CHAPTER VIII

POETIC STYLE, METRE, IMAGERY AND MUSIC IN GARIB DAS

Medieval Saints expressed themselves through such poetry which was at once popular and literary in style and expression. Kabir, Nanak, Namdev set the style and tradition of writing devotional songs in a certain pattern and style which is closely followed by Garib Das.

While Garib Das has imitated his predecessors in style he shows great flow and abundance in his output. He takes up a theme and in a smooth running style writes on it to the point of exhausting it. While all medieval poets and Saints were fond of repetition, Garib Das surpasses them all in repetition of an idea or a theme.

In the opinion of Dr. Mohan Singh, Garib Das founder of the Garib Desi sect of Dadu Panthis, may be considered as the last of the Hindu Raja Yogis and Bhakta poets who had a great mastery of popular poetic language and style as Ghulam Farid had, but whose range of thought and whose knowledge of other Indian languages was greater than any other Indian poet of medieval India, the only poet who comes near to him being Shah Qayam Din Chisti of Kari Geon in Bombay, a descendant of Babe Farid and successor to his Gaddi in the 16th century."

Accepting openly the influences of all great figures before and also the influence of contemporary folk literature, Garib Das made his poetry simple, forceful and appealing to the masses and the religious devotees. Their aim was not to produce artistic poetry but to write appealing songs which could bring moral and spiritual awakening. There is an amalgamation of languages and thoughts to bring them closer to each other and break down linguistic and

1. An Introduction to Punjabi Literature by Dr. Mohan Singh p 152
religious barriers. Thus Garib Das achieves a variety of poetic expressions rarely seen in the common run of poets of the time. Garib Das like other saint-poets of his time was not a man of learning but a man of wide experience and religious knowledge. Prosody in almost all medieval Indian poetry in north India was based mainly on Sanskrit prosody called Pingala Chhanda Shastras attributed to the Sage Pingala, which consists of Sutras distributed over eight books. The Agni Purana also gives a complete system of prosody founded apparently on Pingalas' prosody. Ever since then several treatises have been composed. A stanza (a padya) is a combination various pades which are regulated either by the number of syllables (akhar) or by the number of syllabic instants in each line. A syllable is as much of word as can be pronounced stonce, that is a vowel with or without one or more consonents. A syllable is laghu (short) or guru (long), according to its vowel - long or short. A short vowel becomes long when it is followed by an anusvara or a visarga. The last syllable of a pada is either long or short according to the exigence of the metre, whatever be its natural length.

In metres regulated by the number of syllabic instants one instant or metra is allotted a short vowel, and two a long one. For the purpose of meaning metres regulated by the number of syllables, writers on prosody have devised right genes or syllabic feet, each consisting of three syllables, and distinguished from one another by particular syllables being short or long. Expressed in symbols, ( the symbol denoting a short syllable and a long one, the different genes may be represented as follows.

| Guru. | 5 |
| Lagu. | 1 |
| Magan. | S S S |
Garib Das' poems are mainly lyrical. Garib Das shows considerable knowledge of Indian prosody as he uses different types of metres in his poems. His diction is always apt in all his metres. The following are the examples of the metres used by Garib Das:

**Aril also called Adil**

Each Aril has four lines. There is one type of Aril which has 16 metres, each line ending either in bhagan or yagan. This type is rarely used by Garib Das. There is another type of four lines having 21 metres with a pause after 11-10 metres. It is also known as Chandrain. Out of the four lines of the verse the first rhymes with the second while the third rhymes with the fourth.

yah dunyā sansar, sarikat jēegī,
nisā bāse bin sa, jauē khaegī,
sacī bēt prēr na pūrē pēyā,  
dekho andh gavēr kahan dehkarē.

R.S. 245

There are Ariles with all the four lines rhyming with one another.
(R.S. 251, 252, 253).

**Dohas or Dohra (Slokas)**

Like Kabir's Bijak most of the Granth of Garib Das is in the form of couplets which are sometime called Slokas and sometime
Sakhīs, which Westcott describes as "rhyming couplets, bearing witness to the truth. The rhyme of many couplets is very fine, with the result that important teaching given in this form is easily remembered. In Sanskrit, a Sloka is not a verse form. It is only a "hymn of praise written in verse." A doha is a couplet in which the popular doha has 24 metres with viśrama at 13 and 11. Different writers vary the form of their dohas by changing the number of lagū, guru combinations of the doha.

Garib Das makes the dohas which are also called Sakhīs the chief vehicle of his thoughts. We give below examples of the various forms of dohas composed by him. It should be noted that while counting the metres, the word Garib, occurring in the beginning of the first line of the couplet should not be counted in the syllabic instants. The following are the main types of dohas found in Garib Das.

**Doha of 25 matras, viśrama at 14 * 11**

(Garib) aisē abigat Rām hai agam agocar mūr,  
sunyā, āneñī ādī hai sakal lok bharpūr  
R.S. 11

**Dohrā with 23 matras, viśrama at 13 * 10**

(Garib) tīn lok takhat kīāi, kich rahī na bēkī  
abāl bālī vāryām hai caṇḍ sūraj sēkhi.  
R.S. 97

**Dohrā with 25 matras, viśrama at 11 * 14**

(Garib) kahān kahūm jagdīs, sakal janras binānī  
duryodhan ku kumet dai durbasā bānī.  
R.S. p 104

**Dohrā with 22 matras, with viśrama at 10 * 12**

(Garib) sat darsān sahī bekh, hot grahi ghar bessī
Dohre with 25 mæstras, visræm at 13 + 12. The word Garib does not occur in the beginning.

je tare upje nahi, to sabad sakh sun leh,
sakhī bhūt sangīt hain, jāge lavo nagh.

Rekhtās: is not a form of poetry. According to Kahan Singh, the Persian writers considered the Praksrit poems Rekhtas. Later on a verse having a mixture of Hindi and Persian words came to be known as Rekhtas. Giving the historical background of Rekhtas, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee says: "Hindustani speakers from North India took the lesson from the Deccan Muslims and followed their example from the end of the 17th Century in striving consciously to write literature in Persianised Delhi Hindusthani, the "speech of the exalted court," which they, too, began to write in the Persian character, Wali is the first known poet of Delhi Hindusthani in the Persianised form; and he had lived in the South. The language as yet was not so much Persianised as in later times: Persian words were comparatively few, being just scattered (rexta) in the line, and hence the language was called 'Rekhta', the earliest form of the present day Urdu Hindusthani poetical speech. Some of Kabir's verses composed in the 15th century, nay, even those of Baba Farid, 12th - 13th centuries, may be described as Rekhta; and Baba Farid merits the sobriquet of Baba-i-Rexta or the Father of the Rekhta speech more than Wali. Among the Muhammedans of North India, the Rekhta speech of Wali and others met a real want, and in no time it became popular. An Urdu form of Hindustani as a literary language thus took rise, and when Wali settled in Delhi about 122, a school of Urdu
being. Mehmood Sherani calls Rekhta a simple verse easily understandable in which there is a mixture of Persian and Hindi.

Music.

So poetry-called Rekhta—is what later on developed into Urdu poetry. At the earlier stages Rekhta was the type of poetry in which there was a free mixture of Persian with Hindi and Punjabi. The Rekhtas of Garib Das has a mixture of Punjabi, Hindi and Persian words. The following are a few examples:

Yoh gurmukhi gyan, bazar bavhar hai,
Satguran bina maha sindhu melaa,
Das Garib pusap gandh jhin hai
Sabad atit abfat akele.

G.G.S p 421

Fir Kabir duhun din darves hai
Allah allah abigat hai,
Adi ar ant madh satya Kabir hai
takhat khvas hasuri soi.

G.G.S. 423

beakal beruh bedin jainai nahi, sadhui ke mahal ka bati bhui
ghor mashan masjid madhi jai kar, maun pathar sahi prit puje

ibid p 423

kufar ke nifes par pair dhar calya hai
mit gai mani sabh dhabazi,
ars ki kunjme jee kalm padhya, rab ramjan cinya abazi.

G.G.S p 431

We find the following persian words in the above lines: abfat,

3. Indo Aryan and Hindi by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee p 189
akelā, pīr, darves, allāh, takhat, khvās, hazūrī, bekal, 
barūh, bedīn, kufar, nīfās, daghābāzī, kalmā, ramān.
The Punjabi words are gurmukhī, bāsār, satguran, soi, prit, rab, 
Other words are from western Hindi. Such a mixture of North 
Indian languages of Prakrit origin with Persian words is called 
a Rekhta. Garib Das has written over three hundred Rekhtas, 
Writing of the Rekhtas attained the height of popularity in the 
eighteenth century. There is such a blend of Persian and Arabic 
words with Indian Languages of Prakrit origin that they have 
become an inseparable part of Punjabi and Hindi upto this day. 
Tribhāngī Chand. This is an important Chand of the Riti kāvya 
poets Generally it consists of four lines of 32 matras each; 
each line having a visram at 8 + 8, 8 + 8, or 10+ 8+8+ 6 
all rhyming in the middle. Garib Da's Tribhāngi Chand is peculiar 
in construction. It has five lines, each of 9-12 matras ending 
with re. There are three middle rhymes in the first visram of 
every line. Sometimes there is a middle rhyme in fourth visram 
also.

njā sabad nā sujhe re, 
jādh jūnī lūjhāi re, 
jo pāhan pūje re, 
koī mehram būjh re, 
suh amrit sujhāi re.

G.G.S 317
Thus there are 60 matras in the chanda with visram at every 12 
matras. 
Swayyas Garib Das has made an extensive use of Swayyas. It has 
31 matras with visram at 16 + 15 ending with laghu. They do not 
genrally rhyme in the middle. It is a type of swayya which Garib 
Das calls Gand Uchāl Swayā. It resembles Bīr Swayās.
Here is a swayya of 32 matras with visram at 16 + 16.
auh bhakt hirambar nyārā hai Nāma se saṁt kare ratna,
athsath tīrath tīlkai tilmē, sabh dham bhayā kāshī patna,
Suja Sainā Bājid bidhe, Pīpa praban pachānyā hai,
auh lok alok gavan sailī, Raidās agampur jānyā hai.

Baint (Persian Bait). A Bait is persian name for a couplet which has a lyrical theme and a complete idea in the couplet. It is these Baits which later gave rise to couplets. In Punjabi literature Baints have been written in abundance by such prominent poets as Guru Gobind Singh, Vāras Shāh, and Hāfiz. Vāris Shāh writes baits of 40 matras with visrām at 20 + 20. Hāfiz writes baits of 28 matras with visrām at 16 + 12.

Garib Das has written Baints of 28 matras with visrām at 16 + 12:
mādar pidar hai saṁg terai, bichartā nahi pālk ve,
Kayām kāla kurbān jāi, khalak basai khalak ve.

There are also Baints of 26 matras with visrām at 14 + 12 matras:
ajar maina ajar bainā ajar, ajar māla tilak ve,
ek ajrī kahan gāvai, ajar hai sabh mulk ve.

Garib Das has given the heading Parsi Bait to his Baints. It does not mean that he has written them in Persian but it probably means that the Baint of the Persian prosody. There is of course
considerable use of words of Persian origin which had been absorbed in the common use of North Indian languages.

Jhulna is a type of Chand which is of many types. One type resembles Swayyaz and is known as Manidhar Jhulna. It is considered as a metric chand by some and as a gas chand by others. The gan Chand generally has four lines with 8 yagan or 7 sagan and 1 yagan. The metric Chand has 37 matras with visram as follows: 10 + 10 + 10 + 7 + 37 matras. Gārīb Dās (Jhulna, has 40 matras in a line with visram on 20 + 20. There is slight variation found in some Jhulnas which is due more to the error caused by the scribes and editors. The following is an example of Jhulna with 40 matras.

ars kurs ke bagh mai kaun mali,
jahān-nur jahur ke kānd hain ji,
kahe Dās Gārīb sambhāl bhaiyā
dekho cakhte nahi jo anch hain ji.

G.G.S p 437

Jhumkra is a form of poem in which the word Jhumkarā occurs again and again. It is probably a dance song, sung in tune with a dance. It resembles folk songs in its form and pattern:

bin kar bāje baj hi rāi jhumkara,
bin mukh rāg suono rāi jhumkara,
man ka mastak mundiāi rāi jhumkara
bin dehi bairāg suono rāi jhumkara.

G.G.S p 467

Ramaini: Ramaini according to some is a type of Chand. According to others it is conventional religious poetry, like padāvī and Sābd. Each line of Ramainī has 32 matras, with a visram on 16 + 16 in pañcan mil kineh bandhana
samjhen nahi jīv divāna,
in pañcan mil jīv atkae
Besides poetry in Chandas, Garih Das, wrote conventional forms of poems and compositions of which the following are the chief:

1. Sabad or Sabadi

Explaining the term Sabad Westcott, writes: In the writings of Kabir three thoughts seem to underlie such teachings: (1) All thought is expressed in language (2) Every letter of the alphabet, as a constituent part of language has significance, and (3) The plurality of letters and words now in use will appear as one, when the Maya that deludes men in their present conditions shall have been overcome. The two lettered Ram seems to Kabir the nearest approach in this world to the unity of Truth or the letterless one. A distinguished Sanskrit scholar explained to me the Hindu conception of Shabda, somewhat in this way. Man desires knowledge. Knowledge is obtainable by means of (1) Perception and (2) Inference. These two channels are acknowledged by all and to them are added by some (3) Shabda, sound (including the voice of the teacher) and (4) uparnam or reasoning by analogy.

The term Sabad or its diminutive Sabadi in the religious literature of the time simply means the word of God. A hymn of praise to God began to be called a Shabad. But more particularly those hymns that glorified the Name of God are called Sabad.
Garib Das' Sabad deal mostly with the plane of higher consciousness such as surti mārti, anahad sabadi:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jåhan båje anåhad nåd,} \\
\text{jåhan dhyån dhåre koï sådh,} \\
\text{lågyå gågan måndal mài dörå,} \\
\text{jåhan åcåi hams mórå,} \\
\text{dekhå gågan måndal mài jyoåti,} \\
\text{jåhan barsåi månåk mótå.}
\end{align*}
\]

G.G.S. p 672

Padavali (Pad Hansāvali): A pada is a Song. The padavali of Vidyapati, Chandidas and other Vaishnav poets are well known. From these padavalis emerged many types of Songs known as Vishnu pada or Vikham pada. In Garib Das we find Pad Hansavali. According to Dr. Charan Singh when a padavali has no particular name attached to it is called a Sabad.

\[
\begin{align*}
dam då nahl bhoså ve, ab tåså kår calne då sùl bår\hspace{1cm} \\
måe puråå saåå satå jårat håi parå bhåram kî dåul \\
pìth månakå dåkh lådí håi kårå håt bamsål \\
mådå måndår båg bågååå rehså dål nå sùl \\
zindå puråå acåål abinaåå bînå pìnd asthåul \\
Wåinå ååå jhåku jhåku åvåi råten åmolå phål \hspace{1cm} \\
Garibåås yohå alåål dhyån håi surti hindåå bhåul.
\end{align*}
\]

R.S. P 385

Nasihatnamāi: Nasihatnama is another conventional composition. We have a Nasihatnama attributed to Guru Nanak but not accepted by the compiler of Adi Granth as authentic. Nasihatnama is a kind of instruction to the disciple. Nasihatnamas were written mainly by Sufi poets. Garib Das also writes his Nasihatnama in the language of the Sufis and calls it Baint Farsi.
Arati: Arati is a devotional song sung with lamp and dance before the idol. It could be tuned to various Ragas. In one or two places Garib Das calls Arati a Raga. The heading of the chapter is given as Arati. This appears to be an error of the copyists and the compiler. The Nirguna School of Bhakti poets did not believe in idol worship, but they composed the Aratis in praise of the Infinite God. We have the Arati of Guru Nanak which he sang at Jagannath Puri. We have the following Aratis of Garib Das:

- Shiv ki Arati .......... G.G.S p 342
- Anna dev ki Arati Badi G.G.S p 343
- Adi Maya ki Arati G.G.S p 346
- Sandhya Arati R.S. p 379

The above headings show that the word Arati means the Song with lamps sung in praise of God. The word Sandhya Arati makes it clear still further because Arati is generally sung along with evening prayers.

Nur ki arati nur ke chajain, nur ke tal pakhavaj bajai
Nur ke gayan nur ki gavain jaur sumte bahur na avai,
Nur ki bani bolai nur, jhil mil nur rehye bharpur,
Nur Kabira nur hi bhavai, nur ke kehai para pad pavan.

R.S. 278

apai aratii apai sajai, apai kinger apai bajai,
apital jhanj jhanjra, apineca ap dekhanb pregnancy,
The above quoted passages from the Arati show that music and dance is associated with the Arati worship. Instead of worshipping the idol Garib Das worships the Nur (Light). In tune with the song there is the dance of nature (apai nace) and the jingling sound of the dance "tal jhanjh jhankāra). Arati is associated with the self merging within the Over-self (ape mādhai ap samaun).

Mūl Mantra and Gayatri: In Hindu theology the Mūl Mantra and the Gayatri form the core of formal religion. The Mūl Mantra differs from one Hindu sect to another while the Gayatri is the same. In the Adi Granth the Introductory Sloka is called the Mūl Mantra; Garib Das gives his own Mūl mantra and Surya Gayatri. Both are much longer than Mūl mantra and Gayatri are. Both are devotional Songs of the one supreme God. The following are the first two verses of Mūl Mantra:

Nirāñjan, niranjān, niranjana nīrākār bhaj re,
tātā nā mīrā, rātā nā pīrā, dhāro dhīyān dhīrā rehyā
adolaṁ, abolaṁ achedāṁ abhedāṁ, pare se pare re kaho kaun ārē,
agāṁ athāṁ darya, gayā tū bijār re.

It is the praise of God as Nirañjan (Spotless) Nirākār (unmanifest, Steadfast, Immovable, Infinite and Supreme. This Mūl Mantra is not in praise of any God or deity. The Surya Gayatri is written in the same strain:

ugmāṁt surāṁ, barsat nūram
bajant tūraṁ, sakal loṅk bharpūram kal kantak durām.
The Original Gayatri is an invocation to Savtri and Light. Garth Das' Gayatri is an Invocation to the supreme Sun, the Almighty God. He is the Light, the giver of Mukti and the Bestower of spiritual powers.

*Bhakta Mal.* The famous biographies of Bhaktas are known as Bhaktamal. Garth Das has written his own Bhaktamal which has great historical importance. The Bhaktas have been treated with great reverence and respect. Garth Das has discussed the important life stories of almost all the well known Saints of the period. He has also written about the Muslim Sufi Saints. He has given more space in his Bhaktamal to the life of his Guru, Bhakta Kabir. He gives a vivid portrayal of the life of Kabir and others in a dramatic way. This portion of his poetry reflects his ability to write epic and dramatic. He brings in action and dialogue within the poetry without any distraction. His flow of the narrative is as natural spontaneous and impressive as the poetry of Tulsi Das' Ramayana.

_Nāma kahe suno mātā pitaē,_
_Hari biṭhāla dūdh pīā ju dhāe,_
_mātā pītā dekhan Nāma kā neh,_
_Hari biṭhāla dūdh kaise pīāi,_
_dūdh katorā liyā mātā ju hath,_
Goshtis. Debates and discussions between the heads of the great religious movements was the order of the day. The winner of the debate generally won over the opponent and his disciple to his creed. Many Saints recorded their historical Goshtis. But the followers of many Saints started writing imaginary Goshtis about their Masters. We have many Goshtis written about Gorakh but most of them are legendry. We have a number of Goshtis attributed to Kabir and Kamal but they all appear to be of later day and not written by Kabir. We have the Sidh Gosht of Guru Nanak in the Adi Granth which is considered by scholars to be historical. Garib Das has written three Goshtis (1) Ramanand and Kabir ki Gosht (2) Kabir te Sikandar di Goshta (3) Vaishna Dharam Das and Kabir ki Gosht.

These Goshtis are based on some historical informations which Garib Das had with him. But the historical information is always made legendry by including supernatural events.

Goshti Ramanand sain, Kashi nagar majhar
Garib Das jind pir kai ham pae didar.

G.G.S p 203

Similarly the dialogue between the Emperor Sikander Lodhi and
Kabir when on the report of the Qazis he was persecuted is recorded.
In the Goshta between Kabir and Dharam Das, Kabir tries to prove that Rama and Krishna were not God as the Vaishnava believe.
In the creation of God there are many Ramas and Krishnas:

Dharam Das: sun jinde ram gyan ku Vaishnav rup hamar,
ath saath tirath ham kie, cinya sirjanhar,
Kabir: bole jinda baia, kahaan se salag aae,
ko athsath ka dhama, mujhe tatkal batae,
Ram Krishan kahan rahain, narg aur kaan kahavai
suneh suneh nahi bat, ghat pathar ke swami,
kaahe bharma dharam das, cinea nij pad nekami,
avat jat nah koe alakh abinashi saain,
rehat sakal sareang, bol hai mujh tujh mahin
bolat ghat ghat brahm dharam adi nahi jana
cidanaand ko cinaai, dar pathar pasana,
Ram Krishan koteo gae, dhani ek ka ek
jind kahai Dharam Das saain, bujhai gyan bibak.

Puranic Composition: Just as Goshtis became conventional compositions imitation puranas under various names also became conventional compositions. These Puranas had nothing to do with the Classical Puranas. Their theme is purely based on Nirgun school of thought. Garib Das has written three such compositions (1) Adi Purana (2) Ganesh Purana (3) Karam kand mokh purana. Adi Purana has been written in excellent dohas and Chaupais. The theme is the Origin of Creation, a theme common to the classical Puranas. But here God and creation are described in a different way.

doha: Garib namo namo satpurus ku namaskar gur kinh,

G.G.S p 220
sur nar mun jan sādhvē, santoṁ sarbas dīnhī.

Chaupai: Oṁkār bij upatī,
upjai Brāhma satkei nātī
dañda kemandal Brāhma lyse,
jug chātis kemal bharme.

G.G.S. p 271.

The Chaupai has four lines, 16 matras visram 8 + 8. There are some chaupais of 15 matras also with visram 7 + 8 matras. The doha is of 25 matras with visram at 13 + 12 matras.

Ganesh Puran is also written in chaupais, Sakhīs and Ramānīs.

The theme resembles that of Ādī Purāṇa.

Paraṁ saktī saṅgītām,
ridhi sidhi datā soī,
abigati guneh etītām
Setya puruśa mirmohī

G.G.S p 300

Keram Kañḍa Mukh Purāṇ is remarkable for its variety of metrical system. Here the poet follows the tradition of the Riti Kavya poetry of Braj poetry and his language is also close to Braj. We find ekachari Chand also known as Shashi Chand and also ardha Bhuyān Prayat Chanda.

ekachari Chand:
setguraṁ,
sisvaram;
parsaram
kaśaram.

G.G.S p 306

ardh Bhuyān Prayat Chaṇḍa
trisul melām.
agar kholām.
Bodha is another conventional composition which may be called poetic exposition of various themes. The following compositions of this type are attributed to Kabir: Bhopal Bodh, Garur Bodh, Madsod Bodh, Musa Bodh, Santokh Bodh, Sikander Bodh. Garib Das has written the following compositions of this type: Biles Bodh, Sukhsager Bodh, Vigyan Bihangam Bodh, Hirambar Bodh, Muhammad Bodh, Kafir Bodh.

Biles Bodh is a criticism of the life of pleasures. Even the pleasures of heaven are depreciated. Pleasures always lead to pain. Examples are given from history and mythology. The poetry of Biles Bodh is quite romantic. The pleasures of Indra loka and other godly mansions are described as futile. The rhymes are disorderly. In some places poetry runs like prose poems of today:

\[ \text{tab Indra an kar Markande Gussain ke carno par paye,} \]
\[ \text{calo baad nivaj Inderpuri, lijai,} \]
\[ \text{Markande Gussain bole re re Inder tu kyeh kahain hai,} \]
\[ \text{re re Inder hamare Inderpuri kis kham ki hai,} \]
\[ \text{hamei nah ichhah hai. G.G.S. P.385} \]

This poetry is like the earliest prose which emerged from poetry. The subject matter and poetry of Vigyan bihangam bodh is slightly different, but it resembles that of Hirember bodh. The whole poetry of these portions is in Chaupais and the theme is the Name and meditation of God.

\[ \text{pakam pak hai nij nam} \]
\[ \text{nirgun satya niralambh kham} \]
Sāhib setya subhānem mūr
jel thal mai sakal bharpūr.

G.G.S. 364

Muhammed Bodh and Kafir Bodh gives Garib Das' views about Islam and Kafir, addressing the Qazi, Garib Das says that "O Qazi you are neither Mullā nor Qazi. You are false traders.

Qazi kaun kateb tumhari
na tu Qazi na tu mulā
Jathā hai biopari.

G.G.S. 386

A kafir according to the Koran is a heretic, an idolator, and a disbeliever in God. During the period of Garib Das, orthodox and fanatical Muslims used this word for all Hindus. But Garib Das gives a more ethical definition of Kafir:

Vai kafir jo bad bad bolsi,
kafir kaho ghat jo tosi,
Vai kafir rin hatyā rakhai,
vai kafir pardērē tākai.

G.G.S 387

He who talks too much, weighs less, does not return debt and looks on other women with an evil eye. The poetry of this portion is extremely simple in which every line tries to give a definition of kafir which included all evil minded people, both Hindus and Muslims.

Sukhmani Sampat This composition appears to have been inspired by Guru Arjan's sampat. The poetry is in Ghekala Chand. In poetic form it resembles the Solhe of Adi Granth. It has four lines, 63 matras, visram at 16 + 16 + 10 + 15. Sometimes the fourth visram is of 14 matras.

Hai cedhai gheḍ per bhāi,
Punjabi words are predominant in this composition.

Other conventional poems which Garib Das has written are Satvāra, Thithi, Stotras, Arjanaṃa.

In all his conventional poetry Garib Das has not strictly followed the principles or the rules of a particular composition. He has used them all as a means to give exposition of his thoughts which differed from the Hindus and Muslims of Orthodox type.

**Ragas in Garib Das**

"Raga has been defined by Matanga as a combination of notes, illustrated by melodic movements (Varnas), which is capable of producing pleasant sensations." The depth, height or compass of a Raga thus depends upon the discernment and depth of feeling of the artists and his capacity to select and arrange the notes in a mode that can evoke and hold a mood at its highest pitch. Since the introduction of the term Raga with this meaning, the underlying idea of the Raga has broadened till it has come to denote Murchana idealised." A Raga," says Gangoly in his Regas and Raganis "is generally mistranslated as a tone, air or key. It is in fact a peculiar conception, having no other parallel in any other system of music. Literally, a raga is something that colours or tinges the mind with some definite feeling, a wave of passion or emotion. In a special sense a Raga is a sonal composition of musical notes (svaras) having a sequence, form or structure of peculiar significance."

7. C. Gangoly: Regas and Raganis p 1
Garib Das has shown immense interest in the Ragas. With the exception of a small portion of his writings the major portion are strung to the Ragas. We find that Garib Das has written his poetry in the following Ragas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asavari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todij</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindolmi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gareng Bilaval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nat Prabhathig</th>
<th>Horig</th>
<th>Kehraig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bajig</td>
<td>Kafig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindhu</td>
<td>Binodg</td>
<td>Mangalg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheureg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marug</td>
<td>Malarg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prabhathig</td>
<td>Raimkolig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairevg</td>
<td>Nehpalg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaijeiwantig</td>
<td>Bhagdag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalyeng</td>
<td>Dipg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaudig</td>
<td>Malig Gaudig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ragas have had an interesting origin. Malkaus is said to have originated from the Malwas. It first came to be known as Malava Kasi and is now vulgarised into Malkaus. Similarly Rag Gujri has originated from the Gurjar tribe. Says Goswami "The present Raga Gujri owes its origin to Gujjar tribe, originally white Huns, who entered India near about 5th century. Certain regions, towns and villages also have contributed to embroider the fabric of Indian Music. Thus we find the Bangala, a melody referred to by Matanga, is derived from the region of Bengal or an Austro-Negroid tribe of the same name. So was the Sindhu contributed by the Sindhu

8. The Story of Indian Music by Goswami p 56
the modern Sindh, Sorath a vulgisation of Sareestri is a gift of Sareestra. Gaud is still prevalent from the Gauda desa, a part of Bengal as it was known then. So also Purvi, another of our current Ragas is the shortened form of Purvika Raga, emerging from the Eastern region. Kalyan Raga must have originated in the city of Kalyani where the western Chalukya dynasty ruled. O.C. Gangoly writing about the origin of the Ragas says: "Harava, and Bheirevi, (probably associated generally with Harava clans) became the medium of singing solemn hymns to Siva. Kedara (a name given to Siva), Sankrakshara (the ornament of Sankara), are apparently names given by devout Siva worshippers. Kanada came to be associated with the cult of Krishna (Kenara, the Hindi-prakrit form of Krishna). The more significant examples of melody associated with Vaishnav worship is Natta Narayana (the Dance of Siva).

Many Rages are of Non-Aryan Origin have been Sanskritised later on. The Dravidian vella-ulli became Velavali (Balawali). The Dravidian Tuddi became Todika, later Todi. "Asavari and Dhanasika (Dhanasari) are meaningless as Sanskrit terms, probably conceal within their modern forms, their original non-Aryan names."

Garib Das has written many Kafis. There is considerable controversy among Punjabi scholars whether Kafi is a Chanda or a Raga. Garib Das in Granth points out clearly that Kafi is a Raga.

9. ibid p 56
10. Rages and Reganis by O.C. Gangoly p. 72
11. ibid p 75
(or rather a Regani). The title of the hymns on page 653 is
"satha Rega Kafi." In the Guru Granth Kafi is associated as a
Regini with other Regas like Asa and Suhil:

äsā, ghar 6, Kafi Mohalla III Adi Granth p 255
Rāg āsā, ghar 8 ke Kafi Mohalla IV

Adi Granth p 369
Rāg āsā Kafi Mohalla I ghar 8 Ashtapaian
Adi Granth

The headlines in the Adi Granth indicate that Kafi is not a Chand
but is an associated Regini. "Kafi, as the word signifies,"
writes Goswami, "is not as Sanskrit word. All we know is that
Kafi is a type of composition sung in a particular way by the
Sufi poets of Sindh where it is still almost an institution." 12

Dr. S.S. Kohli in his Introduction to "Chonvian Kafias" suggests
that Kafi is derived from Kafis which means "intoxicating". All
compositions about the intoxication of Nam are Kafis. But as we
have already stated Garib Das pointedly calls it a Ragni.

Only those Saints mostly Sufis who were associated with the
literature and thought of Sindh have mostly written Kafis.

By the time of Garib Das Kafis had become very popular in north
India. Garib Das' Kafis have close resemblance with the Kafis of
Punjabi Sufi poets.

Many poets accepted one particular system of Regas indicated
by the Ragmala of their choice. Of the principal schools of Regas,
three are well known: Schools (mat) of Haruman, Siva and Bharata:
Garib Das does not appear to be particularly attached to any
school of Regas. He has made a free and wide choice of Regas from
various schools. Whether these songs can be sung in these Regas is

12. Goswami: The study of Music p 79
There is also no indication in Garib Das’ Granth showing the relation of the ragas and ragnis. Garib Das has not commented on any Ragas as the Gurus have done in the Guru Granth. It has to be admitted that the poetry of Garib Das is very musical. The lyrical strain of the songs dominates. Every poem, even when it is not classified under a Raga is written with the main object of being sung in Kirten. Great importance is given to Hari Kirten, which is considered as a means of salvation. Singing the glory of God as a means to attaining salvation is considered the highest Bhakti in the Nirgun Bhakti Movement.

Imagery and Pictorial qualities

Like all poets of high order the imagery and idea pictures drawn by Garib Das are remarkable: "What difference he says is there between a Pundit and parīku. Both of them are like outwardly different vessels of water in which the same moon is shining:

Ko Pundit kis kaho cundre ekai bolanhara

|jon matkioh mai jhilkae caadha hai sabi par pyaara,

G.G.S. p 653

He describes the mulla going up the minaret and giving the call, and points out that the real mosque is within mans:

masak jain mait pyaare

jain caadh mulan bang pukare.

G.G.S p 463

His flights of imagination, depth of thought are wonderful. He describes the spiritual experience through the imagery of heavenly brewery from which flows the wine of wisdom extracted from the flowers, and carried in surahi (pitcher) of the mind.
Garib Das' tendency is to describe the inner mystery of life in terms of outer objects and experiences. His images are homely, rural, and those found in everyday life of the village community.

**Nature in Garib Das' Poetry.** All medieval Saints of India were great lovers of nature. In nature and even the commonest creatures they saw the light of God. They valued not only the life of human beings but of the most insignificant animals. To them even a blade of grass was living and alive with the presence of God.

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aisē tatv basiya bhāi,
jāre māre tis kālān khāi,
kāder hai kudrat ke māhī
rab ruh kuch pedda nāhī
kāder kudrat me bassi, kudrat kāder māhī
Garib Das pāāan jal, nabak pujan jāī.
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G.G.S. p 454

The Creator lives in Nature, and Nature is a living part of the Creator. Instead of worshipping stones in the form of idols, or water in the form of tiratha, it is, according to Garib Das better to worship God in Nature and Nature in God.

Nature is described even in a romantic and poetic way as inspirer of nobler feelings. Garib Das identifies his feelings
with the rain loaded clouds of the rainy season and his soul begins to pant like the papiha thirsting for the rain clouds:

āyā sāvan mehmaṇtā,
jāhaṅ garj garj barsaṇtā,
jāhaṅ dāmaṅ khisai anantā,
jāhaṅ garjat hai ghaṅghorā
sun karat papiha sora
jāhaṅ bole dādur mora.

G.G.S p 539

The peacock, the frog and the papiha are crying for the rain clouds like the soul panting for the solace of God.

Holi is described in all the colourful beauty in an enchanting manner. One feels Holi being played in a very realistic manner, though according to Garib Das the participants in his spiritual Holi are Farīd, Kabīr, Bajīd, Dhanā, Sudāma, Nāmdev and Ravidās.

udat gulāl bisāl bsambhar
rimjhim, rimjhim raṅg,
agar abīr Kabīr khavāsā, jamjārā jītan jāng
sun bedhi sabad sanihī abigat gati kurbān
kesarī ki pickārī chūte, sīv brahma khela hai ān,

G G.S. p 639

Garib Das has great feeling and compassion for animals. He feels that their life is as precious as that of human beings. All birds animals should be treated as creatures of God who have every right to live and enjoy their life. He mentions various animals and birds like, hen, goat, sparrow, partridge, cow, swine,:
murgī bakrī cīqī buterī
sūr gau me ekai serī,
jāke rūm rūm mai dev asthānā,
dūdh dāhī aur ghirt samana. G.G.S. p 451
For Garib Das all animals and birds carry within them the precious life of God. Every part of their body is a dev asthama to him. Kindness to animals is compassion for life and humanity. It was on the basis of this compassion that he became a strict vegetarian.

**Rasas in Garib Das' poetry.** Rasa is described by Dr. Ananda Coomarswamy as "aesthetic emotion." What is the essential element in poetry? Questions Coomarswamy. He himself answers: "According to some authors this consists in style or figures or in suggestion. But the greater writers refute these views and are agreed that the one essential element in poetry is what they term rasa or flavour. With this term, which is equivalent of beauty or aesthetic emotion in the stricter sense of the philosopher, must be considered the derivative adjective rasavant 'having rasa, and the derivative substantive rasika, one who enjoy rasa, a connoisseur or lover."

Various moods, the erotic, the heroic, the Furious, the terrible, the pathetic and Wonderful, and peaceful are depicted. Here are few examples of the various rasas depicted by Garib Das in his poetry.

1. For hundreds of Yogan there are tanks of blood around which there is a crowd of people fall into it and find no way out.
Shīṅgar rasa:
Garib naino kājar bāhī kar khāe liāchhai hāms,
hathōṅ mehdi lāe kar dob dīe kūl bāṅ,
Garib ulti māṅg bharāe kar maṅjan kar hai gāt
mithī bole magan hoe lāvai bahu bīdh gāṭ.

Says Garib Das after putting collyrum in the eyes,
many Swan like souls have been drowned.

After putting mehdi on hands the whole family
and mehdi has been thrown into hell.

After putting Sandhūr in parked hair
and colouring the lips, women
go in wrong path ḍer
Sweet speech is her ornament
of the parted hair
And she bewitches and attacks many hearts.

Vabhīṭ rasa (the Terrible)
Garīb ridra bharāī jāhan kund haiṅ, kūmbhī jin kā nām
dvārā hai mūkha lōdh kā bāḍā bheāṅkār dhām,
Garīb sau sau yojan kund hai girdh gāti bahu bhīr,
kotoṅ jīṅ userīai kahīn nā pāvai thīr,

Says Garib, full of blood is the kunda known as kumbhī
It is a door of terror and a place full of fearful things.

Aḍhīṅbhūt rasa. Garīb Das being a mystic, the emotion of wonderment
dominate all his writings. The ineffable experience of God is
described only through this rasa.

vāh vāh aṅgam pūr jauṅ gā,
kūmbhāk recaṅ kāṁ rasayan,
dasme pavan sadhauñ gā.

R.S. 385

Wonderful, Wonderful, I will go to heaven (agampur)
The Name of God is kumbhak and rechak
I will carry my breath to the tenth door.

bangla ajab banyā hai khūb jāma parbrahm mehboob
agai naulakh patra nācaï, brahmanand rihāvai
 tejpuñj ki sunder nāri anhad maṅgal gāvai

R.S. 318

A wonderful Bungalow is built in which the Beloved God resides.
Nine lakhs devotees dance there, They amuse Him by divine music.
The body of beauty is of Light and she sings the unstruck songs of joy.

Shānti rag

Garīb aisā satgur ham milya sindh surti kī saīn,
ūr aṁtar prakāshyā ajab sunāvai bāīn.

R.S. p 2

Says Garib such a Satguru I have attained through inner consciousness
The Light is revealed within the heart, and wonderful music is heard.

Garīb aisā satgur mai milyā beparvāh abandh
param hams pūran purāś, rūm rūm ravi candhā

R.S. p 3

Such a Satguru I have attained who is carefree and without bound
He is Perfect and Pure, He shines like wonderful Light
in every pore of His body.

Karunā rag

Garīb jīon kūnī jurlāt hai,
āṁde pāve pos'
āise birhan dhyān dhar
Us birhai ke lok
Garīb mai jogan jog dhūnḍhia
Just as Kunj (Crane) flies and cries
keeping her mind on her eggs
so the lover of God in separation keeps his mind
concentrated on God.

Says Garib, I am a Yogin who has searched the nine
regions of the world for the Beloved
Without meeting him I am suffering agony

Just as the fish separated from water

Satire and Irony  The following are outstanding examples of
the use of satire and irony in Garib Das' poetry:

Garib kasi mulla cor hai, sarai sariat jawab
jugan jugan chute nahi khae jinh ki kabab,
Garib kazi tasbi pehar kar, gusal kia kai bar,
andrun sabat nahi dargah parsī mār.
Garib mulla mūrat rab di gal kātan nahi sank
churā det aijūdmen bhansī torī ankh

The Qasi and mulla are criticised with sharp irony for their
hypocrisy.

Ghandī landī bakre khānī jwālāāmukhi juhāram
kar tatbir karad gal kātanī būde bhaujal dharam
Cita pāth pūran dhyānam bedi mahūram sadhī
do tith bār lagan sabh likhtī jampur girjan khadīh

G.G.3.12

G.G.3.91

G.G.3 p 4507

cange malīde khānī kar manvā bheā hai dāgh ve
अपर अपर हास बना, मेठी काउ काक वे,
gudrī lāgāi ajāb cīndī aran bāraṇ bīraṅग वे
phire ban khānd bhēdiā jīon nai satgur sāṅ ā वे,
bhaṅge bīraṅge phirat hai, kachaul kor ā kādh वे,
bhang post garak gost naihī dikhē had वे,
khākī khatās mai pare hai bhāsmī lāgāe bhaṃs वे,
hāi bhūle phīre jāg bhānddar naihī jōde casam वे
mundrā bīlaurī kān hai mastak sindhurī tēlāk वे,
pade jāngal ke roj hai, jō naihī cīnā ahālīk वे,
matā mutga bāndh kar kinhī bājar kaupīn वे
manuā bāhār bhāgyā phirē, tūk bēhek lehā līn वे.

G.G.S 458

Alankaras in Garib Das' poetry.
The following alankaras are found in Garib Das' poetry.

1. Alliteration (Sabad alankar)
kulf kunjī, kholeh khālak, dam mai dīdār.
   R.S. 264
alakh ap allbā sahib, kura kunj jahūr
   R.S. 263

Gharoli Alankar
Garib gun kalīl janai nāhi, cicād mukh nāhi dūdhp
lakh caurāśī yon bādhi sur ā belā sādh
Garīb rudrā pīvat nīsbaśam nāhi dūdhp kī dhār,
ars kurs nāhi jāt hai khūr samudra nyār
   G.G.S p 84-43-44

Drishtānt Alankar
Garīb jīon bādala 'al nīr hai, dikhāi nāhi adekh
kaya madh kurbān hai avhad adi ałēkh
Garīb ghrit dūdhp mai ōm rehīā, yoh abhad tan bāē
Thus the poetry of Garib Das has achieved artistic excellence from all aspects. It is full of ornamental colouring like *alankaras* and is a distinct contribution to the language and literature of our country.