypt or at Istanbul he is said to have met the Emperor of Rum. The Emperor of Rum at this time was Salim (1511-1520 A.D.). The *Janam Sākhis* call him a tyrant and compare him to Korah, the greedy tyrant of Koran (son of Musa's uncle: Sura 28-76-82). "Salim was a controversial figure. He was stern, inflexible, ferocious. He massacred 40,000 heretics in his land. Vazirs and generals lost their heads at seemingly the slightest failure. A standard curse came to be: "May you become Salim's vazir." His tastes were simple; he read widely, slept little and was uninterested in harem. "Salim's rule brought Ottoman Empire and the life of its people to the pinnacle of power and lustre."³⁸

After meeting Guru Nanak, this Korah of Rum, who could be either Salim I or one of his governors, was a changed man. He gave up cruelty and lust for wealth.

On his return journey Guru Nanak might have visited many Jewish, Christian and Muslim seminaries in Russian, Mongol and Chinese territory.

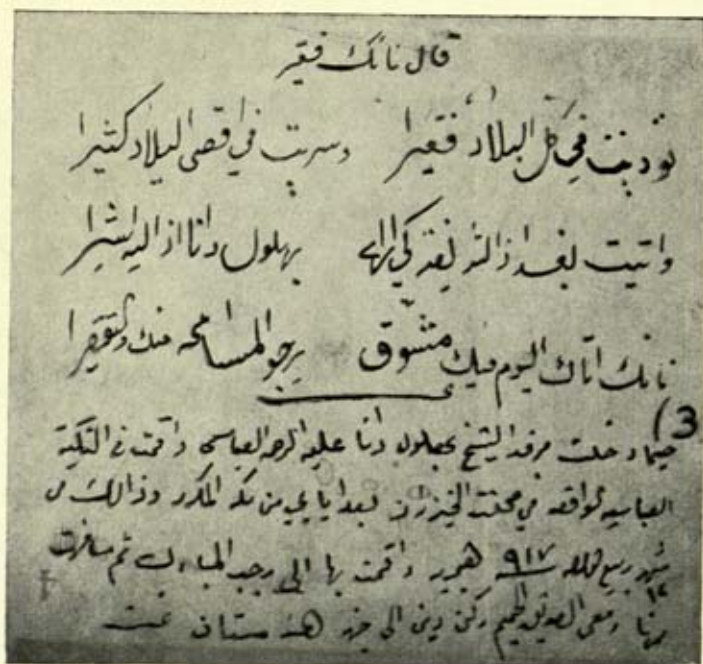
ومن كلامه

لله قوم في السباحة قسما .. كالورد لا لأنه لا يجنى
وطغاة هندستان يعوزي لهم .. شكر الله العرشاني مؤنسا
وكم نحن الاكوان ان قد نأثرت .. من حرب ذي الشيطان طهر طلبنا
اذ يجعلون مع الله شامكا .. حاشا شريك ان يكون لربنا

Inscription Plate XI

The goodness of these people blossoms in travel who undertake it for God Himself, like a rose flower which cannot be plucked.

facing p. 394



Inscription Plate X (Upper portion of the above Inscription)
In all countries I am greeted as a Fakir

Inscription XII (Lower portion)
 Then in the company of my dear Friend Rukn-ud-din
 I started towards Hindustan.

It is the local history of these seminaries which can throw some light on these facts. Some of these famous seminaries were on the route traversed by Guru Nanak. It is unbelievable that Guru Nanak avoided encounter with them when he went to places like Mecca, Madina and Baghdad where there was every risk of being killed as heretic.

I, however, doubt that Guru Nanak went so far as Nanking; nor is Nanking named after Nanak, as some would have us believe it on the basis of spurious evidence. The word Nanking simply means "Southern kingdom" The city was originally known as Kin-ling; under the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-25 A.D.) its name was converted to Tan Yang; by the Tang emperors (A.D. 618-907) it was styled Kiang Nan and Sheng Chow; by the first sovereign of the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368-1644) it was named Nanking which simply means "Southern Capital". It was the seat of Imperial court only during the reigns of the first emperors of the Ming dynasty. The resemblance between words Nanking and Nanak is only incidental. If Sikhism has gone to China it went through the Tibetan devotees of the Guru from Tibet or from some seminaries in Mongol and Russian territories in Tashkent area which Guru Nanak might have visited during his Middle East itinerary. He came back to India by land route through Afghanistan and stopped on the way Ghazni, Kandahar, Kabul and Peshawar.

According to Sant Ram Udasi who visited the Middle East in the first decade of this century there were mosques and shrines in the following regions At Medina there is Guru Nanak's mosque about three miles from Mohammed's roza. A road goes

to it directly from Bibi Fatima's gate. (2) There is a memorial stone at Isphahan, Samarkand, Bakun, Suleman. In the last named place there is spring named after Nanak. There are also Guru Nanak's shrines and memorial stones at Nimagan, Bukhara, at a place some miles away from Tashkent also there is Nanak's mosque. There are of course the Guru's shrine at Kabul, Hazra, Jalalabad. Arjun Muni has recorded some details in his book *Gurdwara Darpan* from pages 42-74. A historical survey should be conducted along with probe into local revenue records, to trace their identity in history.

In Afghanistan, Guru Nanak made Mardana his principal spokesman. He was given authority to give spiritual instructions and people showed him the same respect they gave to Guru Nanak. At a place called Kuram he was greatly honoured and people were so impressed by the music of Mardana that they wanted him to stay there. Guru Nanak established a *manji* in the name of Mardana and later sent his son Shahzada as the first missionary to Afghanistan. Mardana is said to have passed away here.

At Kandhar Guru Nanak met Yār Ali a great Sufi. He asked the sufi's of his Khanqah to understand death. Know death and you know life. "Stay here Master" so that we may be blessed by the dust of your holy feet." Nanak said, "The Word of the divine Teacher is the real dust of the holiest of the holy. Entertain it in your heart and you will be blessed by God."³⁹ During this itinerary a *Shia* Sufi asked the difference between Muhammed and Ali. According to a *Janam Sākhī* Guru Nanak said, "In Wisdom and Enlightenment Muhammed was great; in wielding the sword Ali was great. Both were

perfect souls. The Light of God was shining in full illumination in both."⁴⁰ At Peshwar he met a Yogi who gave up *Hatha Yoga* after receiving spiritual instructions from Guru Nanak. He begged the Guru to stay with him till all his sins were washed away. Guru Nanak said, "My real Self, and my real Personality is the Word Eternal. In it is my life and spirit. Imbibe the Word, string it to your mind and your sins will be washed away."⁴¹

It is also said that Pir Jallaludin of Uch met Guru Nanak at Kandhar on his way back to the Punjab. He asked Guru Nanak to visit his shrine at Uch. Guru Nanak promised and visited Uch during the last Punjab tour. He might possibly have visited Uch on his way back from Mecca also. Guru Nanak reached Kartarpur where the city had been built and people flocked from all directions to meet the Master. Bibi Nanaki and her husband came to Kartarpur and were delighted to hear that Guru Nanak would not go to any distant lands now. He had decided to confine his activities to Punjab only.

Mardana in Eternal Rest

Shortly after Guru Nanak's arrival Mardana sat on the bank of Ravi close to his Master whom he had never left and sang a song on his rebeck. It was the most touching song. It was the swan song of Mardana "My Baba," said Mardana, "my journey's end has come. You know it and so has by your graces the call come to me. You have always given what I never deserved. You have always given me the

best of your love. I was a beggar in the streets, an outcaste from society. You have made princes bow to me. You have made saints beg me for spiritual instructions. You have loved me more than a mother could love her child, more than God could love his prophet. You are my religion, my faith, my wealth and all. What more I need. Give me your last blessings Master and forget not your foolish old Mardana."

"You have always been with me, dear Mardana. I shall always be with you in death and beyond death. Just as Music is inseparable from the musical instrument, so are you inseparable from me. Tell me shall I build a cenotaph on your grave; shall I build a *samadhi* of the kind not built for the greatest Yogi; shall I give you a funeral a royal Brahmin deserves? How would you like the last rites to take place?"⁴² "Babaji," said the contented and enlightened Mardana, "after breaking the prison of the soul and giving me the freedom of eternity, why should you imprison my poor body in a cage of brick and mortar. Cremate me with your own hands, so that I may have the honour that My Beloved Master was the first to set fire to my soul and the last to set fire to my body." Mardana recited the *Japji* and breathed his last in the arms of his Master with the name of Nanak and God on his lips.⁴³ His son Shahzada took his place as his rebeck player and was later installed as a missionary at Kurum.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In J.M.S., and J.B. this incident occurs after Guru Nanak returns from Sumer. It appears that he made up his mind to build the city of Kartarpur before he went to Mecca, and when he came back, his disciples had already

GURU NANAK GOES TO MIDDLE-EAST

established the city where he was to lay the Foundation of the Central Sikh Church.

2. This whole story is given almost in identical wording in J.M.S., J.B., and P.J., all versions of each *Janam Sakhī*.
3. This story is also given in all the *Janam Sakhīs* in almost the same manner. The wording of P.J. is exactly that of J.Mb, from which it is clear that the author of P.J. has used Meharban's *Janam Sakhī*.

A *Karori* or a *karor bandi* was an official in the Mugal Revenue department: It is also a popular name "In that area there was an official working as a *karor-bandi* Hearing of the reputation of Nanak, he got angry and said that a strange *fakir* had come there and disturbed Hinduism and Islam, and that he should be ousted from that place. With this plan in his mind, he started on horse back. As ill-luck would have it his horse got restless on the way. He fell down and was wounded. People started saying that he fell as a miracle of Baba Nanak. People asked of his as a perfect saying that no one could talk ill of him. The next day he again decided to execute his previous night's decision. By divine decree the incident of the previous day was repeated. He fell frightened and on the advice of the people, he walking on foot, presented himself to the Baba and expressed great regards and humility. Nanak accepted his regrets. He made a request that if the Baba agreed, a village might be set up in his name. Nanak consented and a village named Kartarpur (abode of the Creator) was founded and a dharmshala was built for the he Baba's residence.

Mufti Ali-ud-din: *Ibratnama* f 95

There was in that area an imperial *karori*. When he heard of Babaji's popularity he declared: "Nanak is misleading everyone. I will not allow him to camp here. He mounted his horse and set out to where Babaji was camping. On the way his horse fell. The *karori* was unseated and the horse died. Next day he again set out with the same haughtiness. He was written blind on the way. The people then explained to him that the Baba was *mahapurkh* (exalted sage). He should approach

with humility. The *karori* went to Baba Nanak and fell at his feet and was forgiven. The *korori* offered land which the Baba at first refused, but when pressed upon Nanak accepted with pleasure an offering of one hundred *bighas* of land. A *dharmsala* was cultivated there and cultivation begun.

Mehma Prakash: f 206

4. Kālū da turnā sun ke Rai Bular Kalu de ghar āyā, ar ākhyā ke je tusiñ ethe baiṭhe se tañ sanū udīk sī so Guru Nanak dā darśan hosī te tusiñ kirpā karke eṭhe hī raho
J.M.S. (LI) p. 394

According to *Mehma Prakash* Kalu died before Nanak shifted to Kartarpur "Baba ji lived in Kartarpur for some time and then summoned his mother from Talwandi. Baba Kalu had by then also passed away"

Mehma Prakash ibi

5. *Makke di Gosht* : This is a very important document, which was originally in Persian. It had faithfully recorded some of the dialogues of Guru Nanak in the Middle East. According to Gyani Gyan Singh it was first recorded in Persian by Sayyad Muhammed Gauns, a Sufi who met Guru Nank in Mecca and was an eye witness. Bhai Bhana an Arora Sikh translated into Punjabi and Thakari. Then Bhai Dayal a Masand prepared a copy in Punjabi. Gyani Gyan Singh saw one of the earliest versions with one Bawa Shyam Prakash of Hazara. In that book it was mentioned that immediately after Guru Nanak's visit to this area Baba Nanak's shrines resembling mosques in architectural shape were built and the local rulers supported free kitchen in them. There were such shrines in Jedda, Mecca, Medina, Baghdad and one or two more places. Attempts should be made to search the earliest manuscript. Bhai Mani Singh refers to *Makke di Gosht* in his *Janam Sākhī*.

In the early two decades of this century Sant Atma Ram of Budali travelled in Middle East and Russia and spotted out many shrines of Guru Nanak commemorating his visit. They are recorded verbatim in "*Gurudwara Darpan*" by Arjan Muni, published at Lahore in 1923. Attempt

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should be made to retrace these lost shrines. In the Muslim area Guru Nanak's shrines are known as Guru Nanak's mosque, just as in Hindu areas they are either known as *Sangats* or *dharamsalas*.

In Tibet and Ceylon or Buddhist areas they are known as Gomphas.

6. tañ Bava ate Mardana nagar Daurka te hoe kar pscam
disā ko gavan kitā. *Makke-di-Gosht f 2*

"From Dwarka he returned to where he had left Mardana and then taking Mardana he travelled to Mecca where he stayed for some time."

Mehma Prakash f 201

A very interesting point in this historical statement is that Guru Nanak did not take his Muslim disciple Mardana to the orthodox Hindu temple of Dwarka, where he would not have been admitted. In the same way he did not take Bala or any other disciple, Hindu by birth, to Mecca and Medina.

7. Baba phir Makke gya nūl bastar dhare banvarī asa hath
kitab kach kūja baṅg musala dhari

Bhai Gurdas Vār 1: 32

hajjīan dā bānā nūla bānā pehryā, gal vic tasbī pehrī, bagal
vic Kitāb rakhī, hath vikhe asa līa, sir pur musaliā dharya
hajji darves rūp dhar kar Makke ki hajj ko hāzar bae.

Makke dī Gosht f 2

It is clear that when Guru Nanak went to Mecca he put on the dress of Indian sufis or of *muwahid*. Whether Guru Nanak visited Hindu places of pilgrimage or Muslim and Buddhist, he gained access to them by putting on their holy garb so that he may not be dismissed as a lay devotee, but as soon as he had gained excess, he found some or the other dramatic means to loudly declare the uniqueness of his personality, and philosophy.

8. I am indebted for the information on Mecca and Medina

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to the excellent book on "*Mecca and Medina* by Miss Ernel Esin. Instead of giving lengthy quotations I have given summing ups. It is a remarkable study of the Holy place.

9. Makke kī ik masīt vic jae baiṭha

Makké dī gośht f2

Guru Nanak rested in a mosque of Mecca.
baiṭha jae masīt vic jithe hajjī haj guzari

He went and asked in a mosque where the haj came for hajj pilgrimage.

Bhai Gurdas Vār 1:23

Sant Ram of Budail, visited Mecca and Medina and other places in Middle East and his statement has been recorded by Arjun Muni in his book Gurdwara Darpan. On page 42, he says Mecca is forty *kos* from Jedda. About one and half miles towards the East of Ka'aba on the road to Amra there is a mosque of Baba Nanak Wali Hind Pir, close to Baba Farid's mosque Here in the mosque was held the first discussion with Ruku-ud-din. This is a fact which some historian should check up.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1, 32

10. The names of these pirs from India are given by *Makke dī Gosht* and T.G.K. Qazi Ruknul-Din was the Imam of Mecca.

11. (a) Jañ Baba suta rāt nū val mehrābe paeñ pasāri.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1: 32

ik din guzrān kītī, rāt ko ose masīt vic jāe pāe, pai makke ke mehrāb val kītyān te sir pūrab val

Makke dī Gosht f 2

It must be borne in mind that Guru Nanak did it unconsciously. In India this etiquette is observed only within the precincts of a holy place and not outside it.

12. Jiwan māri lat dī kehḍa sutā kurfar kufāri,
latān val khudñe de kionkar paya hoe bajāgrī

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tango pakaḍ ghasitya phiryā makka kala dikhāri

Bhai Gurdas: Vār 1:32

13. jañ pehar deḍh ik rāt rahī tan Mullan Jiwan masit kã jhaḍū
karan aya; tañ dīvā bal kar hajjyand huroñ laga dekhan;
jañ dekhe tañ kī dekhe; hor sabh apo apne mukāmī pae
han, kal jo navañ Hajji darves aya hai so betrah kible
roe latañ karke sutā payā hai, tan Mulla Jiwan man vic
gusā khādos. tañ Mulla Jiwan gusā khāe kar Bābe de
magar vic lat dī marios: ākhyos are Bande khudāe de tūñ
kaun haiñ: Hindu haiñ ke Musalman, jo tun khudie de
ghar val pair kar sutā haiñ.

Makke dī gosht f 2

tañ Jiwan jhādūkash āyā ar Babe nū lat marios are kehios
he kāfir tūn makke di jarrat nū āyā haiñ ate ka'be dī car
divārī khudāe da ghar hai so tuñ is taraf mehrāb de val
kadam kioñ kīte han tāñte tainū ajab bājageri hovai gī.
añ Jiwan jhādūkash ne Babe nū tañgoñ ghadisyā, par
jidhar Bābe de pair jāvan odhar Makke de mehrab jāve.

J.M.S. (LI) 409

14. hoe hairān karen juhāri

Bhai Gurdas, Vār 1:32

Tañ Jiwan ate hor Hajji jo masit vic ahe so sabhe hairān ho
gae eh aulya allāh dā hai, eh is zamāne dā koī walī paidā
hoyā hai.

Makke dī Gosht f 3

15. puchan gal imān dī, kazi mullā ikatḥe hoe
vaddā sāñg vartāyā lakh na sākai kudrat koī

Bhai Gurdas Var I 33.

tab Baba uṭh khaḍā hoyā; uju karke kibal hoe kar khadoc
kar sabad rag alāpyā.

Makke dī Ghost f 3

16. puchan khol kitāb nū, vadā Hindu ke musalmanoī

Bhai Gurdas Var 1 : 32

tudh eh baḍī kudrat dikhaī hai jo makke da mehrab tere
 pairaṅ nāl phirdā āyā hai, so tūṅ kitāb khol ke asān nū
 das jī Babe ādam de putar Hindūān Musalmānā vicoṅ
 Hindu vadā hai ke Musalmān

J.M.S. (LI) 412

17. Baba ākhe hajjiaṅ subh amlāṅ bajhoṅ doveṅ roī,
 Hindu Musalman doe dargeh aṅdar lain na dhoī;
 kaca raṅg kusambh kā pānī dhotai thir na rahoī
 karan bakhilī āp vic ram rahīm kathāe khaloe.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1: 32

18. unaṅ kihā fakīr tūṅ rasūl nū mandā haiṅ ke nahī, taṅ
 Babe kihā ke ākāl purkh de daure kaī rasūl avatār han

J.M.S. (LI) 238

They asked O Saint, do you have faith in the prophet
 Mohammed or not. Baba Nanak said at the door of
 God there are innumerable prophets. I believe in God
 and not in any prophet.

kalmā ik khudāe hai, kudrat kaī rasūl
 Ruknal niat rās kar dargeh paveh kabūl

Makke dī gosht f 12

God is only one and only *kalma*, and in His creation there
 are innumerable prophets. O Ruku-ud-din, if your
 mind is pure you will be honoured in God's presence
 (and not by mere faith in any prophet)

19. *Makke-di-Gosht f 24*

20. asī tuhade didar nu itnī dūroṅ cal ke ae haṅ. ibid

21. paigam̃bar usnū kehaṅde han jo paigam lyavān vala hove
 ar tuhada jo rasūl hai so khudae da suncha lyayā hai
 tāṅte je bandgī karoge taṅ bahist nū jāu ge.

age rasūl bhī tuhade manavan vāste āyā sī ate huṅ vī mai
 khudaetā hukam manāvan vāste āyā hai, tusān jo khudāe
 nū bhulāyā hai so tuhāde te sada updeś hai.

J.M.S. (LI) 283

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22. age paigambar tuhādā rāh dasan vāste ayā sī, hun tusiñ
paigambar de rāh to phir gae ho tāñ mai hun āyā han
J.M.S. (MSS) f 411

23. puchan gal imān dī kazī mullā ikaṭhe hoi
Bhai Gurdas Var 1:32
hajjiāñ puchīa imān dīāñ kitniāñ sartañ han, tañ Baba
bolia imān dīāñ car sartañ han: aval bazurgāñ dī subat,
doem mal dī zakāt, soem gunahāñ thī pak, cahāram
Khudāe dī yad
J.M.S. (LI) p. 411

24. Babe akhyā ke hazarañ din roziañ vic baiṭh tap karlīai,
hazār gañj dan kariai, hazār reti jagran kariai, hazār
din roze rakhīai, par je kise da dil nu rañjhanīa tañ kabul
nahi painda.
ibid

25. hajī puchyā: śariat, tariqat, mārfat haqīkat cār rāh musal
manī de han so tusiñ kaho ke eh kioñ kar malum hovan tañ
Baba bolya jaise Makke dī ziārat cāroñ tarfañ te hajjī
aūvde han, itiveñ intha sabhna rahañ da iko hai jo sabh
rāh ka'be vic a pahuñcode han. *ibid* 416

26. dhariñ nisānī kauñs dī Makke aūder pūj karaī,
jiṭhe jae jagat vic Babe bājh nā khali jāi.
Bhai Gurdas Var 1: 34
asīñ jānde san sādā ākhri paigambar hoyā hai ar is upar
hor koī nahī honā, par tūñ sabhnā de sir khatam ho āyā
haiñ, tāñte tū kai apnī nisānī rakh, tāñ Babe akhyā sādī
kahḍavāñ jo hain so rakho
J.M.S. (LI) p. 416

27. If a search is made it should not be difficult to get an old
persian copy of *Makke-di-Gosht* or the first Punjabi
translation of the same. Unfortunately this and a number
of other manuscripts relating to Guru Nanak have never
been studied. They have never even been adequately
referred in historical biographies of Guru Nanak. Some
of our present day Sikh writers and historians have the
tendency to reject what they cannot understand.

28. I am indebted to the eminent historian Dr Ganda Singh

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for this information. He had told me verbally some years ago, but recently he kindly sent the information in writing.

29. Syed Amer Ali: *A Short History of the Saracens* p 444

30. Baba gyā Baghdad nū bāhar jāe kiā asthānā
ik Baba akāl rūp dūjā rabīa Mardana
ditī bāṅg namāz kar sun samān hoā jahānā
sun mun nagri bhai dekh pir bhayā hairānā.

Bhai Gurdas, *Var* 1 :35

jān eh šabad musalmānā de kan paya tān sabhe murchā
gae ate tasivirañ dī nyai tur tur dekhan.

J.M.S. (LI) p. 427

31. vekhe dhyān lagāe kar ik fakir vadā mastānā.
puchiā phirke dāstgir kaun fakir kiskā gharānā.

Bhai Gurdas *Var* 1:35

32. J.M.S. (L) 432

32. puche pir takrār kar eh fakir vadā atāi,
eṭhe vic Baehdad de vadī karamāt dikh lai
patālāñ akās lakh odak bhalī khabar sunai
pher durāen dastgir asīñ bhi vekhan jo tūn pāi

ibid *Var* 1:36

34. nal litā betā pir dā akhīñ mīt gayā havāi
lakh akas patal lakh lakh akh phurk vic sabh dikh lai
bhar kackaul prasād dā dhuroñ patāloñ lai kadāhī
zāhar kalā na chape chapāi.

Bhai Gurdas Var 1: 36

35. see authors' article: "*Findings of Russian Scientists and Guru Nanak on Super Civilizations in Space*: Sikh Review, August 1965

36. korla murād aildī hazrat rabī majīd Baba Nanak fakir auli
a naki āmārat jadīd yadilar imdād aidub kildi ki
tarikhena, yapdi nvab ajrayar abi murid said. 927 hiri
The date is most probably 927 when Guru Nanak in 1517
was about 51. It is about this time Guru Nanak was here.

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Swami Anandacharya in his book, *Snow Birds* has written an inspired poem on this memorial stone. The inscription which be read appears to be different one.

Upon this slab of granite didst thou sit, discoursing of
fraternal love and holy light, O Guru Nanak,
Prince among India's holy sons.

What song from the source of the seven Waters thou
didst sing to charm the soul of Iran.

What peace from Himalays' lovely caves and forests thou
didst carry to the vine groves and rose gardens of
Baghdad?

What light from Badrinath's snowy peak thou didst
bear to illumine the heart of Bahlol, they saintly
Persian disciple?

Eight fortnights Bahlol hearkened to thy words, on Life,
and the Path and Spring Eternal while the moon
waxed and waned in the pomegranate grove beside
the grassy desert of the dead.

And after thou has left him to return to thy beloved
Bharat's land, the *fakir*, it is said would speak to none
nor listen to the voice of man or angel;

His fame spread far and wide and the Shah came to pay
him homage but the holy man would take no
earthly treasures nor hear the praise of kings and
courtiers.

Thus lived he lonely, devoted, thoughtful, for sixty winters
sitting before the stone whereon thy sacred feet had
rested.

And ere he left this House of Ignorance he wrote these
words on the stone: Here Spake Guru Nanak to Farkir
Bahlol, and for these sixty winters since the Guru left,
Iran, the soul of Bahlol has rested on the Masters
Word like a bee poised on a dawnlit honey rose.

37. Captain Bhag Singh Managing Editor of *Sikh Review*
was told about the existence of this monument when he

was at Cairo during world war II. Unfortunately he could not go and see it.

38. Sydney Nettleton Fisher: *The Middle East : A History* p 206 39. J.M.S. (LI) 281.
- 40.(i) Babe kahyā, juāñ mardī karke, ar saśtrāñ karke Ali vadhīk hoyā, ilam karke Muhammed vadhīk hoyā. par samajh karke dono iko jehe san. ibid 284
- (ii) For Sikh shrines in Afghanistan see Dr. Ganda Singh's *Afghanistan vic ik mahina*
41. tusiñ ethe raho; asāde khote karam sabh mit jāvān ge, bacan hoyā merā sargin rūp deh hai, nirgun rūp śabad hai śabad dā abhyās karo tāñ sabh khotē karam mit jāvan ge ibid p. 279
42. tainū moyāñ asī keh dā dāg deīai, jeh dā kahae soī devān ge. je kaheā tāñ madī bañā deīai; Mardane ākhyā: sarīr dī madī vicoñ kaḍh ke hun pathrañ dī madī vic kioñ paoñde ho. ibid 570
43. It appears that Shahzada was sent as missionary to Kuram where he built a memorial to his father and Baba Nanak, but Mardana died at Kartarpur.

CHAPTER 20

GURU NANAK AND BABUR

❖❖❖❖❖ BABUR WAS fourteen years younger than Nanak. He became king of Farghana almost in the same year in which Guru Nanak received the *call* and the apostolic sovereignty of God at Sultanpur. When Babur conquered Kabul in 1505 and aspired to conquer India Guru Nanak left Punjab for the moral conquest of the world. The *Qadiriya Dastgir Pir* of Baghdad called Nanak, intoxicated *dervish* with a rare charm. In a downright earthly way Babur, who like Nanak, loved music and poetry wrote :

*A Book of verses underneath the bough,
A jug of Wine, a loaf of bread, and Thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness,
Oh ! wilderness were Paradise enow.
Man, being reasonable must get drunk;
The best of life is but intoxication.*

The reign of Ibrahim Lodhi had been an unvaried scene of confusion and revolts. His haughty and cruel temper, joined to the impolitic arrogance with which he had treated the Afghan nobles, who considered themselves as having raised his family to the throne, and as being still placed not very far below it, had completely alienated their affection. Many of his discontented nobles had retired beyond Ganges and the whole of the eastern provinces were in the hands of the rebels. The Punjab was held by Daulat Khan, and his sons Ghazi Khan and Dilawar Khan, who Afghans themselves, were alarmed at the fate of the Afghan nobles in other

parts of the empire and were eager to deliver themselves from the power of the emperor. They felt it was safer to rebel than to continue in subjection to a prince whose violent and unrelenting disposition added new terrors to the harsh maxims of his government. All these things had destroyed their confidence in him. Guided by their fears, they sent envoys to offer their allegiance to Babur to beseech him to march to their succour. No circumstances could have been more in unison with the wishes of Babur.

Guru Nanak had time and again warned the rulers that nemesis would overtake them. His warning given again and again had gone unheeded. His reflections on the times speak volumes on the political and cultural degradation :

*Nanak: such are the blasphemers,
Who set themselves up,
As the leaders and rulers of the world;
They consume daily the forbidden fruit of falsehood,
And yet they preach to others,
What is right and what is wrong.
Themselves deluded, they delude others also,
Who follow them in their path.*

*If one smear of blood pollutes a garment,
And renders it unclean, to be worn at prayer,
How can they that like wampires suck human blood pass,
as pure,*

Guru Nanak : Vār Majh p. 140

Unfortunately we have no reference to Guru Nanak in Babur's *Memoirs* as five gaps occur in the period when Guru Nanak possibly met him. But we find from the writings of Guru Nanak, that he was an eye

witness to the third, fourth and fifth invasions. He roundly condemned Babur's cruelty and treatment of innocent citizens, particularly women of the conquered cities. The first song of Guru Nanak is about the sackage of Syedpur (now known as Emina-bad), the second is about the rape of Lahore in the fourth invasion, and the third is about the terrible slaughter and aftermath of the battle of Panipat, which the Emperor of Delhi lost inspite of the assurances of astrologers and miracle working *pirs*. Guru Nanak points out that it was a battle between arrows of Afghans showered from the backs of elephants by the Afghans and the artillery of Mughal army. Daulat Khan claimed to be the disciple of Guru Nanak and apostle Bhai Gurdas, who helped Guru Arjan in the compilation of *Adi Granth*, places him among prominent disciples.² It is a strange thing that while Daulat Khan Lodhi welcomed Babur, Guru Nanak severely condemned his invasion.

All attempts of Babur to capture Khurasan failed. "Khurasan had been occupied by the Safari dynasty of Persian kings, who were now in the height of power and glory, while the provinces of Hindustan, which in all ages have been an easy prey to the rapacity of every invader, offered the prospect of a rich and splendid conquest. The moment was very favourable to such an attempt.³ Babur deemed it a favourable opportunity to establish himself as the conquerer of India.

Ravage and Plunder of Syedpur

In 1519 when Guru Nanak was with Lallo at Syedpur on his third tour of Punjab, Babur came like a whirlwind in his third attempt to conquer and subdue India. "He advanced to Sialkot, the

inhabitants of which submitted and saved their possessions; but the inhabitants of Syedpur, who resisted, were put to the sword; their wives and children carried into captivity, and all their property plundered"⁴ Streams of innocent blood flowed in the city and the whole of Syedpur was a city of corpses. Guru Nanak sang this song of protest and lamentation and even poignantly blamed God, for this sufferings of the lambs in the hands of wolves, though he felt God would not take any blame on Himself. God had saved Khurasan, but terrorised poor Hindustan of Guru Nanak. The Master beheld the city in flames, and witnessed the agonizing sight of the fiendish slaughter, and young Hindu and Muslim women torn from their homes and dragged like captured slaves in the streets. Agonising shrieks of terror rose out of the smoke of desolation caused by Babur wanton destruction. Guru Nanak sang the following death-dirge over this horrible massacre :

*Thou hast shielded Khurasan,
Thou hast struck terror in Hindustan,
Yet Thou takest no blame on Thyself.
You have sent Yama in the guise of Babur,
Terrible has been the slaughter,
Loud have been the cries of innocent sufferers,
Did not this awaken pity in Thee, O Lord.*

*Thou art part and parcel of all, O Creator,
Thou must feel for all men and all nations;
If a strong power attacks another strong power,
No one would grieve, none would complain;
But when fierce tigers prey on helpless cattle,
Thou Herdsman must answer for it.*

*A kingdom that was a jewel,
Has been brought to ruin by these dogs (Afghans)*

*No one would mourn their passing
 Glory, glory unto God,
 Who bringeth people together and parteth them.*

Guru Nanak: Asa p-360

Men and women that were found alive were rounded up and taken prisoners. If Guru Nanak wished, he could safely stay away. He identified himself with the sufferers and found himself in the prison. But this prisoner who had come to give solace to every sufferer was recognised. Daulat Khan Lodhi, his sons Dilawar Khan and Ghazi Khan knew him. Not a miracle but these Afghan nobles who had great respect for Nanak and treated him as an apostle of God must have spoken to Babur and secured his release. It is said Babur on meeting the Guru even accepted his request to release the prisoners. Babur might have heard of the Guru earlier, because when Babur occupied and ruled Kabul, Guru Nanak passed through Kabul and the major cities of Afghanistan.⁵ The line "*Thou hast saved Khurasan*" indicates that Guru Nanak knew about the early military adventures of Babur also. The Guru might have come to know about them when he was in the Middle East or on the way back to the Punjab.

The Rape of Lahore

Babur here received the news that his capital Kabul had been captured by an army from Kandhar. He rushed back to save his own stronghold on Indian border." Soon after the occupation of Kandhar, Daulat Khan Lodhi, apprehensive of treachery on the part of Ibrahim Lodhi, King of Delhi, sent a deputation to wait on Babur at Kabul, offering to place Lahore in his hands. According to

Tarikhe-Salatin-i-Afghanah (p:4), Dilawar Khan was the envoy of his father. Babur having augmented his army advanced through the territory of the Gukkars to within six *kos* of Lahore, where he was opposed by Behar Khan Lodhi, and Mubarak Khan Lodhi. On Behar Khan's approach Daulat Khan had abandoned Lahore and fled to the country of Baluchis.

Babur gave a stunning defeat to the Afghan nobles. "When he entered Lahore in triumph he set fire to the bazars, a superstitious practise common among the Mughals. Babur remained only four days in Lahore, before he proceeded against Dipalpur. The garrison having forced him to risk an assault, he put the whole to the sword, as he did at Syedpur.⁶

For four days destruction, plunder, molestation of women in the most barbaric manner continued. Guru Nanak arrived in Lahore only to witness the most horrifying spectacle of women of noble families and great beauty being dragged in the city. Their lovely hair was cut to humiliate them. Some who resisted ill-treatment were shaven and dust was put in their heads. Those who were used to being carried in palanquins were dragged like tamed beasts in the streets crying for help. Earlier Guru Nanak had already warned the people of Lahore that nemesis would take over this city immersed in vice and viscious cruelty.⁷ They were robbed of their precious possessions, stripped naked and molested. Their beauty which was an asset to them became their greatest enemy.

*The tresses that adorned those lovely heads,
And were parted with vermillion,*

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*Have been shorn with cruel shears;
Dust has been thrown on their shaven heads,
They lived in ease in palace,
Now they must beg by the roadside,*

*Having no place for shelter.
Hail to Thee, Hail to Thee, Lord
Who can understand Thy ways, God ?
Strange are Thy ways, strange Thy dispensation.*

*When these, whose heads are shorn, were married,
Fair indeed seemed their bridegrooms beside them.
They were brought home in palanquins carved with
ivory.*

*Pitchers of water were waved over their heads,
In ceremonial welcome given to them.
Ornate fans glittered waving above them.*

*At first entry into the new home,
Each bride was offered a gift of a lakh of rupees;
Another lakh when they entered the bridal room,
Coconuts shreddings and rasins and delicious fruits
Were served to them on tables.
Their beauties lent charms to the couches they reclined on,
Now they are dragged away, with ropes round their
necks;
Their necklaces are snapped and their pearls scattered.
Their beauty and wealth were once their greatest assets,
Their beauty and wealth are their greatest enemies now;
Barbarous soldiers have taken them prisoners,
They have disgraced and molested them,
God exalteth, God casteth down whomever He willeth.*

Guru Nanak : *Asa* p. 417

The sensitive mind of Guru Nanak vividly brought the miserable lot of the women prisoners

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of noble families contrasting it in tragic contrast to their normal life before capture. Many times he had warned that someday this city of wanton lust and destructive revelry would suffer from the inevitable results of utter moral degradation. The point to be noted is that Guru Nanak does not accuse Babur of any iconoclast zeal, nor particularly of any anti-Hindu crusade. Both the Hindu and Muslim women were the tragic victims. Their men had been put to the sword, or were away in some other battle. In the whole of this hymn the most touching and pitiable condition of the women of high families is brought to the fore. They had lost their character. They had lost their courage. They lost their freedom and were treated worst than captive slaves were ever treated. Guru Nanak adds:

*If these folks had taken heed to the future,
Need they have been reduced to such plight ?
Pursuing worldly love and sensual pleasures;
Desecration and desolation follow in the footsteps;
Of the great Mughal Babur.
None, none in Hindustan can eat his supper in peace.*

*For the Muslim women the hour of prayer is past,
For the Hindu, women, time of worship is gone;
How can they that were proud of their caste
And punctilious in ceremonial performance worship now;
They who never thought of their own Rama,
Cannot even utter the name of Allah.*

*Few, some very few,
From this havoc return home.
And others enquire of them.
About their lost dear ones;
Many are lost for ever,
And weeping and anguish are their lot who survive,*

*Ah, Nanak, how completely helpless mere men are.
It is God's Will that is done for ever and ever.*

Guru Nanak Asa p 417

After the Battle of Panipat

Daulat Khan Lodhi's son Dilawar Khan convinced Babur that his father and brother Ghazi Khan might betray him. Both of them were imprisoned but Babur released them conferring Sultanpur for his subsistence. Babur conferred on Dilawar Khan the title of Khanan Khan and gave over into his hands the family estates. But the desertation of Daulat Khan greatly affected Babur's interest in Hindustan; so he deemed it inadvisable to plan any attack on Delhi this year. Babur returned to Kabul. During his absence Daulat Khan Lodhi found means to sieze his son, Dilawar Khan who had betrayed him and put him in chains; he then marched to Dipalpur and attacked Alla-ud-din Lodhi, brother of King Ibrahim Lodhi and defeating him occupied his country.

Babur again crossed the Indus on December 15, 1525 A.D. He again easily occupied Lahore, as Daulat Khan Lodhi retreated. Some time earlier Daulat Khan had put on two swords and boasted of the manner in which he would crush Babur. Daulat Khan was compelled to surrender himself with two swords still hanging round his neck. It was the last appearance of the Nawab. After severe upbraiding his life was spared. Soon after this incident he died.

From Lahore Babur marched rapidly to Panipat, capturing the Lodhi posts on the way and defeating two detachments sent by Ibrahim in advance of him-

self, one north-west of Delhi and the other eastward in Doab. Against such a swift-paced compact enemy force Ibrahim Lodhi moved in the lordly Indian fashion, making one march of two or three miles and halting for two days. His camp was one vast disorderly moving city.”^s

Babur's forces according to Wolsely Haig were estimated to be 25,000 men. Ibrahim Lodhi is said to have moved with one thousand war elephants and one lakh men. Later historians have given lesser figures. Babur used artillery, which Jadunath Sarkar calls light guns mounted on carts. Afghan nobles felt secure on the *howdahs* of their elephants and fired arrows and spears. Giving a vivid portrayal of this study on contrast of the modes of fighting Guru Nanak writes about the battle of Panipat thus;

*Mughal pathana bhai laḍāi
ran meh tegh vagāi;
onī tupak tār calāi
Onī hast cadhāi.*

*Ferocious battle raged
Between Mughals and Pathans
The sword flashed and clashed in the battle-field,
The Mughals fixed and fired their guns,
The Pathans fought riding their elephants.*

Guru Nanak : *Asa Asht* p 417

If there was one single material factor which more than any other conduced to his ultimate triumph in “Hindustan” writes Rushbrook Williams, it was his powerful artillery.” Describing this battle Jadunath Sarkar writes : “The elephants on which

the Indians chiefly relied proved of no use; their drivers were shot down or galled with arrows and the beasts wounded and forced to turn back, treading down their own men. The matchlockmen of Ustad Ali Quli (centre front) and the carted guns of Mustafa Khan Rumi (left of the centre) worked havoc among the densely crowded Afghan ranks. The Indian army was now entirely surrounded and pushed back into a disordered circle. The Afghans fought with desperate fury of trapped beasts; some of their captains even attempted counter charges here and there. But it was all in vain; the mischief of wrong tactics and inferior arms could not be remedied, though six thousand of their men fell in circle round their dead king Ibrahim Lodhi. Then their host broke up in flight; a relentless pursuit followed in which slaughter, plunder and abduction were carried to the very gates of Delhi. Pyramids were built with the heads of the slain; Timur's example was followed by his greatgrandson's grandson."⁹

Convinced of the Pathan victory many miracle working *pirs* had assured Emperor Ibrahim that their spells against the Mughal invader, Babur, would work wonders. All the Mughals would be rendered blind. Once again, giving, a study of contrast of the tragic fate of Pathans against the false hopes and assurance of charlatans and magic mongering *pirs* and astrologers, Guru Nanak Says;

*Hearing Babur was coming,
Pirs and divines used spells;
Assuring they would blind the invader;
Babur came all the same,
He burnt and razed to the ground their mansions;*

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*He cut the nobles to pieces,
Their heads rolled in dust.
The spells and charms of pirs did not work.
They whose hour had come,
Fell and lost the battle.
Wives of the Hindu, Turk, Bhatti, Rajput Soldiers,
Tore down their veils in despair,
And went in search for their dead.
How would they, whose husbands would never return
Pass their days and nights?
Lord's Will is such,
He alone knows the cause of all that.*

Thus, inspite of the assurance of the astrologers and miracle working *pirs*, the Afghans were not only routed but they were cruelly treated. Their rock-like mansions were destroyed, their palaces set ablaze. Princes were hacked to peaces and trampled under dust. Guru Nanak clearly points out that wealth and luxury, the pursuit of physical pleasures sapped the vitality of the Indians and weakened their will and strength to defend themselves. Nations and political powers are born stoic but they die epicurian. So thorough was the destruction, and so complete the route, that Babur could now make up his mind to live and rule India.

It appears that after the battle Guru Nanak went to the battle field. He saw the spectacle with his own eyes. Out of his deeply moved heart came the poignant cry and a question to the generation that lives in disgraceful luxury and dies in despair and humiliation. It is a question he put to the civilization of his own times. It is a question that can be asked on the battle-fields of any war of wanton destruction;

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*Where are the stables and steeds ?
Where are bugles and drums that beat ?
Where are the buckled sword and arms ?
Where are the scarlet uniforms ?
Where are the mirrors and handsome faces ?
Thou, O Lord of the earth,
In a moment Thou createst,
In a moment Thou destroyest.*

*Where are those palaces and mansions,
Where are those luxurious seraglios ?
Where are those warm beds
Seeing which sleep departs ?
Where are those damsels
With red lips, chewing beetles ?
All has vanished and become dust.
Wealth has consumed so many,
It cannot be amassed without sinning.
It accompanes not any one when he dies.*

Guru Nanak *Āsā Asht* 417

Babur is said to have met Guru Nanak and held some serious talks. At the first meeting Babur offered him a cup of wine and *bhang*. Guru Nanak refused saying that I have taken such intoxicating wine, that I need no more intoxicants. "And may I know what wine or intoxicant is that?" To this Guru Nanak is said to have replied: "My heart is the cup, His Love and reverence is the Wine and intoxicant I have forgotten myself in utter dedication to him"¹⁰ History has not recorded more than the fact that Babur after this meeting was a completely changed man. Bhai Gurdas hints at this incident saying: Babur and his Nawabs bowed reverently to Baba Nanak, and acknowledged him to be a great divine.¹¹

About this meeting between Babur and Guru Nanak, Mufti Ali-ud-din in his *Ibrat-nama* says "When Zahir-ud-din Babur Badshah invaded India, Baba Nanak fell into the hands of his troopers. It was a practice with Baba Nanak to describe things in verse and then to recite them. The sayings and deeds of a person who is advanced in spirituality and religious understanding are liked by everybody and this led people to liking Nanak. So much so that the news about Nanak reached Babur Badshah. When the rulers are confronted with campaigns, they are generally inclined towards saintly people. In this way Baba Nanak met the Badshah who requested him for a blessings. Nanak blessed him conditionally saying : "So long as the descendents of the ruler would not perpetrate oppression and cruelty on his (Nanak's) saintly followers, his sovereignty would exist in magnificence. The Padshah Babur consented and did not consider it proper to oppose Nanak. By virtue of this, whatever commands and deeds transpired in his army, no body objected to them.¹²

This truth is further borne by the fact that Hamayun met Guru Angad when he was in trouble, Akbar met Guru Amar Das and Guru Ram Das for blessings. This respect for the Gurus was instilled in the hearts of his successors by Babur. The moral and spiritual influence of Guru Nanak on Babur is summed up by a writer as follows : "Needless to say that Babur did value and follow all this (advice give him) in his future life and history bears abundant testimony to this. But for those who have read of Babur's power, influence and formidableness, the patriotic part played by the Guru does not stand in need of comments. He met the most terrible man on

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earth, a wink of whose brow was a sufficient order for putting millions to sword, and by his able intercession, turned him into the kindest ruler. This was the service that the Guru rendered to his country and countrymen."¹³

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The five gaps in *Babur's Memoirs* are (1) 1853-84 A.D. (2) 1508-9 A.D. (3) 1520-25 (4) April to September 1528 A.D. (5) 1529-30 A.D.
 2. Daulat Khān Lodhī bhalā hoyā jind pīr abināsī
Bhai Gurdas: Var 11: 13
 3. Erskine: *Babur's Memoirs* p. 150
 4. Erskine: *Babur's Memoirs* p. 149
 5. The author of *Mehma Prakash* suggests that Babur met Guru Nanak at Kabul when he was returning from Mecca and Baghdad tour. He says: "proceeding on, Nanak reached Kabul and there met Mir, Babur. Placing bhang wallet in front of the Baba, Mir Babur said: "O dervish, take some bhang" Baba Nanak replied: "Mirji, I have already taken a kind of *bhang* which induces permanent intoxication. Babur clasped his hands and said "Grant me kingship over Hindustan" You shall receive kingship over Hindustan." promised Baba ji.
- It is highly improbable that Nanak met Babur at Kabul. It is equally improbable in the face of Guru Nanak's devastating comments on Babur's invasion, that he blessed him with the kingdom of Hindustan at such a meeting. Guru Nanak's deep feelings for the freedom of his helpless country, and the misery they had already suffered under Afghan misrule is quite apparent.
6. *ibid*
 7. Lahore śehar, kehar, savā pahar
Guru Nanak: *Slok Vadhik*: p 1412

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8. Jadunath Sarkar: *Military History of India* p. 49
William Irvine: *The Army of the Indian Mughals* p. 114
9. Jadunath Sarkar: *Military History of Indian* p 52.
10. Babar ne kahya: he dervis, eh bhañg tusī pivo tan guru
jī ne kehya " he Mīr jī, mai aisi bhañg pītī hai jis dī
khumarī kade utardī nahī, tañ Babar ne kiha: hedervis:
oh bhañg kaisī hai, jis dī khumarī kade nahī
utardī; tañ guru jī ne śabad kiha: bhau tera bhañg khalḍī
mera cit, mai diwana bheya atit,"

J.B. (all versions)

According to *Janam Sakhis* Babar offered bhang,

11. Bābar ke Bābe mile niv niv sabh nabāb nivāyā.
Bhai Gurdas: Var 26:21
12. Mufti Ali-ud-din: *Ibrathnama* (Mss copy)


In one of Babur's expeditions into Punjab Nanak with a number of his followers, among whom was Mardana, was apprehended at Emnabad and brought before the emperor. Babar who was himself a very good Arabic and Persian scholar and also a poet, was much pleased with the conversation which he held with Nanak, and with the information given to him on many topics. The emperor ordered rich presents to be bestowed on the *faqir* but Nanak refused them, observing that his best reward was the pleasure derived from worshipping the Creator, and as his aim in life was to please the Lord of Lords, he had no concern with the kings made by Him, A drug richly prepared was brought to the emperor by his slave. His majesty partook of it and ordered some to be given to the *faqir* but Nanak requested to be excused saying," On a man who is ever intoxicated with the re-collection of God, this drug can have no effect.

S.M. Latif: *History of Punjab* p.

13. *Ramananda to Ram Tirath*: Natesan, Madras.

CHAPTER 21

FOUNDATION OF THE SIKH CHURCH KARTARPUR : FIRST SIKH VATICAN CITY

 GURU NANAK identified his undying mystic personality, wherever he went with the Word of God, the Wisdom and Light of the supreme Being. He toured all over the world to plant the seeds of eternal Truth in the hearts of all seekers of divine knowledge, and to establish the centres of his faith which he called *manjīs* side by side with the centres of all other faiths. Thus he founded, in a well planned way, a community of his New Faith, and this community of inspired men became the body of Sikh Church which he called *Sangat*. There was a Sikh Church now all over India and outside India in Ceylon, Tibet, and Middle East. No founder of any religion had built such a vast organisation, breaking all provincial, national and cultural barriers, during his own life time. Guru Nanak knew that unless it was centralised, and unless he found a fully disciplined successor, whom he could make as perfect as he was, he could not expect this noble faith to survive. It was otherwise likely to meet the same fate which uninstitutionalised creeds of Kabir, Namadev, Ramananda met. The Sikh Church was established to be a light-shedding and evolving institution, enduring as granite and consistent in her belief in divine guidance. It was to be the herald of God's Word down the length of centuries.

The Sikh Church was made a free association of those who were united by common faith, common ideals and identical spiritual ideals. Unlike the Churches of other faiths, the Sikh Church was to be embedded in secular society. When Guru Nanak

went on his missionary tours he put on the robes of the religious orders of the holy places he was visiting. Holiness in these centres was inseparable from the holy garb. Without them it was impossible for him to gain access to the holy shrines of either Benaras or Mecca. No Hindu or Muslim divine considered it worth while to hold religious discussion with a layman wearing worldly dress. He was looked down upon with contempt by all holy orders. No sooner Guru Nanak stimulated discussion and doctrinal encounter he courageously declared in Hindu centres that he was not a Hindu and in Muslim centres that he was not a Muslim. He boldly established his own centre of faith in the hearts of seekers of truth who kept the torch of his wisdom burning for centuries to come. Now when he was establishing his own Central Church, he gave up all robes of holiness and put on ordinary worldly dress of the Punjabis of those days.¹

Sikhism was not to be a holy order of ascetics and mendicants judged for piety by their formal renunciation and their robes of piety. It was to be union of those who professed their faith in God and Truth as universally as Nanak saw it. It had to discharge manifold temporal and spiritual functions down the centuries. In this temple was to be the mediator between man and God. No caste or class was to be a privileged class. No rites or sacraments were to be invested with magical efficacy. Priestly class was eliminated. Any Sikh, man or woman could conduct services, if he was competent to do so. The emphasis in the organisation of the Sikh Church was to be on freedom, human brotherhood, and inwardness of personal piety. Holiness was not to be distinguished by dress, but by character, enlightenment and spirituality. The Sikh Church was not to be an infallible

institution. Its only and fundamental duty was to keep the Light of Truth burning in its pristine glory through the Word of God, and its doors were to remain open to Sikhs and non-Sikhs, believers and non-believers, men and women, the rich and the poor, the native and the foreigner. It was to be the prayer House not only for a community of Faith but for a world - community of the seekers of truth.

Guru Nanak gave a spiritual and religious discipline to his initiated followers. The daily prayers of morning, evening and night, the *Japji*, the *Rahirās*, the *Kīrtan-Sohilā* were fixed.² In the day time discussions were held, and the Master delivered sermons on the basis of questions asked him. Everyone worked for his living, and gave a part of his earning for the free community kitchen. In this caste ridden land of untouchability this was the first Church, where a *langar* (free kitchen) was attached to every temple. The Brahmin and the *parhia*, the king and the pauper, the Muslim and the Hindu had to sit together and eat their meals to their satisfaction. It was the temple of bread and service attached to the temple of worship. The scribes wrote down the compositions of the Guru, and many devotees copied the daily prayers and hymns. These collections were called *Baṇī-pothis* (Book of hymns). *Kīrtan*, in enchanting musical modes was performed in the early hours of the morning and after the evening prayers. Professional musicians played on a number of musical instruments, *rabāb* being Guru Nanak's favourite. The seat of pontificate, *manjī* or *takhat* as it was called was established.³ People came from distant lands to pay homage to the Master. Guru Nanak devoted the last twenty years (1519-1539 A.D.) to the consolidation of the Sikh Church which he had founded.

At this period came to him many new disciples who were to play a significant role in carrying the torch of his faith to the next generation. Many of his devotees left their homes and hearths to settle at Kartarpur and dedicate their lives to his mission. Guru Nanak disciplined them and taught them a new lesson everyday. Around this oasis of divine knowledge sat many seekers of Truth, eagerly drinking deep and picking pearls of wisdom to enrich their lives and to enrich humanity. Now and then Guru Nanak went for a short trip to some nearby villages to meet the people who could not come but were eager to have a glimpse of him.

Buddha the Young Sage :

On the outskirts of Kathunangal village, Guru Nanak saw a young peasant boy of about ten years grazing cattle at some distance. As the Guru and his companions rested under a tree, the boy felt that they were either holy men or musicians and singers. He milked one of his cows and carried a jug full of milk to the Master. Placing the milk before the Guru the boy said, "You must be thirsty, Master. Accept this milk as my humble offering". "God bless you my child. What is your name?" "My name is *Booda* (later changed by the Guru to *Buddha*). I live in that village Kathunangal. My father's name is Sugha Randhawa and my mother's name is Gauran."

"What can I do for you my child? Ask for any gift, any boon, anything you like most, and I shall get it for you." "O Master", said the boy, "You seem to be a very great Saint. Exalted one, tell me what is life and what is death?" Taken aback by such a question coming from so young a boy, Guru

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Nanak said, "You are yet a child my lad; you have a long life to live. You will know much about these things when you grow old. Why should you worry about these serious problems at such a tender age?"

"Master," said the boy sadly and seriously, "the king's army camped here in our fields. I saw them and reflected over all they did. They trampled and destroyed ripe crops as well unripe ones. They destroyed even little sampling in our fields which father had tilled with such great labour. If death could overtake in one sweep the oldest and the youngest crops, will it spare me at this age. Since that day, I have been constantly brooding over the mystery of life and death. I ask every holy man, the same question. Either they do not know, or they do not want to impart the secret knowledge to a poor peasant boy like me."

"You are not Booda, my child," said Guru Nanak, "You are Buddha the awakened one, a Sage mature in wisdom. I will sing a simple song about life and death. Listen to it and carry with you the fragrance of divine words which will start unfolding within you the mystery of life. When you understand life you will understand death."

With wrapt meditative attention the child listened to the song, every word of which had some sweetness and light. In the mental darkness of his heart the soul stirring words of the Master shed strange light. The song was stranger than life and deeper than death. When the song ended his heart was still yearning for more music and more light. Booda, whom the Master had named Buddha, had found the path which would lead him to know life and death. He felt that he must listen more and more to the Word

of the Guru. He must hear more and more of his songs. Each song, each sermon of the Guru would reveal to him the mystery of life and death. He must live in constant communion with him. He must seek his presence every day. "It is getting late my child," said the Guru, "Your cattle are moving away. Go home now. Your parents must be waiting for you." Silently and respectfully Buddha bowed before the Master and went away.

He got up early next morning and quietly took some butter, sugar and bread, and came to the Guru. When he offered them to the Master, Guru Nanak said, "I will not accept this butter and sugar-cake my child? You have brought these things without the permission of your parents. You will get a beating when you go home."

Buddha began to weep. Tears rolled down his eyes and he sobbed helplessly. "Why do you weep my child? If you take them home your mother will not beat you," said Guru Nanak. "I do not know Master, whether my mother will beat me or not, but you have beaten me as my mother has never beaten me before," said Buddha. "But we did not hurt you my child. We did not beat you," said Guru Nanak, a little surprised. "By refusing to accept this butter and sugar you have hurt me more than my mother's beating could hurt me." said the boy still sobbing, "I did not steal it. I just brought it from home while everyone was asleep."

Guru Nanak quietly accepted the butter and sugar-cake. Buddha remained with the Guru the whole day. After noon his father and mother came searching for him. They found him sitting near Nanak, the well known Guru of Kartarpur. They

bowed to him and felt blessed. Guru Nanak asked Buddha to go home and then meet him again at Kartarpur. On the third day Buddha was at Kartarpur. "I have come, Master, to stay in the sanctuary of your holy feet," said Buddha, "Bless me that I may never leave this haven of peace. I may ever live in thy service till I understand the mystery of life and death." Guru Nanak blessed him and initiated him as his disciple. During the last days Guru Nanak installed Bhai Buddha the High priest of the Sikh Church, and in this position he lived upto the time of Guru Hargobind as the bearer of the spiritual Regalia of the Guru and Master of ceremonies, when the new Guru was installed. He lived upto the ripe age of about 135 and became the first High Priest of the Golden Temple.⁴

Lehna of Khadur

In the village Khadur there lived Lehna, the religious leader of Durga worshippers of Punjab. He had migrated from *Mate-ki Sarai* in Ferozepur district to Khadur, the home village of his wife Khivi. To Lehna the flame in the Kangra hill, the flame of a dying volcano, was the light of flaming Durga. "There was a flame within his heart also, so he loved nothing but the flame. The flame as it came from the Kangra volcano seemed to leap into his soul. He burned more than ever with the love of divine flame, which he felt within him but could not see. He was beautiful and god-like, a leader of the Durga worshippers in those days. He would light for himself, while in the privacy of his sanctuary a little lamp of ghee, and would watch the little flame for hours devotedly and then slowly rising, go round it in sacrifice, and suddenly begin to dance in rapture round the little flame."⁵

The whole of Khadur came under the spell of his teachings about Durga, the supreme *Shakti* the Mother Spirit of Nature. But there was one man in Khadur, Bhai Jodh who neither believed in Durga, nor in any of the Hindu rites, nor in any other god and goddess. People complained about him. Was he an atheist? No, the people said he was disciple of Guru Nanak. The name of Nanak had a mysterious effect on him. He had heard of it from so many people. He had heard of it from his illiterate aunt Mai Virāi who lived in a village close by. She always talked of Nanak. But he failed to understand why had Nanak parted from all that was best in Hinduism. He did not offer allegiance to the Vedas. He did not worship any god or goddess. He did not believe in the four-fold order of the Hindu society. He had revolted against age old traditions. He was attracted by the popularity of Nanak but subconsciously repelled by some of his strange beliefs.

Early one morning when he was going out for a stroll, he heard a melodious voice reciting a strange prayer. Everyone in the village recited verses from *Durga Saptasi*, but this prayer was the strangest he had ever heard. It was Bhai Jodh the disciple of Nanak reciting the *Japji*. He went to Bhai Jodh and asked him to recite the *Japji* again. He asked him to recite other compositions of Baba Nanak. The mystic depths of these prayers touched his soul. He made up his mind to meet Guru Nanak on his way to Kangra when he went there on the annual pilgrimage to homage to Durga.

Dressed in glamorous holy robes of the high-priest of Durga worshippers, Lehna rode his horse and accompanied by a number of his disciples, marched towards Kangra. He made up his mind

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to stop at Kartarpur and see for himself what type of man was Nanak. In the fields outside Kartarpur stood a divinely looking man wearing ordinary dress. He asked him where the great Guru Nanak lived. "I will guide you to his place," said the man humbly. Lehna asked his followers to camp outside the city, while he will meet Baba Nanak and come back. The man who promised to guide him conducted his horse by its reins. Little did Lehna know that it was the gentle and humble Nanak guiding him to his own place. Lehna was riding a horse while the great Nanak was on foot respectfully leading his royal guest. When people on the way bowed to Nanak, Lehna wondered how great must be Nanak whose disciples living an ordinary life were so profoundly respected.

When Lehna entered the shrine of Baba Nanak with offerings of fruit and sugar cakes he was stunned to see the same humble man who guided him sitting on the pontific seat (*manji*) of the Guru. Tears welled into his eyes when he bowed before him and begged forgiveness for coming riding on a horse while he was on foot. "What is your name?" asked Nanak, "Lehna", replied the high priest of Durga worshippers. Guru Nanak brooded over the word "Lehna" which in native Punjabi means to collect what is due, and then said Baba Nanak, "If you are *Lehna*, (Receiver) then we shall give you what is due to you and what we owe you."

Lehna went back to his followers who were camping outside and said to them: "Uptil today I have been your Master. Today I have become the disciple of the great Baba Nanak. His presence to me now is the sanctuary of all gods and goddesses. Tell my wife Khivi when you return from the pil-

grimage that I will come when my Master permits me to do so. For me meeting Baba Nanak has been a spiritual rebirth, a new way of life, a new discipline. I will not go one step backward but will walk on this path which Baba Nanak says is sharp as the sword-edge." Lehna became an exemplary disciple and later the only choice of Guru Nanak to be his successor.⁶

Walk humbly in the Service of God

Bhai Jodh and Bhai Phirna Khehra entered the Guru's path. "We are not learned, Master," they said, "Give us instructions which may help us to mould our lives according to your noble ideals, and which we can practise without much difficulty", said Guru Nanak: "The first lesson every Sikh has to learn is to walk on this arduous path in utter humility. Rise early in the morning, take your bath and contemplate His Presence by meditating His divine Name. But never be proud of your virtues and piety. Learn humility. Know God alone to be your Master. Serve Him sincerely by serving all God fearing people. Serve Him by visualising Him in every heart and soul. Seek wisdom, enlightenment and inspiration in the company of the holy. Live ever in the communion of His Word (*bānī manan karnā*).

Discard the Ways of the Self-Centred

Bhagta Ohri and Japu Vansi came to meet the Guru. They were delighted to see the Master but prayed to the Guru: "Those who are educated and learned can enjoy your divine songs, your philosophy and drink deep from the fountains of wisdom which we see all round us. But we are unlettered men.

How are we to seek enlightenment? How are we to attain truth? Baba Nanak said: "Discard the evil ways of the self-centred men (*manmukh*). "What are the evil habits of self-centred men which we must discard," asked the two devotees: "Firstly," said Guru Nanak, "never be jealous and never talk ill of others. Do not think you alone are able to do good in the world; you alone are right in all matters; you alone should get praise for all you do. But if someone else achieves something, do not be unhappy about it as self-centred men are, and do not be jealous about it. Consider all people to be your friends, particularly the people who are noble and virtuous. Secondly, do not be vain and proud without rhyme or reason. Do not laugh at a person less intelligent than you and do not hesitate to impart knowledge to him. Never think that no one is wiser than you, no one is better than you. Thirdly, do not talk ill of others. A self-centred man cannot tolerate the praise of others who are nobler and wiser than him. On the other hand when he hears him praised he will cook scandals against him saying 'I know him what he really is.' He boasts of his own imaginary virtues and achievements and refuses to acknowledge the greatness of any other. Give up this habit and show reverence to all noble persons and deem yourself the lowliest of the low. Fourthly, give up dogmatism and fanaticism of all types. If a person refuses to listen to words of wisdom do not try to push them down his throat. Do not compel others to accept your views. To do so is an evil habit of the self-centred. Give all these and you will receive the light of God in your heart. Serve all who need some service. Thus were they enlightened.

The Mystic Word Vāh-Gurū

Shihan and Gajjan were uncle and nephew. They came to meet Guru Nanak at Kartarpur and prayed: "Master, teach us how to attain the four ends of life: *kama*, *artha*, *dharma*, and *moksha* (personal, enjoyment, material satisfaction, righteous living and liberation).

■ Said Guru Nanak: "Contemplate with deep mental and spiritual devotion the Guru's Mystic Word: *Vāh-Gurū*. "May we know" said they, "what is the meaning and the spiritual significance of the Word *Vāh-Gurū*? Baba replied: "*Vāh* means woderful, spectacular, exalting. It is an expression which sums up the mystery as well as revelation of life and God. It visualises the riddle and meaning of all that is. It is Man's true and profoundest response to God's majesty and splendour. While *Vāh* reveals Him objectively, *Guru* reveals Him subjectively. *Gu* means darkness and *rū* means Light. So *Guru* means "He who reveals Light in inner in darkness, he who reveals the Spirit in the body and mind."

Thus he who contemplates the true Name *Vāh-Gurū* understandingly and with a single-minded devotion will achieve the four ends of life. He who walks in righteousness and treads the path of truth acquires the blessedness of life. God fulfils all his wishes. Material wealth becomes for him the dust of his feet. The Yoga of divine Name reveals within us the knowledge and experience which books cannot teach but have to be acquired by spiritual discipline only. String the divine Name to your very breath. When you breath in, say *Vāh* along your inhaling vital air (*prāṇa*)., when you breath out,

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say *Gurū* with your exhaling vital breath. Thus you will attain communion with your own Self and with Eternal One within you after meditative practice. Consider all that you have to be the gracious gifts of God and never hesitate to feed the needy in the name of God."¹⁰

Shihan was once preparing for the wedding of his daughter. The wedding party had to be entertained for three days. Suddenly a day before the wedding, a party of pilgrims going to Kartarpur to meet Baba Nanak arrived. His wife thought that if the pilgrims were entertained what would be left for the wedding party. "Let us not worry about the wedding party for the moment. The pilgrims must be fed said Shihan. He entertained them for a night. When the wedding party came, he was able to entertain them for four days. He thanked Baba Nanak for the abundance of the gifts. What he thought would not be enough was more than enough.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Baba āyā Kartarpur bhekh udāsī sagal utārā,
pehar sansārī kapde mañjī baiḥ kiā avatārā.
Bhai Gurdas *Vār* I: 38
2. pitā dī āgyā man ke udāsī bhekh utārā ar, sanāārīāñ dā
bhekh pehryā, mañjī te bhaiḥ ke sikhāñ nū darśan devan
te bānyia ucārīāñ. ar jo jo bānī sune usede man vic gyāñ
dā ujalā hovai, parmesar dī partīt vadhe.
J.M.S. (LI) 458
3. bānī mukhoñ ucārīāi hoe ruśnai mitai āndhārā,
gyāñ gośt carcā sadā anhad śabad uthe dhunkārā,
sodar ārtī, gāvīai amrit vele jāp ucārā.
gurmukh bhār atharban tārā.
Bhai Gurdas, *Vār* I : 38

Saṁdhya vele sodar gāvan, amrit vele jāp paḍan ar sava
pehar dīn cade āratī gavan ar āratī sun ke degḥ prasād

varte....aṭh pehar gyān gosht carcā hundī rahe.

J.M..S. (LI) 458

4. S.B. p 60. N.P. Ut, adh: 46; J.B. (MSS) 215

"Once when Nanak was staying near a village, a peasant boy, Boora by name, was attracted with sincere devotion and honest faith towards the enlightened and detached Baba Nanak and presented to him offering what he had, with him and took to serving him. Pleased with his manner of speech and good behaviour Baba Nanak looked upon him with kindly favour and honoured him with the title of Bhai Buddha and raised him from the rank of a servant to the position of a venerable High Priest. Knowing to be worthy of honour in every way, he, in his kindness blessed him saying, "Whosoever shall become my successor, shall do so with your advice.


Khushwaqt Rai: *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan* (MSS)

5. All the sermons in this chapter and the next two are taken almost verbatim from the text quoted. As they are very popular and known to every Sikh the originals are not quoted.
6. N.P. Ut adh: 47, J.B. (mentioned in the end of all versions) J.M.S. (LI) 459
7. N.P. Ut adh 43, J.B. p 62
8. N.P. Ut adh: 43, S.B. p. 49.
9. N.P. Ut adh: 43, S.B. 50
10. *Vāh-guru*: is the divine Name, the Mystic Word which was first introduced by Guru Nanak. In the *Adi Granth* allusions such as *satnām* (True Name) *gurmukh nām* (Divine Name) *Sabad* (Word), *mahamāntar* (supreme Mystic Word) *guramāntar* (Word inspired by the Guru) all refer to *Vāh-Guru* which literally means Wonderful Light that dispels darkness. This Word is a doctrinal affirmation of the Sikh Faith and its significance can be understood only when it becomes an inner spiritual exercise in daily meditation. Then it begins to confer light and grace *ex opere operato*

The historical facts of this story are given in N.P. Ut ad 43 and S.B. p 50-51.

CHAPTER 22

LAST PUNJAB TOUR

 ACHAL BATALA was an important centre of Nathpanthi *yogis*, not far away from Kartarpur. It was the most important centre in Punjab, and when Guru Nanak came to know that the *Shivratni* festival was about to be held at Achal Batala, he was impelled to meet the gathering of the people. So he left for this *mela* (festive gathering) along with some of his disciples.

Shivaratri falls in the month of March-April. For the Yogis and the Vaishnavas it was an opportunity to collect money from the pious pilgrims. The Yogis established their *asanas* and offered to shower great blessings on the pious adherents who served them. The Vaishnavas started dancing, singing songs of Krishna in moods of emotional ecstasy. The Yogis felt that they should first teach a lesson to the Vaishnavas and drive them out. They were attracting large crowds by their dances and songs.

As soon Guru Nanak reached the place people gathered around him. Everyone had heard of Guru Nanak and people rushed to touch the hem of garment and to touch his feet. They offered so much money that the *yogis* were seriously upset. They were raging with jealousy and bitterness at the way all crowds had gone to pay homage to Guru Nanak and ignored all the *yogis*.¹

While the Vaishnavas were dancing with feigned ecstasy keeping a costly jug for the people to offer money in it one of the Yogis played a trick. When

the Vaishnavas were dancing with their eyes closed, he slipped away with the money jug and hid it. As soon as they found the money jug missing they forgot their dances and their songs.

They were seriously upset and the *yogis* laughed at them saying: "You hypocrites you say you have renounced the world, but you have forgotten all your dances and ecstasy of Krishna for the sake of a jug (*lota*) filled with money. If you have any spiritual powers find it. This is no place for you. You have lost your *jug* and in a moment you will lose yourself and you people will weep for you." Proud of their feat the *yogis* cut jokes and made fun of Vaishnavas and their Bhakti.

Guru Nanak could not tolerate anyone being bullied. With his clairvoyant vision he pointed at the place where the *lota* was hidden and exposed the *yogi* who stole it and hid it.²

This was more than the Yogis could tolerate. Feeling that Guru Nanak was an intruder who had come to their sacred place to win over their disciples, their leader Bhangar Nath went along with other Yogis to Guru Nanak, and without greeting him opened a bitter debate:

Bhangar Nath: Here in this sacred place of Shiva, which is pure as milk and a stronghold of the Yogis, may we know what business have you to come here as an intruder and add your undesirable and contaminated ideas resembling a sour drink (*kanji*) to our pure milk? Now we cannot take any butter out of it because you have spoiled it.³

Nanak: Listen, Bhangar Nath, your milk pot is unclean. Your foolish mother, (mind) did not clean

it properly before pouring milk into it. That is why the milk has been adulterated and you cannot take butter out of it. What a pity. Blame yourself and your careless mother for it and not me. My milk is pure and I can take plenty of butter out of it.⁴

Bhangar Nath: You were an *Udasi*, and wore holy robes of a recluse, but why have you suddenly given it up and become worldly man? I doubt from what you are preaching to the people that you can be called a holy man. You have insulted all holy orders⁵ of monks by renouncing your *Udasi* robes of recluse.

Guru Nanak: You renounce the world, call yourself recluses, anchorites and yet go to the house of the worldly people to beg your food. In what way are you superior to those at whose door you beg your two daily meal? What do you give them in return? If they looked on you with the same contempt with which you hold worldly people, you would starve to death.⁶

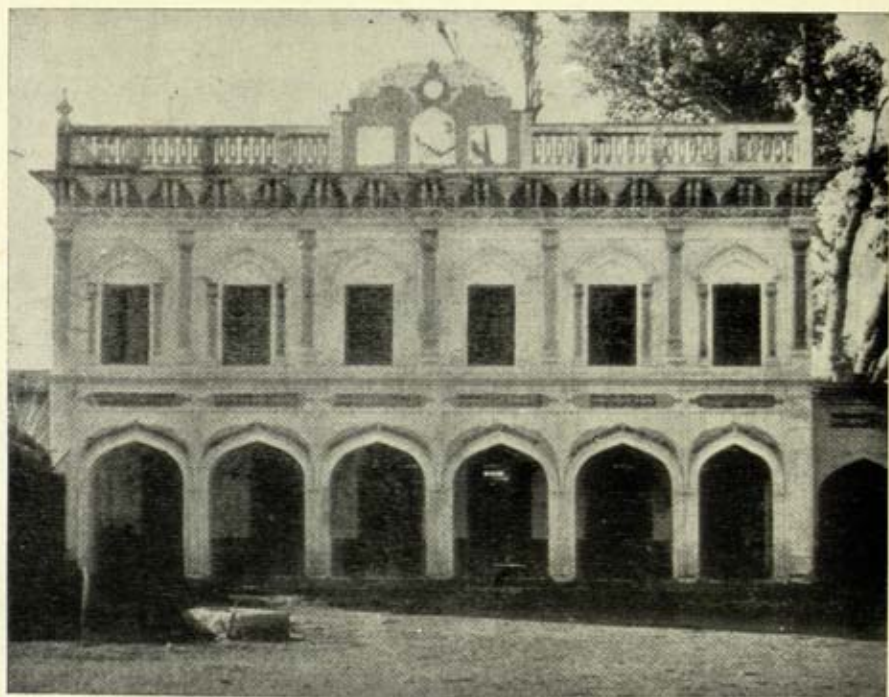
Bhangar Nath (wild with rage) You, Nanak Bedi, wherever you have gone you have condemned the six systems. At all our centres you have insulted our sacred system of Yoga. You have belittled it, lowered it in the eyes of the people, and severely criticised the six *shastras*. We will now show you what we are and what powers *yoga* has and what miracles it can work.⁷

So saying all the *yogis* started showing miracles of black-magic and occult powers. By *Hatha yoga* they had acquired sufficient powers over the forces of Nature to create an illusion of things that were

actually not there, but were created by the dramatic control of elemental forces and the suspension of belief of all the onlookers. Some presented himself as a tiger, some as a snake, others flew like birds.⁸ When they had impressed the onlookers to a great extent Bhangar Nath said to Nanak: "Now this is what our Yoga can do. Show some miracles which are better and more impressive than ours. Show by practical example all your *siddhis* (occult powers). If you cannot, what right have you to condemn Yoga."⁹

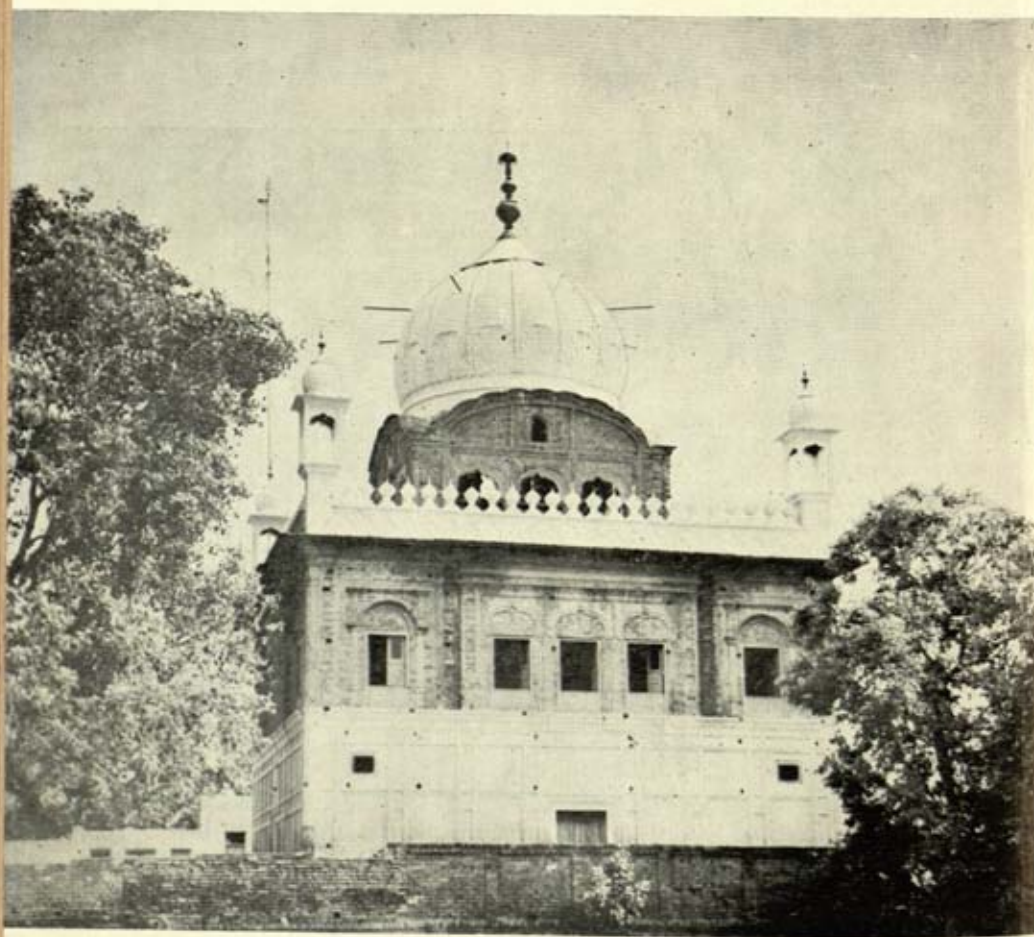
Guru Nanak calmly answered: "Listen, Bhangar Nath, if this is what you have achieved by your *yoga* it is trash and worth nothing in our eyes. I have taken refuge in the supreme Enlightener. I live in the sanctuary of truly holy men, men wedded to truth. I seek light from the Word of God, from Wisdom of the Divine. I care not for anything else. My Shiva, my Lord is not the Shiva of Hindu trinity which you invoke for these occult powers. My Shiva is the supreme Creator, and His blessings are unshakable. His law is unchallengable. He can take away, what you have in a moment. But you cannot take away His grace, His love, His blessings with all your collective *yogic* powers."¹⁰

The yogis felt stung bitterly in the tail. Once more they roared with pride and declarations of their mighty powers. Once more they made up their mind to show more stunning miracles. But when they tried to do so, they felt some superior power had taken the wind out of their sail. Some unknown power had naturalised their unnatural instincts. Some superior Will had chained their wills. They could not move. The only miracle Guru Nanak showed to the *yogis* was that they could not perform any



Shrine at Dipalpur where Guru Nanak healed Nuri the Muslim leper. The shrine has been preserved by Pakistan Government.

facing p. 442



Achal Batala Shrine: Here took place Guru Nanak's encounter with Yogis at Shivratri Festival.

facing p. 441

more miracles in his presence. Bhai Gurdas says, the Guru did so with the mystic power of the Word of God.¹¹

Disillusioned, overpowered, humbled, Bhangar-nath felt his whole inner being paralysed. All his promethean fires were chained to the rock of silence and peace. He came to Nanak calmed but bewildered. All he had lived for and worked for, suddenly turned to nought. "Listen Bhangar Nath," said Nanak, "if I could chew iron, control the earth and revolve it according to my will, wear flaming robes and cut through the Himalayas, weigh planets in a scale, even such mighty powers, they would be passing clouds in the face of Light and Wisdom of the true Word. All these powers would be insignificant compared to the love and grace of God."¹²

This encounter developed into a discussion and the discussion became an illuminating sermon on the aims and objects of the doctrine of the divine Word with the doctrines of Yoga. The representatives of all the six systems, and the Vaishnavas bowed to the Guru and praised him for his unparalleled wisdom and spirituality. "You are O Nanak" said Bhangar Nath, "the greatest living Enlightener of this dark age. In this iron age of ignorance and moral degradation you have shown to the people the path of Light and truth."

At Sialkot

Guru Nanak went to Gujranwala where he met his devoted disciple Bhai Lallo. After the ravage of Eminabad he had shifted to Gujranwala. From here he went to Sialkot. As soon as he reached the outskirts of the city he camped under the same tree

where he stayed during his last tour, and where a shrine had been built by his devotees. He sent for Mulla the shopkeeper. His wife fearing that Guru Nanak might take him on his long tours, hid him and told the Guru's messenger that Mulla was not at home. Twice the Guru sent for him, and twice his wife told a lie. Mulla was hiding in a fuel store where a snake bit him and he died. The foolish wife who feared that she might lose him for some time lost him for ever. Guru Nanak sadly commented, that a capitalist loves money more than friendship.

*Friendship with a money-monger
Is false and leads to falsehood;
You knew not O Mulla,
Where death would overtake you.*

Guru Nanak : Slok Vadhik p. 1413

Among the Pirs of Multan

Guru Nanak then went to Multan and Uch. He had promised Pir Bahauddin of Multan and Pir Jalal-ud-din of Uch that he would come to them on their invitation. When he reached Multan the other *pirs* of the great centre of the Sufis feared that Guru Nanak may not establish his mission in the city which they had held since centuries. The Sufis had a very polite and symbolic way of telling such conscious intruders that there is no place for him in their spiritual jurisdiction. Sometime they would change the direction of their shoes, and place them facing in an outward direction. They were in any way more cultured and respectful in their behaviour than the fiery *yogis* of Achal Batala. They brought a cup of milk full to the brim, indicating that in Multan there was no room for any more *pirs*. Guru Nanak quietly took a fragrant flower and placed

it on the milk, indicating that he had not come to occupy any of their places. He had come like the fragrance of the flower which will float on the milk. He was like the Ganges seeking the ocean, and he had no desire to let his waters fill any stagnant pool.¹³

Soon Makhdoom Baha-ud-din came. He was so delighted to meet the Master that the other *pirs* were surprised at the devotion shown by him to the Sikh Guru. He took pride in serving Baba Nanak with his own hands. He felt delighted to meet the Man whom he deemed his best friend in life and death. It is a pity no record has been found as yet to know what trespassed between them. Unfortunately no search has also been made. Had attempts been made to ransack the records of Multan before partition of India there was a possibility of finding something.

Along with Pir Baha-ud-din Guru Nanak came to meet his friend Jalal-ud-din of Uch of whom the *Janam Sakhis* and *Makke di Gosht* speak highly. At Uch the divine guest of the Pir was entertained with great reverence. Jalal-ud-din had such a personal affection for the Guru that he preserved a number of relics of the Guru. The relics still found at Uch Shariff are (1) Wooden slippers (2) *Āsā* used for meditational purposes. It is also called *bairagan* (3) Two stone bangles (4) a stone club (5) a wooden boat in which four *pirs*¹⁴ are said to have crossed the Panch-nad, the place where the five rivers of Punjab meet. It is close to Uch. With the exception of the boat other articles appear to have been acquired by Makhdoom Jallal-ud-din at Mecca and Medina. These were the things he wore only in his Middle East tour, so they were most probably acquired by the Pir at Mecca. The boat commemorates the Guru's visit to Uch Shariff. The relics are still preserved

by the descendants of the Pir at Uch in Pakistan. After meeting his friend Sheikh Ibrahim at Pakpattan Guru Nanak came back to Kartarpur¹⁵.

1. mela sun śivrat dā Baba acal vatāle āi,
darśan vekhan kārne sagl ult paī lokāi,
lagi barsan lachmī ridh sidh nau nidh savāi;
jogi vekh calit no man vic rasik ghanerī khaī.
Bhai Gurdas Vār I:39
2. bhagtiāñ paī bhagat ān, lotā jogī lyā chupāi,
bhagtiāñ gaī bhagat bhul lotā aṇḍār surt bhulāi,
Baba janījān purkh kadhya lotā jahañ lukāi,
vekh calit jogī khunsāi.
ibid
karat bhagatie bhagat prakārā,
rādhā krishan bekh tin dhārā,
nirat nikat lota jo hoi
Bhangarnath gupt tab hoke
pahun durāyio lota laiike.
N.P. Ut. Adhy 39
3. khādi khunas jogisvarāñ goṣṭ karan śabhe uth āi,
puche Bhangarnath tuh dudh vic kioñ kāñji pāi,
phityā cātā dhudh dā ridkyā makhan hath nā ai,
Bhai Gurdas 1/40
4. Nanak ākhe Bhangarnāth terī mau kucajī āi,
bhāṇḍā dhoe na jatioñ bhae kucake phulā sadāi
abid
5. bhekh utār udās dā vat kioñ sañsari rīt calāi
ibid Var 1: 40
6. hoe atīt grehast taj phir unhū ke ghar maṅgan jāi.
7. eh sun bacan jogiśrañ mār kilak bahu rūa uthāi,
khat darśan ko khehdiā, kaljug Bedī Nānak āi.
8. rūp vatāyā jogiañ, singh bāgh bahu calit dikhyāā,
ik par karke udaran, pankhī jiveñ rahe lilāi,
ik nāg hoe pavan chod iknā varkhā agan vasāi,
tāre to be Bhangar Nath, ik ud mirgīnī jal tar jāi,
sidhañ agan na bujhai bujhāi.
Bhai Gurdas Var 1:41

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At one period of his (Guru Nanak's) career, when he visited Batala the *jogistwaras* who were recluses, and who by means of corporeal mortifications were supposed to have acquired command over the powers of Nature were so enraged against him that they strove to terrify him by their enchantment assuming shapes of tigers and serpents but they could not succeed, for Nanak appears to have been a real philosopher who taught a pure theism and inculcated universal peace and toleration.

Kathertine Corvey : *Night Side of Life* p 269

Jahangir's Memoirs and *Aine Akbari* give a list of similar miracles which were performed by Assamese magicians. Ram Rai son of the seventh Guru showed similar miracles to Aurangzeb who gave Dehradune as a fief to him. His father Guru Hari Rai resented his attempts to please the emperor.

9. siddh bolan sun Nānakā tuh jag nū karāmat dikhlāī,
kujh dikhāe asāñ nū bhi tūñ kioñ dhil ajehi lāī,
Bhai Gurdas, Vār 1:42
10. Baba bole Nāth ji: asāñ vekhe jogī vast na kāī,
gur sañgat bānī binā, dūji ot nahi hai rāī,
siv rupei karta purkh, cale nahi dharti calai,
ibid
11. siddh tañtar mañtar kar jhaḍ pae sabad guru ke kalā
chapai. ibid
12. It should be noted that the subject matter of this *Siddh Gosht* does not tally with the subject matter of his composition *Siddh Gosht* : As pointed out in the chapter on Summer Dialogue :
 - i. Here at achal Batala the *Siddhas* already knew Guru Nanak before he arrived. Even before the discussion began they knew it was Nanak Bedi of Kartarpur.
 - ii. Naturally they do not ask his name, his whereabouts which they do in *Siddh Gosht*
 - iii. Achal Batala dialogue is based on jealousy, bitterness and is sarcastic on both sides. None of these questions and answers recorded by Bhai Gurdas figure in

Siddh Gosht, which fits in with the Sumer situation only

- iv. Here at Achal Batala *Siddhas* ask why had Guru Nanak given up *Udasi* dress, In the *Siddhas Gosht* they ask why was he wearing *Udasi* dress when he was preaching asceticism and renouncing the world. This questions again fits in with the Summer situation.
- v. The first attack on Nanak by Achal Batala Yogis is that he has all over the world run down and condemned the Six systems, but in *Siddha Gosht* Loharippa asks him to accept Yoga. He does not know that Nanak's doctrines are against Yoga as they were practiced.
- vi. In Achal Batala *Gosht*, the dialogue begins with *karāmat*: miracles. While there is no question and answer on miracles in *Siddh Gosht*.
- vi. In the first line of Bhai Gurdas' *pauri* 40, on Achal Batala he says: *gost karan sabhe uth ai*. The *Siddha* came for discussion. From this point none of the questions and answers that pass on between Nanak and the Yogis figure in *Siddha Gosht*.
- vii. The leading character of Achal Batala *Gosht* Bhargar Nath is one whose name does not occur in the *Siddh Gosht*. The leading characters in the Summer *Gosht* are Loharippa (who calls himself Gorakhputa, disciple of Gorakh) and Charpat.

All these facts clearly prove that the composition *Siddha Gosht* has nothing to do with the Batala dialogue.

13. melioñ Baba uṭhya Multāne di zyārat jāi,
agon pir Multan de dudh katorā bhar lai āi,
Babe kadh kar bagal te cambeli dudh vic milāi,
jioñ sagar vic gang samāi.
14. The four pirs are said to be: (1) Guru Nanak (2) Makhdoom Sayyed Jallal Sani, Pir of Uch (3) Pir Bahauddin of

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Multan (4) Mast Kalandar. All these four sailed in the boat across the Panch Nad

I am indebted to Sardar Balwant Singh Kalra, President of Singh Sabha Bangkok, for this information which he kindly sent by letter. Sardar Balwant Singh Kalra lived here at Uch for a number of years and has seen the relics. The pirs keep long hair and beard and wear tubans. The annual urs is held in August and the Nawab of Bhawalpur leads the processions

15. Zyārat kar Multan dī phir Kartarpure nūāyā,
Bhai Gurdas Var I 45

CHAPTER 23

SERMONS AND DISCIPLINE



KARTARPUR became the Mecca of the pilgrims of the New Faith of Guru Nanak. Men, women and children, seers, scholars and seekers of peace and truth wended their way to this city for enlightenment and to listen to the musical words of Baba Nanak¹.

A few years after his arrival here both, his² father Kalu, and mother Tripta passed away. They spent their last days in joy, peace and glory. Their son was now respected and honoured as the King of kings and their dream of capturing the historic glory of the family was fulfilled. After the fall of Sultanpur under the sway Babur, Bibi Nanaki and Jai Ram are also said to have shifted to Kartarpur. It is a pity that we do not know much about the last days of this great woman Nanaki, who can rightly be called the first disciple of Guru Nanak. She appears to have predeceased Nanak. Rai Bular also passed away and true to his promise his dear Nanak was by his bed side to give him his respectful love and blessings. Rai Bular had been a second father to Nanak, and throughout his life, the Guru respected him much more than a son could have done.²

Out of hundreds of disciples from all quarters of the country history has preserved the names of only a few, and the sermons delivered even to these few show Guru Nanak's psychological approach to persons who sought enlightenment. The child, the illiterate peasant or blacksmith, the musician, the pundit, the sufi, the mystic, all found that Guru Nanak's

Word and Wisdom had for him a complete theoretical philosophy of life, each apparently different but all inherently the same. His message was the message of Light and Love. Light and love can be approached through art, music, poetry, philosophy, theology, charity, service and above all by contemplation of the Word by a clean heart. He tried to bind together all humanity in the golden chains of a spiritual understanding, in which all were to recognise the leadership of the Word, the Truth. In this free state of spiritual brotherhood, all differences were dissolved; all barriers fell, and all passions which divided man from man changed and transfigured into the blessedness of peace and unity. The disciple-consciousness (*sikh-sruti*) merged into the vast sea of Guru-consciousness (*Sabad-sruti* or *Guru-Sruti*) as streams and rivers wend their way only to mingle with the boundless Ocean.

Fear of Death Changes to Love of Life

A boy of hardly ten years, named Taru Popat, one day stepped into the presence of Baba Nanak at Kartarpur and said: "Baba ji, I hear that those who meet the saints get peace of mind. All their sorrows depart. They fear not death and they live a happy life. Bless me with such a life because there is no saint greater than thee."

"You are quite young, my boy," said Guru Nanak. "Why should you fear death at such a tender age when you are hale and hearty? Why should you worry about such serious problems which should worry only old people?" What sorrow oppresses your mind?

"My mother," said Taru Popat" lights fire in

the hearth everyday, and when she places firewood in it, I notice a strange thing. The smaller pieces of firewood catch fire first and the bigger ones later. Death can in the same way swallow a young boy like me more easily than it can overpower older people. Enlighten me, Baba Nanak, about life and death. You cannot trust a friend, how can you trust death."

Deeply impressed, Guru Nanak said, "My lad, I will tell you how to change your fear of death to love of life. Keep your mind pure. Let no impure thought, act, or deed come near it. Contemplate the Name of God with every breath and live in His remembrance. Learn to live by the sweat of thy brow and give all the surplus to the needy. See the light of God in everyone and serve selflessly any one who comes to you in need. A king once built a palace. In one wall of the palace he studded the most precious gems and stones. The wall facing this wall was grounded in shining stones and made like a mirror of precious stone. All the precious gems and jewels studded on the opposite wall were reflected in it. In the same way if you clean your mind and make it as pure as a mirror, life will reflect itself in its eternity and you will forget death. This you can achieve through love and service. Go, live such a life, you will save many from the fear of death."

Forgive in His Name

Mulla Keer, a learned man, once said to Guru Nanak, "Some of the heroes of Mahabharata were considered very pious and holy, yet they gambled and indulged in adultery. Is it possible to live such a life?"¹

"Do not try it these days," said the Guru. This is not the age of Mahabaharta where so much ignorance prevails. Consider all human beings to have been made in the image of the Guru and God and serve them selflessly without seeing their transgressions.

One day a man who pretended to be very devout came to Mulla's house for a day's stay. He read the hymns of the Guru very loudly and created an impression that he was very pious and devout. In the middle of the night he stole a casket containing the ornaments of Mulla's wife and requested him to allow him to go out for answering the call of nature and bath. Mulla insisted that he should not move out of the house in the bitter cold night. He should go to the lavatory at home and he would make arrangement for his bath with hot water at home. But the guest compelled him to open the door. While Mulla was persuading him not to go, the casket of ornaments fell from the thief's hands. Mulla saw it and knowing full well it was his casket containing the ornaments of his wife he allowed him to go with the stolen ornaments and casket.

Mulla's wife was about to raise alarm when she saw her casket of ornaments. Stopping her from uttering a word he said: "Be silent and do not worry about your ornaments. I will get you a new set of ornaments. Everyone here knows him to be a pious Sikh of Guru Nanak. What impression will the people have about the Sikhs of the Guru. Let us forgive him. He might change. Perhaps his need was greater than ours."

When Mulla again met Guru Nanak, the Master blessed him saying "You forgave the sins of a thief in the Name of the Guru, the Guru forgives all your

sins and blesses you with divine wisdom for such nobility. Consider the divine Word to be the image the of Guru. In it is Light and Truth."²

Desire to be Desireless

Two devotees, named Pritha and Kheda came to Kartarpur. The atmosphere in the presence of the Guru was so calm and soothing that they easily acquired concentration of mind and peace of soul. "Ask for any boon, noble visitors," said Guru Nanak. "We have only one desire Baba Nanak, and that is to be completely desireless. Boundless are thy spiritual treasures. Give us only one gift that we may ever bask in the sunshine of your divine wisdom. We want our life to be completely free from cravings, serene, unperplexed, and fixed in thy faith and love. We want to live in your divine company drinking the blessed *amrita* of thy sweet words and music with a single-minded faith of true devotees. Linked by no ties to the earth, we want to spend the rest of our lives in steadfast love of Thy presence." "If you wish to live close to me," said Guru Nanak, "live close to truth, holiness, and wisdom wherever you find them. The congregation of the seekers of truth is the sanctuary and presence of the Guru. The Word (*Sabad*) is the eternal Being of the Guru. Contemplate the Word and you will attain desireless peace."³

Tapasya in the Sikh Way

Prithi Mal Sehgal and Rama Didi came to Guru Nanak and expressed their desire to attain God and be one with Him. They however asked him to show them the easier way as the path of Yoga was too severe. Guru Nanak said: "By self-mortification

of the *Hatha Yoga* a man may acquire some occult powers, but nothing more. I will tell you an easier and more ennobling way. Turn your eyes away from lustful things and concentrate on the scriptures and the Word of God. Turn your ears from the false praise and blame of others and let not your tongue indulge in uttering falsehood, but sing the praise of God and utter the Name of the Lord. Turn your hands away from the evils of stealing, cheating and causing injury to others, and use your hands for the service of others. Let not your feet take you to the dens of evil. Turn away from them. Walk daily in the company of the holy and virtuous. This is the Sikh Way of *tapasya* (penance).

“Tame your mind patiently as you tame a wild horse. If the rider gets tired of taming the horse he will never be able to tame it and control it. So go on restraining and controlling the mind with persistent efforts. Let your mind rest in the fragrance of the divine Name. The more you let your mind sink in the light and music of the Word the more you will acquire illumination.” They lived such a life and were blessed⁴.

The Wages of Music and Wisdom

Bhai Mallo and Manga were musicians and learned men. They were the best singers and the best interpreters of the holy word (*Gurbani*). Guru Nanak blessed them saying, “Great would be the reward of their service of humanity through divine music and imparting Wisdom to the people by correct interpretation of Sikh Scriptures. “But”, said Bhai Mallo, “we are told by the *yogis* and *sanyasins* the greater the labour in penance and prayers the greater would be the reward. But Master,

you suggest, the easier the way the greater is the reward. We do not quite understand how this is possible."

"You have seen a woodcutter working all day and carrying fuel to the market and getting hardly enough to live. A shopkeeper who sells provision and does easier work earns more. A cloth merchant who does still easier work earns more than him. A jeweller who works least earns most of all. The wages of divine music and imparting wisdom to people are greater than all the penances of *yogis* and *sannyasis*," commented Nanak.

Both of them performed *kirtan* and interpreted scriptures and so melodious was their music and so inspiring was their *katha* (interpretation) that every word went home to the listeners. It was because they did so with sincerity and devotion.⁵

Characteristics of a Devout Sikh

Kalu a disciple of Guru Nanak, asked the Master : "Exalted One, what are the characteristics of a devout Sikh (*sanmokh*)?" Guru Nanak replied there are four characteristics of a devout Sikh : Firstly, a Sikh should treat all human beings as his friends and should have a feeling for the sorrow and suffering of others as one has for his dearest friend. Like a true friend he should give whatever he has, be it knowledge, money, food, clothes. He should try to make others happy as one tries to make his friends happy and prosperous. Secondly, a Sikh should be compassionate. He who has lesser knowledge than him, he who has lesser power than him, and he who occupies an inferior position should be looked on with ennobling compassion and treated as an equal. He should be

treated as a younger brother who must be affectionately helped to stand on his feet.

Thirdly, a Sikh should have reverence for those who are superior and those who are wiser. He should not be jealous of them but should learn something from them and should respect them as one respects a father or teacher.

The fourth characteristic of a Sikh should be that he should impart the best of his knowledge again and again to him who seeks it and respects it but he should not try to teach obstinate foolhardy fanatics who would not listen to reason.

Yoga of Love

Ajita Randhava was the *chowdary* of Pakho ke Randhave. He had met Guru Nanak when he came to his village. Now he came to the Guru and asked for spiritual instructions. "I have met many saints, Baba Nanak," said Ajita Randhawa but all show some difficult path or a way that has never satisfied me. Instruct me that I may be united with God and attain peace of mind."

Guru Nanak said "There is a *yoga* of self-mortification and there is a *yoga* of Love." "But I am a Jat," interrupted Ajita, it will not be possible for me to practise any self-mortification." "Then listen to the *yoga* of Love," said Guru Nanak. "These are the fundamental principles of this *Sahajya Yoga* :

1. *Ahimsā* (Non-violence)

- (i) Do not wish evil for anyone. This is *ahimsa* of thought.

- (ii) Do not speak harshly to anyone. This is the *ahimsa* of speech.
 - (iii) Do not cause injury to any one. This is the *ahimsa* of action.
2. Know only God to be the ultimate Truth and do not believe in any other gods and goddesses.
 3. Give up stealing and thefts of all types. To take what belongs to others is theft. To exploit the labours of others is theft. To hide your sins and crimes is theft.
 4. Give up lust of all types. To be attracted by the false charms of women is lust. To abandon oneself to sensuousness of all types is lust. To have illicit relations with any woman is lust.
 5. Forgiveness is the greatest virtue. Tolerate false praise and blame with equanimity. This is forgiveness. Endure sorrow and suffering inflicted by others. This is forgiveness.
 6. Patience and fortitude are very essential on the path of Sikhism. Calm endurance and abiding by the Will of God is patience.
 7. Compassion is essential for moral elevation. If you are powerful, pity others and help others. This is compassion. If you are rich help others. This is compassion.
 8. Be tender in heart, soul and mind. Never think evil of any one. Be sensitive to the feelings of others.

9. Eat little and sleep little.
10. Bathe your body with water, clean your teeth and wash your clothes. This is keeping clean and pure. But equally important is that you should keep your heart and mind pure and not entertain jealousy anger in it.

“And what may I know is true charity Master? Some say that by charity alone you can attain salvation.” asked Ajita Randhava. “To give charity in the hope of reward is inferior charity. To give charity in the hope of being praised is also not noble charity. To give charity without any hope or desire for reward is the highest charity. To give money or clothes is not the only charity. To render every type of help to lessen human suffering is charity. But the highest type of charity is to impart knowledge to others. Be humble, live in the company of the holy and contemplate the Word.” This is the Yoga of Love.’

Sheikh Mallo and Ubare Khan

Both Sheikh Mallo and Ubare Khan were devoted friends. Both were learned Sufis of the orthodox order. Ubare Khan was one day surprised to learn that on meeting Guru Nanak Sheikh Mallo had almost become the disciple of Guru Nanak. He wondered how a learned Muslim could submit to one who had rejected both Hinduism and Islam as he understood them. Ubare Khan did not believe that any Hindu could achieve enlightenment.

Urged by Mallo he came to Kartarpur. There he met Nanak and entered into discussion with him. “Why has God created Hindus and Muslims

differently if there is no difference between them?" asked Ubare Khan. "God has revealed unity in diversity in all phases of life. When men are born he is neither Hindu nor Muslim. We make them different by differences of dress, customs beliefs, and rites." So impressed was Ubare Khan after a long discussion with the Master that he stayed at Kartarpur as long as Guru Nanak lived.⁸

NOTES AND REFERENCES.

1. S. N. p 31-2; N.P. Ut adh 41
2. ibid p 33; ibid
3. ibid p 34; ibid
4. ibid p 39; ibid
5. ibid p 45 ibid 43
6. ibid p 47 ibid
7. ibln p 53
8. Kahn Singh in his *Mahan Kosh* says, his real name was Abdul Rahman Khan. He became the Guru's disciple and lived with him at Kartarpur. All *Janam Sakhis* mention his story.

CHAPTER 24

THE GAME OF LOVE



GURU NANAK felt, that the Light of God revealed by him to the world could remain burning in full effulgence, if there was someone competent to carry the torch of his Wisdom and Word to the next generation and pass it on to successive generations in all its perfection and transmuting splendour. Sikhism, with all its basic and independent institutions, had been founded; its seeds sown all over the world; and its roots deeply fixed in the spirit of one God and eternal Truth. He had given it a Church and principles of corporate worship, in which the essence of religious worship, and homage to the eternal spirit of God was enshrined in his universal teachings, spontaneous songs, and prayers.

Yet there was nothing oppressive and rigid about the institutions Nanak built. He gave Sikhism a Church, in which, men and women, people of all castes and creeds, of all nationalities and countries could meet and worship the eternal Truth to exalt and nourish their inward piety, and live the life of truly human and spiritual religion. They could, if they wished, enter the life of an initiated Sikh, and dive deep into the mystic life unfolded by the Guru's teachings and discipline. They could, if they wish, retain the religion of their birth, and bask in the sunshine of the ethical glow, and the warmth of spirituality of this faith, which owned all seekers of truth in fraternal co-operation and enlightenment.

In the last, seventieth year of his life, Guru Nanak realized that if Sikhism was to conserve its values,

it was essential for it to preserve its continuity with the original spirit of the founders, and to show itself capable of meeting the challenges of the future. It must have a historical growth in the face of social, cultural and political challenges of a grimly uncertain future. There was a fear of the spiritual sapling of this mighty tree facing oppression, tyranny, and political disasters, leading to its possible extinction, or getting uprooted from its natural and original soil and planted in artificial environments, or even grafted to some old decaying sectarian trees, where it would have withered away, and met the tragic fate of Sufism, Bhakti movement of Ramananda, Namadev and Kabir, and of the Yoga movements which were great forces in that period.

Sikhism had to undergo a process of evolution to adapt itself to all types of situations and face the forces of fanaticism, schism, opposition, and oppression. The seeds had been sown, the doctrines had been established, the trees had been planted all over India and outside India by Guru Nanak with his own hands. Yet these saplings had to flower and the fruits had to spread and create more seeds of faith. In the spirit of God and Truth were the seeds planted, and in the sanctuary of perennial wisdom and light they were expected to grow.

The path of Sikhism was not so simple as the oversimplified facts of many historians would make us believe it. It is tough path, sharp as the sword's edge, and narrower than hair's breadth, on which the most cautious, the most disciplined and enlightened man can walk.¹ It demands dedication of mind, spirit and body, and consecration of the self at the altar of Love. Guru Nanak calls it the most trying and exhilarating game of love:

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*If you desire to play the game of love,
Carry your head on your palm in complete dedication,
Then, enter the path of my Faith,
If on this path you wish to tread,
Hesitate not to sacrifice your head.*

Guru Nanak: *Sloka Vadhik: 20*

Guru Nanak had to find a successor who could completely identify his will to God's Will, lose himself in the spirit of his Being, and allow his soul to be free from the dross material snares, and be blended with the perfect Light of God. He looked for a successor, who could be another Nanak in mind, heart and soul in the eyes of God and humanity. He tested his sons; he tested his disciples; he put to test all the divines who visited him. Lehna out of all distinguished himself as the most dedicated and perfected disciple, and in the eyes of Guru Nanak, only a perfect disciple could be perfect teacher and leader².

To discipline him and test him, Guru Nanak put Lehna to the severest trials, always allowing his sons and other prominent disciples like Buddha, Sadharan to have the first chance, to prove their worth. "Lehna's humility and voluntary poverty won the heart of the Guru as he busied himself in sweeping the visitor's quarters, washing their clothes and doing all kinds of other material work. Daily he used to bathe long before dawn and then sit before the Guru for three hours rapt in meditation. Again and again was he tested for patience, endurance and obedience; always he came out triumphantly through tests."³ "Beyond all expression was the love on each side between Lehna and Guru Nanak. The heights Buddha attained by his almighty struggle, Lehna attained through love. Lehna entered Nir-

vana in his love for the Master. Everything else that can be thought and seen was very small for Lehna besides his love for the Guru. Nanak, in this divine statue of love, chiselled in his own image. He saw in it his eidolon, his transfigured self and bowed down to it."⁴ The *Janam Sakhis* are full of stories in which Lehna's self-consecration at the altar of Guru's love is vividly described. Some of these stories have been given stange legendary colouring, which no serious historian accepts.

One day Lehna came from Khadur dressed in silk of Bukhara. He gave the offerings he had brought for the Master to Mata Sulakhani and went to the fields where Guru Nanak was working with the peasants. The Master asked Lehna to carry a heavy load of wet grass home to the village. When he brought the wet grass home, with all his silken clothes soiled, Sulakhani, was almost in tears and asked Baba Nanak: "Why should you ask this young man from so noble a family, and uptil recently the religious leader of Durga worshippers, to undertake such menial work. All his costly clothes are soiled with mud, and look what a heavy burden he has been made to carry." "It is not mud," said her husband, Baba Nanak, whose strange ways she had never understood, "The Lord has anointed him with the sacred saffron of purity and spirituality. It is not heavy load. It is the burden of suffering humanity."⁵ I just wanted to see whether he can carry the cross of mankind groaning in fear, pain and oppression. He is strong. He must be stronger. He must be perfect."

Every time there was heavy task for a trial, his sons disobeyed him, his other disciples shrank from the difficulty of the task, while Lehna promptly obeyed

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the command of the Master. His sons thought it below their dignity to do any manual work, but for Lehna all work in the service of Nanak was worship, all labour in his presence was the game of love.

One day a jug fell into a ditch. Baba Nanak asked his son Sri Chand to take it out and clean it. Sri Chand, the proud ascetic, who had taken a vow of celibacy, piety and purity against the wishes of his father, was confident that he was the natural successor to his great father. He said, "Of all the people here, dear father, why should you ask me to go down to the ditch to pollute my hands, soil my clothes, and lower my prestige in the eyes of everyone, by ordering me to do unclean work. There are hundreds of servants and devotees at your disposal to do menial work of this kind. Do you think I would be considered worthy of being your successor if I stoop so low?"⁶

Calmly and sternly, Baba Nanak asked his second son Lakhmi Chand to take the jug out of the ditch. Lakhmi Chand felt slighted. "Surely father," said he, "you do not wish to humiliate and insult us in the presence of all your disciples; everyday you ask us to do one or the other scrubby or degrading job which we consider below our dignity to do. We would never stoop so low as to do such dirty work. Let us make it clear father, that we will not obey any such order in future."⁷ When Nanak turned to Lehna he went down to the ditch, took out the jug and after cleaning it thoroughly filled it with clean water. He then humbly placed it before the Master. It appeared that Guru Nanak was training his successor to lift the lowliest of the low out of the pit of man made suffering and give him a clean, pure and respectable inner and outer life. Sulakhani was an eye witness to this

incident. In reply to her usual complaint that he was bestowing greater care and affection on his disciples like Lehna than on his sons he said : "Do you think that these boys can ever shoulder any grave responsibility? Do you think that they can ever step down from the ivory towers of their vanity and self-assumed importance and identify themselves with the poor, the sorrowful, and the oppressed and lift them out of earthly misery to equality, freedom, brotherly love? Themselves enmeshed in envy, pride, vanity, narrow-mindedness, disobedience, shirking duty and responsibility, can they ever set an example of the noble ideals of Sikhism?"^s

There was trial after trial. Lehna alone stood the severest tests. A rat was found dead near the store room. Guru Nanak asked his sons to carry it away and dispose it off. Both of them refused. Lehna obeyed. Rain and storm had worked havoc one night when the roof of the house began to leak. It was Lehna who went out to repair it before greater damage was done. He was to learn how society and culture, when taken over by sudden disasters can be saved by the personal sacrifices of the leaders.

In the crucible of suffering, Guru Nanak was purifying the soul who was to symbolise his spiritual wealth and greatness. Seven times he put his gold in fire to test its inner purity. Others ran away from the scorching experiments. Lehna devotedly submitted himself each time proving the purity of his devotion, the strength of his mind and the grandeur of his soul. Two events which are reported by all *Janam Sakhis* and other old records ended the trials and settled the selection.

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"Early before dawn during the last watch of the night, Baba Nanak everyday went to the river for bath, accompanied by Buddha, Sadharan, Bala and Angad. One morning Babaji went to the river to take his bath as usual. When he reached the river-side he took off his clothes, and waded into the water to take his bath. While bathing he passed into ecstasy. In the mean time heavy rain poured down and lashing hailstorm fell all round. All the companions of Baba Nanak took shelter under some tree or went home. Sri Angad alone remained sitting there almost buried in hail-stones. When Baba Nanak came out of the water he saw that no one remained except Angad who was sitting there in great physical discomfort. "My dear divine Man, (*purkha*)", said Baba Nanak, "why are you sitting here? You should have taken shelter somewhere." "My gracious King, my Lord," said Lehna, "I seek no other shelter in life except the sanctuary of your lotus feet and mercy." "Why should you perform such austerities and penance of love, Lehna? All I have done in life is for you. All my spiritual wealth and treasures are for you."

In the jungle, one day, Nanak and his disciples saw a funeral pyre. On it there was something covered with a sheet, and appeared to be a dead body. "Go and eat that," commanded Baba Nanak. "Everyone shrank from even approaching the dead body." "Lehna climbed onto the pyre and when he removed the wood, behold, there was no corpse, but Baba Nanak himself," says the author of *Mehma Prakash*. Babaji stood up and embraced Angad saying: "Blessed art thou, divine Man. I have searched the entire world and it is you I have found. Hitherto your name has been Lehna. Now your name shall be Angad or the limb of my body, as

you have taken a rebirth from my spiritual being.”¹⁰

Guru Nanak openly declared that Lehna, now named Angad, was the Chosen one of all disciples, which clearly indicated he was to be the successor. He did not anoint him as his successor on this occasions but prepared for it by handing over his responsibilities to him. He seated him by his side and treated him as his equal. History records two events of future planning and organization. Guru Nanak felt that Punjabi language had no proper script of its own. In different regions of north-west India it was written in different scripts, notably, Thakuri, Sharda and Persian. He asked Angad to study all the scripts and evolve a script corresponding to the thirty five letters of his acrostic, the *Path*.

It is recorded “that on the following New Year day, *Baisakhi*, Angad presented to Guru Nanak the Punjabi alphabet, which after consultation and discussions with the Master was finalised and approved as the Punjabi script of the future.”¹¹ As the script was based on the phonetics of the Guru’s Punjabi acrostic, it was called *Gurumukhī*. It might have also been called *gurumukhi* because it was a creation of the Guru and was the script used first for recording the sacred writings of the Sikhs. When Guru Arjan started compiling the *Adi Granth* he asked Bhai Gurdas to simplify this script still further, and the form in which it is written now is the creation of Bhai Gurdas and approved by Guru Arjan.¹² The earlier form was used by the Gurus in writing the *Hukamnamas*.

During this period Guru Nanak also asked Angad to compile and edit his writings into a collection

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which came to be known as *Bānī pothī*. The *Japji* was composed at different periods. The first verse was, according to all records, composed when he received the *call*. Almost all the verses had been composed before settling down at Kartarpur. There is a story in old manuscripts of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* in which Guru Nanak is said to have edited it and rearranged the verses in the present final order. Guru Nanak was so pleased with some of Angad's suggestions that he said: "Well done my Child Angad these *paudīs* and *slokas* fit here exactly as you have suggested. Read now from *Sodar paudi* to the end and I will listen to it." Angad recited them and Baba Nanak was extremely delighted."¹³ Then he said about the *Japji*:

*This Jap is inspired by the Lord,
Nanak has revealed truth in it;
It is the Word that has descended from God,
To redeem the ignorance of the world.
Take bath early in the morning
And in quiet contemplation recite Japji,
He who recites it with inward devotion,
Will be blessed in the presence of God;
He who concentrates on the Wisdom of Jap,
His bondage of birth and death will be removed.*¹⁴

Janam Sakhi Bala (L) p. 574.

According to *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi*, *Japji* was composed as a result of the *Gosht* (dialogue) with the *Siddhas*, but some Sikhs pointed out to Bhai Mani Singh that in the older *Janam Sakhi* (*Bala's*) it is held that *Siddha Gosht* was held at Sumer while *Japji* was composed elsewhere. Bhai Mani Singh accepts this correction.¹⁵ *Āsādi Var*, another composition, was composed by Guru Nanak at Pak-

pattan at the request of Sheikh Ibrahim before he set out for his eastern journey.¹⁶ This fact is supported by a number of other historical documents. *Om̃kar* was composed on his return from the South. *Patti* has been accepted as his maiden composition written during his early years and from its extreme simplicity it appears to be so. Thus all the major compositions were completed before he settled down at Kartarpur. Out of the smaller compositions *Baramaha*, written in reminiscent mood away from Talwandi appears to have been composed at Kartarpur, but I find it difficult to accept the suggestion of *Puratan Janam Sakhī* that it was composed just before his death. It contains nothing about death and its atmosphere is full of light and sunshine, heat and rain. The *Bani Pothis* or the Book of his sacred hymns, compiled during his life time, became the spiritual regalia which passed on from him to Angad and from Angad to the third Guru. Out of the three or four *Pothis* (Collections of hymns) brought by Guru Arjan from Goindwal for the compilation of *Adi Granth*, one was the *pothi*¹⁷ which Guru Nanak got compiled and edited under the supervision of Angad during the last few years of his life.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *khāndedhār galī ati bhīdī,*
lekhā lijai til jioñ pīdī.

Narrow as the double-edged sword is the path,
Like the linseed passing through the press,
The Task Master puts the souls to test.

Guru Nanak *Mārū Sholē* 8-10

gursikhī bārīk hai sil catan phikī
trikhī khāndedhār hai oh valoñ nikī.
Sikhism is extremely subtle,

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It is tasteless as a stone,
Its path is sharp as a double-edged sword,
And narrower than a hair's breadth.

Bhai Gurdas, *Var* 9:2

2. Sikhī parkhī jabai kirpāl,
niscal rehio sarb hī kāl
yate den nyae hai tañhi,
acraj kich lakho na man mahi.
When the compassionate Baba put to test the faith of
every one, (Lehna) only remained unshaken all the time.
So it is just and proper to give guruship to him. There
is no need to wonder at it.

N.P. ady Ut 52

3. Duncan Greenleess: *The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib* p
Lviii.

4. Puran Singh : *Ten Masters* p 26-27

5. Guru Nanak the treasure of virtues hearing this said:
"Do not consider this to be mud that has soiled his clothes.
It is the shade of the umbrella of spiritual sovereignty.
There is none like him. This mud which you see,
is the dust of saffron sprinkled by God's grace.

N.P., Ut: adhy, 47-91-93

6. dās sikh age bahu mere,
mānai bacan na kareh dere.
āes deh nikāse soil,
mai kādhoñ mehmā ghat hoī.

N.P. Ut adhy 54-43

7. is prakār sunke jagnāthā,
bole pun dūsar sut sāthā,
Lakhmi Dās nikāso jāi,
mañjo suc kario teh tae.
sunio sron tin bain bakhāne,
pit jī tumho adhik syāne,
mañd kām ham pai karvāvo,
sabh lokan mai mān ghatāvo.
isī prakār tumāro subhāu
kaho āp ham kare na kau.

ibid 44

8. suni Sulakhanī sudh as kânâ,
hirdai upjio khob mahâna;
baith samip khai as bainī
sun Sñi Chand-pit gun khânī.
kion biprit âp man thâni.

teh vhin srigur gira ucârī,
Mule-sutâ, pikho man haniai,
eh nij sut so parsût jâniai,
maneh kadon nâ bacan kadâhin,
so ais anusârī sadâi.
jis dharnī mai hoe nivânâ
teh jal jâvai tikeh mahânâ.
tiba jôhn ucerâ hoī,
teh jal jâve tike na kou.

N.P. 52 adh 10—28

9. *Mehma Prakash Prose and Poetry*: The quotation is the translation from the prose version.
10. *Mehma Prakash Vārtak*. f 207
Nanak never thought that the office which he had created would become hereditary. When he saw that his last end was approaching, he named Lehna, one of his faithful disciples, his successor. The sons and other disciples envied him but he gave proof of his faith and devotion. Seeing the dead body of a man Nanak said, "Ye who have confidence in me partake of this food." All shrank back including the Guru's son, but simple Lehna, Nanak's most staunch ally and follower jumped over the dead body and was about to devour the dead when he was embraced by Nanak, who declared that from that moment his own spirit had gone into Lehna's body and he must be regarded as Nanak himself. His name he changed from Lehna to *Ang-i-khud*, Angad.

S.M. Latif: *History of Punjab*. P

11. Ganesh Das Badehra: *Chahār Bagh-i-Punjab*: on p 9, say: The *Gurmukhi* script is an invention of Guru Nanak." On the margin of page 215 of one of the original Goindwal *pothi* from which Guru Arjan compiled the *Adi Granth*, now lying at Patiala the historical fact is recorded by some later scribe: *Guru Angad gurmukhi akhar banâe, Bâbae be age sabad bhet kita*: Guru Angad coined the *Gurmukhi*

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letters and made offering of this literary creation to Baba Nanak.

Satgur Nānak ji kehio sun satpurkh matsār,
gurmukh pañth har ko rōco gurmat mañtar ucār,
satbacan satgur mat dhārā,
tab gurmukh akhar likhe sucārā.
gurmukh bacan likh pothī karā,
jai gurmukh pañth jag karā.

Guru Nanak asked Angad to prepare Gurmukhi letters for the use of the language of the Sikh scriptures, on which depended the foundation of the gurmukh Panth. In obedience to this command Angad coined the gurmukhi letters and write the scriptures in them.

Mehma Prakash p 207

Mehma Prakash prose also states this fact on p. 29

12. tñ bacan hoyā, Bhai Gurdas, hun tñ bñian nū sikh jānde han, te age jo hovan ge so pachānan ge nahī jo gurū kī bñi kaun hai, tñ te sabh bñian ikathiān karke grānth dī bīd kīce, te akhar gurmukhi sugam kīcai. Sabh kise de vācan vic sugam āvan

Guru Arjan said: Listen Bhai Gurdas, now the Sikhs can distinguish the hymns of the Gurus from the imitation hymns of the *Mīnās* (false-prophets); the Sikhs of the future may find it difficult to do so. So collect all the original manuscripts of the hymns for compiling the *Granth Sahib*. Also simplify the Gurmukhi script. Make it so simple that everyone may write and read it easily.

Bhai Mani Singh: *Sikhañ dī Bhagtmāl*

13. bacā jo mere ākhan dīān pauidān han sodar te laike, so tñ padhdā jāh te rās karke sunāu. eh sārā japji mukhvāk Bābe jī de hai; Angad ne padh sunāyā; gurūjī prasan hoe te kihā: sābās bacā Angadā. eh sloka pauidān ithāun hi loḍide hain. J.B.S (LI) p 573

14. eh jāp karte purkh kā,
sac Nānak kīa bakhān
jagat undhāran kārne dhuron hoā pharmān,
amrit velā sac nām jap jāpīai kar isnān

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hit cit kar jap ko padhai so pāvai dargah mām.
Jaman marnā katīai jo jap saṅg lāvai dhyān

ibid p. 574

hameh sunavat jāo ucārā,
bañdh marjādā karo upkārā
ham te jo janme pascātā
tin sabh ko sabh kohai gātā
join jahāj cagh sāgar tarhī
tion teh padh samsār udharhai.

tab jap nām dhrye gunkhānī

N.P. adh Ut 52 93-94

15. tām sikhān Bhai Mani Singh ji nū puchiā jī eh *sidhā gosht*
tām Sumer parbat ute *Janam Sakhi* voc likhi hoi hai te
tusin ocal vatāle kahī hai. J.M.S. (LI) 506

16. Sheikh Ibrahim kehyā: tusin mere tām kām parmeswar
kī vār sunāvo; tab Bābae kehyā mardānya hamāre sabhī
rag haiñ eh pīr asā vaūt āyā hai so āsā ke rāg vic sunāco.
ibid p. 63

17. ar sabh banī srī mukhvāk Bābe jī de bal se sabh hazūr
mai baithke likhā. pothī tyār hoī.


Mehma Prakash f 29

gurmukh varn likh *pothī* karā

Mehma Prakash (Poetry) f 207

CHAPTER 25

ASCENSION

 THE TRANSFIGURATION of Lehna into Angad was an event of great importance and historical significance. It showed how on the path of Sikhism, a dedicated novice becomes an inspired disciple, and the disciple changes mentally and spiritually into an embodiment of his Master's spirit.

Guru Nanak wanted to recreate every man that came to him for wisdom and enlightenment, in the image of the Word Incarnate, which as he said, was his life and blood. Every one of his successor repeated this experiment in a novel way till Guru Gobind Singh merged his personality in the Khalsa. Angad was the first consummation, the ideal Sikh, who became the ideal Teacher, to the perfect Guru carry this movement forward the building of culturally autonomous super-national community. Nanak started treating Angad as his real spiritual son and prospective successor. He would seat him by his side as a king seats a prince by his side. This created jealousy and even suppressed ill-will in the mind of his sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das, who with all the other qualities in them failed to understand their father as he wanted them to understand him. They considered themselves to be the Guru's natural successors. Who could, they thought, take away from them, the land, the shrine or the pontific seat of Kartarpur. They would receive all this as their heritage and along this will come the Guruship of the Sikhs.

Sri Chand always dressed himself as an *Udasi*, exactly as Guru Nanak dressed in his Eastern mis-

sionary tour. He was under the impression that outward imitation of his father coupled with his piety and celibacy would entitle him to become the spiritual heir of his father. Angad and other disciples would naturally bow before him, acknowledge him Guru, or leave the place. He was pious but haughty and conceited; he was educated and learned but vain and disobedient. Foreseeing working of his mind, Guru Nanak asked Angad to go to Khadur and establish a *manji* (pontifical seat) there. He told him that during his earlier visit to Khadur, Mai Virai, an old devout lady who ate the bread which she could earn by her own manual labour, had got constructed for him, a lovely pontifical seat. (*manji*). He had asked her to keep it for his successor. Angad was instructed to use that *manji* as his pontifical seat." "Here" said Guru Nanak, "you may not get the respect you deserve. Go to Khadur and stay there," said Baba Nanak.

"Master" said Angad, "what would be life for me, without your presence. When my hands cannot serve you any more, when my ears cannot hear your melodious voice, when my eyes cannot see you as a visible presence, I would be like a fish out of water," "When you need me, and when you want to meet me, my son, I will come to you. You my Angad, are inseparable from me now, and for ever in future. I have now to teach people to see me only in you, my Angad."

Khadur, the seat of Durga-worshippers, became the seat of Guru Nanak's mission. Angad stayed there for about four months, pining for a glimpse of his Master, remembering him constantly in his heart and soul, and talking about the greatness of his Master day and night. Khadur was only about fifty miles

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away from Kartarpur. Now and then visitors from Kartarpur would come and bring some news of his Beloved Master. After impatiently waiting for four months he received the news that Guru Nanak was coming to Khadur.

Angad went many miles to receive the Master. When he met him he tried to touch his feet, but Nanak embraced him.³ They stayed together for about a fortnight and then Nanak set out for Kartarpur. Angad accompanied him for some miles and then the Master commanded, "You need not go any further, Angad; you have already come a long way." Obeying the Master, Angad waited there and saw him going towards Kartarpur. Whenever Nanak turned back to see him, he saw Angad still standing there, as if the parting was another waiting for his Beloved Master. Angad sat there watching his Master disappear in the horizon and as he saw him and contemplated his greatness, he brooded over the lovable personality of Nanak in his heart and in his soul. In this vision of love, he forgot himself and remembered only the resplendent personality of Nanak. On the third day Guru Nanak came to know that Angad was still sitting there, waiting and watching for the Master to come again. Guru Nanak went there and overwhelmed by his affection, he said, "Why this penance for love, my son, Come live with me, live within me, and live ever in future as my spirit and being."⁴

Letter from Makhdoom Baha-ud-din

Makhdoom Baha-ud-din, a pir of Multan once came to the mosque in a pensive mood. People asked him the reason of the strange gloom on his face." If I tell you," said the *Pir*, you will lose

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faith in me. There is one who is far greater than me. He is greater than any Muslim divine I have ever known. He has lighted my path on this earthly journey. I wish he lights my path on my journey to heaven. My days are numbered.”⁵

He asked a messenger to carry his letter to Baba Nanak. In the letter he wrote : *asañ je ladan ladya, asadī kar kae*. We have launched the boat, the caravan is leaving loaded with burden for the last journey. Come, and graciously help.” Guru Nanak on reading it said :

*The perfect one goes loaded with treasures,
Everyone has to depart according to His Will
Those who live the life of Truth,
Their faces glow in the presence of God.⁶*

Then blessing and praising Makhdoom Baha-ud-din he said, thrice “Liberated is the great soul of Baha-ud-din” Then as his eyes were filled with tears of affection, he wrote a letter and in it added the following hymn :

*Riches, youth and flowers are short-lived,⁷
Like the leaves of Chaupati they fade and die;
Seek joy O friend while your youth is abloom.
Few and numbered are thy days,
Thy garment, the body will become old and die.
My beloved friend will now sleep in the graveyard.
I who weep for my dear friend,
I too must depart, I too must go.
Have you not heard with your own ears, O soul, O bride,
You cannot remain in your parental home, the earth for
long,
You must go to your Huband's Home, yonder.
She who sleeps heedlessly in this parental home,*



Kartarpur (*Dera Baba Nanak*) in Indian territory (Here the first Sikh Church was founded, and here Guru Nanak breathed his last).

facing p. 478



Kartarpur (*Dera Baba Nanak*) in Pakistan territory.

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*Will be robbed of precious possessions in broad day light
She who foolishly casts away the bouquet of virtues,
She carries the faggots of iniquity.*

When Baha-ud-din read this letter he wept tears of sorrow. Why those tears Master, "asked his disciples?" The Pir answered. "I wrote to Baba Nanak that I was leaving this world, as the call had come. I begged Baba Nanak to accompany me and light my path to heaven. The divine Nanak has sent his blessings saying, he would follow me after forty days. My friends, I am worried about those forty days. I will have to spend these forty days in darkness and wait for the bearer of Light, Baba Nanak, who will come and guide me to God's presence."⁸ The next day the Pir died. According to *Mehma Prakash* he died on the day the messenger arrived.

Ascension

It was now clear to everyone that Baba Nanak intended to leave the world. He was physically in good health. His sons did not in the least suspect that he would depart from the world so soon. On September 5, 1539 A.D. he announced his intention of bestowing Guruship formally on Angad.⁹ Preparations were made in a festive mood, of a coronation. For two days there was congregational singing, distribution of gifts and people poured from nearby places to witness the great occasion. Early on September 7, Guru Nanak seated Angad on his pontific throne, and offering five *paisa* and a cocoanut, bowed before him, touching his feet in reverence. Along with it he bestowed his spiritual regalia of his "*Vani Pothi*" the Book of Wisdom¹⁰. His light blended with the soul of Angad, and Angad was declared Nanak II, and from that day onwards Angad

wrote hymns under this name.

The disciples watched the ceremony with awe and reverence. When Baba Nanak asked every one else to bow before Angad and acknowledge him as his successor, everyone did so except his sons Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. Angrily and bitterly they went away. In the evening Baba Nanak ordered preparations for his ascension. He asked his disciples to construct a tent-wall around a place where he had decided to pass into *samadhi* and leave the body.¹¹ This was done to keep everyone away from disturbing his last moments. This is exactly what Guru Gobind Singh did when he passed away. When thousands of people are around to seek his blessing, to touch him and be close to him, such an arrangement was absolutely necessary for a peaceful ascension in calm solitude. Only Guru Angad and disciples like Bhai Buddha were allowed to remain near the Master, during his last moment.

On learning that Guru Nanak was making serious preparations for leaving his body, his sons Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das came running to seek forgiveness and sought blessings saying, "Father, you have given Guruship, to Angad. What is left for us? Are we left to starve and remain neglected?" "Even the dogs in the Guru's *darbar* have never starved. You are my sons. You have always aspired after material possessions and public importance and glory. You will get enough of it."¹² "What I have given to Angad cannot be acquired the way you have been trying to do. It is the gift of God, and it must go to him who deserves it, and to him whom God Wills it," said Guru Nanak.

Then Guru Nanak covered himself with a sheet

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and passed away. The three major *Janam Sakhis* give three legendary versions out of which the historical reality has not emerged very clearly. *Purātan Janam Sakhi* gives a version which is aptly worded by Kincaid: "He passed over his two sons, who had rebelled against him and placed the umbrella of spiritual sovereignty over the head of Angad and bowed down before him. Before Nanak's death a quarrel arose between his Hindu and Musalman followers (for he attracted numerous disciples from Islam) as to the disposal of his corpse. The former wished to burn, the latter to bury it. Nanak was asked to decide it. He said, "Let the Hindus place flowers on my right and the Muslims on my left. They whose flowers are found fresh tomorrow morning may have the disposal of the body." After the flowers had been put on each side of him, the prophet drew his sheet over the flowers as well as himself. Next morning the sheet was found unchanged. The disciples removed it, thinking to find the saint's dead body beneath it. The flowers would then guide them as to the disposal of the body. Both sets of flowers they found equally fresh and blooming, but the body had wholly disappeared.¹³ The version of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* is that just as he was passing into *samadhi* the Pathans arrived. They insisted on paying homage to the Guru but some orthodox Hindus would not allow them to touch Baba Nanak's body. But as they were strong and armed they pushed their way inside the tent-wall. But when the sheet was lifted they found that the body had disappeared. The Hindus and Muslims divided the sheet between themselves and the Hindus burnt it, and the Muslims buried it."¹⁴ *Janam Sakhi Mani Singh* adds another legendary story of resurrection. A man came after the death and told the people gathered there, he met Nanak a few miles way who

asked him to tell his disciples that, only his body had disappeared. He was still living and with them in spirit.¹⁵

Mehma Prakash gives a more believable version. While the *Janam Sakhis* concentrate on telling us what Guru Nanak left for the Hindus and Muslims (Sikhs who claimed that they were neither Hindus nor Muslims are naively left out), *Mehma Prakash* tells us what they did with the body: "Baba Nanak's follower's carried his bier to the banks of the Ravi, singing hymns as they went, and there they cremated him amidst songs of rejoicing. When they searched in the funeral pyre for the remains of the body to be taken for the immersion in the Ganges they found no portion of his body remaining. All were struck with wonder. Chanting "Glory to Baba Nanak, the perfect Satguru, "they all returned home."¹⁶ Thus passed away Guru Nanak on the tenth day of the dark-half of the month. It *Asu Vadi* 10, *Samvat* 1595 corresponding to 7 September, 1539 A.D.¹⁷ Exactly fifteen days after his ascension his devoted wife Sulakhani passed away, It appears separation from her godly husband was unbearable to her.¹⁸

Pundit Tara Singh Nirotam, on the basis of some record which he does not quote suggests that he was cremated on the banks of the river Ravi and his ashes were put in metal pot and buried there. A *samadhi* was built over it, but the river Ravi swept it away twice in the life time of Sri Chand,. Perhaps the wish of Guru Nanak to have no *samadhi* or tomb, as the Hindus and Muslims wanted was fulfilled by the river Ravi. I do not believe in the legendary stories spun out of some historical facts, which are still shrouded in mystery. It appears, just before his death the Hindus and the Muslims

wanted some relic or some gift. He offered them the flowers that were lying around him, or tore one of the two sheets he was having and gave half to the Muslims and half to the Hindus. If Guru Nanak had given half the sheet or any other relic to the Hindus and Muslims, they would have neither buried it nor burnt it. They would have been wiser in preserving it. Such gifts by such greatmen, given just before death are never burnt or buried. The first legend is also attached to Kabir by nineteenth century writers on Kabir. These writers on Kabir have not only added stories from Guru Nanak's life to that of Kabir but have also lifted many of the Punjabi *slokas* of Guru Nanak and added them to the saint's works. Just before passing away Guru Nanak asked his successor Angad for any boon or gift. Angad answered, "Master, give me but one boon, fulfil but one last wish, Forgive all those who have offended thee. Forgive and bless all those who have failed to understand thee and caused injury to thee. Make them thy own."¹⁹ Guru Nanak said, "For your sake I bless them all." Thus passed away one of the greatest prophets of peace, harmony, enlightenment and truth.

All his life Guru Nanak remained for humanity the Man who was the point of contact of the world with God, a creative genius full of dynamic force and strength. His mind was filled with reality, truth, intuition and conviction. The purity of his feelings, the beauty of his disposition reflected Light and Wisdom. Truth became sweet honey on his lips and every word he uttered mirrored God and Nature in all their manifestations. His speech radiated music, love and grace. His peace-shedding looks sank into the souls of feverishly searching hearts, and his healing touch gave strength, joy and power

to men. "The true Guru", said he, "is one who changes men into living gods," "and such a Guru he was." His thoughts, his philosophy, his spirit pervaded every segment of social, cultural and political life of the people. He oriented human passions with tender affection and compassion. He corrected rejuvenated and sanctified the wicked, the proud, the sensual and slothful characters. He lifted them from disgusting depths into which they may have fallen and elevated them to divine heights. He picked up the commonest of common men, transfigured them to unique heroes of history. Serene and imperturbable, he never took offence. He never complained of the wrong done to him. He forgot every injury and he knew no rancour. His art was the brightness of light. His method was to present truth directly, clearly and perceptibly. To everyone he showed the way to perfection within the area of his own religious traditions and culture. He taught men how to change the daily sorrows and sufferings to fragrance of love, power, strength and a heroic burning for truth at the altar of God's presence.

Guru Nanak disciplined his Sikhs in such an inspiring manner that he made them immune to persecution, hostility and opposition and oppression. He recast their mind and soul in the crucible of his wisdom and made them indomitable like a river to which no rocky cliff is a barrier, and which sweeps aside all oppositions and obstructions and moves on towards its goal. He made every human being conscious of his dignity and destiny. Destroying all exclusiveness, he compelled all narrow faiths to open the doors of their wisdom to all, to come closer to one another, to live in harmony and not stink in isolated ponds of vanity of the past glory or the false conviction that there is no wisdom and truth beyond

their holy books.

Out of the seventy years of the life of Guru Nanak, emerges one consistently resplendent image of Guru Nanak which we find deeply and clearly engraved in his spoken and written words, and which has left an imperishable imprint on Indian history and people of all nations. He became for those who seek God through his Word and Wisdom, a being-Man and a becoming-Man. His divinity became his humanity and in his humanity was his universality of enlightenment. He was a poet of life, a musician who called himself a wandering bard of God, a singer of truth and eternity, a philosopher of human existence and essence, of life and spirituality, and a prophet of all times and all people on earth. In the words of Shakespeare we may say, "He was Man-all in all-we shall not look upon his like again."

Notes and References

1. dil khote ākī phiran, ban bhār ucāyan chatīai
Var Satta Balwand

2. grām khadūr sadan kar rahīai,
tahāñ birajo karo gurai
moha singhāsan sadan bhirāi
Suraj Prakash, Ras 2, Ansu 57

Purkhā ji tusīñ khadūr jāe raho; Mai Virai de ghar sāde singhāsan baithan di manji hai merā singhāsan vahī hai tum othe jāe baitho, asin tuhāde pas āvañ ge, tusīñ ethe na avna.

Listen divine Man go and live at Khadur. In the house of Mai Virai is my pontific seat, *manji*; that is my *singhasana* throne, go and stay there,. I will come to you. You need not come here.

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3. abhilākhat bhe milan jarūr

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Sri Nanak ji æe Khadur

Suraj Prakash Ras, 2, Añsu

tab mātā khivi ji, Guru Angad ji ke kabile ne suna jo Baba
ji æe hai, tab mata ji gae, puja kiā, Baba ji ke ghar darsan

6. jo asan ladan ladya asadi kar kae
tad Bala likhya salok us e slok upar

jo bharia so ladsī, sabhnā hukam rajāe,
Nanak te mukh ujle cale hak kamāe,

7. dhan joban ar phulḍā nāthadīai din cār,
paban kere pat joīn dhal dhul jumanhār,
rañg mān lai pyariā ja joban nau hulā,
din thoḍaḍe thake bhaya purānā cola,
sajan mere rañgle jāe sute jirān,
hambhi vanjhā dumni rovān jhīnī bān
ki na sunchi gorai, āpan kanī soe,
lagī āvai sahure nit na paeai hoe
Nanak suti paīai jan virtī san
gunā gavaī ganthaḍi avgun cale ban

Nanak Sri Rag,

8. On receiving Baba Nanak's letter tears rolled down Baha-
ud-din's eyes. His disciples asked "why those tears
Master " Then Makhdoom Bahau-udin said, "Friends
I wrote to Baba Nanak to accompany me to the House of
God. It would be a joy to go together. Baba Nanak
has replied, "Go ahead, I shall follow you after forty
days". I am worried about those forty days which I will
have to spend in darkness (without the company of Baba
Nanak)".

P.J. 128

9. tab *asu vadi satavin* (September 5) kā dīn hot hai, anand
sohle gāite hai tab ik gal dā gulgālā sabhanā lokān vic
hoayā jo Baba Nanak ji samāvda hai.

J.B. MSS 1826 of 253

10. tadoñ paise pañj Babe ji Angad ke age rakhke paīrin payā.
tadoñ parvār vic khabar hoī. tit mehal jo šabad hoa, so
pothi juban guru Angad jog mili.

P.J.P. 128-132

Babe Kiha, Angada, asin nu dargah da sada āyā hai,

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so asin dargāh jāñde hān, phir pañj paise te misrī nālier
Guru Angad age rakh ke Baba Nanak ji ne mathā tekyā,
tan pher Guru Angad ji ne Babe age mathā tekia.

J.M.S. (L I 582)

11. bahuro kahyo kanāt tanijāi,
cahun dis mai ghera kar lijai,
sarb nikās ke bāhar jāvo
satnām simroh gun gāvo.

N.P. adh 5 260

12. gurūān dī kūtiāñ nū bhī kamī nahī, rotīān kapde bahut
hovan ge, ate guru guru japa ge tāñ janam savre gā.
P.J. p 132

13. tusī in duhān valī 'phul rakho, dahnī val Hinduān de rakho
are bāhvīn val musalmana ke rakho, je Hindu ke hare
rehañge than jalāenge, je musalmana ke dabeñge., jab
cadaruthaveñ tan kich hai nahi, phul dohan do hare rahe.
P.J. p 132-133

14. All versions of J.B. give and N.P. this story, and it is the
most popular one.

15. Baba dohān kohāñ to mile kise nū, ate ākhyā, ke merā
sunchā denā, mai sarir hanahi si dharya, mere asan te do
'patāñ dī cādar hai, ek pat Hindu sanskāṛ karen, ik musal-
man daban.

J.M.S. 584

16. tab bibān kīrtan karte nadī Ravi kināre siskāryā, bade
bhajan anand hoe, phir jab gangā parvāh ke vāste cikḥāh
khol sat lain lage tāñ koī sarir kā akār nazar nahi āyā.
sabh bismād hoe gae, dhan Baba Nanak pūrā jap japde
sabh ghar ae. *samvat 1596 asūvadi 10*

Mehma Prakash

This is the most acceptable version. If the Hindus got half the *cadar* or flowers and the Muslims the other half what was left to the Sikhs and his family. If he had left any relic like the sheet, it is against Hindu or Muslim tradition to burn or bury such a relic. It was not the ceremony of burning or burying that would then have been important but the preservation of the relic. Bute Shah in his *Tarikhe-i-Punjab* says that the party of Muslims

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who claimed the right to bury Guru Nanak's body was led by Syyed Mitha Shah a disciple of Guru Nanak.

17. In the appended pages of *Adi Granth* compiled by Guru Arjan now lying at Kartarpur it is written: *samvat* 1596 *asuvadi* 10, nū Guru Baba Nanak Dev ji Samāne, (This falls on 7th September 1539 A.D. This fact is stated in all the recensions of *Adi Granth* from the time of Guru Arjan to Guru Gobind Singh. I have seen them in about 300 copies. Two of them dates 1706 A.D. one of which is signed by Guru Gobind Singh are with the author.

18. pher pandrāñ dinpiche Sri Chand te Lkhami Das di mātā bī baikuñth dhām nū gaī, so us dā bhi sanskār ate kiryā karam kita
 After fifteen days Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das' mother also departed to *baikuntha*. She was also cremated and her last rites performed.

J.M.S. p. 584

"The words, *also cremated* indicate that Guru Nanak was also cremated.

19. jī pātasāh, tuñ bhāveñ tañ, jo sañgat nāloñ tutī hai, so lad. laīai jī, tñ bacan hoyā terā sadkā sabh bakhshī.

P.J. p 128

20. Most of the disciples and devotees of Baba Nanak are men of real attainment of God fearing saintliness advanced in meditation and accepted prayer in the court of the Lord. Having removed all hatred from their hearts and lifting the curtain of doubt and darkness and narrowness from their minds they look upon their relatives and others alike; friends and foes are equal to them, and they are faithful to their friends and with foe they live without any quarrel with them. Even if a person were to come at midnight mentions the name of Baba Nanak, however stranger and unknown he may be, even if he were a thief, a robber or an evil doer, they look upon him as a brother and a friend and serve him to the best of their ability.

Sujan Rai Bhandari: *Khulasat-u-Tawarikh*

APPENDIX I

DATE OF BIRTH AND DEATH

Date of Death

While there is confusion about the date of birth of every Guru, there is no confusion about the date of death, because this date began to be recorded on the appended pages to oldest copies of *Adi Granth*. From the first copy of *Adi Granth*, the Kartarpur recension, to the late nineteenth century, all copies give September 7, 1539 A.D. Besides this, *Bala's Janam Sākhī*, *Mehma Prakash*, *Kesar Singh Chibber's Bansāvalināmā* and nearly all the *gurparnālīs* give September 7, 1539, *Puratan Janam Sākhī* or the *Valayat Wālī Janam Sākhī* gives even the date and year of death incorrectly. Macauliffe was persuaded by his advisers to accept this wrong year and date of death which he did. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in their "*Short History of the Sikhs*," write "He (Nanak) took him (Angad) to his seat and calling him the flesh of his flesh and the bone of the bones saluted him as his successor. He died soon after, on September, 22, 1539." Khushwant Singh in his *A History of the Sikhs* Vol. I says: "Guru Nanak died on September 22, 1539 and then he gives the legend of the disappearance of the body from under the sheet and the Hindus and Muslims sharing the flowers half and half." Both these books do not give the source of their incorrect date of death, 22nd September 1539. Probably they accept the date of *Valayat Wālī Janam Sākhī* but not the year.

A very interesting clue is given by Bhai Mani Singh's recension of a combined Volume of *Adi Granth* and *Dasam Granth* in which the writings of all the contributors are recorded author-wise. The date of death is given as September 7, *asū vadi*, 10. But the fact that *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sākhī* gives *asū sudi* 10 shows that some one has later on interpolated the wrong date of death as well that of birth. The author of *Gurbilas Patshahi Chevin* claims to be a student of Bhai Mani Singh, through one of the great companions of the apostle.

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It gives *Kartika Puran Mashi* as the date of birth of Guru Nanak and mentions Bhai Mani Singh as the source of information. The fact that someone has introduced *Baisakh Sudi 3*, (April 1) in Bhai Mani Singh's *Janam Sakhi* shows that it is an interpolation and not Bhai Mani Singh's date.

Date of Birth

The following records give the date of birth of Guru Nanak as *Kartika Puranmashi*, October 20, 1469 A.D. and they disprove conclusively the fantastic lie propagated by Bhai Gurumukh Singh that it was some *Singh Sabha* leader who introduced this date of the basis of spurious version of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* and that it was never before recorded in any earlier record nor celebrated on that date in earlier times. The following are the historical records which disprove this fact and supports *Kartik* date, 20, October 1469.

- (1) Bhai Gurdas in his *Kabit* 345 which says "*Kartik mās rūṭ sarad pūranmāshī, ath jāṃ, sathgharī āj teri barī haī*. See the interpretation of this in *Sant Sampuran Singh's Kabit Swayyas Sidhant Bodhani Satikh*, Dayal Singh's *Nirmal Panth Darshan* and a historical discussion of over 15 pages on *Bhai Gurdas' View on Guru Nanak's Birthday* in "*Sikh Review*" February 1964 by the author.
- (2) *Guru Tegh Bahadur's Malwa the Safar* (1716 or thereabout);
- (3) Kesar Singh Chibber's *Bansāvalīnāmā* and *Gurparnālī* (1727 A.D.).
- (4) Sant Gulab Singh, 1753.
- (5) *Nanak Chandrodaya* Sanskrit *Janam Sakhi*, 1797 A.D.
- (6) *Gurbilas Patshahi VI* 1797 A.D.
- (7) Sant Das Chhiber, *Janam Sākhī Baba Nanak* (18th Century)
- (8) Sant Singh Chhiber, *Janam Sākhī Nanak Shah* (early 19th Cen.)
- (9) Kavi Santokh Singh: *Nanak Parkash* 1823 A.D.
- (10) *Gurparnālī* of Gulab Singh (1851 A.D.) says "In *Nanak Chandrodaya* and *Amritsari Gurparnālī* the date of birth is *Kartik Purnima*, but Meharban's *Janam Sākhī*

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gives *Baisakh Sudi 3*. The correct one is that of *Guru Nanak's Chandrodaya* thus as far back as 1851. Sikh historians were conscious that *Kartika's Puranmashi* is the correct date and the *Baisakhi Sudi 3* introduced by Mina Maharban should be rejected.

- (11) *Kaifiat Khāndan Sahibzādgan Babe Nanak jio* (mentions Bala)
- (12) Baba Nihal Singh Bawa Gurmukh Singh : *Khurshid Khalsa*
- (13) Pundit Tara Singh Nirotam : *Gur Tirath Sanghreh* 1884 A. D.
- (14) Gian Singh Giani : *Panth Parkash* 1890, he refutes the Baisakh date in his introduction to *Kartik ke Baisakh* by Karam Singh
Parchain Sewa Das, (mentions Bala) 18th Cent.
- (15) Sharda Ram Phillauri : *Sikhan de Raj di vithia* 1899
- (16) Brahmananda Swami: *Sri Nanak Chandrodaya Stik*
- (17) Ram Narayan: *Guru Chandrodaya Kaumadi* 1884 A.D.
- (18) Baba Sumer Singh: *Prem Parkash* (late nineteenth century)
- (19) Khazan Singh: *History and Philosophy of the Sikhs*.
- (20) Sewa Ram Singh: *Divine Master*

Bhai Vir Singh continued to believe in *Kartik Puran Mashi* inspite of his admiration for *Puratan Janam Sakhi*. When the Chief Khalsa Diwan printed the second edition of Karam Singh's *Kartik ke Baisakh* it destroyed all the copies probably on the advise of Bhai Vir Singh. At least the Chief Khalsa Diwan realized that the book did more harm than good, but burning down a book or the opinion of scholar, even though he himself in a letter to Baba Prem Singh historian repented later, is a bad practise. I found it difficult to acquire a book for a critical study of it.

APPENDIX II

THE JANAM SAKHIS

The *Janam Sakhis*, as we find them today, are crude mixture of history, heaven of Hindu legends, and hell of haters of Nanak, who wanted to denigrate Nanak. Upto 1880, there was no confusion in the minds of Sikhs historians about the worth and importance of each *Janam Sakhi*, although the tendency to accept most of the miracle stories literally was there. But with the zeal to give undue importance to Colebrook's Manuscript by sometime calling it *Valayat Wali Janam Sakhi*, and at other times *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, a name which, has come to stay, two Sikh scholars instead of making correct assessments of all *Janam Sakhis*, poured the most vitriolic scorn and used the most malignant language that can ever be imagined by quoting from versions of *Bala's Janam Sakhis* against which Bhai Mani Singh warns us in 1716, and Kavi Santokh Singh warns us in 1830 A.D. Such dishonest and absolutely incorrect arguments have been used to condemn this *Janam Sakhi* outright, that before I give a brief account of these *Janam Sakhis* in historical context, I will deal with one of their baseless conclusion, and that is, because their foreign imported *Valayat Wali Janam Sakhi* does not mention Bhai Bala, so Bala does not exist. Because *Kartik Purana Mashhi* is given the birth date by *Bala's Janam Sakhi* so this is wrong. To add to these fantastic statements, a third misleading and absolutely incorrect statement is made. That is no reliable records mention the name of Bala.

As very few historians writing on the basis of *Janam Sakhis* have peeped into old *Janam Sakhis*, the truth is that *Mehma Prakash*, and *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi*, two out of the three records, which they quote contain Bhai Bala's name in many places. There is Bala family's well still at Nankana Sahib. There is Bala's *samadhi* at Khadur, because as the *Janam Sakhi* states he was cremated by Guru Angad with his own hands, a unique honour for a great Sikh, and the memory of this event has been preserved in history and tradition. While all the documents quoted in Appendix I give the name of Bhai Bala, the most important is Bhai Behlo's "*Suchak*

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Prasaṅg Gurū kṛ" in 76 lines. It is a summary of what then was *Bala's Janam Sakhi*, though no legendary stories are hinted at. It ends saying.

Bāle tajā kalevar tahāñ
Purī Khadūr pavan mahāñ
Bhalī marjādā Angad nāth,
Bale ke kram kīne hāth

Bala discarded his body there,
At the holy city of Khadur,
Angad, the Master, performed the rites,
Graciously with his own hands.

This is what Bhai Behlo writes at the time the *Adi Granth* was being compiled. I have given some critical Comments on these *Janam Sākhīs* in Chapter 10. Here I give a brief history, which would reveal also how the genuine *Janam Sakhis* have suffered at the hands of enemies of Sikhism, as much if not more than the Sikhs have suffered. The Sikhs who suffered at the hands of the *Mīnās*, the *Hindālyas* the *Masañids* were called heroes and martyrs while the *Janam sākhīs* which have suffered at their hands are blindly cursed and damned and the work of those who mutilated them are praised as new discoveries. The following are the principal *Janam Sakhis*.

Janam Sakhi Bhai Bala. Guru Angad first got the writings of Guru Nanak compiled. It is he who got the Guru's life stories compiled through the scribe Paidā Mokha. Guru Angad could get material of the Guru's later life but no childhood companion of Guru Nanak was left. So the stories of Guru's early life were acquired only from Bhai Bala. To get the exact date and time, Bala procured the Guru's *Janam Patri* from Nanak's uncle Lalu, who was yet living. The scandalizers of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* say that children born on *Kartika Purnā Mashī* are unfortunate and contemptible people. They do not quote the pundit or the astrologer who says so, but I have to submit historical evidence against this punditry. Baba Atal in whose memory and eight storey monument is built by his

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father Guru Hargobind was born on *Katrika Puranmashi*. His eldest brother, Bhai Gurditta was also born on *Kartika Puranmashi*. Because of this coincidence of date and time of birth, he was considered the living image of Guru Nanak, and I wonder if it was for this reason Sri Chand selected him as the successor of his Udasi Mission. The eminent astrologist Dr. B.V. Raman in his well known book "*Notable Horoscope*" proves after lengthy calculation that Guru Nanak was born on *Kartika Puranmashi* and not on *Baisakh Sudi 3*. This *Janam Sakhi* was first corrupted by the Minās, or Meharban and his followers. Then during the life time of Guru Gobind Singh by the Handalyias, and then by the printers who in their zeal to give a simple and all inclusive and sensational *Janam Sakhis* changed the language and made whatever changes they liked. All version printed after the Litho-copies were produced in 1890, are anything but *Janam Sakhis*. Because Bala's *Janam Sakhis* were traditionally considered the oldest and the first, these printers traded in them with indecent abandon and neither the Sikh institutions nor the Universities in Punjab, which waste thousands of rupees in publishing trash, have ever cared to employ some scholars to edit the oldest available manuscripts of *Bala's Janam Sakhi*, also known as *Paide Mokhe di Janam Sakhi*.

Meharban's Janam Sakhi: Meharban and his father Prithi Mal were called Minās by the Sikhs, a name given probably by Bhai Gurdas who says, they are not Nanak-panthis but *Narak-Panthis* or Community of dwellers in hell. Prithi Mal posed as the fifth Guru, but when Guru Arjan died a martyr, it became impossible for him to pose as his rival. So he announced himself as the sixth Guru, and his son Meharban called himself the seventh Guru, while Meharban's son Harji became the 8th guru. After that their guruship faded away. In the name of Nanak VI, VII and VIII they composed hymns, plagiarizing and changing the verses of *nirgun upasana* to *sargun upasana* in priase of Krishna and Rama. They stole so much of it and imitated so much of the Bani of earlier Guru that Guru Arjan had to compile a correct version.

Bhai Mani Singh tells us that Guru Arjan felt that the ori-

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ginal *Janam Sakhi* had developed many patterns and it was necessary to standardize it. Time did not permit him to do so but he asked Bhai Gurdas to compose a *Vār* contradicting the false representations of historical and msytical facts of Nanak. Bhai Gurdas, and also Guru Arjan contradicted the theory that Nanak was avatara of Janak. He refuted their versions of Nanak's visit to Mecca, Baghdad and Sumer.

I am firmly of the opinion that because the Minās wrote hymns under the name of Nanak VI, VII, VIII, the real successors of Guru Nanak who rightly were Nanak VI, VII, VIII never wrote any hymn. That made it easier for the Sikhs to discard the hymns of Minās. Bhai Mani Singh calls Meharbān's *Janam Sakhi*, as milk diluted with a lot of water. He changes not only the date of birth but also the place. Nanak according to it spends the first seven years of his life at his mother's parents home, which is unbelievable at the face of it. Most of the legends and stories denigrating Nanak for which the Hindalyas are accused later on were introduced by Meharban. His son Harji calls Meharban far greater than Nanak. The best portion of this *Janam Sakhi* is Guru Nanak's life at Sultanpur. The rest is all soap opera taking Nanak to heaven after every three chapters and contradicting himself throughout in names, places and directions of journeys.

Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi: Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Gurdas, and Guru Arjan blame Meharban and his followers for corrupting *Gurbani* and the *Janam Sakhis*. We have shown in Appendix I how someone later on changed the date of death and date of birth in his *Janam Sakhi*. In no other *Janam Sakhi* it is easier to sift the matter interpolated and distorted than in this *Janam Sakhi*. Bhai Mani Singh follows the historical chronology of Bhai Gurdas' *Vār* and the person who has distorted it introduces new material by destroying that order. The language of Bhai Mani Singh which can be attested from his other work "*Sikhan dī Bhagat Mal*" is quite different from that of Bhai Mani Singh. Bhai Mani Singh never introduces Puranic stories either in his interpretations of Japji, Siddha

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Gosht etc. or in his Bhagat Mal, and that is why the Puranic and Koranic stories introduced into it are visible to the discerning historian like patches of black cloth on a white coat. This *Janam Sakhi* also has never been printed in the last seven decades. It refers to the original *Bala's Janam Sakhi* many times. Unfortunately very old copies of this *Janam Sakhi* are not available. If a copy of the middle eighteenth century is available it is likely to be quite different from the present version and it might solve many of our problems.

Valayat Wali Janam Sakhi : This is a cross-breed of a number of *Janam Sakhis*. It gives a few stories and leaves out many. It leaves out such stories as *sacha sauda* in which Bala figures and that is the obvious reason why Bala is not mentioned. It leaves also the stories in which Bhai Lalo is mentioned. What surprises me is that historians depend on it for dates, when in my opinion it is the most unreliable *Janam Sakhi* on date of birth and date of death, and also for quotations from Gurbani. Ill advised by Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Macauliffe used the wrong date and year of death and the wrong date of birth from this *Janam Sakhi*. It quotes and puts into the mouth of Guru Nanak the hymns of the third, fourth, and fifth Guru, which Bala's *Janam Sakhi* never does. Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterjee says that because the language of this *Janam Sakhi* is more or less Lehandi it cannot be the original version. The original *Janam Sakhi* must have *mahjhi* as their language and old manuscripts of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* have this type of language.

I can imagine Gurmukh Singh giving to the public erroneous notions and impressions about *Janam Sakhis* in 1884 when there were hardly two or three graduates. I can also imagine Karam Singh historian impulsively repeating the arguments of Gurmukh Singh about the *Janam Sakhis*, because scientific study of the *Janam Sakhis* or any other historical record was not in vogue. Karam Singh during his last days repented over what he had written against *Bala's Janam Sakhis* and he wrote a letter to Baba Prem Singh Hoti that if he recovered from his last illness he would undo the damage his book had done. He did some-re-thinking about it because, Giani Gian Singh, the eminent

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historian refused to accept Baisakh sudi 3, and insisted on proving that Kartik was the date. The Nirmala scholars also strongly criticised this ill-conceived notions propagated about the *Kartik* date, and Pundit Tara Singh Nitram and Nirmala Sant Dayal Singh and Sant Sampuran Singh strongly wrote against these Baisakh notions and date.

I however cannot imagine that in 1967 A.D. a historian would write fantastic and baseless things about *Janam Sakhis* without so much caring even to see which heresay allegation applies to which *Janam Sakhi*.

Khushwant Singh in his "*History of the Sikhs*" Appendix I p 300 says: (1) "Angad according to Bala's admission was ignorant of Bala," Nowhere does Bala say so. Disciples who came to know that Angad had succeeded Nanak came to pay homage to him, and Bala came to see whether the successor was spiritually as great as the Founder, because Sri Chand, who was also known to Bala from the very day of his birth naturally attracted his attention. (2) Then Khushwant Singh says that the language of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* is comparatively modern. Copyists have no doubt taken liberty to alter the language of every *Janam Sakhi* they wrote, but the language of Old Manuscripts of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* is in no way recent or modern. It is at least as old as that of *Puratan Janam Sakhi*. (3) Khushwant Singh then says the hymns of the second, third, and fifth Guru are ascribed to Nanak. This is so in *Valyat Wali Janam Sakhi* and nowhere in *Bala's Janam Sakhi* are hymns of other Gurus quoted. *Bala's Janam Sakhi* and *Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhis* are the two records which give the most appropriate quotations. (4) Then Khushwant Singh says that expressions such as *Vahguru ji ki Fateh* which gained currency during Guru Gobind Singh's times are used in *Bala's Janam Sakhi*. These expressions are used mainly in *Valayat Wali Janam Sakhi*. In *Bala's Janam Sakhi* the writer sometime says, *bolo bhai Vahguru*. *Vahguru ji ki Fateh* is not there in any Manuscript and not even in the printed Litho copy. I wish Khushwant Singh had at least taken a cursory look at these *Janam Sakhis* before making these fantastically incorrect re-

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marks confusing one *Janam Sakhi* with the other.

About interpolations done by the Minās, Bhai Mani Singh said they had added milk to water, and just as a swan separates milk from water so will the discerning Sikhs separate facts from fiction. About the Hindalya version of *Bala's Janam Sakhi* Kavi Santokh Singh wrote in *Nanak Prakash* in 1832 that they have put dead flies into a sweet pie. Their version must be avoided. If even in the present age of advanced historical studies historians continue to write from complete ignorance of the contents, or just pick the flies out of the pie and display to the world to create a contempt for them, they are neither serving the cause of historical studies nor showing any respect for truth and facts. Even though Renan completely demolished the historical basis of the four Gospels in his six volumes of critical studies, the fact remains that Gospels have historical elements and Christ, whatever the details of his life, however great the contradictions in the four Gospels, was a unique figure of history. So was Guru Nanak, and so are the '*Janam Sakhi*' of some vital historical importance, though their study is a very delicate and difficult research work. I have not come across a single document of history of the 15th, 16th, 17th century in any language which can be totally accepted or can be totally rejected.

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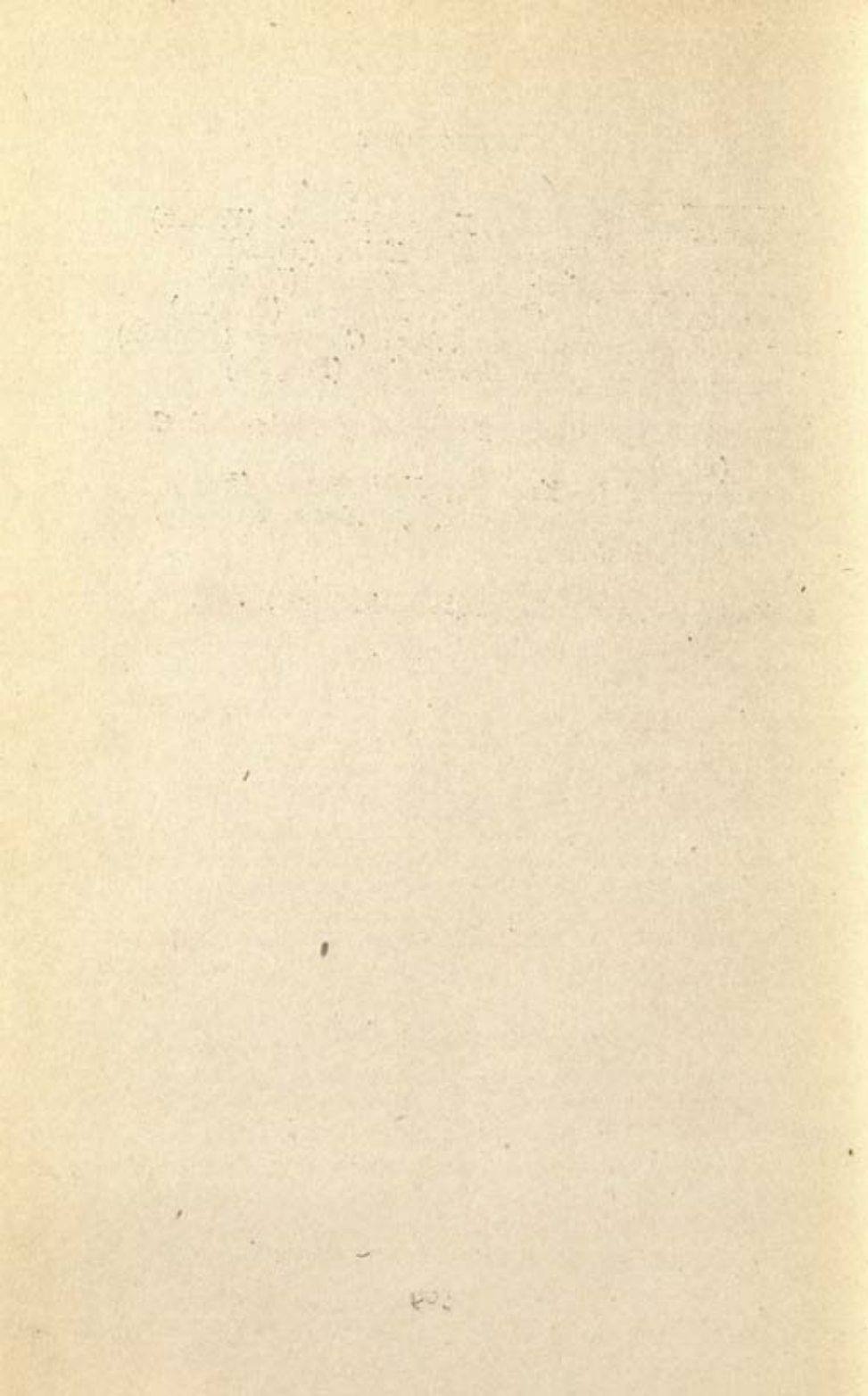
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