Chapter 12

REBELLIONS

1. The Satnāmīs:

The Satnāmīs are known to most students of history because of their uprising during the reign of Aurangzeb. Our knowledge of the Satnāmī revolt is derived almost entirely from Persian records. But on the Satnāmī sect and its beliefs, we are fortunate in possessing the primary source, viz., the text of the Satnāmī scripture. The only known copy of this text is preserved in the library of Royal Asiatic Society, London. H.H.Wilson, Crooke and Grierson probably refer to the same text, which Crooke and Grierson designate "Pothī". The information used by them largely tallies with the that given by the manuscript of the Royal Asiatic Society.

The Satnāmīs were a sect of 'unitarians' and were


2. Gīyān-Bānī, RAS, London, Hindūstānī 1. Prof. Irfan Habib let me use his transcription of the part of this text. The name of the author is not known. A translation of the extracts from the text is given in the appendix.


4. Manucci (II, 155) has termed them "Hindū Holi Mendicants" while Māmūrī (148a) and Khāfī Khān (11, 252) have used the term "Hindū Faqīrā" for them.
called Bairagis, as also Mundiahs since they shaved off their hair "not even sparing their eye-brows." The Satnami scripture lays down that no one should keep a beard, though women should keep their hair.

The sect was founded on 21 April, 1657 A.D. (Samvat 1714, Baisakh sudip dwadashi, Sukarvar) by a native of hamlet Kaunsali village of Bijhasar in Narnaul.

This is probably the only authentic information we have for the founder of the sect. Crooke and Grierson, give a much earlier date, for his birth, viz, 1543 ascribing the foundation to Birbhan of Bijnasor. But if the latter date is correct the Satnami scripture cannot be his composition since it refers to tobacco. Besides, it is said that Birbhan

1. Manucci, II, 155, Saqi Mustaid Khan, 114, Mamuri, 148a, Khafi Khan, II, 252, Isardas, 61b.
4. Gyan-Bani, 1a, 52b. Trant also mentions that the sect was found in the year of Vikramaditya 1714. Cf. Wilson, 197.
was inspired by Uddhava Dāsa (discussed later). If this is true, then again Birbhan's time must be later, since Uddhava Bairāgī was executed in Aurangzeb's 12th R.Y./1669-70 A.D.¹

Crooke and Grierson consider the Satnāmīs as an offshoot of the Raidāsīs.² They say that Birbhan was inspired by Udho, Uddhava or Uday Dās, who was a follower of Raidās.³ But we do not find any evidence of a connection of the Satnāmīs with Raidās. Indeed, the only teacher named in the Satnāmī scripture is Kabir which shows rather that the Satnāmīs were an off-shoot of the Kabīr-Panth.⁴ Fisher calls Birbhan a disciple of Jogī Dās, who is said to have been in the service of the Rāja of Dholpur. Once he was left for dead in the battle field, but was restored to life by a stranger, who carried him to a mountain and having instructed him in religious truths, sent him back to spread his doctrine.⁵ This account too seems legendary.

¹ Sāqī Musta'īd Khān, 84-85.
² Crooke, IV, 245, Hastings, XI, 46.
³ Crooke, IV, 245, Hastings, XI, 46; Wilson, 194.
⁴ Giyān-Bānī, 49b.
⁵ Wilson, 197.
According to Sāqī Musta'īd Khān the Satnāmīs recruited their ranks from lower castes like gold-smiths (zargar), possibly a misreading for barzgar, peasants⁴, carpenters, scavengers, tanners and other menial professions who were "weak and doomed to slaughter".⁵ Abūl Fazl Māmūrī tells us that they were largely peasants and grain merchants with small capital.⁶

The Satnāmī doctrines are contained in the form of sabdas and sakhis, which were read at the religious meetings of the Sādhs.⁷ The substance of the teachings is collected in Ādi-Upades. First precepts, where the whole code is arranged in twelve hukms (commandments).⁸

The Satnāmīs cared greatly for their repute, the title of good-name (nek-nām), the meaning of Sat-nām.⁹ The main emphasis in their scripture is on "Truth". They believed in strict monotheism and the worship of the Formless God. They detested idolatry.¹⁰

1. Irfan Habib has suggested the reading barzgar (peasant) for zargar (gold-smith), Agrarian System, 344, fn 31.
4. Wilson, 197.
6. Māmūrī, 148b. Khāfī Khān, II, 252. Māmūrī has used the word "Sītārnām in place of Satnām".
7. Gīvān-Bānī, 1a, 4a, 17a, 25b, 26b.
8. Ibid, 9a, 26b.
9. Cf. Crooke, IV, 246; Hastings, XI, 46-47. This is clearly indicated in the first commandment (Wilson, 197). "Acknowledge but one God... there is none superior not to earth, nor metal, nor wood, nor trees, nor any created things." Eighth Commandment also says (Ibid, 198) "... hold not up your hands bow not down your head in the presence of idol or of men.".
Their worship took place in the evening, which all members of the sect, male and female attended. The Prabhas were read almost daily in their "Chapel or meeting house, which is known as 'jumlaghar', or house of assembly or chaukí.

The Satnámí scripture denied caste-distinctions. It rejects any identity with Hindús or Turks (Muslims). They condemn all rituals and superstitions. Pilgrimage, festivals and fasts were also condemned. They discarded the counting of garland-beads and the putting of ōka-marks.

1. Crooke, IV, 246; Hastings, XI, 46. Fisher (Wilson, 199) says that their meetings are held at every full moon "when men and women collect at an early hour all bringing such food as they are able to. The day is spent in miscellaneous conversation or in the discussion of matters of common interest. In the evening they eat and drink together; and the night is passed in the recitations of the stanzas attributed to Bīrbhan or his preceptor and the poems of Dādū, Nānak and Kabīr".

2. Crooke, IV, 246.

3. Gīvān-Bānī, 36a. The sixth Commandment (Wilson, 198) also condemns: "When asked what you are, declare yourself a Sādh. Speak not of "caste", engage not in controversy, hold firm your faith, put not your hope in men."


5. Gīvān-Bānī, 31b, 39a-b. Twelfth Commandment (Wilson, 198): "Let not a Sādh be superstitious as todays, or to lunations, or to months, or the cries or appearances of birds or animals; let him seek only the will of the "Lord".

6. Gīvān-Bānī, 26a, 39a-b.

7. Ibid., 25b, 31b.
Magic was despised. The Satnami text says, "Do not be afraid of anyone who threatens you with magic, nor believe in it (magic) nor practice it...... Whatever the Lord wishes, happens. Contemporary Persian writers nevertheless accused them of practising magic and witch-craft. Following them, but surely quite unjustly, Sarkar terms the Satnami movement a "Vulgar craze for the supernatural".

The Satnami scripture prescribes that dances and playing of any musical instruments are to be avoided. Meat, betel-leaf, hookah, tobacco, opium and drinking of wine are all prohibited. Isardas, on the other hand, alleges that they "eat pig's flesh and other disgusting and distasteful things"; and that even if a dog's meat was served before them they did not show any disgust or shame at it. There is no justification in the Satnami

1. Giyān-Bānī, 40b.
2. Isardās, 61b; Māmūrī 148b; Khāfī Khān, II, 253-54.
4. Giyān-Bānī, 31b, 39a, 44a. The third Commandment (Wilson, 198) ran, "... let not your eyes rest on improper objects, nor men, nor women, nor dances, nor shows." The fourth Commandment (Ibid) says, "Listen not to evil discourse, nor to anything but the praises of the Creator, not to tales nor gossip, not calumny, nor music, nor singing except hymns; but then the only musical accompaniment must be in the mind."
5. Giyān-Bānī, 39b, The eighth Commandment (Wilson, 198); "Never eat, nor drink intoxicating substances, nor chew pan, nor smell perfume, nor smoke tobacco, nor chew nor smell opium."
6. Isardās, 61b.
scripture for these allegations, which might have simply arisen because the Satnāmis had opened their doors to the pork-eating "menial" castes.

The Satnāmis were constantly asked to abstain from worldly pleasures and lead a simple life. They were to wear undyed clothes and no jewellery. Crooke says that the Satnāmis never wear a cap, but use instead a turban of a peculiar shape. All the Hindu ceremonies of marriage, death etc. were also condemned; even the Hindu way of burning the dead was not admitted.

The Satnāmis were forbidden from acquiring wealth through unlawful means. Theft, fraud, bearing false witness,

1. Gīyān-Bānī, 26a, 44a; The seventh Commandment (Wilson, 198) "Wear white garments, use no pigments, nor collyrium, nor dentifrice, nor menhdi, nor mark your person, nor your forehead with sectarian distinctions, nor wear chaplets, or rosaries or jewels.

2. Crooke, IV, 245.


4. Ibid; 36a; Cf. Māmūri (148a, Khāfī Khān, II, 252. The third Commandment (Wilson, 198): "..... Never steal, nor wealth, nor land, nor beasts, nor pasture; distinguish your own from another's property, and be content with what you possess."
loot and the spoliation of the poor were condemned. They preferred to earn their bread themselves and not to resort to begging. They did not accept gifts or charity.

The tenth Commandment declares, "Let a man wed one wife and a woman one husband, let not a man eat of a woman's leavings, but a woman may of a man's, as may be the custom." Let the woman be "obedient to the man." The Satnāmī scripture also says that a woman should marry only once. Thus, on the one hand the Satnāmīs prohibit polygamy and widow remarriage; on the other they rank woman subordinate to the man.

Strict punishments were provided for those who acted against the doctrines of the Panth.

1. GIYĀN-BAṆĪ, 36a, 39a-b, 40b. The ninth Commandment (Wilson, 198), "Take no life away nor offer personal violence, nor give dammatory evidence, nor seize anything by force".

2. GIYĀN-BAṆĪ, 36a. The fifth Commandment (Wilson, 198), "Never covet anything either of body or wealth, take not of another. God is the giver of all things, as your trust is in Him, so shall you receive".

3. Wilson, 198; CROOKE, IV, 249, HASTINGS, XI, 47.

4. GIYĀN-BAṆĪ, 37b.

5. Ibid, 40a.
A certain amount of political defiance is shown by the Satnāmī scripture's exhortation to the "saints" not to go to meet "Unjust rājas", and wealthy and corrupt people.¹

Isardās called the Satnāmīs impure, foul and wicked.² Abūl Fazl Māmūrī gives a much better certificate to them. But, if, he says, anyone tried to impose oppression or tyranny upon them, by force or as a display of authority they would not tolerate it. Most of them bore weapons and arms.³ A revenue official writes in the early years of Aurangzeb's reign that in pargana of Bhatnair, there were certain cultivators who dressed like bairāgis and used to live with their women and children. They were alleged to have indulged in violence, robbery and sedition and to have harassed people.⁴ It may be that the reference is to the Satnāmīs.

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¹. Ibid., 38a, 44a.
². Isardās, 61b.
³. Māmūrī, 148b; Khāfī Khān, II, 252.
⁴. Bālkrishan Brahman, 56a-b.
The Satnami revolt took place in the 15th year of Aurangzeb's reign (1672 A.D.). At the time of the revolt they consisted of about four or five thousand householders living in the neighbouring parganas of Narnaul and Mewat. Apparently, either the ranks of the sect swelled suddenly, or they were joined by masses of poor people in the revolt, for a contemporary Hindi verse calls their host "a crore of villagers". Sāqī Mustaid Khān also speaks as if a huge multitude was involved, for the exlaims in wonder as to how they "sprang out of the ground like termites and descended from the sky like locusts".

The conflict arose from a purely temporal cause.

Following some dispute, a foot-soldier (piyāda) of Narnaul,

1. Sāqī Mustaid Khān, 114-115. He says on 26th Zaī-ul-Qadah/25th March the final encounter was taken place. Unlikely Mīmūrī (147a) puts the revolt much later, in the 20th R.Y. This can not be accepted. Isrā'īlī (62b), though provides no date for the revolt, he puts it just before the Afghān rebellion which took place in the 16th R.Y. (1672-3 A.D.) Sāqī Mustaid Khān, 129).


5. Mīmūrī (148b) and Khāfī Khān (II, 252) say that the revolt took place while Aurangzeb was returning from Hasan 'Abdāl. But Aurangzeb went to Hasan 'Abdāl in the 17th R.Y. (1673-4 Sāqī Mustaid Khān 132) and returned from there in the 19th R.Y. (1675-6) while the revolt took place in the 15th R.Y. (1672) (Ibid, 148).
who was watching the harvest broke the head of a Satnāmī cultivator who was working in his field. A body of the Satnāmīs collected and beat the foot-soldier to death. When the shiqdār was informed he sent his troops against the Satnāmīs. Thus the armed conflict began.

Sāqi Musta‘īd Khān tells us that Uddhava Bairāgī was executed along with his two Rājpūt disciples, who had murdered Qāzī ‘Abul Wахhāb’s son, by the Emperor in the 12th R.Y. (1669-70). We have seen that there is a tradition (though of dubious value) of some connexion between Uddhava Bairāgī and Bīrbān, the founder of the Satnāmī sect. If so, Uddhava’s execution too might have caused some bitterness among the Satnāmīs.

Manucci tells us that at that time the Emperor had only ten thousand troops at his disposal. The main body of Mughal troops had been sent to the Deccan for Shāh ‘Alam’s expedition against Shivājī. Seeing this, says Manucci, the Satnāmīs took the opportunity to rebel and march on the capital.

4. Manucci, 156.
Isardās names one Gharīb Dās Hārā as the leader, of the Satnāmis. This name is not otherwise heard of; Hārā suggests Rājpūt affinites. There also appeared among them an old sorceress. Isardās writes that "it began to be talked about that among that sect, there was a sorceress, who by magic called up a supernatural army every night and that army acted with such vigour that no attack made by swords, musket-shots and arrows had any effect on it". So also Māmūrī: "stories were currently reported about them which were utterly incredible. They were said to have made a magic wooden horse, on which they mounted a woman, who was the leader of their vanguard." Manucci too describes this sorceress. Whether sorceress or not, the presence of a prominent woman-leader among the Satnāmis is thus established. We may recall that the English also thought that Joan of Arc was a sorceress. Certainly, the Satnāmis were fired by religious enthusiasm. "These wicked people", says Sāqī Musta‘īd Khān, "considered themselves immortal and believed that if one of them was slain, seventy others would spring up in his place".

The woman-leader must have been an evangelist rather than a magician.

1. Isardās, 61b. However, other Persian chronicles do not mention his name. Sarkar also does not refer to him and only highlights the role of the sorceress (III, 299).
2. Isardās, 62a.
4. Manucci, 156.
Whatever the actual leaders' identities, the Satnāmis grew in strength quite rapidly. They defeated the contingent sent by the local official (shiqdār),¹ and then plundered the villages of surrounding parganas,² occupying a number of them.³ When the matter was reported to the faujdār of Nārānāul, Tāhir Khān,⁴ he sent, one after another, number of horse and foot but they too were successively defeated.⁵ The faujdār had to flee,⁶ and the Satnāmis seized the towns of Nārānāul⁷ and Bārāt Singhāna.⁸ Isardās says that they ransacked the property of the inhabitants and destroyed a number of mosques and tombs there.⁹ They collected taxes from the villages and established their own administration.¹⁰

¹. Māmūrī, 148b; Khāfī Khān, II, 253.
². Sāqi Mustād Khān, 115.
³. Isardās, 62a.
⁴. Sāqi Mustād Khān, 115; Isardās, 62a. But Kār Talab Khān is mentioned as faujdār of Nārānāul by Khāfī Khān (II, 253).
⁵. Māmūrī, 148b; Khāfī Khān, II, 253.
⁶. Our authorities have given different versions of the role played by Tāhir Khān, the faujdār. Isardās (62a) praises him for offering stout resistance and says he attained "martyrdom" (shahādat). Sāqi Mustād Khān (115) says that, being unable to resist them, he came to the presence of the Emperor, Māmūrī (f. 148b; Khāfī Khān, II, 253) writes that he had to flee (farār) with all his force; he was finally killed in battle.
⁷. Isardās, 62a; Māmūrī, 148b, Khāfī Khān, II, 253.
⁸. Isardās, 62a.
⁹. Ibid.
Overjoyed with their victories the Satnāmīs marched towards Delhi,\(^1\) thereby directly challenging the Imperial court. Owing to their approach towards Delhi prices of grain rose greatly and the inhabitants of the capital faced considerable distress.\(^2\)

Aurangzeb himself now sent troops under "famous rājas and experienced nobles" to quell the revolt, but while the Satnāmīs reached a place only 16 kurohs from Delhi, the Imperial army hesitated to attack them.\(^3\)

In the meantime, taking advantage of the disturbances, some Rajputs and the zamīndārs of the neighbourhood also went into rebellion and refused to pay revenue.\(^4\)

Finally, Aurangzeb decided to assemble a large force to crush rebellion. To quell their reputed magical powers, Aurangzeb, wrote some prayers and formulas and tied those on the banners of his troops.\(^5\)

On Friday, 26th Zi-al-Qad, 1082 A.H./25th March, 1672 the Imperial troops were ordered to attack the

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1. Ḍāmūrī, 148b; Ḍāfī Khān, II, 254.
2. Isardās, 62a.
3. Ḍāmūrī, 148b; Ḍāfī Khān, II, 253.
4. Ḍāmūrī, 148b; Ḍāfī Khān, II, 254.
5. Ḍāmūrī, 148b; Ḍāfī Khān, II, 254; Manucci, 156.
Satnamis. The commanders included Fādandāz Khān, with artillery; Hāmid Khān, with the troops of Khās-chauki and 500 troops of his father Murtaza' Khān; Yāhya Khān Rūmī, Na'īb Khān, Kamāluddīn son of Diler Khān, Purdil, son of Fīrūz Khān Mewātī, and Asfandiyār, bakhshī of Prince Akbar with a body of the Prince's troops; Kunwar Kishan Singh and Sarmast Khān. They marched with 10,000 horsemen.

We do not know the exact place where the final encounter took place. But the place was probably some 16 kurohs (or about 35 to 40 miles) distant from Delhi, as mentioned by Māmūrī. Manucci gives an almost identical position, viz. 15 "leagues" of Delhi and 'league' is his usual word for kos or kuroh.

The Satnamis offered stout resistance in the battle that now took place, but they were overthrown. Thousands of them were killed including, according to Manucci, "the old sorceress;" very few escaped. Gharīb Dās Hārā, the leader, was killed in the first attack.

5. Manucci, 156.
6. Ibid., 157.
Isardās puts the Satnāmī losses at 2,000 killed, while the Imperial loss was only of 200 lives. Describing the severity of the battle, Sāqi Mustaʿid Khan says that the Satnāmīs fought with such bravery that they repeated the scenes of Mahābhārata.

On the Imperial side Kunwar Kishan Singh, Hāmid Khān, son of Murtaza’ Khān and others fought gallantly. During the battle Kishan Singh’s elephant received seven sword wounds. Sarmast Khān also took a prominent part in the battle and had Hindi verses composed to commemorate his role:

"Emperor Aurangzeb directed Kamāluddin Khān to suppress these people (the Satnāmīs)."

"The Satnāmīs were crushed so badly that they lost all their courage."

"The brave Sarmast Khān trampled a hoast consisting of a "Crore of villagers" (ganwār)."

1. Ibid.
3. Isardās, 62b. Sarkar (III, 301), basing on Khāfi Khān (II, 254) has given the name wrongly as Rāja Bishan Singh. Bishan Singh was the son of Kunwar Kishan Singh, and entered Aurangzeb’s service after his father’s death in the 25th R.Y. (1681-82) with a mansab of 1000/400 (Sāqi Mustaʿid Khān, 217). See also V.S. Bhatnagar, Life and Times of Sawai Jai Singh, Delhi, 1974, p.12.
5. Isardās, 62b.
6. He belonged to the Dāʿūd Zāi clan (‘Ālamgir-Nāma 1054-5). He is first mentioned in the 10th year of Aurangzeb (Ibid). His rank in the Mughal hierarchy is not known. The genealogical chart of Diler Khān’s family also does not mention him (Nāma-i Muẓaffarī, I, 236). However, one Ranaast idān was the son or Bahadur Khān, brother of Diler Khān (‘Ālamgir-Nāma, 337, 708).
"All the nobles (of the Mughal army) witnessed the remarkable gallantry (shown by Sarmast Khan (lit. where-ever he stepped he was not repulsed).

For his part in the battle Radandāz Khān was now awarded the title of Shuja'at Khān and obtained the mansab of 3500/2000. Besides, Ḥāmid Khān, Yāhya Khān, Rūmī Khān, Najīb Khān, obtained promotions and robes of honour.¹

The battle, with its tremendous slaughter, seems to have broken the back of the rebellion. Such Satnāmis as escaped the slaughter fled and scattered, ² and the area was pacified. Henceforth, to judge from the present tense used for them in the descriptions of Māmūrī and Khāfī Khān, they continued to exist as a small agricultural and commercial community.³

Sarkar has termed the revolt as part of a "Hindu Reaction". ⁴ He says "the quarrel soon took on a religious colour and assumed the form of a war for the liberation of the Hindūs by an attack on Aurangzeb himself". ⁵ There is only one reference in Isardās to religious zeal when, he says, that the rebels demolished mosques and tombs at

5. Ibid, 299.
Nārīnāl. However, the Satnāmī scripture itself does not recognise any identification with either Hindūs or Turks (Muslims). The Satnāmīs discarded superstitions and religious rites of the Hindūs. The Satnāmī scripture clearly says, "neither the Pandit nor the Qāzī know what is kindness, right conduct (dharma) and truth". It is, therefore, not correct to categorize the Satnāmīs as representatives of the Hindū community. Isardās himself rules them out of the Hindū community by calling them filthy and wicked, totally violating the Hindū concepts of ritual purity. The immediate cause for the revolt itself was not religious in nature. The Satnāmī grievances were against the exploitation and tyranny of the local officials and the administration. These grievances involved not only the Satnāmīs but other peasants, zamindārs and the Rājpūts of the surrounding areas who joined hands with the Satnāmīs. In this sense, it was more an agrarian than a religious uprising.

1. Isardās, 62a.
2. Gīyān-Bānlī, 14b.
3. Ibid., 4a.
APPENDIX

Translation of Extracts from the Satnāmī Scripture

1a SATNĀM-SAHAI

Book "Gīyān-Bāṇi" of the community (Panth) of the Satnāmī saints.

Satgur came from the promixity of God. He was the first person to behold (God.). The country was Nārnaul. The native village (dah) was Bijhāsar, the hamlet was Kaunsālī. Do not leave ever the sight of him. Do not deviate from his path to the end. The sight of him leads to the right path. Without the Gurū who will be enlightened? Hindūs and Turks (Muslims) live in all the four directions. Both of them loot and enjoy living on oppression. The Satgur came and gave the call. The shaved head God's servant is best. Whoever sits at the feet of Agōjar (God) all the illusions of his heart are removed. No doubt remains in the heart whatsoever. The

1. I am very thankful to Dr. Shailesh Zaidi and Dr. Shandilya of the Department of Hindi, Aligarh Muslim University for their help and guidance in the translation of the extracts of the Satnāmī scripture.

2. I am unable to identify Bījhāsār and Kaunsālī. However they might be somewhere near Nārnaul.


4. The word use here is Kāl. It has two meanings, someone (Kaḷ) and water-moss (Kāḷ). The latter sense (=filth) seems employed. Platts, 808, 866.
Satgur showed (the saints) the Ocean of Truth.

4a. Disciple is he who is happy with reciting the Truth, does not seek others’ wealth and abstains from superstitions, and does good deeds. Neither the Pandit nor the Qāzi know what is kindness, right conduct (dharma) and truth. Anyone relying on illusion cannot understand the secret (of truth); he remains mad after wealth. God is the maintainer of the whole world and there is no god other than Him. Immerse yourself everyday in the rememberance of Him. Recite of Him who hath given you life. He has created you to follow (the path of) kindness and faith and (His) name. Keep the company of the saints. Recite of Him who hath given you life. Do not let your attention be diverted by wealth. Do not humble yourself (lit. join your hands) before any man. Immerse yourself in the devotion of the Formless (Nirguna). Recite of Him who hath given you life.

11a. Rarely a person (banda) can recognize evil in the beginning. His heart is like that of wax, which can not stand before the eternal light of God(?). He is virtuous, kind, truthful and treat everyone equally. The person

1. The meaning here is obscure. The text reads as follows:

بنده کو تاابورپتیتے موم ہیں مار دیلی تےناپنٹی
obedient to God (banda) is marked amidst the Hindu and the Turk; the devotee (bhagat) does not care for any other occupation.\(^1\) Satgur has blessed and favoured those who have put their reliance on God. He who respects the holy paper, comes to know God and Satgur.

14b. The saint who puts God's name in his heart, does not recognise the barriers of Hindūs and Turks (Muslims).

17a. O, heart: Speak the Truth, speak the Truth, speak of Truth. Without Truth who can be yours?

25b. Satgur came in this world and founded the Satnāmi\(^2\) Panth. O, Saint! Follow (lit. recite) the truth shown by him. Do not count the garland-beads. Keep control over your tongue. Do not taste the pleasures (lit. rice) of the world. Do not serve any other (than God). There is no god equal to the Satgur.

26a. Recite\(^2\) God ('s name), do not keep fast. Keep to the company of saints. He has not laid down any of these practices. Do not watch a nautch or take part in it. Let white be (your) woven cloth. Such does the wise saint wear. Those who are instructed by the Satgur. Nothing in this world can trouble them. He does not need any other thing

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1. The word used is kasab (pers. kash), profession.
2. Pero, probably from varan: to choose. Platts, 1189.
to perform, who is devoted to the Lord. Do not go to see any magic or be deceived by it; worship the One everyday. Let man hold fast to the teaching: Abandon untruth, and hold fast to Truth. Let him concentrate on One name only; worldly desires will not come unto him. Know only One name, which is spread all over this world. What one can not get out of pilgrimage or fasting, he gets who takes shelter on His name. Do not look to following the other’s asceticism (jög). Suppress yourself (āpā) and ..... (unclear). 1

31a. Do not put the tika-mark (on any one) ... 2 Do not utter abuse; and worldly life .... Do not watch any nautch, nor throw any colour, do not eat betel-leaf nor do any thing of this kind.

35a. Bachankë that is Prose.
First God was by himself; then he created His disciple.

36a. And do not snatch away the property of others, and do not discriminate, and do not beg anything of anyone. Do not accept gifts or charity. Do not be envious of enjoyment of good things by others.

37b. A woman should marry only once and should have one husband (Purakh) 3 only.

1. The text reads: जोग: गीता.
2. Here words अपा are not very clear.
3. In the Glossary to the Manuscript, the word Purakh is said to stand for God, but here seems to be used for husband.
38a. ... Do not concourse with an oppressive rājā, the rich, the dishonest and the lying. Do not go to their marriages, or sit with them of your own will. Be with the saints (Sādhan).

39a. The saint should not take any one else's money, whether given as gift or charity or respectful offering or reward. His clothes should not be coloured, whether on occasions of happiness or in the mourning. Do not play any musical instruments at marriage or on birth of child (bālak nahēna) or in thīk bi kōl (pakōi?). Do not play any vocal instrument of leather or of wood or of bone or of skin of fruit. Do not clap with hands or play chakai. Do not play on any other musical instrument or fire crackers in any marriage celebrations.

39b. Let not the mōr and bracelet be worn by the boy or the girl (on marriage). Do not have them wear garland and

1. The word is शादी, apparently a corruption of shādī, marriage.

2. The word is not clear. However, it might be from mānḥā: child and the reference is possibly to the birth of child.


tārh (?)¹ and bridegroom's turban (sahra), nor go round (the fire), neither the boy nor the girl. Do not put antimony (sūrmā) and lamp-black (kājāl) in the eye except medicinally (lit. without any illness). The saint in whatever they do should not either marry or have anything to do with a married woman (suhārag).² On the occasion of marriage or occasion of happiness or in any celebration do not have the nautch. On any occasion of mourning (death), do not cry, or shave your head and beard. Do not burn the dead or should go on pilgrimage (Gavā-karnā)³ or make mourning donations (pind-bharna)⁴, or other gifts. Do not eat betel-leaf or smoke tobacco, nor smoke the hookah, nor take opium, nor drink wine, nor eat or drink any intoxicant, nor drink nor eat eatables having bad smell. The most just (nyāva)⁵ way is that of the greater. You should be generous to all, and oppress and harm none. The following are very bad offences: First, to kill an innocent person either for money or out of cruelty; to occupy someone else's dwelling place, even for one day;
to eat meat; to loot or steal any one else's good (māl); to beg; to talk rubbish (baknā) like the ordinary people (lit. world) to any one, whether man, cattle or birds or anything whatever. Such a person (who commits the above deeds) will be expelled from the panth for life. So long as he lives, any new judgement (nauyar?) on that man is prohibited. The saint should avoid the company of such persons.

40a. ... And if one beats by hand or by foot or by wood or by any other means any member of the panth, he should not (be allowed to) join (lit. bow to) (the community) without the counsel of the member of the community.¹

If both fight (with each other) so as to be enemies outside (the circle of) amity, then a senior saint should be entrusted with judging about them. Whatever the judge considers to be proper, should be acted upon. Whoever has inflicted injury by wood or by hand should be deprived of benefits (be-pāwati)² (from the sect) for twelve years; if one does it then one, and if both have done it, then both of them.

¹ Bina lag ware. The lit. meaning of lag is affinity. (Platts, 946).

² Without gain (be = without, pāwati = gain). Cf. Platts, 201, 222.
40b. Do not enter into money (arrangements) with any one unless in accordance with (the rules of) the Panth; do not inflict oppression upon any one (especially) the poor; and do not act treacherously, and do not take a petition or appeal to any man or call for his help. Do not praise anyone in the same terms as the Creator Lord. Do not glorify any man in the same manner as the Lord. Do not be afraid of if any one threatens you with magic, nor believe in it (magic) nor practise it. Magic can not harm us. It is nothing; nor does anything by magic ... whatever the Lord wishes, happens.

44a. Wear white clothes. No one should keep beard; but women should keep hair. The saint should not wear (good) clothes and jewellery. He should love him whose heart loves the saint (?). Do not see any public spectacle whatsoever, or see any dance, or apply henna or hear music, unless it contains praise of the Lord and teaching, and not criticism (mukari) of the path of the Panth. Do whatever you want to do. Only do not do that work which gives pain to the world or man. Do not drink any

1. The word is tanka, copper-coin, money.
2. The text is not very clear here. The text reads as follows: का के के हे हे हे नाई पी सादे लोन सो 99 पाणी
3. Probably from mukarnā: to go back upon one's word.
Intoxicant. Do not so act that anyone is harmed. Do not become a servant of him who wishes you to do whatever improper thing he wants, such as committing theft or treachery, acting false witness, looting or harming the poor, and make you do things not in conformity with the Panth. Do not remain in his service. Do not treat with an unjust rāja, or rich man, or a dishonest person. Do not accept any gifts whatsoever from such people or from rājas. And the secret of the Lord can not be known without His grace. And the Lord knows every secret of everyone, and there is one Lord (for all of us).

All those have tied their devotion to God\(^1\), their guide is Kabirdas.

GLOSSARY

51a. The name of this book.

52b. "Bihin\(^2\) Gyān Bānī"

Samvat 1714, one thousand seven hundred and fourteen, Baisakh suddi dwādashi, Friday, Shukarwār, is the date of the beginning of this sect (mażhab).

Fagat, Abigat, Āp, Purakh, Jōgī, Kartā, Mālik,
Sarjanhār, Gorakhī - the meaning of all these words is God (Allāh). The word ḥukmī is the order (ḥukm) of Satgur-

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1. The word used is Abigat (God). See the Glossary of the Manuscript.

2. From bih (Pers.), meaning 'best, most excellent'. platts, 201.
Bābājī. The (words) āwāz, shabd, betā, chelā, all these mean the Word of God. Sādh, Nar, Satd(h)ārī, Pundhārī, all these (words) mean a slave and obedient servant (of God). Allāhgyān means to know who is the Lord. Panth, pad, mārg mean the way. Sumārān, āhyān, astut mean rememberance of God. Rasnā mean tongue Jahvā (?) Kēvā, Sarīr, badan, tan, sarīr-pind mean the body. Prāṇī-bolnā (?) means the spirit (rūḥ) of the devotee. Sevā means service.

- Bhāwanīdās Sādh Satnāmī.

2. The Sikhs:

Another uprising which posed great threat to Mughal administration in sūba Delhi was that of the Sikhs.

The history of relations between the Sikhs and the Mughal authorities has so often been told that a brief recapitulation is all that is necessary. Akbar is said to have granted the site of Amritsar to Gurū Amar Dās's daughter Bībī Bhānī. Here the city was then founded by Gurū Rāmdās.

1. Since W. Irwin (Later Mughals, ed. Jadunath Sarkar, Vol. I, Calcutta) has given detail account of the revolt I have mainly confined my discussion to the nature of the revolt.

But after Akbar's death, Guru Arjan blessed Prince Khusrau as he fleeing from his father's armies. Jahangir tells us that he thereupon sentenced Guru Arjan to death. Later on Jahangir employed Har Govind but he was also kept a prisoner for twelve years in the Gwalior jail. During the war of succession among Shâhjahân's sons, Gurû Har Râi is said to have blessed Dârâ Shukoh. After Dârâ Shukoh's defeat Aurangzeb called the Gurû to the court to explain his action. The Gurû sent his son Râm Râi but the latter defected to the Mughal side. Râm Râi's action led the Gurû to disinherit him.

In 1675 Aurangzeb executed Gurû Tegh Bahâdur at Delhi. It was during his successor Gurû Govind Singh's time that armed conflicts broke out with the Mughals. There were several Mughal-Sikh encounters near Sirmûr and Nahân. One such clash also occurred at Sirhind. During this encounter

1. Tuzuk, 35; Dabistân-i Mazâhib, Nawal Kishore, Kanpur, 1904, p. 234.
Wazir Khan, faujdār of Sirhind captured Guru Govind's mother Gujari and two sons Fath Shah and Zorawar Singh. At the instigation of Sāj Ānand they were put to death.

After Aurangzeb's death Guru Govind Singh accepted a mansab from Bahadur Shāh. He was assassinated in at Nānder in 1708. Upon his death, his disciple Fath Shāh or Banda assumed leadership of the Sikhs. Coming to the north, he rallied armed followers and started from Kharkhauḍa. Within the Delhi sūba, sarkārs of Sirhind and Sahāranpūr and the Sirmūr territory were the main centres of Banda's activities.

After Kharkhauḍa, the next target of Banda's attack was Sonepat. After a military success at Sonepat, Banda Bahadur attacked Sirhind to punish Wazir Khān, faujdār of Sirhind who was responsible for the murder of Govind Singh's sons. He also plundered Sadhaura. Wazir Khān was killed

1. Ibid, 28b, 30b.
2. Ibid., 29a-b.; Khāfī Khān, II, 652.
4. Ibid., 388-389.
5. 'Ibratnāma, 29b-30-ab.
and all power seized by the Sikhs. Bar Singh, a man of low-
birth (belonging to pargana Haibatpūr, sūba Punjab) was
appointed "sūbedār" of Sirhind by Banda. Banda's forces
also plundered and occupied Sunam, Samana, Ludhiana, Sadhaura,
Mukhliśpūr etc.

After occupying sarkār Sirhind Banda crossed the
Sutlej into the Bait-Jalandhar Doāb.

The Sikhs also attacked Sahāranpūr. Almost half of
Sahāranpūr came under their control. The faujdar of
Sahāranpūr Ālī Hamid Khān fled to Delhi. Bahādur Shāh sent a
strong force under Khān Darān, sūbedār of Oudh, Muḥammad
Aмир Khān, faujdar of Moradabad, Khān Jahān, sūbedār of
Allahabad and Saiyyid ʿAbdullāh Khān Bārīa, along with Asad
Khān, sūbedār of Delhi. Though the Mughals made great effort
to press on towards Sadhaura, Banda Bahādur was able to escape
in disguise.

1. Khāfī Khān, II, 652 et passim; 'Ibratnāma, 30a-31a;
Muḥammad Ḥādī Kāmwār Khān, Taṣkīrat-ūs Salāṭīn-ī Chaghtā,
ed. Muzaffar Alam, Bombay, 1980, pp. 93 et passim. Warīd,
389 et. passim.
2. 'Ibratnāma, 31a.
3. Ibid., 31a-b.
4. Ibid., 31b; Khāfī Khān, II, 657-660.
6. Ibid., 669 et passim.
During Farrukh Siyār's reign the final clashes occurred with Bandā. He was captured in 1715 and executed in 1716.

To analyse the nature of the Sikh movement, certain questions arise: Was the movement mainly supported by peasants? Had the zamīndārs any role to play? and what was the caste-composition of Bandā's supporters?

The followers of Bandā were said to be mainly Jāts and Khatris. They belonged to agricultural and mercantile classes respectively. Gurū Nānak himself was a Khatri. We also encounter references to merchants' supporting the rebels. In 1710, during the Mughal siege of Lohgarh, traders of the Imperial army surreptitiously maintained supplies to the fort. Moreover, Gulābo Khatri, a tobacco-seller, who resembled Banda helped him to escape from the fort. But the leadership of the Sikhs had long been passing gradually into the hands of the Jāts, although the Gurūs were Khatris. The

1. Ibid., 761 et passim. English Factors also record the capture of Bandā Bahādur by 'Abdus-Ṣamad Khān. See Ganda Singh (ed.) Early European Accounts of the Sikhs, Reprint, Calcutta, 1962, p. 52.
3. Ibid., 642-73.
4. Ibid., 673.
Dabistān-i Mazāhib tells us that most of the masnads (agents appointed to collect the gifts) of the Gurūs were Jāts; thus the Khatriās were in away made subservient to the Jāts. The Khatriā's meek submission to the Imperial order to shave-off their beards might also have caused some dissen-
tions. Part of the Khatriā disenchantment with the Sikh uprising might have been because it severely affected the mercantile interests. In Sirhind, Jalālābād and neighbouring areas of Delhi merchants were the main losers. By Jahāndār Shāh's reign the Mughals started befriending the Khatriās by giving them lucrative offices. Sabhā Chand, a munshī became diwan-i khāliṣa.

The Sikh movement, however, retained support among the lower classes. There is little explicit reference, it is true, to low-class grievances in Sikh literature. The manifesto of Gurū Govind Singh did not refer to the sufferings of the peasants. However, during later years, especially under Banda, the Sikh uprising does seem to have drawn strength from the oppression of the peasants by the Mughal officials. Banda's

1. Dabistān-i Mazāhib, 233.
3. Ibid., 655-56.
5. Cf. Prof. Irfān Habib, Forms of Class Struggle in Mughal India, IHC, Bombay Session, 1980(Cyclostyled copy), p.32.
supporters were consisted of scavangers, leather dressers and other low-born. Wärid says that a sweeper could, as a Sikh, share food with a rāja of high status. Bar Singh whom¹ Banda appointed sūbedār of Sirhind was also a low-born person.²

Banda enjoyed considerable support among some of the zamīndārs in the Punjab region. The zamīndārs of Sahāranpūr, Sirhind and Ropar gave help to the Mughals against Banda.

Muzaffar Alam says that Banda predominantly got the support of Jāt zamīndārs. However, this does not seem to be correct in case of Delhi sūba. Banda's revolt was mainly confined to Saharanpur and Sirhind sarkārs where Jāts had only secondary importance. In the sarkār of Saharanpur out of 33 parganas only 7 returned Jāt zamīndāris in the statistics of the Ā'īn. Pargana Sahāranpūr, which was the main target of the rebels did not have any Jāt. zamīndāri. Sarkār Sirhind returned Jāt zamīndārī in 15 parganas out of 33 but these Jāt zamīndāris were mainly in the parganas —

2. 'Ibratnāma, 31a.
4. Ibid., 510-511.
5. Ibid., 512.
Ghuram, Massigan, Habri, Pail, Chirak etc. — where the impact of the uprising was less severe. The main centres Sirhind, Ropar, Sadhuara, Mustafabad, Shahnabad and Sultanpur did not have Jat zamindaris. Only Samana, Thanesar and Khizrabad had Jat zamindari and they also saw severe clashes between Banda and the Mughal forces. In Delhi sarkar some of the localities affected by the uprising had Jat zamindaris, such as Kharkhauda — the place from where the uprising started — and Sonepat. However, in this sarkar, its western parts which was stronghold of Jats were not affected by Banda's activities. Similarly, sarkar Hissar Firuza where Jats were returned as zamindars in 19 out of 27 parganas remained unaffected.

1. A'in, I, 518-529; for further details see Chapter 6 on zamindars.

2. Muzaffar Alam says that the column zamindar in the A'in's statistics denotes just 'intermediary (khidmatqazir) and big zamindars alone' (Muzaffar Alam, 512). On the basis of this he hypothesizes that 'the large number of small unidentified zamindars were largely Jats who settled in the region for the last 3-4 centuries (Ibid.). However, the A'in has used the words bumi and zamindars which do not distinguish between small, intermediary or big zamindars. (For further details also see Irfan Habib, 'Forms of .......', IHC, 1980, p. 35 fn.1).