

SIKHISM: AN ORIGINAL, DISTINCT, REVEALED
AND COMPLETE RELIGION

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I

The word ‘Sikh’, as we know, is the Punjabised form of the Sanskrit word *shishya*, meaning a disciple or a learner, especially a seeker of truth. It came to be used for the disciples of Guru Nanak Dev and his nine spiritual successors who graced humanity from 1469 to 1708 A.D. in the Indian subcontinent. Thus, their religion, called Sikhism, literally means the path of discipleship and the new-way of life taught by them.

Their faith is the youngest and the most modern of the world’s religions. It originated in Punjab, the land of Five Rivers, about five centuries ago, during the Muslim rule of Lodhis followed soon after by that of the Mughals in India.

II

Soon after the passing away, in 1708, of the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, the Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah, issued an imperial ordinance on the 10th of December 1710 from Delhi to “kill and finish them (the Sikhs) wherever they were found,” [1] ordering thus their wholesale destruction. That royal proclamation, outlawing the Sikhs and seeking their complete annihilation, was repeated by Emperor Farrukh Siyar, and it remained in force for three long years in all parts of the Mughal Empire. “According to it, every Sikh or Nanakpanthi, wherever seen, was to be immediately arrested. He was to be offered only one alternative, either Islam or the sword. He was to be executed there and then without any hesitation or loss of time. A schedule of valuable rewards was proclaimed. For every Sikh head Rs. 25/- were to be given, and for a Sikh captive a sum of Rs. 100/- was to be awarded. Their pretty girls were to be reduced to Concubines, and others were to be made maidservants. When a Muslim died, his grave was to be dug by the Sikhs or their Hindu sympathisers. For *begar* (unpaid labour), in place of cobblers, Sikhs were to be employed. The Emperor’s orders were strictly obeyed. The Governors of Sarhind, Lahore and Jarnmu tried to surpass one another in persecution of the Sikhs in order to win the goodwill of Farrukh Siyar.” [2] Later, in 1746, according to Syed Mohammad Latif, “The Governor (of Punjab), Yahya Khan, issued a proclamation for a general massacre of all Sikhs, wherever they could be found. Death was to be the punishment of all persons who invoked the name of Guru Gobind (Singh), and a reward was offered for the heads of Sikhs. Thousands were put to death daily, and their heads brought before the Subedar of Lahore for reward.” [3] It was reported, on three occasions, to the authorities that the Sikhs had been exterminated root-and-branch. The Afghan invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali, during his invasion of India in 1762 and his continued campaign of the Sikhs’ extermination, killed about twenty five thousand of them [4] in a single day’s battle. [5] Besides, he ransacked their capital (viz. Amritsar), blew up their Harimandar (the Temple of God, better known as Golden Temple), and desecrated its *Sudhasar* (sacred pool) with blood, bones and entrails of cows, etc., and had it filled up with debris. [6]

With the establishment, in 1849, of the British rule in Punjab, Dr Ernest Trumpp, a German missionary, appointed by Her Majesty's Government to translate the sacred Sikh scriptures, asserted in 1877 that "Sikhism is a waning religion that will soon belong to history." [7] Joginder Nath Bhattacharya rather prophesied in 1896 that "Under British rule, Sikhism is fast losing its vitality and is drifting towards amalgamation with the Hindu faith. In the course of a few more generations, Sikhism is likely to be superseded by one of those forms of Vaishnavism which alone have the best chance of success among a subject nation in times of profound and undisturbable peace." [8] Max Arthur Macauliffe also apprehended such a danger of amalgamation or absorption, when he observed, first in his essays and papers (1881-1906), [9] and later in his magnum opus (1909) : "Truly wonderful are the strength and vitality of Hinduism. It is like the boa constrictor of the Indian forests. When a petty enemy appears to worry it, it winds round its opponent, crushes it in its folds, and finally causes it to disappear in its capacious interior. In this way, many centuries ago, Hinduism on its own ground disposed of Buddhism which was largely a Hindu reformation; in this way, in a pre-historic period, it absorbed the religion of the Scythian invaders of Northern India; in this way, it is disposing of the reformed and once hopeful religion of Baba Nanak. Hinduism has embraced Sikhism in its folds; the still comparatively young religion is making a vigorous struggle for life, but its ultimate destruction is, it is apprehended, inevitable without state support." [10] Gokul Chand Narang posing a self-prophetising question and answering it himself in a self-righteous manner, stated in 1912, "What is their (the Sikhs) future? It is anything but dark. However, it is apparent that the best days of the Khalsa are altogether behind." [11]

During the all-out crusade of extermination against its adherents (who are easily recognizable by their strikingly distinctive appearance sporting unshorn hair and colourful headgear) immediately before and after the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan on the 15th August 1947, thousands of them (the Sikhs) were killed at sight. The rest were uprooted, *en masse*, from their homes, lands and historic shrines; and were deprived of all other belongings in an unprecedented way. [12]

The horrendous holocaust reduced nearly half of their thriving community to a homeless, landless and seething refugee population. So much so that of all other persons, one of its own followers, Khushwant Singh, while prefacing his first book about them and their faith, observed in 1953 : "The chief reason for my writing an account of my people is the melancholy thought that contemporary with my labours are being written the last chapters of the story of the Sikhs. By the end of the century, the Sikhs themselves will have passed into oblivion. Before that happens, it is proper that some estimate of their religion, history, traditions and political and cultural achievements should be made by someone identified with them by faith and association." [13] Gokul Chand Narang, a staunch Arya-Saniajist, came out in 1960 with another self-fulfilling statement asserting that the "Sikhs have no political future as an

independent community.”[14] Fourteen years later, another highly learned Sikh, Kapur Singh, stated while concluding his speech on 7th of October 1974 at Vancouver: “While as Canadian citizens, the Sikhs may look forward to a hopeful and bright future; in India, their historic homeland, they now face the basic problems of their identity and existence, since the control of their own history has been snatched out of their own hands and their historical potential has been submerged and throttled. And I add that the Sikhs want to live, as all living things do not want to die.”[15]

Only ten years after that last pronouncement, the Sikhs had to face still another holocaust in 1984, only thirty-seven years after the independence of India; for the attainment of which their sufferings, sacrifices and contribution far exceeded their numerical strength in their motherland.[16] This too involved not only a multi-pronged attack on their historic shrines and institutions,[17] but also a genocidal campaign to slaughter thousands of innocent Sikhs, disgracing their women and burning their properties all over India, not accounted for to this date.[18]

But in spite of such recurrent persecution and treacherous onslaughts perpetrated on this religion by the rulers and the foreign invaders as well as the ongoing challenges and intimidating prophecies about its absorption, assimilation or disappearance, Sikhism has stood its ground and withstood all tests of the time. All nefarious efforts made from time-to-time to suppress, subjugate or exterminate it have gone up in smoke. All prophets of doom who predicted its extinction had to bite the bullet and their prophecies have proven totally wrong. Even “the boa constrictor has failed to swallow it,”[19] The fact remains that it has not only survived, but is very much here to stay. Its followers are flourishing now in even larger numbers, not only in Punjab, its homeland, and in all other parts of India, but also in every part of the world. Despite various limitations, such as their ‘stateless status’ - the Sikhs have achieved a far greater success in all walks of life, contributing a lot to the progress of the communities they live in and wielding “an influence much in excess of their numerical strength”[20] everywhere in the world. So much so that according to the renowned historian Arnold Toynbee, “they are the burliest men on the face of the planet, tough and capable, and slightly grim. If human life survives the present chapter of man’s history, the Sikhs for sure, will still be on the map.”[21]

III

This is so and shall remain thus, because the Sikhs, in spite of being about two percent of the population of India, their country of origin, profess one of the ‘higher religions’ of the World which is not only an original, distinct and independent faith, but is also an autonomous, complete and dynamic religion, born of a direct and definitive revelation like other major religions of the world. It is primary in its source and pure in its contents.

The authenticity of its dogmas, simplicity of its beliefs, exalted moral code, internal vigour, tenacity of purpose and sustained heroism together with the religious zeal, spiritual energy, unshakable faith and indomitable spirit as well as the enterprising and self-sacrificing nature of its followers have kept it intact and firm on its ground in many such crises during its 500 plus year-old history, raising it up again with greater strength and better prospects after every attempt to annihilate it.

IV

Those who have not been able to study Sikhism properly or objectively, or have been unable to understand rightly its nature, origin, essence, psyche and spirit, have often described it wrongly or misleadingly.

Some of them, like Estlin Carpenter, have considered it not an original and distinct, but an eclectic and ‘composed’ religion, maintaining that “the movement of Nanak which culminated in the formation of a kind of church nation, was fed from two sources and attempted to establish a religion combining the higher elements of Hinduism and Islam alike.” [22] According to Rev. F. Heiler, too, it is “a pure and elevated religion in which the best of Hinduism and the best of Islam unite. Many elements of the religion come near the central truths of Christianity, though these glimpses of revelation are indeed blurred by the strong influence of Vedantic pantheism and Islamic fatalism. Above all, the element which robs the teaching of the Granth (its sacred scripture, Guru Granth Sahib) of any creative power is its eclecticism, its continued oscillation between theism and pantheism.” [23] In the words of Khushwant Singh, “Sikhism was born out of a wedlock between Hinduism and Islam.” [24] It is “a synthesis of these two faiths.” [25] According to Bhattacharya, it may be described briefly as a “Hinduized form of Mahomedanism or a Mahomedinized form of Hinduism, . . . is a mixture of Hinduism and Mahomedanism minus circumcision and cow-killing, and plus faith in the Sikh Gurus. Even in outward appearance, a Sikh with his short trousers, flowing beard, forehead free from paint and neck without beads, looks more like a Mohammedan than a Hindu. The only visible sign by which he may be distinguished is the iron ring which he wears on the wrist.” [26] The Time magazine has recently described him as “a member of a casteless religion that combines elements of Hinduism and Islam, but scorns the caste system of the Hindus and the historical expansionism of the Muslims.” [27]

Some others, like Frederic Pincott, have also tried to identify Sikhism with Mohammadanism. According to him, “the religion of Nanak was really intended as a compromise between Hinduism and Muhammadanism, if it may not even be spoken of as the religion of a Mohammedan.” Concluding his article on Sikhism, included in the Dictionary of Islam, he observed, “It is enough for the purpose of this article to have established the fact that Sikhism, in its inception, was intimately associated with Muhammadanism and that it was intended as a

means of bridging the gulf which separated the Hindus from the believers in the Prophet.” [28] Tara Chand has even gone to the extent of asserting that “Nanak took the Prophet of Islam as his model and his teaching was naturally deeply coloured by this fact.” [29]

Sri Rajagopalachari has described the Sikhs as “no better than uncircumcised Mussalmans.” [30] Ascribing the theistic character of Sikhism to the influence of Islam, Monier Williams has stated, “Nanak was partially Islamised, to the extent at least of denouncing idolatry.” [31] G.T. Baltany has also mentioned this religion “having been largely influenced by the growing Mohammadanism.” [32] But the Muslim writers, like Maulvi Insha Ulla Khan, [33] Maulvi Muhammad Ali [34], Khawaja Hasan Nizami, [35] and Shaikh Muhammad Yasuf [36], have gone a step further even by claiming Guru Nanak as a great Muslim Fakir who, according to them, taught a religion which in itself was a form of Muhammadanism. [37]

On the other hand, according to Ernest Trumpp, “Sikhism has only an accidental relationship with Muhammadanism. It is a mistake if Nanak is represented as having endeavoured to unite the Hindu and Muhammadan idea about God. Nanak remained a thorough Hindu according to all his views.” [38] “Although precipitated by Islam,” asserts Gokul Chand Narang, “Sikhism owes nothing to that religion. It is, on the other hand, a phase of Hindu religious revival, and has in consequence retained all essential features of real Hinduism.” [39] Mahatma Gandhi has even claimed that the “Sikhs are a part of the Hindu community. The Granth Sahib is filled with the Hindu spirit and the Hindu legends, and millions of Hindus believe in Guru Nanak.” [40] Gandhi, records Archer, “acknowledged that he had met some Sikhs who held themselves distinct from Hindus, but intimated that he would be pleased to find that the separate tendency is confined to only a very few Sikhs and that the general body regard themselves as Hindus,” [41] thus paving the way for Sikhism to be labelled as an off-shoot of Hinduism.

There are still others who, like Muhammad Akbar, have even denied the distinct identity and separate entity of Sikhism by asserting that “Guru Nanak did not enunciate any new religion, but only wanted to reform Hinduism.” [42]. According to Guru Datt also, it is difficult to say whether Sikhs have any separate or distinct religion of their own. The faith they profess is the basis of the present-day Arya-Samaj. [43] Nirad C. Chaudhuri has also identified Sikhism with Hinduism and has described it as one of its different forms. [44]

According to some others, like Marian Smith, Sikhism is a religious synthesis. She “finds a similarity between the reforms of Guru Nanak and those of Martin Luther. She calls Sikhism a religious synthesis, pointing out that Guru Nanak offered a doctrinal synthesis which answered the challenge of Islam, and aimed at the foundations of the top-heavy Brahminical social structure.” [45]

V

But those who have studied Sikhism and have understood its origin, growth and gospel have proclaimed, in the words of Duncan Greenlees, the celebrated author of the World Gospel Series, that “Sikhism is no disguised Hindu sect, hut an independent revelation of the Truth of all sects; it is no variant of Muslim teaching . . . It too is a distinct religion like the other great religions of the world . . . The Sikh is not a Hindu or a Muslim; he is the disciple of the one Eternal Guru.”[46] According to Edward Bittencourt, “Sikhism is a wholly new, original and genuinely monotheistic religion. It is an independent religion which naturally may be said to have a background of Hinduism and Islam, much as Christianity has a background of Judaism, and Judaism has a background of Akhnatonism and Zoroastrianism and previous Semitic Paganism.”[47] M.A. Macauliffe, who devoted thirty long years to its study and research and produced a six-volume monumental work about its prophets. scripture, tradition, etc., had already stated, while introducing to the West this religion and its founder as follows: “Guru Nanak was not a priest either by birth or education, but a man who soared to the loftiest heights of divine emotionalism, and exalted his mental vision to an ethical ideal beyond the conception of Hindu or Muhammadan. The illustrious author of *Vie de Jesus* asks whether great originality will again arise, or the world be content to follow the path opened by the daring creators of ancient ages. Now there is here presented a religion totally unaffected by Semitic or Christian influences. Based on the concept of the unity of God, it rejected Hindu formulations and adopted an independent ethical system, ritual, and standards, which were totally opposed to theological beliefs of Guru Nanak’s age and country.”[48] Hence, he asserted, “It would be difficult to point to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system.”[49] According to R.C. Majumdar too, the founder of this new and distinct religion, “cut himself adrift from all associations with prevailing sectarian religions.”[50]

It even fell away from allegiance to their respective codes, and developed its own, as observed by Sir Lepel Griffin in 1870: “The Sikhs had abandoned the Hindu faith and with it the system of law which is the basis of the faith and which was inseparable from it. For a hundred and fifty years they had been governed as far as chiefships were concerned, by another code altogether, and it was as reasonable for them to refer to *Manu* and the *Shastras* as the source of legal authority, as it would have been for Mohammedans who had embraced Sikhism to appeal to the *shariat*.”[51] So much so that in the words of Prof. Indubhushan Banerjee, it “forged its own weapon, hedged itself behind newer forms and customs, in short, developed individuality of its own.”[52]

And this is what Guru Arjun Dev. the holy compiler of its sacred scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, has himself stated in unambiguous terms as long back as in 1604 A.D. :

I observe neither fasting (like a Hindu).
 nor the month of austerity (like a Muslim).
 For I serve God alone.
 Who saves all at the last.
 Gosain of the Hindus and Allah of the Muslims are one to me.
 I have broken free from Hindus as from Muslims.
 Neither I go to Mccca to perform Hajj (like Muslims),
 nor I perform worship at pilgrim places of Hindus.
 I serve only the sole Lord (i.e., God) and no other.
 I neither perform the Hindu worship.
 nor say the Muslim prayer.
 I bow to the One Formless Lord in my heart.
 We are neither Hindus nor Musalmans,
 Our body and soul belong to the One Supreme Being,
 Who alone is both Ram and Allah for us.[53]

A contemporary historian. Mobid Zulfiqar Ardistani (popularly known as Shaikh Mohsin Fani), who happened to stay with his son and successor, Guru Hargobind, at Kiratpur Sahib, and who had been the first non-Sikh writer to record an account of the Sikhs and Sikhism of those days, and that too based on first-hand information, has recorded his statement in his famous work on comparative study of religions, entitled *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, compiled in 1654 AD. Opening his chapter on the subject. Mohsin Fani observes “the Nanak Panthis who are known as the Sikhs of the Gurus, have no faith in idols and temples of idols.” [54] Proceeding further, he states “They do not read the mantras of the Hindus. They do not venerate their temples or idols, nor do they esteem their avatars. They have no regard for the Sanskrit language which, according to the Hindus, is the speech of the angels.[55] Indicating (Guru Nanak’s own attitude towards avatars and divinities, he tells that Guru Nanak did not believe in divinities and incarnations. “Just as he praised the Mohammadans, so has he praised the incarnations and the gods and goddesses of the Hindus. But he considered them all to be the created (*makhluq*) and not the Creator (*khaliq*). He denied the doctrines of *Halool* (i.e. direct descent from or incarnation of God), and *Ittihad* (i.e., direct union of the All-pervading God with any particular body).” [56]

Bhai Gurdas, the amanuensis who wrote the Holy Granth at the dictation of Guru Arjun, was himself a great scholar and writer, and his ballads and couplets are regarded as the ‘key’ to the understanding of the Sikh scriptures, tenets, practices, etc., has categorically stated: The Guru’s *Panth* is distinct. And cannot be mixed with others.[57]

Basine his conclusion on numerous references and statements contained therein, Owen Cole has therefore observed, “Hinduism at all levels is rejected and replaced by the practices which have come to be the essential part of Sikh ceremonial use of the Adi Granth and celebration of the anniversaries of the Gurus (*gurpurbs*).” [58]

Qazi Nur Muhammad who came to India from Baluchistan in the invaders train to record the events of the seventh (dt. 1764) invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and who completed his “invaluable” [59] *Jang Namah* in 1765. has also expressed similar views which are based upon his personal observations and close contacts. Speaking of the religion of the Sikhs against whom the said expedition had been organised. Nur Muhammad tells us that religiously they were absolutely separate from Hindus:

The Sikhs are the disciples of the Guru and that august Guru lived at Chak (Amritsar). The ways and manners of these people received their impetus from Nanak who showed those Sikhs a separate path (i.e., taught them a distinct religion). He was succeeded by Gobind Singh from whom they received the title of ‘Singh.’ They are not from amongst the Hindus, and have a separate religion of their own.[60]

J.D. Cunningham (1812-1851), who happened to be the first-ever Westerner to write and publish in 1849 the first full-fledged history of Sikhism after fighting fierce and decisive battles with its followers, therefore, observed in 1849: “The last apostle of the Sikhs did not live to see his own ends accomplished, but he effectually roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people, and filled them with a lofty, although fitful, longing for social freedom and national ascendancy, the proper adjuncts of that purity of worship which had been preached by Nanak. Gobind saw what was yet vital, and he relumed it with Promethean fire.” The result of the miracle that the Tenth Master wrought, tells Cunningham, is that, “A living spirit possesses the whole Sikh people, and the impress of (Guru) Gobind (Singh) has not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but has also operated materially and given amplitude to their physical frames. The features and external form of a whole people have been modified, and a Sikh Chief is not more distinguishable by his stately person and free and manly bearing than a minister of his faith is by a lofty thoughtfulness of look which marks the fervours of his soul, and his persuasion of the near presence of the Divinity.” Asserting that the people marked by such high spirits and changed features belonged to a distinct faith, altogether different even from that of their other countrymen, Cunningham added “Notwithstanding these changes, it has been usual to regard the Sikhs as essentially Hindus, and they doubtless are so in language and everyday customs, for Gobind (Singh) did not fetter his disciples with political systems or codes of municipal laws; yet in religious faith and worldly aspirations they are wholly different from other Indians, and they are bound together by a community of inward sentiment and outward object unknown elsewhere. But the misapprehension need not surprise the public nor condemn our scholars, when it is remembered that the learned Greeks and Romans misunderstood the spirit of those humble men who obtained a new

life by baptism. Tacitus and Suetonius regarded the early Christians as a mere Jewish sect, they failed to perceive the fundamental difference and to appreciate the latent energy and real excellence of that doctrine which has added dignity and purity to the modern civilization.” [61] Sir Charles Elliot acclaimed it, therefore, as “a religion of special interest (to mankind), since it has created not only a political society, but also customs so distinctive that those who profess it, rank in common esteem as a separate race.” [62] Guru Gobind Singh’s “ordinances”, he added, “were successful in creating a nation.” [63]

Recognizing and acclaiming this amazing fact of history, the Sage-Scholar of Pondicherry, Sir Aurobindo, has similarly observed: “A more striking instance was the founding of the Sikh religion, its long line of Gurus and the novel direction and form given to it by Guru Gobind Singh in the democratic institution of Khalsa.” [64] Explaining it earlier, he has stated: “The Sikh Khalsa was an astonishingly original and novel creation, and its face was turned not to the past but to the future.” [65] Nirmal Kumar Jam has likewise asserted that those who consider this religion as an off-shoot of Islam “are as mistaken as those who think Sikhism to be an off-shoot of Hinduism. Like every original religion, it is born of a direct revelation. It is not based on any scripture. As it does not derive from any established creed, it does not fight any preceding religion.” [66] In the same vein, maintains Ishwari Prasad that “Guru Nanak declared that there was no Hindu or Mussalman. He set aside the Vedas and the Quran, and asked his followers to repeat the name of God.” [67] Hence, said Dorothy Field, “Pure Sikhism is far above dependence on Hindu ritual. A reading of the Granth strongly suggests that Sikhism should be regarded as a new and separate world religion, rather than a reformed sect of the Hindus.” [68]

It is similarly not a sect or a form of Muhammadanism. It is neither a mixture of both nor a compilation of good points selected from the Hindu and Muslim faiths. It has not been formed, as alleged above, by combining some rational and acceptable rituals, beliefs and dogmas of the Hindus and Muslims. “The teachings of Guru Nanak have,” says Geoffrey Parrinder, the eminent author of the *World Religions*, “commonly been represented as a syncretic blend of Hindu tradition and Muslim belief. This is a gross simplification, and when expressed in terms of a mixture of Hinduism and Islam, it must be totally rejected. The teachings of Guru Nanak do indeed represent a synthesis, but the elements which constitute the synthesis can never be defined, however loosely, as Hinduism and Islam.” [69] Thus, Sikhism can, in no way, be termed as an eclectic religion, composed of selections made from various systems, doctrines, sources, etc.

The order of the Khalsa “from its very birth has claimed the status of a new Way of Life, the Third *Panth*, a separate community, and distinct people from the two Ways of Life, already known and largely practiced by the peoples of East and West and the inhabitants of India: the Way of the Aryans, represented by Hinduism and its heterodox forms, Buddhism

and Jainism; and the Semitic Way of Life, represented primarily by the Christians and the Mussulmans.” [70] “That such was the unambiguous claim made for his new order of the Khalsa by the Guru (Gobind Singh) himself, cannot be in doubt, as the Guru’s own assertions on this point amply support the testimony of the contemporary non-Sikh historians and writers.” [71]

This is also quite clear from the proclamation he made in the great gathering of the Sikhs at Anandpur Sahib soon after initiating the first five members of the Order of the Khalsa, knighting them as Singhs and calling them his Beloved Ones, on the historic Vaisakhi day of the 30th March, 1699. “According to the Persian historian Ghulam Muhi-ud-Din, the newswriter of the period, sent to the Emperor (Aurangzeb) a copy of the Guru’s address (which) is dated the first of Vaisakh Samvat 1756 (AD. 1699), and is as follows” [72]:

I wish you all to embrace one creed and follow one path, rising above all differences of the religions as now practised. Let the four Hindu castes, who have different rules laid down for them in the Shastras, abandon them altogether, and adopting the way of mutual help and co-operation, mix freely with one another. Let no one deem himself superior to another. Do not follow the old scriptures. Let none pay heed to the Ganga and other places of pilgrimage which are considered to be holy in the Hindu religion, or worship the Hindu deities such as Rama, Krishna, Brahma and Durga; but all should cherish faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. Let men of the four castes receive my baptism (of the Double-edged Sword). Eat of the same vessel, and feel no aloofness from or contempt for one another. [73]

The newswriter of the Mughal Court who was present there on the occasion, when forwarding this proclamation to his master, submitted his own report: “When the Guru had thus addressed the crowd, several Brahmins and Khattris stood up, and said that they accepted the religion of Guru Nanak and of the other Gurus. Others, on the contrary, said that they would never accept any religion which was opposed to the teachings of the Vedas and the Shastras, and that they would not renounce at the bidding of a boy, the ancient faith which had descended to them from their ancestors. Thus, though several refused to accept the Guru’s religion, about twenty thousand men stood up and promised to obey him, as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission.” [74] About eighty thousand men, say Ahmad Shah Batalia and Bute Shah, received the Baptism of the Double-edged Sword and joined the Order of the Khalsa during the first few days. [75] Their names were changed, and “they were given one family name ‘Singh’ for thenceforth their father was Gobind Singh (so renamed after his own baptism), their mother Sahib Devan, and their place of birth Anandpur. The baptism symbolised a rebirth, by which the initiated renounced their previous occupations (*krit nash*) for that of working for God; severed their family ties (*kul nash*) to become the family of Gobind; rejected their earlier creeds (*dharm nash*) for the creed of the Khalsa; gave up all rituals (*karam nash*) save that sanctioned by the Sikh faith; and stopped believing in superstition

(*bharam nash*) for belief in One God. Five emblems were prescribed for the Khalsa. They were to wear their hair and beard unshorn (*kesh*); they were to carry a comb (*kangha*) in the hair to keep it tidy; they were always to wear a knee-length pair of breeches (*kach*), worn by soldiers of the times: they were to carry a steel bangle (*kara*) on their right wrist; and they were to be ever armed with a sabre (*kirpan*). In addition to these five emblems, the converts were to observe four rules of conduct (*rahit*) not to cut any hair on any part of their body; not to smoke or chew tobacco, or consume alcoholic drinks; not to eat an animal which had been slaughtered by being bled to death, as was customary with the Muslims, but eat only *jhatka* meat, where the animal had been despatched with one blow, and not to molest the person of Muslim women. At the end of oaths-taking, the Guru hailed the converts with a new form of greeting:

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru ji ki Fateh
“Hail the Khalsa who belongs to Lord God!
Hail the Lord God to Whom belongs the victory!” [76]

The very first ordinance issued by the Founder of the Khalsa to the Sikh congregations throughout the subcontinent, Kabul and Ghazni confirms the above,[77] and this definition of the Khalsa corroborates all that further as under in his own words:

“He whose mind dwells, night and day,
On the Ever-effulgent Light,
And never swerves from the thought of one God;
He who is full of love for God and faith in Him,
And believes not, even mistakenly,
In fasting and worship of the graves of Muslims
Or sepulchres of Hindus;
He who recognises the one God and not another,
And does not believe in pilgrimages,
Ceremonial acts of mercy
And charity, penances and austerities;
And he whose heart is illumined within
By the Light of the Perfect One,
He is to be recognised then
As a pure member of the Order of the Khalsa.” [78]

All that ushered in a complete break with the past of all those who joined the Order of the Khalsa. It also marked “the culmination which had crowned Guru Nanak’s revelation.” [79] It also pronounced the complete independence and distinctiveness of the Sikh religion. “That such has been the stout belief, and the basic impulse of the Sikhs and their history can be

readily ascertained by any dispassionate person who would take pains to enquire with an open mind.”[80] He or she would surely come to a similar conclusion.

Further authentication to this stance has been duly provided by John Clark Archer, who, after conducting a critical and comparative study of the Aryan and Semitic religions and recognising the separate entity and identity of Sikhism, has maintained that, “Indeed Sikhism in itself reveals something of what in the last analysis religion is . . .” It is “an independent and conspicuous order of its own, with a character worthy of comparison with that of Hinduism and Islam, and with Christianity in particular . . . The five centuries of Sikh history provide many lessons in human thought and action which are of more than passing value . . . Sikhs may stand, therefore, as symbols and examples of all who search for God and Truth . . . They preserve among themselves a hardy tradition of religious and political activity, and enjoy among Hindus, Moslems, Christians and other peoples, an extraordinary prestige.”[81] The dispassionate enquirer would also find like an American convert, Ralph Singh, that the followers of this distinct faith “have their own Prophets who brought a new divine revelation to earth which is enshrined in their own sacred scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, regarded as the living Word of God.”[82] But, a biased enquirer, like Hew McLeod, who has, according to Justice Gurdev Singh “attacked most of the Sikh traditions, institutions and beliefs, questioned their validity and striven to create doubts about others.”[83] would, on the other hand, maintain on flimsy props and erroneous conclusions that “Sikhism does not deserve much consideration as it is only a rehash of a minor effete Hindu creed” and that Guru Nanak was not the founder of this religion “as he did not originate a new school of thought or set of teachings.” McLeod has even gone to the extent of choosing not to accept the aforesaid account of the birth of the Khalsa and the five emblems and rules of conduct prescribed for it by Guru Gobind Singh himself on the Vaisakhi of 1699, “not because he finds any evidence to falsify it, but by simply refusing to believe it,” saying, “Our knowledge of this (18th) century is still limited. Traditions abound, but so too do compulsive reasons for scepticism. What we do know, however, indicates that traditions relating to the period of Guru Gobind Singh must be, in some considerable measure, set aside. The slate must be wiped clean and must not be reinscribed until we have ascertained just what did take place during the eighteenth century.”[84]

VI

But the history and tradition of a religion cannot, and should not be “set aside,” “discarded” or “wiped clean” on the mere suspicions or unjustified scepticism of an ex-employee of a Christian Mission. Such scepticism is unwarranted particularly in the case of a religion, viz. Sikhism, which was born just about five centuries back and which has survived so gloriously through this eventful period of the modern world in full gaze of history. More so, when it has been duly recognised not only as an original and distinct, but also as an independent and autonomous higher religion of the world.

Besides, as already stated, this is a prophetic religion. It is born of a direct and definitive revelation like all other great and 'higher religions' of the world, "Instead of drawing authority and inspiration from any revealed scripture, such as the Hindu *Puranas* and *Smritis*, Guru Nanak depended on his own mystical experience." [85] The revelation did not also come to him as an 'external inspiration' (called *wahi zahir*) which "was used for the production of Quran" during whose process "the mind of Muhammad was passive and the message, an external one, was brought to him by Gabriel." [86] On the other hand, "It seems certain," says Duncan Greenless, "that his (Guru Nanak's) views welled up from the deeps of inspiration in his own heart and owed little or nothing to what he received from others, either through books or through their words." [87] Guru Nanak himself vouchsafed this fact and has himself recorded those experiences and revelations, received directly from God Himself, in his own *bani* or revealed word, preserved till today in its original and undefiled form, singling out his religion, thereby, "from, most other great theological systems as regards the authenticity of its dogmas." [88] He has defined this as *Khasam-ki-Bani* ("Word of the Lord") in one hymn, and *Eh Bani Mahan Purakh Ki*, ("This Word of the Supreme Being") in another. [89]

The spiritual and religious truths which Guru Nanak preached had been revealed to him "through a direct encounter with God at some level of consciousness", and he preached what he had been told and taught by God Himself. He conveyed only those words to the world which God had wished him to give forth as His divine message, as stated by him in verses such as the following:

"As the Lord's Word descends to me
So I express it, Lalo !" [90]

"I have uttered only what You, O'Lord! Have inspired me to utter." [91]

Guru Nanak has also mentioned in another hymn that he was an ordinary minstrel who was commissioned and blessed by God with His service. Describing his first audience with the Supreme Being, the Guru sang aloud thus:

"I was an idle bard,
God assigned to me a rewarding task,
And commanded me to sing His praises night and day.
He summoned me to His Eternal Mansion,
Bestowed on me the robe of holy laudation,
And feasted me on the holy Name ambrosial
The Supreme Being is attained, says Nanak,
By laudation of the holy Eternal." [92]

As is well-known to students of comparative religion, contents of revealed religion are conveyed to the people by the Supreme Being through His special messengers, either by calling them to His presence, as in the case of Moses, or by communicating His messages to them, as in the case of Prophet Muhammad. As regards Sikhism, God is stated to have been pleased to use direct ways to convey His Words, Laws and Commandments, to its founder,[93] as stated above by the first Sikh Prophet, Guru Nanak, himself in his own words.

His successors in the Apostolic Lineage have not only endorsed this fact, but have also recorded their own experiences and audiences, as under, in their respective writings, compiled in 1604 by the Fifth Master in Guru Granth Sahib, and preserved intact to this day:

I. BY COMMUNICATION:

1. As stated by Guru Amar Das, the Third Master:

“God is Sole and Supreme,
None is His equal.
I speak as and when He makes me speak,
My utterance is directed by Him.”[94]

2. As confirmed by Guru Ram Das, the Fourth Master:

- (i) “To Nanak the Truth was revealed by the Lord. So he relates mysteries of the Divine Portal.”[95]
- (ii) “Know the utterance of the holy Preceptor to be pure and true. Disciples of the Master: For, the Lord-Creator Himself makes him utter it.”[96]
- (iii) “The Lord has appointed me, the unsophisticated, to His task.”[97]

3. As affirmed repeatedly by Guru Arjun Dev, the Fifth Master:

- (i) “Inaccessible, unperceivable, my eternal Lord, Nanak speaks as Thou inspire him to speak.”[98]
- (ii) “ By myself I do not know what to say: I have stated all by His command.”[99]
- (iii) “This servant of the Lord while Conveying the Divine Word, Speaks as the Lord directs him.”[100]
- (iv) “What can I utter? I know nothing to utter: As the Lord Wills, so He makes me utter.”[101]

II. BY AUDIENCE:

1. As stated by Guru Ram Das, the Fourth Master:

“I, a minstrel of the Lord-God,
 Came to the Divine Portal,
 The Lord inside listened to my supplication,
 And called me into His Presence.
 Addressing me, He asked,
 ‘What brings you here, My Minstrel’ I prayed, ‘Confer on me, O, Gracious
 Lord;
 The boon of your ever-abiding Name Divine.’
 The Bountiful Lord granted my prayer,
 Conferred on me meditation on the Name
 And blessed me with a robe of honour.” [102]

2. As affirmed by Guru Arjun Dev, the Fifth Master:

“As I have attained the sought-after Lord,
 Illumination and joy have filled me . . .
 I have been fully blessed by the Perfect Lord
 Who has come, in His grace; to His servant.” [103]

3. “The Lord-God called me into His Mansion ,Wherein I consumed nectar (of Immortality).” [104]

Such important disclosures, solemn statements, persistent affirmations and firm conviction, in the existence and beneficence of God, prove beyond doubt that Sikhism is a revealed religion. It is so, because it has been directly revealed by God through a line of Ten Prophet-teachers, who, after receiving its contents directly from Him, presented it to mankind in word and deed. They reproduced it in exactly the same original form; and also recorded it in their sacred writings. It is so, because it still remains primary in its source, and pure in its contents. It is neither selective or elective in its nature; nor secondary in its source; nor adulterated in its content. Hence, says M. Mujeeb, “the revelation that came to Guru Nanak, must have been as direct and immediate, and as independent of history and social circumstances, as the religious literature of the Sikhs show it to be.” [105]

That being so, Sikhism can in no way be called an admixture or juxta position of various doctrines gathered from this religion or that theological system by its Prophet-teachers who were genuine messengers of God. Its tenets and teachings have been borrowed neither from Hinduism nor from Islam, nor from any other such source, as has been alleged by those who

have not been able to study or understand its essentials properly or dispassionately. It is true, in the words of R.C. Majumdar, that “his was the first and also the last successful attempt to bring together the Hindus and Muslims in a common fold of spiritual and social brotherhood.”[106] The first words he uttered when called to take up the mission of his life after the aforesaid Audience with God were:

“*Nah ko Hindu Nah Mussalman.*”

“There is no Hindu, there is no Mussalman.”[107]

On the face of it, this cryptic phrase was “a simple announcement, and yet a significant one in the context of India of his day.”[108] To a society torn by conflict,[109] he brought a vision of common humanity - a vision which transcended all barriers of creed and caste, race and country. He reminded men of their essential oneness. The terms, ‘Hindu’ and ‘Mussalman’, included Jainas, Buddhists, Jews, Christians and so on. Guru Nanak was asking men of all faiths and denominations to look beyond external divisions and distinctions to the fundamental unity of mankind. In proclaiming the unity, which lay beyond particularisms, Guru Nanak was not overruling any existing religious designation or tradition. His intention was more radical: “he wanted to point men beyond their accepted condition to a new possibility - a human community with a true spirit of fellowship and justice, with that deep ethical and spiritual commitment which expresses itself in concern for fellowmen. Nor was he seeking a syncretistic union between Hinduism and Islam, or striving to achieve in his teachings a judicious mixture of elements from both to be acceptable to all. His equal attention to Hindu and Muslim identities and use of some of their religious vocabulary have led some to depict him as the reconciler of the two faiths, and to see Sikhism as ‘a deliberate mingling of Hindu and Muslim practices. To do so will mean missing much of his individual genius and misinterpreting the historical development issuing from his revelation.”’[108] The beginnings of the Sikh faith, in fact, go back to this revelation which Guru Nanak brought to light around 1496 A.D., soon after his enlightenment and just before his departure for his preaching odysseys in India and abroad.

VII

Sikhism is, above all, a complete religion in all respects like all other original and revealed religions of the world.

1. It is *Ahi-al-Maqam*[111], having its own spiritual and political Capital, viz., the holy city of Amritsar (as Mecca is for Islam), with its world famous Harimandar (Golden Temple) and Akal Takht which are its focal point, and for its followers the highest seat of spiritual and temporal authority, besides being “the centre of a World religion, meeting ground of the various facets of the human-spirit, and a profound symbol of future confluence of the World cultures into a universal culture for mankind.”[112]

2. It is *Ahl-at-Kitab*[113] possessing its own holy book, viz., Guru Granth Sahib (as Quran is for Islam), which is not only the Guru Eternal of its adherents, but is also unique among the world's sacred scriptures. It has been acclaimed as "the only non-denominational scripture," [114] the "scripture of universal religion" and "part of mankind's common spiritual treasure," which, according to Arnold Toynbee, "should be brought within the direct reach of as many people as possible" and which also "deserves close study from the rest of the world." [115]
3. It is *Ahl-al-Milla*[116] being a true religion revealed by Guru Nanak and having its own fellowship of faith and a cohesive community, called *sangat* and *Panth*. The Turkish and Persian connotations of the word will mean a 'nation', a 'people' and a 'state.' [117] Sikhs are a casteless democratic society, assuring equal status and respect for all. It is for this society that Guru Gobind Singh, while expressing his great love and respect for it, declared:

"Whatever is available in my house, my wealth,
My body, my mind, even my head
Are ever at the disposal of my people." [118]

Paying his tribute to their selfless services, contributions and achievements, he also stated without any reservation that:

"It is through their favour that
I have won my battles,
And have gifts been bestowed.
It is through their favour that
I have overcome my troubles
And my stores are filled.
It is through their favour that
I have acquired knowledge
And have smothered my enemies.
It is also through their favour that
I am exalted and have attained this position;
Otherwise, there are millions of
Humble persons like myself going about." [119]

After administering *Khande di Pahul*[120] to the First Five, knighting them as Singhs,[121] and proclaiming them as his *panj piare*[122] the inaugurator of that 'selfabnegating, martial and casteless' Fellowship of Faith, Guru Gobind Singh, himself besought to be initiated by them in the same way as he had initiated them. Having been initiated

and admitted as such to their brotherhood, called Khalsa[123] he later announced that he had created the Khalsa in his own image under the direct command of God, the Timeless Being:

“The Khalsa is my alter ego, my own image,
The Khalsa is my embodiment.
In it I have my being.
The Khalsa is my beloved ideal.” [124]

Hence, there was to be no difference between him, the Guru and the Khalsa, as created and initiated by him in his own image. All this is unheard of in the annals of the religious and spiritual history of the world.

4. It is *Ahl-i-Kalam*[125], having firm faith in the doctrine of the *Shabad*[126] the holy Word, and the *Shabad-Guru*, i.e., the Word is Guru and Guide.[127]

“God permeates the celestial music of the Word.”
“The Word is the essence of all meditation and discipline.” [128]
“God’s Name is cherished in One’s heart by means of the Word. The supreme state, realization and liberation is attained by means of the Word.” [129]
“The Word alone can ferry us across the Ocean of Existence.” [130]
“The holy Word is the true Preceptor,
The Guide, the Mystery profound and inscrutable.
And it is the Word, the absence of which
Results in spiritual confusion.” [131]

5. It is *Ahl-al-Zaban*, having its own language, viz., Panjabi (as Arabic is for Islam), with its own specific script called Gurmukhi, in which its scripture, annals and chronicles, etc., stand recorded right from the beginning.
6. It is *Ahl-al-Nishan*, having its own distinct flag or banner, called *Kesri Nishan Sahib*, with *Khanda* (the Khalsa emblem) inscribed and or installed thereon (as the parcham is for Islam). It keeps on waving over all Sikh temples, called gurdwaras.
7. It is *Ahl-al-Shahad*, [132], cherishing a long and unique line of great martyrdoms, like those of its two prophets (viz, the Fifth, Guru Arjun Dev and the Ninth, Guru Tegh Bahadur), the Sahibzadas (Babas Ajit Singh, Jhujar Singh, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh) and their followers (such as Bhai Mati Das and Bhai Mani Singh).
8. It is *Ahl-al-Shamshir*, possessing the ceremonial sword called *kirpan*, as a symbol of power, sovereignty and weapon of defence and justifiable offence in time of need. This specific weapon is a significant part of the required uniform of a member of the Khalsa

Brotherhood, being one of the Five Ks or symbols of the Sikh faith, obligatory for him to always keep on his body. “Since a member of the Khalsa Brotherhood is pledged not to accept any alien restrictions on his civic freedom, he is enjoined to insist on and struggle for his unrestricted right to wear and possess arms of offence and defence.” [133] According to a quotation attributed to Guru Gobind Singh:

“The political power and the State rest on armaments.
And without political sovereignty,
the good way of life cannot securely prevail in society.” [134]

As he created the Khalsa “to establish the ever-persisting community of saint-soldiers,” who could assist in the fulfilment of Guru Nanak’s revelation and mission, it was considered essential to equip them with an “instrument of offence and defence and as an emblem of power and dignity which India had lost and which Guru Gobind Singh wanted to restore.” [135]

At the same time, he approved and allowed recourse to the sword as the last resort of a reasonable man for settling conflicts when all other means have failed in due course. In his letter to Emperor Aurangzeb, he therefore, made it quite clear that,

“When an affair is past every other remedy,
It is just and righteous to draw the sword.” [136]

It is obvious that the creator of the Khalsa created this new metaphor of the sword “to give a new orientation to the minds of men given to passivity.” [137]

9. It is *Ahl-al-Sunnah*[?] as well, having its own usages, customs and a distinctive code of conduct recorded in its scripture, compositions of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal, various *Rahitnamas*[139] and *Rahit-Maryada*. [140]

Describing the Sikh way of life, these works cover not only the spiritual discipline and moral code, but also the social behaviour of the community whose members “are required to observe a distinctive code of conduct, one which specifies normative behaviour, outward appearance, and social obligation.” [141]

VIII

Sikhism is, thus, a complete and perfect religion, not only because of its having such prominent features, elements and essentials of a ‘higher-religion’, but also because it was established, as its Founder stated, to carry out a specific command of the Lord-God Who Himself is, as proclaimed by him in the following couplet, All perfection or perfection-incarnate:

“All that the Perfect One has made is perfect.
There is nothing lacking or excessive in its making.” [142]

It is dynamic, stable and eternal, too, as, according to the holy compiler of its sacred scripture,

“The holy Preceptor has laid the immutable foundation of the faith
That never and in no way shall shake.” [143]

Rather, it becomes firmer and firmer with the passage of each day, as stated below:

“The eternal foundation laid by Guru Nanak, Is ever-ascendant.” [144]

According to the following assertion of the contemporary bards, Rai Balwand and Satta,

“Guru Nanak founded the True Dominion of God.
He raised the citadel of Truth on firm foundations.” [145]

On these foundations was raised a glorious spiritual and temporal edifice by Guru Gobind Singh who imparted his “stern Olympian air” to the followers of his, who are recognizable till today by their distinctive appearance and are distinguished by their everpresent high spirits, particularly in a period of adversity and crisis. That is so because “His impress not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but contrary to the experience of ethnological experts, it also operated materially and gave amplitude to their physical frames. They came to be regarded as models of physical beauty and stateliness of manner. A tremendous change was affected in the whole tone of their national character. Even those people who had been considered as dregs of humanity were changed, as if by magic, into something rich and strange. The sweepers, barbers and confectioners, who had never so much as touched the sword, and whose whole generation had lived as grovelling slaves of the so-called higher classes, became under the stimulating leadership of Guru Gobind Singh, doughty warriors who conquered fear, and who were ready to rush into the jaws of death at the bidding of their Guru.” [146]

IX

This revealed, distinct and complete religion of such self-sacrificing saint-soldiers is a universal world faith with an all-embracing appeal and elevating message for all mankind. “It is the faith of the New Age,” says Rev. Bradshaw, “It is the *summum bonum* [147] for the modern man. It completely supplants and fulfils all the former dispensations of older religions. The other religions contain Truth, but Sikhism contains the fullness of Truth. The older faiths were good in their day, but that day is now past and we are living in the dispensation of Guru Nanak. Just as we appreciate the discovery of modern living and do not want to exchange our modern jet airlines, automobiles and electricity for the horse-drawn carriages and candles of the past, we do not want to exchange the New Age Faith of Guru Nanak for any of the

old age systems and their antiquated philosophies. The Sikh faith is the universal religion for the present space age. The Sikh religion is truly the answer to the problems of the modern man.”[148] And it “is the only living faith,” according to Bittencourt, “that gives the healing outlook on life.”[149]

As regards its potential and prospects in the religious domain of the world, it was Macauliffe, who, while addressing the Quest Society in 1910 at London, stated: “The Sikh religion (as compared to other religions) presents no mysteries, and embraces an ethical system such as has never been excelled, if indeed it has ever been equalled. It offers fewer points of attack than any other theological system, and if patronized and cherished, as its religious and political importance deserves, by a powerful government, it might become one of the first religions on this planet.”[150]

Dorothy Field observed as follows in 1914, “Sikhism is capable of a distinct position as a world religion, so long as the Sikhs maintain their distinctiveness. The religion is also one which should appeal to the Occidental mind. It is essentially a practical religion. If judged from the pragmatist standpoint, which is a favourable point of view in some quarters, it would rank almost first in the world. Of no other religion can it be said that it had made a nation in so short a time. The religion of the Sikhs is one of the most interesting at present existing in India, possibly indeed in the whole world. That it should have transformed the outcaste Indian - a notoriously indolent and unstable person - into a fine and loyal warrior is little short of a miracle.”[151] It was Arnold Toynbee again who prophesied, therefore, as recently as in 1960: “Mankind’s religious future may be obscure: yet one thing can be foreseen. The living higher religions are going to influence each other more than ever before in the days of increasing communication between all parts of the world and all branches of the human race. In this coming religious debate, the Sikh religion, and its scripture, the Adi Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world.”[152]

This will indeed be so, because it will have the opportunity of sharing the sort of experience which the Nobel-laureate Pearl S. Buck had gained when she observed, after going through the 4-volume English translation (by Dr Gopal Singh) of Guru Granth Sahib: “I have studied the scriptures of other great religions, but I do not find elsewhere the same power of appeal to the heart and mind as I find here in these volumes. They are compact in spite of their length, and are a revelation of the vast reach of the human heart, varying from the most noble concept of God to the recognition and indeed the insistence upon the practical needs of the human body. There is something strangely modern about these scriptures and this puzzled me, until I learned that they are in fact comparatively modern, compiled as late as the 15th century, when explorers were beginning to discover that the globe, upon which we all live, is a single entity divided only by arbitrary lines of our own making. Perhaps this sense of unity is the source of power I find in these volumes. They speak to persons of any religion or of

none. They speak for the human heart and the searching mind.” [153] And they do speak in verses such as these which, indeed, indicate that unique concept of unity and universality:

“The One Lord is our Father,
We all are His children.” [154]
“None is our enemy,
Nor is anyone a stranger to us.
We are in accord with all . . .
The one God is pervasive in all creation
At the sight of which Nanak is in bloom of Joy.” [155]

These and many other hymns contained in Guru Granth Sahib, clearly visualize and preach a religion which knows no ethnical, racial or regional limitations; recognises no distinction on account of birth, sex, caste, creed or colour, embodies universal respect and concern for all, and regards all as equals. This is testified by its first and last prophets, Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh, in the following words:

“There is Light among all
And that Light is God’s Own.
Which pervades and illuminates everyone.” [156]
“Some one by shaving his head
Becomes a *sanyasi*, another a *yogi*,
And yet another passes for a monk or ascetic.
Some call themselves Hindus,
Other claim to be Muslims;
Among these some are *Shias* and some are *Sunnis*.
Recognise all as belonging to the one race of humanity
God as Creator (for the Hindus) and God as Good (for the Muslims)
God as Sustainer and God as Merciful
Is all one and the same God.
Recognise not another even in error or in doubt.
Worship that One alone,
As He is the Supreme Lord of us all.
It is only His form, His Light
That is diffused in one and all.” [157]

Hence, the followers of this universal faith conclude their daily prayer to that One God, in the name of their founder, Guru Nanak Dev, with the following couplets:

“May Your holy Name,
be ever in ascendance.
May peace and prosperity

come to all!!
 In Your Will
 By Your Grace !![158]

They, thereby, ask for God's blessings in favour not only of their own community, but also of the entire humanity, for the maximum good of each and every creature in the world.

X

Thus, apart from being such a distinct monotheistic faith, Sikhism is also a social and fraternal religion, standing equally for the common Fatherhood of God and universal Brotherhood of Man, guaranteeing equal status to all human beings and asserting that normal family life, lived with virtuous conduct and firm faith in God, surely leads to the path of salvation.

“Contemplation of the True Lord brings illumination,
 Which enables one to remain unattached in the midst of evil.
 Such is the greatness of the True Preceptor
 (that through His grace and guidance)
 One can attain fullness
 while living with one's wife and children.”[159]

Hence, it is the religion of our time, modern in outlook, scientific in analysis, rational in approach and practical in adaptability; suited to the needs, aspirations and conditions of the modern man and his social set-up. It is a religion which is concerned with the creation of a just social order, and is committed to social equality and peaceful co-existence, as proclaimed by its Fifth prophet, Guru Arjun Dev, in the following verse:

“The Gracious Lord has now promulgated His ordinance;
 None shall dominate over others or cause pain;
 All shall abide in peace and happiness.
 As the governance shall be gentle and affectionate.”[160]

Sikhism enjoins on its followers social responsibility involving both social service and social action:

“He who does dedicated service in the world gets a place at His Portal.”[161]
 “They alone understand the right way
 Who eat the bread of their labour,
 And share it with others.”[162]

The above directives of Guru Nanak, (couched in his own pithy aphorisms: *Nam Japo*, *Kirt Karo*, *Vand ke Chhako* are indeed “the foundation of a spiritually oriented, dynamic social life.” [163] His frequent exhortations to follow the under-mentioned six-sided discipline cultivates and follows the virtues associated with it, and leads further to the enrichment and fulfilment of such an ideal life:

Naam: Devotion to the Divine Name.

Daan: Giving to others, particularly to the needy.

Isnan: Purity of mind, body and environment.[164]

Seva : Service of mankind.[165]

Simran: Contemplation and remembrance of God.[166]

Satsang: Fellowship or company of true believers: Association with holy men.[167]

XI

Sikhism is thus based on humanistic and universal values of the purest form. Human freedom and dignity, self-realization and self-confidence, service and sacrifice have been the essential elements of its ethos.

The history and heritage of this religion, whether in its principles, doctrines, and sacred pronouncements, or in the practical lives of its founders and followers, “has been one of exhortation to liberation from all kinds of degrading bondage, mental, spiritual and social. Long before the modern idea of social freedom was evolved in the West, Sikhism had brought to mankind the message of freedom. In its social aspects, it was a movement of freedom from feudalism and caste tyranny. While socially, it brought to man liberation from feudalism and caste tyranny, spiritually it brought to man freedom from suppression and those false beliefs which enslaved man to a selfish or ignorant priest-craft, whether the priest was called Brahmin, Yogi or Mullah.” The founder of the holiest Sikh shrine and the compiler of the Sikh Scripture, Guru Arjun Dev, has himself recorded the impact of this unique movement in the following verse:

“The eggshell of doubt has shattered,
And the mind is illumined:
The Master has freed us from bondage
By cuffing off fetters from our feet.” [166]

This is the verse which Macauliffe, while recognizing its lasting significance, reproduced on the title-page of each of the six volumes of his *magnum opus*, *The Sikh Religion*, published in 1909 by the Oxford University. This is also the verse on the basis of which Banerjee stated, seventy years later: “The fetters of ritualistic religion were cut off and the captives were freed: and the foundations of the Spiritual Empire were laid. On these foundations was

raised an imposing structure of Temporal Empire, blessed by Guru Gobind Singh's never-to-be forgotten utterance: RAJ KAREGA KHALSA."

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- [4] Miskin, Tabmas Khan, Tazkirah-Tahmas Miskin, also called Tahmas Namah, MS. No. 1918 of British Museum, London, dated 1779-80 A.D., Forster George, A Journey from Bengal to England. London - 1798, V01. I, p. 319.
- [5] That fearful bloody carnage which occurred on 5th February, 1762 at Kup, near Malerkotla, is known as Dooja Wadda Ghalughara, i.e., the Second great Holocaust.
- [6] Nur-ud-Din. Husain Khan, Sayyed, Tarikh-e-Najib-ud-Daulah, also called Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-Daulah, MS. No. 24410 of B.M., London, f. 57a (cf. English Translation by Sir Jadu Sarkar in the Islamic Culture, 1933-34); Khushwant Rai, Tawarikh-i-Sikhan, also called Kitab-i-Tawarik.hi-Punjab,MS. No. Or. 187 of B.M., London, dated 1811, f. 95.
- [7] Trumpp, Dr Ernest; The Adi Granth. London- 1877. p. vi.
- [8] Bhattacharya, Joginder Nath, Hindu Castes and Sects, Calcutta-1896, p. 511; reprint-1968. p. 404.
- [9] Macauliffe, M.A., The Sikh Religion under Banda and its Present Condition in the Calcutta Review. Calcutta-1881, Vol. CXLV. p. 168; The Sikh Religion and its Advantages to the State. Simla 1906, p. 28; 'How the Sikhs became a Militant Race?' Simla - 1906, pp. 26-27.
- [10] Macauliffe, MA., The Sikh Religion, its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors, Oxford-1909, Vol. 1, p Lvii.
- [11] Narang, Dr Sir Gokul Chand. Transformation of Sikhism, Lahore-1912; 2nd. ed. Lahore-1945, p. 350.
- [12] For details see Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab by Prof. Gurbachan Singh V Talib. Amritsar-1950; Divide and Quit by Mr. Penderal Moon. London-1961; The Partition of Punjab by Dr Kirpal Singh. Patiala-1978.
- [13] Khushwant Singh, The Sikhs, London-1953, p. 7.
- [14] Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, op. cit., p. 350.
- [15] Kapur Singh's speech entitled, Sikhs and Sikhism, Vancouver, 7th October 1974. p. 26.
- [16] "Of the total number of persons martyred during the Independence Movement, 75

- [17] Under 'Operation Blue Star', stated to be "the biggest and the most significant army action against its own countrymen ever taken in the world," and used as the 'Code name for the Indian army's move into Punjab against the Sikhs" during the first week of June 1984. (Gurmit Singh. Dr. History of Sikh Struggles. Vol. III, p. 1). "On 5th June 1984, the Indian army began its attack on the complex at Amritsar which housed the two most sacred shrines of the Sikh Community. For some details see Report to the Nation Oppression in Punjab by Citizens the Golden Temple and the Akal Takht ... tanks were ordered in and the Akal Takht was virtually reduced to rubble." (Mark Tully and Satish Jacob, Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle, Delhi-1985, p.i.). For some details see Report to the Nation: Oppression in Punjab by Citizens for Democracy, Bombay- 1985.
- [18] History of Sikh Struggles. op. cit.. Vol. III. pp. 28-29. 34- 39 For some details refer to the Reports to the Nation published under the auspices of the Peoples Union for Democratic Rights; People's Union For Civil liberties entitled Who Are The guilty' New Delhi-1984 and the Citizens For Democracy (entitled Truth About Delhi Violence, Delhi-1985); Army Action in Punjab, Prelude and Aftermath, New Delhi-1984: Report of the Citizens' Commission: Delhi- 31st Oct. to 4th Nov. 1984, New Delhi-1985.
- [19] Banerjee, Prof. Dr Anil Chandra, Guru Nanak: The Teacher of Man, Chandigarh-1979, p. 23.
- [20] Parrinder, Prof. Geoffrey, World Religions from Ancient History to the Present. New York- 1983. p. 260.
- [21] The Hindustan Times, New Delhi-2nd June, 1957. See also Kapur Singh, Sikhs and Sikhism, op. cit., p. 3.
- [22] Carpenter, J. Estlin, Theism in Medieval india, London-1921, p. 489.
- [23] Heiler, F., The Gospel of Sadhu Sunder Singh, London-1927, pp. 35-36.
- [24] Khushwant Singh, The Sikhs Today, New Delhi-1959; reprint, 1969, p. xiii.
- [25] Khushwant Singh. A History of the Sikhs, Princeton-1963, Vol. I, p. 17.
- [26] Bhattacharya, Hindu Castes and Sects, op. cit.;, 1st. ed., pp. 497, 510; reprint, pp. 393. 403.
- [27] Time, New York. dated 12th November, 1989, p. 53.
- [28] Picott, Frederic, Sikhism in the Dictionary of Islam by Rev. T.P. Hughes, London- 1885, p. 583 and 594.
- [29] Tarn Chand, Dr. Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, Allahabad- 1946, p. 169.
- [30] Rajagopalachari, Sri, Vaishnava reformers of India.
- [31] Williams, Monier, Brahmanism and Hinduism, London- 19, p. 64.
- [32] Battany, G.T., Encyclopaedia of World Religions, London- 19 p. 246.
- [33] cf. Insha Ulla Khan. Maulvi, Sikhon aur Mussalamanon Ke Ruhani Tualqat, Lahore-1909.
- [34] cf. Muhammad Au, Maulvi, The Founder of Sikhism, Lahore- 1919.
- [35] cf. Nizami, Khawaja Hassan, Sikh Qaum aur unke Bani ki ntsbat Mussalamanon ki Muhabbat-amez Rai, Batala-1919.
- [36] cf. Muhammad Yusuf, Sheikh, Baba Nanak Ka Mazhab, Qadian-19 19.
- [37] Quadiani, Mirza Ghulam Abmed, Salya Bachan, Baiala 2nd. ed. 1902. pp. 4377-4504.
- [38] Trumpp, E., The Adi Granth, op. cit., ch. ill, p. ci.
- [39] Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, op. cit., p. 379.
- [40] Gandhi, M.K., Young India, May-1924, p. 829. Abmadabad.
- [41] Archer, Prof. Dr IC., The Silchs, in Relation to Hindus, Moslems, Christians and Ahmadiyas a Study in Comparative Religion, Princeton-1946, p. 301.

- [42] Ibid., p. 302, Akbar, Dr Mohammad, *The Punjab Under the Mughals*, Lahore-1943; reprint, Delhi- 1979, p. 187.
- [43] Kenneth, Wi., *Journal of Asian Studies*, translation Singh Sabha Patrika, Amritsar-January, 1974, pp. 92-94.
- [44] Chaudhun, Nirad C., *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, London-1951, pp. 492-3.
- [45] Smith, Marian W., *Synthesis and other Processes in Sikhism in the American Anthropologist*, Vol. 50, No. 3, Pt. I, July-September, 1948, pp. 457-62; Marengo, Ethoc K, *The Transformation of Sikh Society*, New Delhi-1976, p. 24.
- [46] Greenlees, Duncan, *The Gospd of the Guru Granzh Sahib*, Madras-1952, p. 216.
- [47] Bittencourt, Dr Edward A.de., in his 'Foreword' to the *Sikh Way of Life* by Ranbir Singh, New Delhi-1968, p. vi.
- [48] Macauliffe, MA., *The Sikh Religion*, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. Liv.
- [49] Ibid., Vol. 1., Introduction, p.1.v. Lv.
- [50] Majumdar, Dr R.C., *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. VI, Bombay-1960; 2nd.- 1967, p. 569.
- [51] Griffin, Sir Lepel, *Rajas of the Punjab*, Lahore-1879, p. 338.
- [52] Banerjee, Prof. Indubhushan, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Calcutta-1936, Vol. 1, p. 182.
- [53] Arjun Dev, *Guru, Guru Granth Sahib*, Amritsar-1604 AD., Rag Bhairo, M.5. p. 1136
- [54] Mohsin Fani, Shaikh, (*Ardistani, Mobid Zalfiqar*), *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, dated 1654 A.D. - 1904, p. 223.
- [55] Ibid., p. 233.
- [56] Ibid., p. 223. See also Ganda Singh, Prof. Dr. Nanak Panthis, extracted, translated and edited with notes, Amritsar-1940, pp. 4, 5, 10, II.; Nanak Panthis or *The Sikhs and Sikhism of the 17th Century*, in the *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XIX, Pt. 2.
- [57] Gurdas Bhai, *Varan*, composed 1600 AD., Var no 3, pauri no
- [58] Cole, W. Owen, *Sikhism and Its Indian Context(1469-1708)*, New Delhi-1984, p. 251,
- [59] "For the history of the Sikhs in particular, and a knowledge of the country and people in 1764," according to Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar in his 'Foreword' to the *Jang Namah*, (fn. no. 58).
- [60] Nur Muhammad, Qazi, *Jang Namab*, Gunjaba-1765, cli. XLI, pp. 156-159 edited and translated into English by Dr Ganda Singh, Amritsar-1939, pp. 158-59 (of the text), pp. 59-59 (of the English rendering).
- [61] Cunningham, Capt. J.D., *A History of the Sikhs from the Origin of the Nation to the Battles of Sutlej*, London-1849; reprint, Delhi-1985, pp. 75-76. See also Elphinstone, M., *History of India; Rise of the British Power in the East*, Vol. II, London- 1887, pp. 561-564.
- [62] Elliot, Sir Charles, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, London-1921, Vol. II, p. 267; reprint-1954, p. 272.
- [63] See also Malcolm, Lt. Col., *Sketch of the Sikhs A Singular Nation who inhabits the Provinces of the Punjab*, London-1812, pp. 129, p. 148, Burnes, Alexander, *Travels and to Bukhara*, London-1834, Vol. p. 285, Vol. H, p. 39; Barth, A., *Religions of India*, Paris-1882; London-1906. pp. 242 and 249.
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- [66] Jain, Nirmal Kumar, *Sikh Religion and Philosophy*. New Delhi- 1979, p. 1.
- [67] Isliwari Prasad, Dr. *The Mughal Empire*, Allahabad-1974. p. 30.

- [68] Field, Dorothy, *The Religion of the Sikhs*, London-1914, p. pp. 34, 10.
- [69] Parrinder, Edward Geoffrey, *World Religions, from Ancient History to the Present*, 1983, p. 251.
- [70] See Bachitar Natak by Guru Gobind Singh, Anandpur Sahib-1696, cont. VI; Chaubis Avtar, Verses 2-27. 2488; etc.. (Ramkali Var Patshahi Daswen ki, dated 1700 A.D. (7), Stanza No. 16). See also Panth Parkash by Giani Gian Singh, Delhi-1880, ch. 85.
- [71] Kapur Singh, *Parasarprasna or The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh (An Exposition of Sikhism)*, Jalandhar-1959, pp. 8-9; 2nd. ed., *Parasarprasna*, Amritsar-1989, p. 4.
- [72] Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion*. op. Cit., Vol. V. p. 93.
- [73] Bute Shah alias Ghulam Muhay-ud-Din, *Tawarikh-i-Punjab*. MS. Ludhiana-1848. pp. 405-406; Macauliffe, M.A.. *The Sikh Religion*, op. cit., Vol. V, pp. 93-94; Teja Singh. Prin. and Ganda Singh, Prof., *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Bombay- 1950, pp. 68-69; Kapur Singh, *Parasarprasna*. op. cit.. pp. 2-3.
- [74] Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion*. op. cit.. Vol. V. p. 94.
- [75] Batalia, Ahmad Shah. *Tawarikh-i-Hind*, MS. dated 1818; Bute Shah, *Tawarikh-i-Punjab*. op. cit., 406.
- [76] Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Princeton-1963; 7th impr.-1987, Vol. I, pp. 83-84.
- [77] See Saina Pati, *Sri Guru Sobha*, Anandpur Sahib-171 1, Clis. V and VII; Santokh Singh, *Bhai. Sri Gurpratap Suraj Granth*. Kaithal-1843. III. 21.
- [78] Gobind Singh, *Guru*, 33 Swaiyyei, Sw. no. 1. in the *Dasam Granth*, op. cit.
- [79] Harbans Singh, Prof., *The Heritage of the Sikhs*. New Delhi-1983; 2nd. ed., 1985, p. 95.
- [80] *Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh*, op. cit., p. 9.
- [81] Archer, *The Sikhs in Relation to Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Ahmadiyahs*. op. cit.. pp. 1. V. viii.
- [82] Ralph Singh, *Sikhism*. New York-1988 (c.), p. I.
- [83] Gurdev Singh, *Justice, Perspectives on the Sikh Tradition*. Patiala-1986. pp. 5, 8-9. See MeLeod. W.H., *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford 1968: *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*. Delhi-1975; *Early Sikh Tradition*, Oxford 1980. 22-23.
- [84] McLeod, W.H., *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*, op. cit., pp. 16-18; Gurdev Singh. *Perspectives on the Sikh Tradition*, op. cit. pp. 22-23.
- [85] Bannerjee, *Guru Nanak- The Teacher of Man*, op. cit. p. 44.
- [86] Hastings, James, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, New York-19 14; latest ed. 1971, Vol. VII, p.354.
- [87] Greenless, *The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit., p. 37.
- [88] Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion*, op. cit. Vol. I, p. iii.
- [89] *Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit., Rag Tilang, M.I., p. 722 and Rag Ramkali. M.I, p. 935.
- [90] *Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit., Rag Tilang, M.I., p. 722.
- [91] *Ibid.*, Rag Wadhans, M.I., p. 566.
- [92] *Ibid.*, Rag Majh; M.I., p. 150. See also p. 148.
- [93] This has been duly mentioned by the earliest chroniclers of Sikh religion; such as by Bhai Gurdas (1551-1629) in his var no. 1 pauri no. 24; Puratan Janamsakhi (1634 c.), pp. 17-18; Sodhi Meharban (1581-1640) in his *Sachkhand Pothi* (dt. 1620 c.), pp. 88-89; Bhai Nand Lal (1633-1741) in his *Ganj Namah*, ch. I, verses 48-50.

- [94] *Ibid.*, Raga Sri, M.3. p. 39.
- [95] *Ibid.*, Raga Gauri, M. 4, p. 308.
- [96] *Ibid.*, Raga Gauri, M. 4, p. 308
- [97] *Ibid.*, Raga Asa, M.4, p.449.
- [98] *Ibid.*, Raga Suhi, M. 5, p. 743.
- [99] *Ibid.*, Raga Suhi, M. 5, p. 763.
- [100] *Ibid.*, Raga Sorath, M. 5, p. 629.
- [101] *Ibid.*, Raga Sarang, M.5, p.1203.
- [102] *Ibid.*, Raga Sri, M.4, p.91.
- [103] *Ibid.*, Raga Sarang. M. 5, p. 1237.
- [104] *Ibid.*, Raga Wadhans, M. 5, p. 562.
- [105] Mujeeb, Prof. M., *Guru Nanaks Religion, Islam and Sufism*, in *Guru Nanak His Life, Times and Teachings*, ed. by Prin. Gurmukh Nihal Singh, New Delhi-1969, ch. VII, p. 116.
- [106] Surendra Nath Banerjee, as quoted in *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. IX (ii). Bombay-1977, p. 481, and Majumdar, Prof. R.C., *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, Bombay-1960; 2nd. ed. 1967, p.569.
- [107] For a detailed account see *Guru Nanak The World-Teacher (Jagat Gurubaba)*, Chandigarh- 1979. pp. 30-32; and *Teachings of Guru Nanak*, Chandigarh-1984, pp. 3 1-32 - both by Dr Harnam Singh Shan.
- [108] According to Dr Mohan Singh, "No teacher of the populace had uttered words of that import and significance, since the time of Upanishads. Those few words at one stroke felled the giant structures of caste, creedal, sectional and religious differences." (cf. *Sri Guru Nanak Dev and Nation Building*, Tarn Taran-1934, p. 8.
- [109] Harbans Singh. Prof., Berkeley, *Lectures on Sikhism*, New Delhi-1983. pp. 9-10 That terrible conflict grew from the fact that the "impact of Islam on north-western India in the 11th century had been through military conquest and sword, and this had created reactions in the proud and sensitive Hindu mind such as resulted in impassable barriers of hatred and prejudice between the two World-culture currents, and their mutual contacts have, therefore, left irritating and unfortunate monuments of bigotry and misunderstanding, spiritual and historical, that still mark the Indian scene. The Sikh Prophets, the Nanaks, desired to level down these barriers with a view to discover and provide a common spiritual ground for the two, Hinduism and Islam, where Hinduism gets over its injured superiority and sense of exclusiveness, and [Islam, its arrogance and self centricity born out of military superiority. The Nanak V declared Let Muslims rediscover the truth that the true essence of religious practice is compassion and its goal, the purification of soul, and that political utilitarianism and expedience is not basic to Islam as such, and let the Hindus concede that Islam, thus understood, is as respectable and ceremoniously pore as the flowers, the silk, the deerskin and the butter-fat." (*Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit. Rag Maru, M.5, p. 1084; *The Golden Temple Amritsar*, a paper read by S. Kapur Singh at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. on 24 Oct. 1977, p. 2).
- [110] Harbans Singh, Prof., Berkeley *Lectures on Sikhism*, New Delhi-1983, pp. 9-10.
- [111] *Ahl* in Arabic originally meaning those who occupy the same tent, thus family inmates. Therefore, *ahl-al-bait* means the household of the Prophet Muhammad, his descendents. But this word is often connected with other notions, meaning so much as sharing in a thing, belonging to it or owner of the same, etc. (see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* ed. by M.Th. Houtsma and others, Leyden-1913, Vol. I, p. 183. *Maqam* means place or glorious station. (see *Quran*, ch. 17, V. 81).
- [112] *The Golden Temple Amritsar*, op. cit. p. 3.
- [113] *Ahl-al-kitab*, the people of the Book. Muhammad calls so the Jews and Christians, in distinction from the heathens, on account of their possessing divine books of revelation, (*Tawrat Torah*; *Zabur* = *Psalter*; *Indjil* = *Gospel*). See *Ibid.*, p. 184, "According to T.P. Hughes, it is a term used in the *Quran* for Jews and Christians, as believers in a revealed religion." (See his *Dictionary of Islam*, London-1885, p. 12).

- [114] Khushwant Singh, *The Sikhs*, Varanasi-1984, p21.
- [115] Toynbee, UNESCO's Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs, op. cit., p. 9.
- [116] Milla in Arabic means religion, rite, "In, Qur'an the Prophet speaks of Abraham's Milla, by which he means the original revelation in its purity ... with the article, al-milla means the true religion revealed by Muhammad and is occasionally used elliptically for ahl-al-milla, the followers of the Muhammadan religion." (See Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, ed. by H.A.R. Gibb and JA. Kramers, Leiden- 1953, p. 380). According to the Kitab t-Tarifat, "it is expressive of religion as it stands in relation to the Prophet, as distinguished from Din, which signifies religion as it stands in relation to God, from Mazhab which signifies religion with reference to learned doctors." (See Dictionary of Islam, op. cit., pp. 348-349).
- [117] See Glasse, Cyril, *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Francisco- 1989, p.269.
- [118] *Khalsa Mahima*, Swaiyya no. 3. p. 717.
- [119] *Ibid.*, Swaiyya No.2, p.716.
- [120] That is, Baptism of the Double-edged Sword.
- [121] That is, the lions, used as surname by all male followers of Sikhism.
- [122] That is, the Five Beloved Ones, Three out of them belonged earlier to the so-called low castes (viz. Muhkam Chand, washerman from Dwarka; Himmat; a cook from Jagannath, Sahib Chand, a barber from Bidar, the fourth (viz. Daya Ram, a Kshatriya or Khatri by caste, from Lahore), the fifth (viz. Dharam Das, a Jat from Delhi).
- [123] 'Khalsa' means the pure baptised and initiated Sikhs; Sikh brotherhood. The aim of Guru Gobind Singh in founding the Khalsa was to build up a nation of the purified Ones who would be free from the evils of religion and society. (Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, op. cit., p. 72).
- [124] See Sarab Loh Granth. ch. *Khalsa Parkash*.
- [125] Kalam in Arabic means word; speech. "The first technical use of Kalam seems to have been in the phrase Kalam Allah meaning either the Kuran or Allah's quality (Sifa) called speech." (See Short Encyclopaedia of Islam, op. cit., p. 210, Dictionary of Islam. op. cit., p. 260).
- [126] "The majesty of the mystic Sabda (Shabad) which we come across in the Sikh scripture," tells Dr R.K. Arora, hardly finds any parallel in its fullness. It has been associated with God without attributes. As the Guru is the repository of all spiritual jewels, so, in him enshrines the Sabda and he also imparts it to the devotee. Sabda is the means by which one gets wisdom and the knowledge of the Lord, 'By the Sabda of the Guru one recognises the abode of the Lord within.' (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 364) He is one with Nama and Sabda, the two most profound concepts in the Sikh faith" (See *The Sacred Scripture Symbol of Spiritual Synthesis*, New Delhi-1988, pp. 35, 45, 103. 109).
- [127] *Guru Granth Sahib*. op. cit., Raga Asa. Ml, p. 351.
- [128] *Ibid.*, Raga Dhanasari. Ml, p. 661.
- [129] *Ibid.*, Raga Parbhathi, Ml, p. 1342.
- [130] *Ibid.*, Raga Ramkaii, M.1, p.943.
- [131] *Ibid.*, Raga Sorath, M.1, p.635.
- [132] Shuhada in Arabic means testimony, evidence and martyrdom. The meaning martyr is not found for Shahid in the Koran. It is only later commentators that have tried to find it in the Sura iv. The development of the meaning of Shahid to martyr took place under Christian influence. The martyr who seals his belief with his death, fighting against the infidels. Shahid through out the Hadith literature and the great privileges that await him in heaven is readily depicted in numerous Hadiths. In the book of Djihad, martyrdom is praised quite in the style of the Hadith. The praise of Shahada (martyrdom) led to a real longing to meet a martyr's death and even Muhammad and 'Omar longed for it' (see *The Dictionary of Islam*, op. cit., p. 571; *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, op. cit. p. 515; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 259-60. Penrice, John, *A Dictionary and Glossary of the Quran*, New Delhi- 1978, pp. 79-80).

- [133] Kapur Singh, *Parasarprasna*, op. cit., p. 108.
- [134] As stated by Bhai Santokh Singh, in his *Gurpratap Suraj Granth*, Kaithal-1844 aim 7, ansu 36; *Parasarprasna*, op. cit., p. 41.
- [135] Teja Singh, Prin., *Sikhism Its Ideals and Institutions*, 322, Amritsar-1938, reprint-1978. p. 34, *Essays in Sikhism*, Lahore-1941; reprint-1988, p. 168.
- [136] Guru Gobind Singh, *Zafarnamah*, Dma Kangar-1706, Verse No. 22.
- [137] *Heritage of the Sikhs*, op. cit., p. 90.
- [138] Sunna or Sunnah means "custom, use and wont, statute." (see *Another Encyclopaedia of Islam*. op. cit., p. 552)". According to H.P.T. Hughes, "lit, a path or way; a manner of life. A term used in the religion of the Muslims to express the custom or manner of life. Hence, the tradition which records either the sayings or doings of Muhammad. Consequently, all traditional law is divided into (1) what Mohammad did; (2) or what Muhammad enjoined; (3) or that which was done or said in the presence of Muhammad and which was not forbidden by him." (see his *Dictionary of Islam*, op. cit., p. 622).
- [139] By Rahit we mean the distinctive Sikh code of conduct or discipline which is 'feature of fundamental importance to the life of the Panth,' that is, the Sikh religion. The manuals in which this code is recorded are called *Rahitnamas*.
- [140] That is, the Sikh Code of Conduct compiled by a committee appointed in 1931 by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, with Prin. Teja Singh as convenor. It was approved by it in 1945 and has since been accepted as an authoritative manual, and regarded as the standard guide for the whole community.
- [141] McLeod, Dr W. H., *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism*, Manchester-1984, pp. 3, 73.
- [142] *Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit., *Slok Varan te Vadhik*, MI, No. 33, p. 1412.
- [143] *Ibid.*, *Raga Sarong*, M.V., p. 1226.
- [144] *Ibid.*, *Raga Gujari*, M.V., pp. 500-501.
- [145] *Ibid.*, *Ramkali ki Var*, Rai Balwand tatha Sattei Dum akhi st. 1, p. 966.
- [146] *A Short History of the Sikhs*, op. cit., pp. 71-72.
- [147] That is, the chiefgood, especially as the end on the ultimate determining principle in an ethical system.
- [148] Bradshaw, H.L., *Sikhism*, in the *Sikh Review*. Calcutta.
- [149] Bittencourt, *The Sikh Way of Life*, op. cit., p. vi.
- [150] Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion A Lecture*, London-1910, p. 25.
- [151] Field, *The Religion of the Sikhs*, op. cit., p. 9, 34-55.
- [152] Toynbee, A., *UNESCO's Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 'Foreword', pp. 10. 11.
- [153] Buck, Mrs. Pearl S., in her *Opinion* as published in Vol. 1 of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, English Version by Dr Gopal Singh, Delhi-1960, p. xiv.
- [154] *Guru Granth Sahib*, op. cit., *Raga Sorath*, M.V., p. 611.
- [155] *Ibid.*, *Raga Kanara*, MV.. p. 1299.
- [156] *Ibid.*, *Raga Dharuzsari*, M.L, p. 663.
- [157] *Guru Gobind Singh*, *Akal Ustat* in *Sri Dasam Granth*, op. cit., *Kabit no. 15/85*.

- [158] See Ardas, that is the Sikh congregational prayer to God which is a basic religious activity in Sikh religion. Its version is available in various Gutkas (i.e., anthologies of hymns meant for daily and occasional prayers etc.) and Sikh Rahit Maryada, q.v.
- [159] Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit., Raga Dhanasari, M.I., p. 661.
- [160] Ibid., Rag Sri, M.V., p. 74.
- [161] Ibid., M.I. Rag Sri, p. 26.
- [162] Ibid., Rag Sarang, M.I., p. 1245.
- [163] Mujeeb, Prof. M., in his 'Foreword' to Guru Nanak in His own Words by Dr Harnam Singh Shan, Amritsar-1969, p. xiu.
- [164] Guru Granth Sahib, op. cit., Rag Maru, M. 5, p. 1002.
- [165] Ibid., Rag Asa, M.I., p. 419.
- [166] Ibid., Rag Asa, M.I., pp. 354, 468.
- [167] Ibid., Rag Asa, M.I. p. 9, Rag Ramkali, p. 944.
- [168] Ibid., p. 72; Rag Sorath, p. 598.