CHAPTER -III

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB

3.1. THE SIKH INSTITUTIONS

3.1.1. EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE UDASIS, NIRMALAS etc.

3.1.1.1. Introduction

The Sikh missionary saints who preached and propagated the educational concepts of Guru Nanak (the founder of Sikh religion), were popularly known as the Udasis. The educational activities of the Udasis began with the rise of their faith after the death of Guru Nanak and continued throughout the pre-British period.

The term Udasi is the Punjabi derivative of the Sanskrit word Udasin which means 'indifference' to the worldly charms. It will be interesting to note that the missionary tours of Guru Nanak Dev are also known as the Udasis by the Sikh writers.¹

However, it has no relation with the Udasi order. In fact during the life time of Guru Nanak, there was no such sect as Udasi and the term was used in a different context during the period of Guru Nanak.²

Guru Nanak has himself explained the term Udasi by observing that he left his home in the garb of an Udasi in search of a Gurmukh, replying to the question of Charpat Nath, Guru Nanak claimed his faith as Udasi.³

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1. Giani Gyan Singh, Tawarikh Gur Khalsa, (Khalsa Tract Society, Amritsar), Part, I No. 1, records the four Udasis (ਉਦਾਸੀ) performed by Guru Nanak, the first being performed in the year 1502 A.D. and the last in 1526 A.D.
Again, in the course of his travels, when Guru Nanak was proceeding to Dipalpur, he was asked by a Sanyasi to define the word *udas*. The Guru replied:

' to make use of all things in this world and not deem them one's own, but God's property, and ever to possess a desire to meet Him in *udas*.'

3.1.1.2 Origin of Udasi Order:

The founder of the Udasi sect was Baba Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak. Regarding Sri Chand’s motive in founding the Udasi order, it is argued that when Guru Nanak nominated Angad as his successor and thereby excluded Sri Chand’s claim to Guru-gaddi, he denounced the world in disgust and turned an Udasi. Thus was founded a separate sect of the Udasis.

It may, however, be added that the above argument does not seem to be correct, because Baba Sri Chand subsequently appointed Baba Gurdita, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind and sixth Guru to be his successor. It appears that the primary aim of Sri Chand in establishing the Udasi order was to propagate the mission of his father in his own way. He created an order of the Udasis, a class of devouts, who, leading a life of high asceticism, were to render an earnest and useful service in perpetuating the faith of Guru Nanak. It appears

that by creating the new order of the Udasi, Sri Chand was neither laying the seeds of a separate church nor exhibiting a spirit of revolt.¹

3.1.1.3. Organisation of the Udasi Order:

The founder of the Udasi Order, Baba Sri Chand is stated to have born on Sawan of 1551 Bikrami corresponding to 1495 A.D.² According to another account, however, he was born in 1500 A.D.³ Since he admitted Baba Gurdita in the order of Udasis in 1629 A.D., it is certain that he lived a long life and attracted a large number of followers, who also called themselves as Udasis.

A proper organisation to carry on the teachings of Guru Nanak outside the Punjab was still wanting. With this object in view, Sri Chand in 1629 A.D., entreated Guru Hargobind to depute one of his sons to him to shoulder the responsibility of furthering the teachings of Guru Nanak. The Guru deputed Baba Gurdita, youngman, disposed to saintly life. Baba Sri Chand admitted him to his order, gave him his blessings and committed the missionary work to his charge.

By this time, the **Masands**, who since the time of Guru Arjun, were engaged in the missionary activities, had grown corrupt and had deviated far away from the self-less spirit of work which marked the early stages of their missionary activities. The **Udasis**, on the other hand, exhibited greater zeal and held out the prospects of a more devoted service in the cause of Sikh education.

### 3.1.14. Spread of Udasi Order:

Baba Gurditta, on the advice of his father, Guru Hargobind, appointed four head preachers to educate the masses about the faith of Guru Nanak. These were:

1. **Almast**
2. **Phul**
3. **Gobind**, and
4. **Balu Hasna**

They were given a peculiar dress of **Udasi**. Thus came into being the four orders of the **Udasis** known as the four **Dhuans** or earths. Each **Dhaun** came to be known after the name of its head preacher.

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1. For details about the **Masands** and their contribution to Sikh education see separate chapter.

2. Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *op. cit.*., p.45. For four **Dhuans** of the **Udasis** see also Appendix, V.
The four Dhuan of the Udasis began their missionary and educational activities in a regular and organised way. The aims and objects of the Udasis included many-fold activities including:

(i) Discovery of such places which were visited by the Sikh Gurus but had sunk into oblivion due to passage of time.

(ii) Establishment of missionary centres for missionary and educational activities.

(iii) Setting up of Deras, Dharamsalas and Sangats to render social, humanitarian and educational service to the people in those areas.

(iv) Teaching and propagating of Gurbani.

The Four Dhuan:

The first order of the Udasis belonging to the four Dhuan arose with Almast, a term denoting an enthusiast. Almast gave gurmatt (teachings of the Gurus) to a large number of disciples, propagated Gurbani and taught Gurmukhi to his followers apart from travelling widely and preaching the mission of Guru Nanak. During the course of his tours,

1. For a brief account of the popular Udasis belonging to the four Dhuns and their missionary and educational activities see separate Appendix V.

2. When Baba Gurditta appointed Almast, Phul, Gobind and Balu Hasna as head-preachers, he gave each of them a portion of the ashes from the Dhuni maintained by Baba Sri Chand. These head-preachers collected the portion of the ashes and set up their own Dhunis at the places where they settled and established their own centres. Thus these came to be called as Dhuan.

Madanjit Kaur, op.cit., p.121

he arrived at Nanak Mata, a place at some distance from Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh. Here he found that some followers of Guru Nanak had already built a temple to commemorate Guru Nanak's visit to that place.\(^1\) Charmed by the sanctity of that place, Almast settled there.

The contribution of the saints belonging to the order of Almast is very valuable as some of the saints of this order were great intellectuals. Baba Lakshman Das, who established the Udasi Dera of this order at Lucknow, was famous scholar. His discourses on Adi Granth and holy scriptures of other faiths were highly impressive and inspiring.\(^2\) Another saint of this order was Krishnanad, who was a renowned scholar of Sanskrit. Similarly Shi Dyal Das of this order was an eminent scholar and historian. Baba Sant Ram of the same order was famous for his work Nanak Vijay Sunder. Bhai Gurdas was another missionary and the author of Mata Udas Sampradaya.\(^3\)

The rise of the second order is ascribed to Baba Phul who was admitted to the Udasi order in 1637 A.D., and established his Dera at Hoshiarpur. He sent his disciples to far off places to preach the mission of Nanak. Thus were established the centres at places like Berar, Deccan and Sindh.

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The third order of the Udasi saints originated from Gobind. His missionary activities were confined to the Punjab. He established his Dera at Phillaur. His disciples Kamal Nain, Gurmukhia and Surat Ram extended the preaching and missionary activities in the villages around Kiratpur and in the Doab.¹

The fourth order was that of Balu Hasna, a term which denotes laughter. He was appointed head-preacher in 1636 A.D. He was instrumental in establishing centres in U.P., Bihar and Orissa. He was a good physician also. He popularised the Guru's teachings in Orissa where Raja Thakur Das, grandson of Raja Mangal Das, donated two villages to his Dera for its maintenance.²

It will be seen that the missionary-cum-educational centres established by the Udasis, spread throughout the length and breadth of the country and continued their academic and missionary activities till 19th century.

3.1.1.6. The Udasi Akharas as Educational Centres:

As we have seen above Baba Gurditta, a son of the sixth Guru, first organised this Udasi order, founded the city of Kiratpur and established four centres of Udasi culture and propaganda in and outside the Punjab. During the Misal period, Paritam Das and Santokh Das were Udasi scholars of note, who founded monasteries at Allahabad, Kankhal (Haridwar) Kurukshetra and Amritsar.

2. Ibid., p.175.
At Amritsar three monasteries or Akharas came to be founded in 1762, 1767, 1794. These Akharas or monasteries imparted higher education in Sanskrit, literature, Philosophy, medicine and played a very prominent part in the education of the province in general and of the city of Amritsar in particular.

The Akhara of Santokh Das, was, the largest monastery in Amritsar, with a Jagir or grant of land made by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It contained besides two courts and an upper storey, a goodly number of small rooms for the accommodation of monks. Known as Akhara Brahm Boota, it stands to this day.

At this Akhara, writes Leitner, both Gurmukhi and Sanskrit were taught the former by three teachers and the latter by one.

Other Akharas of repute that can be seen are Sangala, and one of Mahant Balanand. All the three had a reputation for the study of Sanskrit and medicine while at the same time they gave education in Sikh religion as well. In Sanskrit they pursued studies in Philosophy, Vedant and the Niyaya, and in Grammar like Laghu Kaumudi and Siddhant. In medicine, they studied Megh Vinod, Nidan Charak. In Gurmukhi they taught from the Holy book, Bhagtan di Bani. Chita Akhara with which is associated the name of Pandit Gyan Das specialised in the study of Ayurveda.

Pat Sarup Das, a disciple of Bala Ram Swami of Faridkot who completed his education in Benaras was considered as an authority on medicine and Grammar, while Balanand was a scholar and educationist of note. The latter, also, completed his education in Benaras. He was given Jagirs in Jhelum as well.
as in Amritsar for maintaining a school for the education of Hindu and Sikh children. He migrated from Jhelum and built up a monastery in Amritsar about the year 1775. He looked after both the institutions and kept a high standard of educational achievement.

Baba Ganga Ram founded his monastery in about the year 1815 after his return from Benaras, where he had specialised in the study of Vyakaran or Grammar.

Amir Das was, like Balanad, a great teacher. Bhaskara Nand was another scholar of Sanskrit literature, one of whose pupils had been Bhai Vir Singh.

Udasis had deras or Akharas all over the province from Rawalpindi to Dehra Dun, and from Batala to Kurukshetra, wherein they carried on their cultural tradition. At Patiala also they had four deras and two Akharas.

In the schools kept by Sadhus, writes Bhai Dit Singh, the subjects taught were Vedant (philosophy), Nyaya (logic), Vaidak (medicine), Rajniti (politics), Sahitya (rhetoric) - all these were written in Gurmukhi. These schools were colleges kept in the Akharas or deras of the Udasis in different parts of the Punjab.
3.1.1.7. The Nirmalas:

During the lifetime of Guru Nanak Dev, his followers did not form a separate form of their own but in the course of time, some of them found it necessary to adopt some nomenclature because the word 'Sikh' was then ambiguous. Guru Nanak's school, which laid emphasis on purity, was therefore referred to as the Nirmal-Panth or the Pure Path by others and later even the Sikhs adopted this distinctive name for themselves.

It is in this context that Bhai Gurdas (a contemporary Sikh literature of Guru Amar Das, 1552-1574) refers to the school of Guru Nanak as the Nirmal Panth.1

'Marya Sikka Jagat wich Nanak Nirmal Panth chalaya'

Bhai Gurdas is supported by the Bhattas in their compositions in reference to Guru Amar Das and Guru Arjun Dev. It appears that up to the time of Guru Gobind Singh there was no distinction between the 'Nirmal Panth' and other similar names, like Sikh, Gurmukh Panth, Guru Sikh Panth etc.

Guru Gobind Singh is noted not only for the creation of the Khalsa to meet the imperial challenge, but also for giving

1. ॥ निर्मलवधु निर्मल पंथ सागर बुद्धिजीवि नरक करार ॥
    बृहस्पति वनोदने उग्रजाः प्रजासंसारां न हृद दर्ताय ॥
    
    Bhai Gurdas, Varan

    
    
    स्वायत्त अन्वेषणानि हृद रिक्षणः ॥
    
    
    Swaiyye

new dimension to the cause of educating the Sikhs through the creation of a new order, known as the Nirmala Panth.1 The Guru had two-fold objectives in mind:

(1) To prepare a set of the Sikhs with a view to have a comparative study of Indian religions and classical Indian tradition; and

(2) To break the bondage of class learning and of the missionaries belonging to a particular caste, like Brahmins, Sanyasis and Vairagis.2

Accordingly the Guru selected a dozen of his Sikhs from all castes, creeds and classes and appointed a thirteenth Sikh of a Brahmin birth Pandit Karama (Singh) as the leader of this delegation which he now intended to send to Kashi i.e. Varanasi.

1. While at Paonta (1686 A.D.) Guru Gobind Singh, during one of his sittings with the poets and scholars, felt the need of propagating the doctrines of the Sikh Gurus in the context of traditional Indian systems of philosophy. The Guru desired to establish a special order of his Sikhs with a view to make a comparative study of the religion and to teach Sikhism in the context of Indian tradition. K.Mrigindra Singh, op.cit., pp.110-11.

2. It is recorded that the Guru asked his court poet Pt. Raghu Nath to teach Sanskrit and vedic scriptures to the Sikhs. The Pandit politely replied that as the Guru did not discriminate between castes, he was prohibited by convention to teach the devabhasha and holy scriptures to the non-dvijas i.e. Sudras and women. On this Guru Gobind Singh promptly retorted: 'O Pandit, this is a degenerated convention. Tell me has not the Bhagwat Gita opened itself to all classes castes and creeds? Is it not a part of the 5th Veda the Mahabharata? O Pandit who was the Rishi Ved Vyas, was he not born of a fisher woman, a Sudra? Who were the Rishis Suta, Mandva, etc. by birth? Who were the sages of the Veda by names Gargi, Chandala, Nadalsa, Katyavani, Maitri etc? Are they not women sages of the Vedas?' Hearing this the Pandit felt greatly ashamed. K.Mrigindra Singh, op.cit., p.111.
The Guru gave pink (Bhagya) robes to five Brahmin students to wear. They were:

1. Pandit Karama (Singh)
2. Pt. Rama (Singh)
3. Pt. Ganda (Singh)
4. Pt. Vir (Singh)
5. Pt. Sobha (Singh)

The other members were given white robes. They were from various classes. Their names were:

1. Dharam (Singh) 2. Daya (Singh) 3. Kesar (Singh)
4. Mohkam (Singh) 5. Gian (Singh) 6. Gaja (Singh),
7. Chandan (Singh) 8. Saina (Singh).

All the above members went to Kashi and studied there for six years under the guidance of Pt. Satta Nand. In the seventh year, they returned to the Guru who had by now shifted to Anandpur. The Guru was much pleased to find them all as scholars and assigned them various duties. Pt. Karama Singh used to give sermons on the Granth Sahib's teachings and the Upanashida daily in the Guru's court in the morning. The Guru being impressed by his exposition, ordered Bhai Mani Singh to become his student and learn the Sata Darsanas. In about five years period, a few hundred scholars belonging to all castes, were ready as trained teachers, and missionaries.¹

Tradition goes that the Guru used two words 'Nirmala' from the Sanskrit and 'Khalsa' from the Arabic to show their original oneness in the 'Nirmal Panth' of Guru Nanak, they both being synonymous meaning 'pure'. After the Khalsa was created Bhai Mani Singh and many other Nirmala Sikhs requested Guru Gobind Singh to initiate them into Khalsa Panth. The Guru accordingly asked his Pani-Piyaras (five beloved ones) to prepare and perform the initiation ceremony personally for all the Nirmalas. Thus the two orders became complementary to each other.  

Bhai Mani Singh, the leading scholar, was ordered by Guru Gobind Singh to study the philosophical works systematically under the guidance of Sant-Pandit Karam Singh Nirmala.  

Bhai Mani Singh became fairly well-versed in this and subsequently he was ordered to start a three-year course for training the Granthis (reader of Sri Guru Grant Sahib) for the Sikhs.  

Under the orders of Guru Gobind Singh, many Nirmalas went to different parts of India as preachers and teachers. It was due to their teachings that it became quite a custom amount the Khatri Sikhs of the Punjab, to dedicate one son to the Khalsa for the sake of the noble cause of the Guru and this custom even survives even today in some of the Hindu


families, where one member is kept as the unshorn Khalsa according to the Sikh practice.

3.1.1.8 Branches of the Nirmalas:

As the Nirmalas increased, they were divided into two distinct branches:

1. Nirmala saints who wore the ascetic pink (bhagva) robe given by the Guru and did not marry though they did not prohibit it to others. In fact they asked others to lead a pious married life.

2. The Nirmalas who adorned white clothes.

The latter were further split up into two categories:

(a) The unmarried among them were referred to as sant, and

(b) The married were referred to as 'Giani'. Likewise the Sikhs who took to fighting for the sake of the Panth were known as the 'Nirmala Khalsa' or the 'Tatta Khalsa'.

1. J.C. Archer, who has conducted a comparative study of the Sikhs in relation to Hindus, Moslems, Christians and Ahmediyas, observes:

'There was another order, the Nirmalas,' those without blemish, who emphasised as a group the virtue of personal purity, but without recourse to physical disfigurement. These Nirmalas arose with one Bir Singh, during the days of Guru Gobind Singh, when such virtue was in peculiar need of emphasis, and they came to be known and very highly respected for their habits, being quite sincere and genuine, and unlike certain earlier sutre or 'pure ones'- asheer euphemism in this instance- whose habits were a stench and a by word among decent Sikhs.'

During the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh, Bhai Panjab Singh Nirmala came to the Punjab under the Guru's orders, and settled down at Khadur, the village of Guru Angad Dev. Bhai Panjab Singh was one of those Nirmalas who had taken Amrit from the Panj-Payaras, in the presence of the Guru. The Bhai was much respected in that area and brought many people of the area to the Sikh fold. His grand-pupil, Sant Rodha Singh Nirmala was also noted for converting thousands of persons to Sikhism in the predominant Muslim area of Kashmir, Pothohar and the West Punjab.¹

As directed by Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa always sought the advice of the Nirmalas and gave the latter great respect. The Nirmalas were considered by the Khalsa (Sardars) as their right arm, the first wing, the wise counsellors to guide them in all matters both in peace and war. In fact the Nirmalas and the Khalsas unitedly conducted the missionary work.²

² Ibid. According to Archer, 'They (the Nirmalas) organised under a Mahant of their own, with council which they designated as 'Akhara', because it 'wrested' with their order's problems... As a matter of fact, their weddings were few, because generally the Nirmalas were celebrates and lived in monasteries. But they did not beg as the Hindu Sadhus did, being more self-respecting, like the Jains and they disregarded caste in the manner of all good Sikhs'. J.C.Archer, *op.cit.*, pp.228-29.
Two monasteries of the Nirmala sect were located at Amritsar, both known as Thakar Dyal Singh's Dharamsalas tenant by a few monks. The students of these monasteries were known as sadhus for they adopted the sadh manner of life and dedicated themselves to sacred learning. Children were not admitted to the monasteries, only adults of 15 years or older who had already received some education in Gurmukhi were initiated into the Order. After performing the baptismal ceremony of the Sikh religion, they took a vow of Brahmcharya or celibacy, and adopted the ascetic mode of life until their education was complete; or they dedicated their whole life to learning. The Dharam Dhaja is a grand Akhara of Nirmalas at Patiala with a branch at Haridwar. It was founded by Sant Mahtab Singh under the patronage of the Maharaja of Patiala with the cooperation of other Phulkian states.

The higher education imparted in Nirmala monasteries or Akharas aimed at the comparative study of religion. Sanskrit, therefore, formed an important subject of which the students acquired a fair sometimes amazing command. Ambitious scholars travelled to Banaras to complete their education. The abbots like Bhai Dargah Singh, Jai Singh, Thakar Dyal Singh, Pt. Nihal Singh, Pt. Tara Singh and Mahant Ganesha Singh have been scholars of great repute, who devoted their lives to research.
Nirmala monasteries had under them so many centres of research, wherein big libraries were kept; translations from Sanskrit into Gurmukhi of Bhakha were made; and many a thesis was written. At Patiala, records the Phulkian Gazetteer, there was a library of Bhai Tara Singh, a well-known scholar of Gurmukhi and Sanskrit, at the Dera of Bhai Sadhu Singh. Pt. Ganesha Singh, who the Mahant of the Antaryami Akhara, was carrying on the tradition of learning and research even in our own times.

At the Akhara of Bishan Nikkari, writes Leitner's education in Gurmukhi was given by S. Ram Singh. It is difficult to know what was actually taught by him but it is presumed that higher education in Gurmukhi must have been given there for each Akhara was an institution of some standing.

3.1.1.10. DERAS OR ASHRAMAS

Before they came in possession of monastaries with the help of grants made by Rajas, like the Maharaja of Patiala and by chiefs, Amar Singh Bagha, Gujar Singh of Gujrat, Sada Singh Behar and Jai Singh the Udasis and the Nirmalas built up deras or ashramas in villages, or small towns, besides rivers, or elsewhere. These deras were like ashramas, dwelling places as well as schools, which imparted both elementary and higher education to the children of the community. The education was given in Gurmukhi at the elementary stage. Sometimes Gurmukhi was combined with Sanskrit, and in other cases it was Sanskrit alone but that was taught at the secondary stage; for instance, Mahant Pt. Ram Singh received his first
education at 7 at the feet of a Nirmala Pandit in the village of Chimal Kalan, studied Sanskrit first at Kuru Chhetra with Pt. Man Singh Nirmala, and then at a Pathshala beside the Phul Prachi.

After learning Gurmukhi at home, Pt. Tara Singh studied Sanskrit at a Nirmala dera. Thikriwala, a village in the district of Barnala, in the Patiala States, was another popular seat of learning. Pt. Tota Singh, like Pt. Tara Singh, was a famous Achari or Professor of Sanskrit. Nirmala deras of note whose mention is made in the lives of the Nirmala saints' and pandits, were scattered far and wide from Gujrat to Khikshetra and from Ferozepur to Hoshiarpur, at Amritsar Girvari, Muktasar, Naurangabad, Redhian, Dubherni, Thikri'wala, M'angwal, Pindori, Nijhran, Barnala, etc. In fact, in every district they possessed at least one dera which attracted promising scholars or saints.

Higher education in a dera or akhara, says Bhai Bishan Singh, was given in the medium of Bhakla in the Gurmukhi script. It began at a later stage and was often confined to one subject like philosophy and sometimes to two, like philosophy and literature.

In the first year the pupil studied Sarkatauli (Ethics) Bhawar Samarit (asceticism), Vicharmala (vedant), and Rup dip Pingal '(Reotoric and prosody).
In the second year, he completed his education in philosophy with Vichar Sagar. His studies were further extended to include Adhyatam Ramayana, Hanuman Natak, The Ramayana by Tulsi Dass or Valmiki, the Bhagwat Gita and Gita Mahatam by Kishore Chand.

In the Udasi deras, Puranas were also read at a still later stage by such students as were permanent residents of dera who had leisure enough to pursue the literature which was partly devotional, partly mythology and partly history. Bhagwat Puran XI chapter, Bishan Puran and Atam Puran were the favourites, and recitations from these was a popular feature of deras, monasteries and temples.

The students who came from the villages nearby were mostly day scholars; others from far-off places became resident scholars and stayed with their teachers both as their attendants and pupils.

The Udasis had about a hundred deras in the Punjab; forty of which were found in Amritsar alone. The others existed in the states of Nabha, Patiala, and in the districts of Ferozepur and Ludhiana. Their institutions at Dera Baba Nanak, Nanakana Sahib, Brahm Buta at Amritsar, and at Srinagar were most well-known of all.

These monasteries as is evident from the above accounts, had several notable features in common with the deras. These were originally modest deras or ashrams which a teacher founded with the help of the community for whose spiritual and cultural
needs be catered. In course of time, at certain places, with the grant of a gift of land, the dera was rebuilt as a monastery and the school became a college with accommodation for the stay of resident scholars for several years. The teacher, or his successor pupil became now a Mahant. Since he was devoted to the cause of education, his monastery extended its curriculum of studies and offered specialised teaching in more than one subject. Sometimes the abbot took to research and produced some work of note which contributed something new to the Punjabi literature or Sikh theology. In course of time, a monastery built up its own library. Some books were copied by pupil teachers; some were added to, as gifts, while others a teacher himself wrote by translating or adapting from a work in Sanskrit.

It was a common feature of education in the 19th century that after a preliminary education at home or in the average dharamsal, a boy was sent for further education to the dera of a sant who was known for his piety and learning. The education of Bhai Vir Singh and his elders affords an interesting instance in the case. His grand father Bhai Kahan Singh was a pupil of Sant Ram Diyal of Thakaran da Dera; his father was a pupil of Gyani Sant Singh Garhianwala; his maternal grand-father was a student of Sant Chanda Singh, and he himself sat at the feet of a Sant for his education in religious philosophy.
Higher education in dharamsal was not well-defined in scope or practice but enjoyed the freedom and variety of individual scholarship, ability or circumstances. In an average dharamsal, education was limited to a secondary standard. It was only when the Granthi was a Gyani or the dharamsal was situated in a flourishing town that it offered opportunity for higher education.

It is found to obtain in two categories. In a large number of dharamsal of orthodox type, the study of the Granth was the only aim of the Sikh education. It took the learners at least two years to make a thorough acquaintance with the text, and to memorize it as much as he could.

Biography and history were allied subjects, the study of which formed a background to the study of the Granth and represented the human side of the spiritual or religious learning. The books like "Waran of Bhai Gurdas", 'Nanak Parkash' and 'Suraj Parkash' were, therefore, studied in the orthodox church side by side with "Parchian or 'Bhajat Mal', the life stories of the Saints whose devotional verses formed a portion of the Granth.

In the dharamsal of less orthodox type, scriptures did not feel jealous of secular literature but religion liberalised by humanism rose above sectarianism. There the Dhasam Granth of Guru Gobind Singh was also studied though in parts.
In the dharamsals of the western Punjab, in the Rawalpindi Division, the Dharm Granth was popular only in parts like Jap Ji and Akal Ustat and Vichatar Natak. A Sikh scholar completed his education with the study of Hindu philosophy embodied in six shastras, particularly the Vedant. The latter was studied in books like Vichar Sagar by Nishchal Das, Vairag Shatak and Sarkutawali by Hardyal, and Mokhsh Pad.¹

The Mahabharat was one of the favourite books of Guru Gobind Singh, who himself translated the Bhagwat Gita in Punjabi. A learned Brahman would give recitations from it in his darbar. The popularity that he lent it among the Sikhs it continued to enjoy for about two centuries. In the afternoons when the people were generally free and the students took some rest, recitations were given from the Mahabharta² for the benefit of those who got little time or opportunity to read it themselves. The reader’s musical voice and his lucid commentary attracted large gatherings and the story of the stirring times captivated the heart and imagination of the masses.

Recitations from the Bhagwat Puran, 11th Khand or Chapter were popular among Udasis, but Bhagwat Gita was the most popular book among the Nirmalas, Udasi and other scholars of the liberal school. Its place in their private devotions as well as in scholastic teaching came only next to the Guru Granth.

¹ Mohan Singh, History of Punjabi Literature, p. 151.
² Ibid.
Sir Henry Lawrence wrote in 1844, 'There are many Boongas, all fine buildings, surrounding the Holy Tank. Each Missul had a Boonga; and if we recollect rightly, several Chiefs have private ones¹. M' Gregor made mention, about two years later of these 'stately mansions', 'the numerous handsome buildings erected on its (Tank's) sides, belonging to the various Sikh Sirdars in the Punjab². 'Besides the Sikh Chiefs, like the grand father of Dyal Singh Majithia and father of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and Sikh communities in provincial towns who built up these hospices for the accommodation of pilgrims while on their visits to the holy place on sacred occasions, the Sikh religious orders also possessed their own bungas for the propaganda of their creed and for the education of their followers.

The Akali had 'a place of Boonga on the bank of the sacred reservoir'. The Granthees or readers, adds Sir Lawrence, are not Akali though they have a Boonga and a very handsome one, capped with gold and still hold more influence than elsewhere. The Shahids and Nirmalas, two other religious tribes among the Sikhs, wrote Malcolm in 1812, have Bungas or places upon the great reservoir of Amritsar. They are generally men of education.

In their bungas these 'men of education' kept their small colleges or academics and specialised themselves in some

1. H.M. Lawrence, _op. cit._, p.95.
particular branch of learning. They attracted students and scholars from far and wide who went out after completing their education, as specialists to start new schools or to take their places in the religious and cultural life of the people.

These bungas built up each a tradition, and a name for itself. The teachers were a long line of scholars dedicated to their art or science who offered free education board and lodging to their students. Some of them were patronised by chiefs but their mainstay was their devoted and efficient service for which the society paid them unstintedly.

For about a century, these bungas hummed with activity and converted the Har Mandir, the centre of Sikh religion, into a small republic of letters like the Taxila of the Buddhist times. As many as six of the Bungas belonged to the Nirmala Pundits, while two to Udasis being associated with the names of Bawa Paritam Dass and Bhai Wasti Ram. The line of Bhais of Kaithal, Bhai Gurdas Giani, Gyani Sant Singh, Ram Singh Gyani Bhat, each built his own Bunga. Bungas were founded by ragis like Ragi Kahn Singh, Ragi Charhat Singh, and Ragi Dhanpat Singh.

Most of the bunga academies were specialised in some art or science like vedant, exegesis, medicine, music, or calligraphy. Malvayi Bunga, for instance, was renowned for the study of the Vedant. This Bunga was built by the chiefs of the Malwa and some princes of the Punjab states. The Nirmalas maintained a high standard of literary and educational achievement. The study of comparative religion and poetics were the chief educational aims.
Pandit Sarup Das Udasi was a great scholar of classics as well as a specialist in Ayurveda. His bunga lived up to the udasi tradition of the study and teaching of medicine carried in their akharas. Jallianwala Bunga was particularly known for its cure of skin diseases.

The Kapurthala Bunga was devoted to exegesis. It carried on the tradition known as Samparadya Sansthana, formed under the aegis of the Raja of Paridkot who called together great scholars of the Granth and wrote an authoritative commentary on the holybook after that of Bhai Mani Singh, the pupil and disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. Sant Chanda Singh and Sant Daya Singh were the great scholars of this bunga. Some of the distinguished Gyanis and Granthis were students of this bunga. Bunga Gianian is associated with the names of Giani Sant Singh and Parduman Singh, well-known Gianis of Amritsar.

Music was the speciality of the Bunga Ahulwalia which was patronised by the Maharaja of Kapurthala, Fateh Singh, who was himself an authority on music. Training in music was given to those who had already committed to memory important sections of the Holybook, like Japji Sahib, Asa Ki Var, Sohila, Sodhar, which are generally sung or recited to the accompaniment of musical instruments. A Gurmukhi school was, therefore, attached to this bunga. The musical instruments which were used in Harmandir and in other dharamsalas, and in which apprentices were given training were, rabab, sarangi, mardang and kachhua. The office of the raji had been hereditary since
the time of Mardana, the faithful follower of Guru Nanak.

Calligraphy was, in those days, a most paying as well as a most honourable profession, much patronised by religion and aristocracy. Damdama and Amritsar were the great centres of this activity where the holy book was produced by copyists with scrupulous care and accuracy. Singhpurian *Bunga* trained young apprentices in the art of calligraphy and some two of the masters of the art remembered to this day were Bhai Lahora Singh and Hari Singh. Sant Singh Giani of Harmandir was himself a calligraphist of note, and a great patron of the art. The manuscript copies of the Holy book or the *Granthas* written by copyists of those days are still found in some libraries like the Khalsa College, Amritsar, Sikh History Library, and Guru Ram Das Library, Amritsar, and in possession of many scholars.

The Ramgarhia *Bunga*, it is said, acquired a reputation as a meeting place or assembly of poets, particularly after annexation. Leitner in whose time these *bungas* still retained their age-old activities makes mention of these *bungas* in connection with its education of the people. Gurmukhi schools were kept, writes he, at Akal Bunga by Bhai Atma Singh at Nur Mahalyan Bunga by Kishan Singh at Ahluwalian Bunga by Aya Singh, at Anand Puryan Bunga by Atma Singh, at Bunga Hukam Singh by Atam Singh. Further details are lacking.¹

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Sanskrit schools were also housed in the bungas. Agya Ram kept a school at Bunga Hukam Singh and Brij Lal kept a Pathshala at Bunga 'Mayan Wala.' These teachers are probably, Udasis who often taught both Gurmukhi and Sanskrit to whosoever, Hindu or Sikh, came to learn either.

Lastly, of great interest was the Gharial Bunga, which possessed a water clock. This clock regulated the time of Harmandir Sahib because the morning service began long before dawn. There was placed outside the bunga a huge earthen ware vessel of water. In it floated a small pot of iron. There was a very small hole into the bottom of this pot. Water percolated into the pot and filled it in 24 minutes or one ghari. As it sank to the bottom, the watchman struck the bell.

3.1.1.13. Mandlis or Itinerant Schools

The institution of mandli is as old as the age of the Buddha or even older. The Buddhist monks toured to every nook and corner of the land and travelled beyond its confines, to propagate the mission of their master. Down through the ages the wandering ascetics have travelled from one part of the country to another. Shankaracharya came all the way from the south to the Punjab and went up to the heights of Sri Nagar in Kashmir. The yogis of Gorakh Nath moved from Jhelum to Assam. Guru Nanak himself undertook three such long journeys as an ascetic accompanied by his ministerial, and is believed to have gone as far as Ceylon on one side and to the far-off Arabia on the other.  

These wandering ascetics have always affirmed and demonstrated the cultural unity of India; for, they were both scholars and teachers, who had dedicated themselves to the cause of culture. They halted at various centres even at small places far from theatres of war or scenes of political turmoils; and attracted young philosophic minds, some of whom they converted to their own mode of life. Guru Nanak courted their company in forests of Lahore; and Lachman Dev, later known as Banda Bairagi sought their company at Rajori in Kashmir and accompanied their mandli to the Deccan in which country he settled down as a bairagi where he met Guru Gobind Singh, sometime later. With the organisation of the Udasi movement by Baba Gurditta the wandering groups of ascetics acquired indigenous or Punjabi character. In the chronicle of Guru Gobind Singh there is once a mention made of an udasi mandli which visited the court of the Guru in order to get his seal of approval on a copy of the Granth which they had much faith. The mahant or abbot of an akhara or dera, gathered round him mandli of his disciples. Such mandlis became, in time of peace, normal feature of life in the Punjab.

When the Sikh misls came in power, a few popular mandlis toured over the province and beyond: Pt. Fauja Singh's Sant Jawala Dass Dadanwala's, Sant Malook Singh Godariya's, Bawa Prem Singh's, Gyani Sunder Singh Bhindranwala's, and Gyani Gurbachan Singh Virakt's. They had each of them as many as 150 followers, both teachers and students. The number may not be actually as large but what appears to be a bit of exaggeration is an indication of their popularity and as such
an evidence of their usefulness as institutions of educational importance.

The students were free to join a mandli at any age provided the Mandleshwar was convinced of their sincerity of purpose. Children of their education during the sojourn of the mandli but were not allowed to accompany it during its long and endless itinerary. Only adults could be permanent members of it after they had dedicated their lives under a vow to this educational mission. After a student had completed his education, he was permitted by his Guru to drop off or go to some other Guru, recommended by himself for further education in particular branch of learning. Sometime, a pupil rose to be a teacher of distinction and was permitted by his Guru, to start a mandli of his own.

A mandli, during its stay may be compared to an educational camp or summer school. From the dawn to the first part of the night the camp life was regulated to every qhari (24 minutes) and consisted in congregational prayers with music, recitations from the Granth Sahib, private or individual recitations and meditations, teaching or learning, memorizing discussions, with intervals of food and rest and exercise.

From the subjects of study offered to the students, the mandlis may be classified into two types. The purely indigenous type offered education in the medium of Gurmukhi daily. It was mostly religious, confined to the sacred texts, biography and history. At a higher stage, the main subject was exegesis.
The other type of mandli generally belonged to Udasi or Nirmala sect and offered the study of Bhakka (Hindi) and Sanskrit as well.

Bhai Dit Singh has referred to the existence of a school of Sadh Tilok Ram wherein wandering Sadhs were taught. They followed him wherever he went. The subjects taught were Vedant (philosophy), Nyaya (logic) Vaidik (medicine) Rajniti (politics), and Shitya (literature). 1

3.1.1.14. The GYANIS and GRANTHIS

The Gyanis form, like Granthis, almost a class by themselves. Both dedicate their lives, at an early age, to the study of the sacred learning. Both of them lead pure and pious lives in the service of the Church and of their teachers, like inmates of Gurukulas or Asharams. Both of them are expected to be men of sweet temper and sweet voice. While the Granthi is expected to be well-versed in the scriptures and skilful in the art of recitation, the Gyani specialises himself in the interpretation of the holy text, and in the art of exposition. In the beginning, as in most of the Gurdwaras, at the present day, both the offices were combined in the Granthi. Baba Budha was the first Granthi entrusted by Guru Arjan himself with the care of the Holy book, as he had earlier been entrusted with the education of the boy, Hargobind.

1. Calcutta Review, July, 1850, 131
Guru Gobind Singh, however, separated the office of the Reader from that of the Expounder. He himself trained Bhai Mani Singh, and Karam Singh Nirmala, in the exposition of the text and dictated to the former the first complete edition of the Granth. Bhai Mani Singh became the chief priest of Har Mandir at Amritsar, and wrote a Sakhi or biography of Guru Nanak.

The Gyanis, it appears, became scholars and writers. Their close study of the text and their wide reading of the biographies of the composers of the hymns in the holy book, resulted in a considerable literary output. Like Bhai Mani Singh there were other Gyanis who contributed not a little to the Sikh literature; critical interpretative, creative, biographical or historical; Santokh Singh, for instance, wrote 'Gurpartap Surya' (1843) and 'Nanak Parkash' and Ratan Singh, 'Panth Parkash' (1823), Raja 'Bikram Singh' (1842-73) took a keen interest in the critical exposition of the holy text and got a voluminous commentary written in several parts by specialists of repute.

Talwandi Sabo, otherwise known as Damdama Sahib, and Amritsar became with the blessings of Guru Gobind Singh, the centres of literary research. Dama Dama became a resort of learned Sikhs. There is a complete record of a long roll of Gyanis after Bhai Mani Singh: Sant Singh pupil of Pt. Nihal Singh Nirmala, as in ancient days of vedas succeeded his father, Surat Singh of Chiniot (Jhang) Gyani Sant Singh, was himself succeeded by his disciple, Kaviraj Santokh Singh. The line of succession Gurnukh Singh, Parduman Singh, Gurbakhsh Singh, etc.
After the martyrdom of Bhai Mani Singh, the office of Hari Mandir passed into the hands of the Udasis, the last was Gopal Das by name who was succeeded by Chanchal Singh Granth.

3.11.15. The Nam-Dharia, Nirankari and Sawai Pranthis

While the Udasis and Nirmals on the one hand and Granthis and Gyanis on the other, were the great advocates of Sikh learning and culture on a higher plane, there arose and spread three other movements which gave a great fillip to literacy among the Sikh masses. Strangely enough, the leaders of two of the movements came from the N.W.F. Province and found their followers in the Punjab.

Baba Balak Singh (1799-1861) was originally a shopkeeper at Hazro in the district of Peshawar. He renounced the world and became an ascetic, deeply-versed in Sikh devotional scripture and yoga. Among his devotees, he came across a soldier Ram Singh, the son of a carpenter, of Bhaini, a village in the district of Ludhiana. Under his spell, Ram Singh left the army (1841) and became a great saint and religious reformer. His deep piety and religious enthusiasm won him numerous followers whom he organised in varying groups in districts, tehsils and villages with their headquarters at Ludhiana. In every village, wherever his followers lived, a Gurdwara was built and a Granthi was installed. The Granthi was the spiritual preceptor of his parish and took active interest in the education of its children. Baba Ram Singh forbade his followers (Namdharis) to receive western education. This gave, obviously, a great impetus to the study of indigenous education among the...
Another leader of the mass movement, known as 'Nirankari' was Baba Uyal (d. 1854) of Peshawar who left his native place and settled down in Rawalpindi. He was a contemporary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and was held in great reverence by the Sikh middle class, especially the trading class of the Sikhs of the Rawalpindi district.

But older than either was the movement of Sewapanthis, whose founder Ghaniya Lal, a resident of Sodhra, a village near Wazirabad, was a disciple of the ninth and the tenth Gurus. His followers Sewa Ram and Adan Shah became very popular, and the sect half-Hindu and half-Sikh came to be known after them as Sewapanthis or Adan Shahis. The latter was a man of learning who wrote 'Paras Bhag' in a language known as Sant Bhakha. Like his predecessor, Sewa Ram, he built many dharamsalas in which the holy Granth was kept. Recitations were also given from the Ramayana.

Calligraphy was a speciality of the Seva Panthis. They cultivated a beautiful hand and made many copies of the Granth Sahib which Addan Shah used to revise and correct. They wrote in a type of ink called Addan Shahi, invented by the Shah himself. Bhai Amir Singh is believed to be the last of the Gyanis educated on the traditional line.


2. For a list of some Sikh sects see *Appendix, VII*. 
Private schools were also an important agency of indigenous education. Sometimes these were kept by pious or cultured scholars, who took to teaching for the love of it. They were mostly in possession of Jagir or subsistence allowance from the government, and were, therefore, free from the anxiety of earning their livelihood. Bhai Juneja Singh's house, for instance, was a large school at which both the Granthi Guru Bilas (a chronicle of the Sikh Gurus) Arithmetic, Bakaran (Grammar), and Puranas were taught. Bhai Ram Singh had another school at Amritsar, to which students from distant parts of the country flocked. The list of subjects that he taught is rather long and seems to betray Leitner's habit of exaggeration. It includes says he, Granth, Vyakaran, Kavya Alankara (poetics), Poetry, Pingal (prosody), Sanitty (Literature), History, Niti (Politics), Arithmetic, Astronomy, etc. Unless he had a competent staff, it is impossible for a man to be master of all these subjects and to be able to teach these with efficiency. But there is no evidence to show that he had any.

Bhai Lakhan Singh had another school in his house of which his grand son became the incharge, later after him, Bhai Gan Singh, as he was called, was a contemporary of Leitner, and gave 'Private tuition in all those higher branches of learning which have been mentioned in connection with the school of Bhai Ram Singh.'

2. Ibid.
These private schools, were, however, often kept by teachers who adopted the profession in order to make their living. They rented a house or set apart a portion of their own for the purpose and made modest start by collecting boys from their neighbourhood. They charged a small fee, and in some cases, nothing. If a teacher was competent, his school became popular. If he could not pay otherwise but was a scholar, he would retain good boys with him as long as possible by giving them higher education and by making their stay with him worth their while. Some of these student monitors drawn from humble life would become teachers or something even better.

Both Sikhs and other students attended these schools. Sometimes a Gurmukhi school was kept by a Hindu who took in both Sikh and Hindu students. The secret of the popularity of such a school lay in its 'liberalness'. In the first place, the teacher was liberal minded. The business aspect of his profession took sectarianism out of him and made him tolerant in his own interest.

Secondly, the nature of the instruction was liberal. There is no religious dogma in the teaching of skill subjects like reading and writing.

Lastly, there were certain Hindus who accepted the teachings of the Sikh religion without accepting its formalism. They found no harm in attending a Sikh private school. The teacher also would introduce secular elements in his education and offer a variety of subjects to suit different tastes or views.
HIGHER EDUCATION IN GURU NAKH

3.2.1. Introduction:
The Nirmalas or the Sikh Pandits of Guru Gobind Singh who returned to Anandpur from Benares as scholars of Sanskrit made frequent inroads like Sikh freebooters, into the domain of Sanskrit literature and at last annexed a considerably large field of Sanskrit literature and philosophy to the small territory of Punjabi. The curriculum of higher learning was therefore widened extensively and the Sikh scholars became the rivals of the Pandits of the Punjab, and founded their colleges or places of higher learning. Udasis, too, the followers of Sri Chand, the ascetic son of Guru Nanak, founded in time big Dharamsal and housed colleges in them. Griffin (1890) mentions Dera Baba Nanak and Dera Tali Sanib as instances. The head of the institution was called Mahant while the chelas or disciples were called Sadhs. They studied the Granth and other Sikh books. In the account of Amritsar by S. Uddham Singh (1920) there is a mention of ten such colleges housed in monasteries. The most famous of these is that of Bhai Santokh Dass or Akhara Brahmbuta, which Uman also visited on appointment. Three of these are known for higher education in Sanskrit. Uman (1907) also visited two monasteries of Nirmalas known as Bhai Thakar Dyal Singh's Dharamsal.

Leitner (1882) throws further on such colleges in Amritsar. These were, says, he half-a-dozen, mostly private, Udasi and Nirmala, popular and flourishing, at the time of annexation.

1. G.W. Leitner, op.cit., p.150.
Their curricula included Arithmetic, Grammar, History, Poetry, Politics, Astronomy and Hindu Law. At Dam Dama, too, scholars kept up the tradition of Guru Gobind Singh and pursued higher learning for its own sake.(1)

In the schools taught by Sadhus, wrote Bh. Dit Singh, in 1850, the following subjects were taught in Gurmukhi: Vedant, Nyaya, (Logic) Vaidic (medicine), Raj Niti (Political Science), Sahitya (literature). Such schools were found in Amritsar, Lahore, Taran Taran and Anandpur.

The stage in the development of education as hinted above was attained through the literary activities of the Udasis on the one hand and Guru Gobind Singh's Nirmalas on the other. They studied Vedant, Literature, Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine and other arts and sciences which they could lay their hands on. By translation, transliteration, adaptation, and original attempts they produced a large body of literature in Gurmukhi and enriched a whole field of education, offering students of Gurmukhi for the first time what students of Hindi and particularly Sanskrit, had for centuries for their option to study. Leitner has told us that "Hanuman Natak" 'Bhagwat', Nigant"(Drugs) Saringdhar (prescription and pathology) and 'Nidan' (Causes of diseases and diagnosis) as well as 'Vedant' were studied in Gurmukhi.(2) Tulsi Dass's "Ramayana" written in

(1) G.W. Leitner, op.cit, p.150
(2) G.W. Leitner, op.cit, p.35
classical Sanskrit was transliterated in Gurmukhi character for the benefit of Gurmukhi students. Fakir Amar Das of Amritsar wrote 'Jahit Kah' or Rhetoric in Gurmukhi after the Sanskrit models in about 8 volumes with supplements on polite conversation, manners and etiquette, enology, prosody, etc.

Bhai Juna Singh, a Granthi in Amritsar, taught arithmetic, Vyakaran, Puranas at his house. Bhai Budha, according to Leitner, was one of the most successful translators of Sanskrit works in Gurmukhi. Bhai Santokh's renderings of Sanskrit works in Gurmukhi poetry were regarded as a master production. Baba Ganga Ram translated and adopted Sanskrit Grammar in Gurmukhi.

In history, 'Gurbilas', 'Panth Parkash' and 'Suraj Parkash' written under the inspiration of Guru Gobind Singh made the most original works in history, which are regarded as authority on Sikhism by the present generation of students and scholars. Of the textbooks studied in the deras, akharas, mandlis or private schools and colleges run by Nirmalas or Udasi Sadhus or other scholars, interesting information is available from the History of Punjabi Literature by Mohan Singh who has drawn copiously upon

1. G.W. Leitner, op. cit., p. 50.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
the MSS in the Punjab University Library, Lahore. The MSS of these text books, adds he, are still preserved in almost all the important Gurdwaras of the Punjab where in these books must have been used in the higher education of students.

In religious philosophy and vedant, the "Gita" and "Gita Mahtam" by Kishore Chand were in common use. "Vairag Shatak" and "Sarkatavali" were studied from one corner of the Punjab to the other. "Vichar Sagar" of Nischal Das is popular to this day.

In Biography, the Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala, "Gyan Ratnawali" and in history "Gurpartap Suraj", "Nanak Parkash", "Suraj Parkash" by Bhai Santokh Singh Nabha ji's "Bhagat Mal (whose author is unknown) were the favourites of teachers.

In literature and mythology, the "Ramayna" was studied in the form of a drama as "Hanuman Natak" by Hardyal, the famous exponent of the Vedant, philosophy. "Adyatam Ramayna" and Atam Puran" translated by Bhai Santokh Singh also occupied an important place in the education of scholars.

For the knowledge of music, it is not known which particular work was studied or taught. But it is certain that besides the Ragmala in the Granth, Ragmala in verse by Pt. Budh Singh was much in use as many MSS of it have been found in different places. Pt. Ganesha Singh wrote on Sangit Vidya and Sant Dal Singh on "Gauri Rag".
These books were according to Mahant Ganesha Singh in his 'Ithas Nirmal Bekh' popular among the Nirmalas. As regards medical works which were studied in this period at the various centres like Amritsar and Jammu, etc., they were all in Braj Bhasha in the beginning and would only be studied at the feet of a teacher like Sant Jyoti Sarup at Amritsar. The names of several of these books on anatomy surgery have survived to this day. Sushrat has been a famous classical work throughout the country. "Mahadev Nidan", and "Megh Vinod" by Megh Muni a Jain monk of Phagwara, were very popular. In Sikh times they were translated into Braj Bhasha. Mahant Dasondha Singh Antaryami, according to Mahant Ganesh Singh, his successor, wrote a commentary on the latter in Gurmukhi.

Most of these books bear the names of copyists and of Bungas, like Akal Bunga, where the copying was done.

3.2.2. Chief characteristics of Gurmukhi Education.

The chief characteristics of the Gurmukhi school have been the use of the mother tongue, Panjabi, as the medium of instruction. The whole of Guru Nanak's work, according to Dr. Diwana, is in Panjabi Hindwi or in Lahndi. On being asked by the Pandits and Brahmans of the Thanesar, while on his way to Hardwar, why he had abandoned Sanskrit and composed hymns in this vulgar tongue, Guru Amar Das replied, "well-water can only irrigate adjacent land, but rain water: the

whole world". On this account, the Guru hath composed his hymns in the vulgar dialect and enshrined them in the Gurmukhi characters and that men and women of all 3 oastes and classes may read them. When Bhai Gurdas was put a similar question in Benaynas, he replied, "The Guru used the spoken language in order to communicate his ideas to man. Sanskrit was merely the language of priests. The current spoken language had preceeded it and will succeed it....Sanskrit is so difficult that a whole life must be spent in acquiring it, wherefore we use the spoken language which children and women can read and understand. It is on this account Guru had made the spoken language the vehicle for divine instruction a knowledge of which you deny to women and men of low caste.

In short,broke down the monopoly of Brahmans on the one hand and of the Sanskrit on the other in the field of education. It was a sure remedy against illiteracy and ignorance among the two classes. The other great characteristics of the Gurmukhi school were its poetry and music. Guru Nanak's writing are mostly in verse, which is marked by a plenteous use of imagery and an under current of spiritual joy and mysticism. Guru Nanak employs all the major forms of verse and types of poetry and rags of folk-music. Since his employment as a storekeeper at Sultanpur, the Guru kept with him throughout a private servant and disciple Mardana by name, the minstrel who set
his master's compositions to the music of the rabab or rebeck. The first five Gurus as well as the 10th and the 10th were themselves bards or poets, who composed hymns in accompaniment with music, and kept bards in their courts. Balwant and Satta played from the time of Guru Angad to that of Guru Arjan. Bhika lived permanently in court of Amar Dass; Mathura and that of Ram Dass, Bahak and Abdulla in that of Har Gobind, while Guru Gobind Singh had more than 50 bards in his employ. Speaking of the hymns of the Gurus in the Granth, Mohan quotes Frederic (from F.R.A.C., Vol.XVIII as saying) "It would seem from the foregoing that, as originally arranged by Guru Arjan, the Adi Granth had a collection of poems for every musical sub-tone. There can be no doubt that the basis of arrangement was musical, for directions as to the tunes and keys in which the poems are to be sung, occur throughout. The hymns, concludes Macauliffe, are arranged according to Rags or musical measures. Music has ever been a part of the Sikh temple for most of its scripture is poetic and musical. Religious education was in the beginning, confined chiefly to the poetical curriculum. Biography and history, which are in prose form only a minor part of it. Music and poetry have, therefore, been fundamental features of Sikh education.

Fourthly, a very prominent place has been given to memory in the education of the Sikhs. The hymns of the Gurus were enjoined to be recited daily, in the morning, in the evening and at bedtime. A number of instances
bring out the importance of memory in the education of Sikhs. Jodha and Bibi Amro also recited 'Japji' and 'Asa Ki War', from memory. It is further, incidentally revealed that Gur Har Gobind's mother knew 'Japji', 'Sukhmani and 'Anand' by heart.

The other characteristic of the Gurmukhi school was its cosmopolitan character. While the mosque school was a Quran school for Muslim and the Hindu temple was resorted to by Brahman or Khatri boys, the Sikh school, like the Persian school, was attended by boys of other communities as well.

A point of difference that Arnold made out between indigenous Sikh education and that existing or implanted elsewhere was that the agriculturist population in many parts of the Punjab chiefly attended school. (1) "The peasantry that the Guru won over to their side acquired a taste for education and pursued it, to their humble extent for the light that it brought them and the spirit that is breathed into them. They came at last into the heritage that the Brahman had denied them and Guru Nanak had (as their prophet), restored it to them and to their race.

3.2.3. **Extent of Education in Gurmukhi.**

In the statistics obtained by the Board through their district officers and tehsildars, while there is no trace of any college, the returns of Gurmukhi schools are very incomplete as admitted by Arnold. I am surprised to find 41 in Rawalpindi, adds he, if this is correct, it is not likely that there are none in Gujrat and Jhelum. A study of the returns submitted to the Secretary to the Board of Administration in response to the Board's circular No. of January 15, 1851 is, however, likely to throw some light on the question:

Jhelum division in those days comprised of the districts of Rawalpindi, Shahpoore, Gujrat and Jhelum. The returns of the Division are found in the Record No. 86 dated 24th February 1852 in General Volume 15, No. 11 - 21, dated 22nd May 1852. In district of Rawalpindi in none of the tehsils Hussan Abdal, Padhana and Sookhoo, is there any record of a school in Gurumukhee, or of a Sikh boy reading in any public school. This is not difficult to appreciate in as much as the percentage of Sikh Youth (male) to the total population was 1.15 in Rawalpindi, 0.81 in Jhelum, 1.09 in Gujrat and .25 in Shahpur, in which district also there is no such school on record. In spite of this paucity, there are some interesting observations, afforded to us in the figures of Gurmukhi school, however few they are. In the district of Jhelum there was no Gurmukhi school in the tehsils of Chakwal and Pind Dadan Khan. At Jhelum proper there was a school kept by
Utam Singh, who taught *Granth* gratis to two Hindu students. At Singholā in the same tehsil there was another school attended by fourteen Hindu students. The teacher Kesar Singh taught *Granth* and *Gurmukhi* to the boys and his fees were 10/6 p.m. in gross. In the tehsil of Tallagung which is now in Attock district there are on record 8 schools in which *Gurmukhi* was taught to Hindu boys only, there being no Sikh student in any of the schools. Of the 8 teachers of the language four were Hindus. A detailed study of these schools is very interesting. At Tallagung proper there was a five-teacher school with 73 students on roll of the teachers one Dial Singh was a Sikh and the other Muslims; while 26 students were Hindus and the rest Muslims. Dial Singh taught *Pothi* and got like others about Rs.2/- p.m. for his salary while the Muslims taught Persian as well as *Quran* to their boys. (Leitner, p.521)

At Jubbée Khas there was a two-teacher school. The Muslim teacher taught *Quran* to 9 Muslim students while Bhai Nihal Singh taught *Gurmukhi* to 6 Hindus. The teaching was gratis.

At Mansheerah Bhai Deewan Chand and Mohammad Yar kept a joint school, the former teaching *Gurmukhi* and *Pothee* to ten Hindus while the latter taught *Quran* to 26 Muslim students. Their income was Rs.1/9-p.m.

At Unfah, there was another *Gurmukhi* school, of its type, kept by a Muslim and a Hindu. Hassum Deen took 21 Muslim students in *Quran* while Utum Chand
taught Gurmukhi to four Hindu boys. The teaching was gratis.

At Rohtas, Trikta Shah taught Granth free to 8 Hindu students. At Kala there were four schools, two of which were Hindu. One Aulmst Dass taught Granth to 8 Hindu students.

Domalee seems to be educationally well-advanced. It possessed 6 schools. Two of these were Hindu. Devi Dass taught Gurmukhi gratis to twelve Hindu boys.

A unique phenomenon in the survey of indigenous education was school kept by Harnam Dass at Domalee which had 20 students on his role. Five of these were Brahmans, 2 Khatries, 2 Arorias and 11 of the lower classes, sons of oilmen, carpenters, drawers of water and weavers. He taught Granth or Goolistan, whichever subject the pupils liked or chose. He charged no fees and had no endowment or jagir to support him.

The returns from the Leiah and Peshawar divisions were not submitted at all.

Education was found in towns as well as in villages but no pains were taken to collect the figures.1 Masjids as well as Dharmasala existed in the Muslim majority districts and catered to the spiritual and educational

1. ER, 20 - 21, 5-5-1855;
   ER, 175-1/2; 21-7-1852;
   GR, 71-7; 26-5-1854.
needs of the people. But no pains were taken to collect figures of these mosques, temples or private schools.

It is the general feature of Pindi province, wrote Bhai Dit Singh in 1850, that wherever there are 10 houses of Hindus or Sikhs there is sure to be a Dharamsal (Sikh religious place). There is a Bhai and a copy of the Granth Sahib in every Dharamsal. The Bhai teaches the children of the villages the following books: Balbodh (Primer), the Granth, the sayings of Guru Gobind Singh. Both Sikh Hindu boys read these books. In Pothar (Rawalpindi District) many of the Muhammadans also read Gurmukhi.¹

Figures collected by Major Abbot, Deputy Commissioner of Hazara District though imperfect are revealing. There were, says the report dated August 5, 1852, 54 students studying Gurmukhi in four tehsils while in the fifth tehsil there was no Hindu Gurmukhi or Sanskrit scholar at all.²

In Multan division, the state of education in Gurmukhi was much better. In the Pakpattan district (Pakpattan is now a tehsil in the Montgomery district).

1. ER, 16-1/2-17, 7-2-1852.
out of 404 boys under instruction, 114 were students of Gurmukhi while 9 only read Sanskrit, 8 Hindi, 129 Q ran, the rest Persian. At Pakpattan proper, there was no big school of Gurmukhi with 58 boys on roll, Bhai Swarn Singh alone was the teacher who maintained the school according to their (boy's) several means.

In the Jharna District, we are told that Granth is the only book read in Gurmukhi even by Sikh girls at their parents' homes. Sikhs together with Hindus possess, by a rough method of calculation, a literacy percentage of 25. There were four Gurmukhi schools at Maghiana, two at Shorkote, four at Kot Kamalia, and one at Chunniote now called Chinote - eleven in all. There are no figures for Sikh students or teachers. All the students other than the Muslims were Hindus.

In the district of Multan, the figures reveal only one Gurmukhi school at Shujabad with two students on roll. The percentage of Sikh children and youngmen was .09 (males) while that of Muslims 24.84, to the entire population.

In the Lahore division\(^1\) there were 83 Gurmukhi schools with 546 scholars on roll. But strange to say, figures for the cities of Lahore, Amritsar and Sialkot, and for the towns of Eminabad, Deena Naggar and Shakar Garh are not given, for none of them can be without a Gurmukhi

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1. ER, 6-10, 23-11-1850.
school. The highest number is 20 with 119 boys at Kasur, next 19 with 66 boys in the tehsil of Amritsar, third, Wazirbad having 15 schools and 122 boys. Proportionally the highest number of students was at Tulwande the native village of Guru Nanak with 14 boys per school and Tarn Taran with 17 boys in one school. The books taught in the Gurmukhi schools in the Lahore division were (i) Alphabet (ii) Moharnee, Baolavee, (?) (iii) Das Granthi and Panj Granthi.

According to the Revised Settlement of Guiranwala, 1850, there were 40 Gurmukhi schools with 244 scholars in the district. A similar settlement of Gurdaspur 6 years later indicates 811 students of Gurmukhi. In 1858 Lahore District possessed 6.7% Gurmukhi scholars from a total of 4225 in 576 schools. The abstract of schools in Amritsar district in a revised settlement report of 1856 revealed 353 students of Gurmukhi out of total of 3,742.

In Sialkot district, too, where the percentage of Sikh children and youngmen to the total population is 1.66, there was one Gurmukhi school at Samryal with five students on roll. Besides, 4 students at Pasroor and 3 at Hardokilla studied Gurmukhi privately.

The Returns of the Trans-Sutlej States appear to be far from satisfactory. These were obtained thrice, first by the settlement officer, second by the officiating Deputy Commissioner Mr. Brerton and lastly by Major Edward, 1. GR, 1-7; 17-12-1853.
the Deputy Commissioner. Their returns do not reveal existence of any Gurmukhi School in the Jullundhar district. 'The Gurmukhi is in every partial use or favour in this division', say the record. That however does not mean that there were no Gurmukhi school in the district; on the other hand education in Gurmukhi seems to be more popular than in Persian or Hindi, for, even the Jats and Rains, says Henry Brereton, 1 Offg. Deputy Commissioner, read and wrote Gurmukhi. As regards the upper classes, adds Brereton, since Annexation tutors in Persian and Hindee and Gurmukhi are employed at home by respectable zamindars of all classes.

It seems that in the absence of Sikh temples the education was carried on in Sikh homes of the Granthis or of the children of the upper classes. It is presumed that in a district like Kohat of which no returns are given, there must be some education in Gurmukhi, private if not public; for a people numbering 2240, could not remain without such arrangement for long. The settlement report of Ludhiana points out that a Granthi resided in the family of well-to-do landlords for 6 or 7 years if not permanently and gave instruction to boys as well as girls in reading and writing Gurmukhi, and that children in the neighbourhood also shared in the instruction. So private education in Gurmukhi was at least as common as in other languages in the province. This view is supported by a

1. ER, 37 - 58, 4-2-1854.
further remark of the officer that "The Gurmukhi is almost entirely taught by private teachers being generally, considered the privilege of the Granthees or priests." But it is difficult to believe that in none of the tahsils of Philor Rahon, Nokodar or Jullundhar was there a single Sikh Dharmasal. The fact that the Jats and Rains were literate shows that education was extensively carried on by the Dharmasal.

In the Kangra district, too, according to Forsyth's return there was no Gurmukhi school at all. The percentage of the Sikh children being lowest .07 as in Bunnoo, while in Jullundhar it was 4.90. In the district of Hosharpur where it was 2.67, Melville, the Settlement Officer recorded six of 156 schools as Gurmukhi ones; 4 at Hoshiarpur proper, 1 at Hariana and 1 at Una. But it is nowhere given as to what was the number of Sikh students, attending these schools for the classification of students is between Hindus and Muslims only.

Ambala, Ludhiana and Ferozpur came in British possession earlier and education in these districts therefore came under the British influence much earlier. At the time of enquiry, many of the schools had disappeared as admitted earlier by Brereton and later in the record relating to those districts. ¹

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¹ ER, 41 - 42, 17-3-1855.
A true picture of the Gurmukhi school is therefore a very difficult task particularly when the past is dead and gone leaving only a few relics behind.

An interesting feature of these schools was that Hindus also attended these schools. Sometimes as evident in the returns of Tallagang Pargunnah, the Hindu teachers kept these schools for Hindu students. The testimony of Bh. Dit Singh, a wandering Sikh Sadhu of the Punjab who travelled from one part of the province to the other is very instructive. Even where there were 10 Hindu or Sikh residents, a Sikh Dharmasala existed and carried on both the spiritual and educational functions of the Sikh church. The Sikh schools assume a cosmopolitan character when he says that even Mohammadan attended Dharmasals, schools and even Muhammadan boys read Gurmukhi in Rawalpindi district. (Ahuja, p. 413)

3.2.4. MAINTENANCE OF GURMUKHI SCHOOLS

Dharmasal was an institution of religious character and charitable nature. It was, therefore, often endowed with a grant of land either out of the village common or from some private individual. The Sadh or the Granthi who was in charge of the institution was often in possession of endowment and received also presents from the parents of his pupils.

Most of the Granthis charged nothing and lived on the voluntary offering made by the parents of the children.

Given bread and clothing they needed nothing, for some of them had no family of their own to maintain; others were contented with whatever the community gave them to keep the Dharmasala and to make both ends meet.

Some of the teachers who kept Gurmukhi schools charged fee for the education of the children. One of them charged one pice for week; that was probably modest. The income of another was Rs.10.6 p.m. in all. The highest remuneration for teaching Gurmukhi and the Granth was Rs.5 p.m.

Some teachers were, however, fortunate. They were given land in Dharamarth. In Rothas, Triktah Shah, known as a distinguished scholar was given Muafi lands in six places amounting to 100 bighas for the maintenance of his Pathshala by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Another teacher at Kot Kasim in Gujrat had five bighas as Muafi or free land. At Kahuki, at Muradyan, at Waniki villages in the tehsil of Hafizabad, in Gujranwala district, at Raipur in Ludhiana district, and elsewhere, many teachers possessed enough land to keep a school and a Gurdwara going. 1

3.3. THE SIKH SEATS OF LEARNING

3.3.1. AMRITSAR: THE FIRST SEAT OF THE SIKH RELIGION AND LEARNING

Amritsar, "the tank of Nectar", was originally constructed by Guru Ram Das at the instance of his predecessor Guru Amar Das on a piece of land given to him by Emperor Akbar, as a supreme place of pilgrimage or 'God's home', for their followers. When the tank was being excavated, dwellings arose in the vicinity for the accommodation of the Guru's Sikhs, visitors and workmen, and in time a small town came into existence. It was at first called 'Ramdaspur' but finally Amritsar as it is now known. Guru Ram Das is now regarded as the guardian spirit of the city. The next Guru Guru Arjan Dev, completed the tank and built a temple Haramandar (1589) or "The Temple of God" in the midst of it. When the Granth Sahib, the Holy Book was completed in 1604, it was deposited in the Har Mandir and Baba Budha became its first Reader. Since then it has been the first throne of the Sikh religion, the symbol of their strength of weakness, the greatest centre of their religious and artistic achievements, and it has also been "the commercial emporium of Northern India", and as such the most flourishing city in the Punjab.

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1. J.D. Cunningham, op. cit., p.50.
2. Ibid., p.51.
Amritsar passed through adversity in the time of Ahmad Shah Durrani of Afghanistan and suffered decline but came into its own when the Sikh Misal seized the Punjab piece meal from thesatrps of the Afghan Kings, and particularly when Ranjit Singh established himself as the Maharaja.

Amritsar, wrote the new rulers after Annexation, is unquestionably regarded by the natives of the Punjab as the chief seat not only of the prevailing religion of the country but also of its learning and intellectual superiority. Students from other districts came to 'Amritsar for Goormookhee' where wealthy traders support the indigent. Formerly in Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s time there were many Gurumukhi schools in Amritsar which imparted instruction of a high order and enjoyed jagirs stipends from the Maharaja, which were, however, later on resumed.

There were in the beginning of the 19th Century nearly a dozen Akharas or colleges kept by Nirmalas, Udasis and Brahmans, in which was carried on the teaching of higher learning in Sanskrit and Gurumukhi in arts like literature, Philosophy, Politics, Astronomy, Mathematics, Literary criticism, etc.

1. G.W. Leitner, op.cit., p.150.
Rev. Lowrie who visited Lahore at the instance of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1835 describes Amritsar as the chiefly city of learning and religion like Benaras and Jerusalem. Parents sent their children from other places to Amritsar for receiving their education here. Lowrie visited the Har Mandir, and noticed a 'number of learned Sikhs' who lived in the cloisters around its pavement and in the booths on the margin of its waters', and were specialists in the 'sacred book'.

Amritsar was, in short, a great seat of learning.
It had a very large number of Gurmukhi and Sanskrit schools.
It had also a considerable number of colleges housed in monasteries and bungas, an account of which is given separately.
If Leitner's (1882) figures are authentic there were in Amritsar 40 Qoran, Arabic, Persian and Urdu Schools, 13 higher Qoran, Arabic and Persian schools, 20 Gurmukhi schools, 12 Mahajani schools and 56 Sanskrit Pathashalas. Besides these Gurmukhi was studied in five Bungas and three Akharas, and Sanskrit in two Bungas and two Akharas.

3.3.2. THE UNIVERSITY OF ANANDPUR:

Anandpur is a town of little significance in the submontane district of Hoshirpur with a line of low hills known as the Sola Singhi Range, separating it from Kangra and a part of Sivalike running through its heart. Beyond the Sivaliks, at a distance of eight miles from the celebrated peaks of Nainadevi, near the foot of the Tong

1. J.C. Lowrie, Two Years in Upper India (New York, 1842), p. 301.
mountain stands, on the left bank of the Sutlej, in a picturesque perspective, this little historic town which is not even a railway station. Guru Te Bahadur, the father of Guru Gobind Singh, plagued and pursued by Sodhis, left Kiratpur after Bakala near the Bias and took refuge here. He bought this piece of land from the Raja of Bilaspur (Kahlur) and built a village thereon, in the month of Har, Samvat 1722 or 1665 A.D., and called it Makhowal. It was to this place that Guru Gobind reiterated at the death of his father at the age of 15. In this retreat, Guru Gobind Singh lived for two decades in obscurity devoting himself to the arts of war as well as of peace. He founded a military school and a university which flourished for about a generation. These could not stand the onslaughts of the imperial army. The great soldiers fell in the war while the scholars fled to Amritsar and the other religious centres. The siege and sack of Anandpur laid it in the dust and the glory of it departed for ever.

A complete account of the Sikh University is still a subject of research. The few details that are available enable us only to re-construct a partial picture of that seat of research which perished with the town in December 1604. It is, therefore, not possible to give an

1. J.D. Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 64, 77.
2. Ibid., pp. 67, 77.
idea of the number of the young students who pursued the higher education, including Sanskrit and the Granth or devoted themselves to research. Nor can one indulge in speculation about the details of their residence or study. It was a residential university which assimilated the best of the Ashram and the monasteries of the ancient times. The seekers after learning, and learned refugees were attracted to the university from all places in the province and even from central Hindustan. Singers, bards, epic poets, scholars of languages and classics were always welcome there and made the university as their home.

According to both Mohan Singh and Macaulife the Guru kept 52 'bard' permanently in his employ and others occasionally visited him. Bhai Gyan Singh gives a list of these 52 posts the chief of whom were by implications Rama, Shama, Sainapati, Bhai Nand Lal, Bhai Santokh Singh. Of these two were Muslims and nine Singhis. Scholars of Sanskrit came from Benaras and Patna, scholars of Persia from several places in the Punjab. Apart from these, there were five Sikh Pandits: Ram Singh, Bir Singh, Ganda Singh, Karm Singh, Saina Singh, the Nirmalas (the 'Pure' or the 'Unsullied') whom the Guru had deputed to Benaras as monks and who, after 7 years stay there returned to Anandpur as scholars of Sanskrit. They taught Sanskrit to other Sikhs when Pandits like Raghunath refused to do so. They further translated the Mahabharata, the Puranas and the Upanishads into easy Hindi.  

2. Ibid., pp.172, 179, 180.
The aim of the university appears to be the revival of the ancient classics with a view to their diffusion and propagation among the Hindus in general and the Sikhs in particular. While studying the ancient classics for which he had probably imbibed predilection in his infancy, at Patna the young Guru discovered that the culture of the people was vitally connected with their character and that the decay of one led to the deterioration of the other and consequently to the fall of the people themselves. Since their political subjection, the culture of the Hindus had come under a cloud. The study of religion, philosophy or literature had become the close preserve of the high Brahmana who were comparatively few. Most of the Brahmanic class, however, picked up the rudiments of Sanskrit for learning their priest-craft. The Khatris, at the bidding of Toder Mal, took in course of time, to Persian, while the business class found no utility in learning any language but their trade science. Generally speaking, therefore, the study of Sanskrit classics fell into oblivion. Secondly, he found that the Sikhs possessed no secular, philosophic or epic literature of their own since they struck out a new line for themselves by adopting the Gurmukhi script. He, therefore, set about reviving or recreating both the military and the literary traditions of the epic India, for that was the only means of the national re-

Guru Gobind Singh himself was a profound student\(^1\) of the books, traditions and literature of his ancient forefathers, to whom he traces his lineage in his autobiography. Their literature was to him a source of genuine pride and boundless inspiration. Therein felt he

\[\text{Like some watcher of the skies,}\]
\[\text{when a new planet swims into his ken... (Keats)}\]

He was a genius with a gift of poetry which he had attempted in excellent verse beside the Jamana. His readings of the epics cast a spell on him and stirred up his racial memories which lie dormant in that mysterious chamber of the unconscious which links up and transmits heredity from age to age. The influence of Krishna and his Gita which he translated in verse, seems to have been on him as deep as life and probably suggested to him his 'mission' in those troubled times, and urged him to impart to the people the education of mind, of heart as well as of the body, with a view to their uplift and transformation.

The aim of the university was, therefore, a research in, and the study of, the ancient literature; Poetry, history, political science, Military Science Mythology, Medieval Romance and ballads, not as an end in itself but as a means to the national renaissance. His repeated emphasis on the study of history was made to this effect. The work of these scholars consisted not merely

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in studying the originals but also in translating, imitating, adapting and finally producing fresh and original literature of their own after these models. The university must have looked like a beehive with no drones hanging about except the ministrels humming new songs or musicians tuning up their instruments. Their long and patient research and unflagging industry brought forth a prodigious output. The Guru himself contributed no small a share to it. His works, later collected by one of his scholars, Mani Singh, in a separate volume called Dasam Granth are: Jap Ji, a rosary of the epitheots of God intended for daily recitation in the usual prayer, written after the model of Vishnu Sharna, Nam Mala

(2) Akal Ustat, in praise of the Timeless; (3) Var Sri Bhagauti Ji, a Ballad of the Amazonian Goddess Bhagauti;
(4) Gian Parbhodh, in praise of the Lord with the legends of Prichhat, Ajai Singh and Mahikhes; (5) Chaulis Autar,
(6) Shastarnam Mala and Nam Mala, a catalogue of the names of the military arms and the account thereof (7) Ten Shabads in different Rags making devotional songs in 34 stanzas, (8) 35 Sawaiyyas, a dissertation on God and the paths leading up to him.\(^1\) Over and above these, Guru Gobind Singh rendered a literal verse translation of the Bhagvat Gita interspersed with Madhosudhan a commentary done in vernacular together with a running commentary of his own. He further wrote, "Premabodh", a biographical sketch of sixteen saints.

\(^1\) Mohan Singh, op.cit., p.39.
Macauliffe mentions yet another compilation of his Vidya Dhar but which was unfortunately lost in one of his engagements.

Almost most of what the poets and scholars themselves attempted had been lost or rather has not been re-discovered. It is difficult to estimate how much of what the Guru wrote was from his own pen, how much was the product of joint collaboration with other scholars or how far they assisted him in his independent attempts. A thorough study of his style and close scrutiny of different texts might throw some light on the problem and help resolve it to some extent. A good deal of research has in fact been made in this direction and the results so far arrived at are very encouraging: two of his works, for instance, Chahalis Avtar and Tiriya Chritar formerly attributed to the Guru claim to be the authorship of Shiam and Ram.

These poets and scholars attempted numerous subjects and laid under contribution all the available literature, myths, legends, folk lore, epics, philosophy and history. They "wrote on all the nine subjects or Rasas which are in the opinion of the Sanskrit critics suitable themes of poetry, viz., love, pathos, anger, heroism, terror, hate, wonder and quietude living; and added to these was the eulogy of the Gurus. Guru Gobind Singh had once the

cutiosity to weigh their compilation which amounted to nearly two and a half-hundred seers weight.¹

Most of these works were, probably, lost in the Sirsa after their flight from Anandpur and comparatively few of these are extinct. Sainapati, for instance, translated in Hindivi Duhas Kautilya’s Arthaśāstra, otherwise known as Chanakya-niti; Ram and Shyama two other poets, contributed to the Dasam Granth. Tirya Chitra a compendium in 7555 stanzas of medievial romance, “an Encyclopaedia of almost all Punjabi, non-Punjabi, Indian and non-Indian tales in mixed Punjabi and Braji, cast in Kabīts and other metrical forms of history, mythology, geography, legendary lore, customs and beliefs of people. Other productions attributed to this group of associated poets are Rattan Sagar, Buddh Sagar, Vichar Sagar and Lila Sagar, the whole of Mahabharata in Bhasha and Gur Sōbha.

There was another group of scholars, mentioned above, well known to us as Nirmalas who worked together as a team on a definite plan of their own. These Sikh Pandits translated the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puranas and the Upanishads in easy Hindi before doing them in Ourmukhi.

¹ The writings of the Guru and of his men were lost when the Mughal army fell trecherously on the Guru and the party of his followers after their evacuation of Anandpur on the banks of the river Sirsa and the Sikhs were either slain or scattered such manuscripts as were left with the disciples were long after collected by him, and the whole volume was called Dasam Granth or the Granth of the 10th Guru.
The story of their later achievements will be told elsewhere. Summing up, Mohan Singh says that the scholar Guru gave to the Punjabi poetry "many a new world of conception and execution - balladery, battology, sex and romance, Vaishnavite and Shāyānī mythology and philosophy, history and autobiography, military science and lastly a epistology using the media of Hindi, Persian, Braj, Lahandi, Sanskrit, Magdhi, and Lahori, casting words in the moulds of Persian, Braji, Lahandi, Hindvi and Prākritī metres.

One of the gems of the university was Bhai Nand Lal, a great scholar of Persian and Arabic, and a renowned poet, ex-secretary of Prince Muazzim and a refugee from the court of the emperor Aurangzeb. There are two different versions of his flight from the royal court but they agree on one point: that his ability and scholarship won him the appreciation of the emperor who was pleased to recognise and reward it by offering him the privilege of conversion to the royal faith. After the death of Aurangzeb, Bhai Nand Lal returned to his patron who had now succeeded to the throne as Bahadur Shah. The Bhai was a Vaishnivite Khatri who had rebelled even as a boy from the creed of a Bairagi in which he was brought up, but found, in his contact with the Guru, mental satisfaction and spiritual peace. He presented the Guru some specimens of Persian poetry in his books "Dewan-i-Goya, Zindgi name", which the Guru rechristened as Bandgi Nama. During his stay at Annandpur he wrote several books in Persian on his Sikh religion and continued
writing while in Imperial service. His works known to this day are Jot Vikash, Tosifh-o-Sanah, Ganj Nama, Insha Dastur, Arazul-Ilfaz, Khatma, Rahitnama.

Research and learning are the moths of peace and thrive in an Arcadia like Anandpur. In the year 1700 war clouds gathered and thickened and burst over Anandpur. The arts of peace with their lovers bade good-bye to it and made for kindlier skies. The arts of war came in demand. For four years Anandpur had no peace until it was overrun and deserted.

The great tradition of scholarship that was created and fostered at Anandpur has still been kept up and handed down from generation to generation by the Nirmalas the Pandits of the Sikh culture, who found refuge at Amritsar, Muktasar, Dandiama, and other places sacred to their religion.

The Nirmala scholars rooted themselves in Vedant but flowered in Sikh devotion. Their deep reading in the classical literature influenced their thought as well as expression in the provincial dialects. They formed a class by themselves generally called the Sikh literary aristocratic caste which devoted itself to the popularization of the Vedanta and the philosophisation of Sikhism. "The Nirmalas are," says Oman, "a learned Order most given to Sanskrit studies, and are followers of Vedant philosophy. As official theologians and philosophers of the new creed they wrote besides religion, on prosody, medicine music, geography,

rhetoric, Astrology, Astronomy, History, Biography, etc., enriching Punjabi literature and extending its domain.\(^1\) There is a galaxy of scholars who dedicated their lives to scholarship and its propagation among the masses, writers like Ganesha Singh, a Mahant of Amritsar and disciple of Sant Hira Singh, author of "Bharat Mat Darpan", Gulab Singh of Rawalpindi and a disciple of Man Singh, Kahan Singh of Nabha, Santokh Singh of Amritsar, Tara Singh of Hoshiarpur and others hailing from different parts of the Punjab.\(^2\)

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2. Ibid.
After Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh got peace for sometime in the wastes of Bhatinda at two places called by him the Lakhi jungle and Talwandi Sabo now called Damdama in in Patiala State. Some of the poets and scholars who had scattered wide at the siege of Anandpur, like Greek scholars at the fall of Constantinople now gathered around him again. The woods and the sands echoed with the morning prayers and the even song so familiar to the Ravi, the Bias, the Sutlej and the Jamuna. The poetry born of this sand and clime was idyllic and picturesque deeply touched with the tragic pathos of the Guru's life.

It was here in 1705 that the Guru wrote his autobiography the Vichitar Natak or the "wonderous Drama", which was later incorporated with his other literary labours of Anandpur into the Dasam Granth or the Book of the 10th Guru, by Bhai Mani Singh. Here he dictated to the Bhai, the third version (Bir) of the Adi Granth from his wonderful memory. The place acquired on that account a sanctity for the study of the Holy Book. Mahants at Damdama consider it a meritorious act to make a copy of the Guru's version. The study of the Granth, writes Trump (1881) has much been in vogue there and the Gurmukhi writers of the Damdama are considered to be the best. Being situated in desert far away from the route of the invader's march accompanied with sword and fire, and little connected with theatres of war, Damdama known before as Talwandi Sabo became an Arcadia of the scholars of the Granth. The Punjabi scholarship which had no access to
the Vedas now devoted itself to study of the Granth which is probably as bulky as the our Vedas put together. Students from all the parts of the province came to Damdama to complete their education in all the higher branches of Gurmukhi learning. Teachers like Sadhu Bhup Singh attracted pupils from far and near. Under the patronage of Sikh Sardars and Rajas the colleg... and the schools there came in possession of endowments; and the Damdama came to be called the Rural University of the Sikhs or the Benaras of the Sikhs.

A saying of Guru Gobind Singh is current among the Sikhs, writes Trump that whoever would dwell, at Damdama, he would become wise be he ever so great a fool.¹

Here is born my Kasi (Benaras).
Here shall study even slow-witted and dunces, writers, the accompanied, poets, scholars, Intelligent would they become here.

For their sake I scatter pens about in the bushes, 44 Thousands of my Sikh friends will study at this place.

A band of Mirmalas settled down here and carried on the tradition of the Guru, which has come down to the present times through the generations. The spirit of the

¹ G.W. Leitner, op.cit., pp.37, 151.
Guru still works here. It is regarded as the Fifth Throne after Amritsar, Anandpur, Patna (Bihar), Abchal Nagar (the Deccan). The abbots of the Dharamsalas are consulted in important questions of doctrine. Sodhis and Masands are also found here.

Guru Gobind Singh, writes Macauliffe (1909) with the above quotation in mind, used to have pens made and scattered in different directions. By this he meant that the inhabitants of the place should become learned and experienced. The spot is now called Likhan-sar. It is sacred to the art of writing. It is well preserved at Damdama Sahib, being surrounded by Bungas tenanted by scholar-saints.
3.4.1. The Sanskrit Pathshalas

It is in Sanskrit schools that the exclusive side of Hinduism comes out. Like Arabic Schools, those called "Sanskrit" are largely attended by adults and entirely by Brahmans.

A closer study of the Sanskrit Schools, however, wherever statistics are available, reveals that Sanskrit schools were not always a monopoly of Brahman boys nor even that of Brahman teachers, and that Khattris, and sometimes children of the business community also attended the Sanskrit or popularly known as 'Shastri' schools. In Gujrat proper, for instance, one Pandit Ishar Dass kept a school with 60 students on roll. Twenty of them were Brahmans, twenty, Khattris, and an equal number others. They were not all adults for their ages varied between eight and fifteen. In another school, in the same town all the ten students were Brahmins, but their ages varied between 7 and 15, the average being 11. In another school Har Bhaj Misra taught Sanskrit to twenty students, seven of whom were Brahmans, the rest 13, being Khattris. Their ages varied between 10 and 17, the average being 13.

Besides Brahmans, Udasis, Nirmalas, Sadhs or Sadhus also opened Sanskrit schools or colleges.¹ There were also found in the

¹. For details see Under Udasis and Nirmalas.
district, records the Gazetteer of Ludhiana, 'a few Nirmalas in some villages where they occupied Dharamsalā. These Nirmalas, as we know, were devoted to the study of Sanskrit. Since Guru Gobind Singh revived the study of Sanskrit in 1687, Nirmalas have been great scholars and teachers of the classical language. They translated many books from Sanskrit into Gurmukhi and others like 'Jap Ji' into Sanskrit. They were chiefly found in Gurdaspur, Ambala, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Patiala and Faridkot. The chief centres of their educational activities were in Deras, monasteries, Mandirs and in Dharamsalā at towns and villages.


Sadhus and Pandits at Kurukshetra, records the Phulkian Gazetteer instructed students in Hindu theology like "Gita" and and the Mahabharata the Ramayna, and the Vidyarthis learnt shalokas and hymns by heart. The Nirmala Pundits, writes Ganesha Singh, often resorted to Kurukshetra for the study of Sanskrit, which they adopted as a centre of scholarship.

2. Ibid.
Many members of the Udasi sect were good scholars of Sanskrit. The Udasis studied Sanskrit, writes Bhai Parmanand, and thus fostered the ancient culture among the Sikhs. In the possession of the Mahant of the Akhara of Balanand, there is a deed of the grant of jagir to Mahant Balanand (Audasee Sadh) confirmed by British he had a similar Jagir endowment for the education of Hindu and Sikh children. The Akhara or monastery ran a Sanskrit Pathshala of repute for the Mahant himself was a Brahman scholar of Sanskrit. The subjects taught to the students were Vyakaran, Laghu Kaumudi (Siddhant Kaumudi, Vedant and Niyaya. Education in Medicine in Sanskrit was also a part of the curriculum.

3.4.2. **Extent of Sanskrit Pathshalas.**

A surprising fact about Sanskrit schools is that, though comparatively small in number, they were found everywhere in far-off unexpected places in N.W.F.P. Province, in temples, deras, monasteries and in the houses of teachers. At Manzai, lately an outpost of the British Empire in Waziristan, for instance, the Kardar's Report upon Education says that 'Education is conducted in the Monsques and Dharamsalas...The Moolah and the Pandits of these were instructors... The Hindus generally recompense their Pandit with a daily, a monthly or yearly payment in cash. This is generally at the rate of 7 pice per day. Their school room is Dharamsala. But both Hindus and Muhammadans in fair weather prefer the shade of a tree.'

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1. Educational Records, 175-1/2; 21-8-1852.
In the Peshawar Division, 'Every where the Mosque or the temple was the school'. In Hazara district, there were 11 Sanskrit schools. Captain John Loke is silent about Kohat district.

In the Leiah Division, which comprised the modern districts of Mianwali, Muzaffargarh and D.G. Khan there were also a few Brahmins who teach the Shastras but there is nothing deserving the name of a school. In the D.G. Khan district, "Shastri" was also taught to the Hindus. In the Multan Division, there were 9 students of Sanskrit in the Pakpattan district, 13 Shastri schools in the Jhang district and five school with 17 students in the Multan district.¹

In the Trans-Sutlej States, in which there were Pandits versed in Sanskrit, 28 Sanskrit schools existed with 796 scholars in Jullundhar district- a unique record for Sanskrit Education. From Hoshiarpur district there is a return of 39 Hindu schools some of which may be genuine Sanskrit schools. In Ahluwalia territory there were 140 scholars of Hindi-Sanskrit. In the Kangra district, where Brahmins and Goswains according to the Gazetteer, lived in large numbers, there were 10 Sanskrit schools with 97 students.²

¹. Ibid.
². The above statistics are based on District Gazetteers.
Hindus and Sikhs except Kukas, record the Gazetter of Ludhiana District, were greatly ruled by Brahmans. Every one had a Prohit or superior priest, a learned man who was well-versed in scriptures. There were 5 Sanskrit schools with 173 students in their roll. There were also found in the district a few Nirmalas in some villages where they occupied Dharamsal. These Nirmals as we know were devoted to the study of Sanskrit.

On the testimony of Major Edwards about Peshawar, of Major Abbot about Manzai and of the record of Simla, Hissar and other districts, Dharamsal or temple was the school and the Pandit the instructor. In Ambala district there were 9 Sanskrit schools, in Thanesar in Ferozepur 3, with 10 students. Yet from the records of rent free land resumed or confirmed it appears that the Brahmans kept private schools which were not only free but at the same time provided food to the boys who worked for their masters in spare hours and paid for their education.

In Lahore division, Robert Montgomery's returns are more illuminating. He records 76 schools of Sanskrit with 1311 students. The city of Lahore alone had 38 schools teaching 68 students. One school had as many as 110 scholars. Wazeerabad had 13 schools with 104 students. The highest attendance was found in Sheikhupura where 4 schools had 223 students on roll. The Revised Settlement Reports of these districts supply further details. In the Gujranwala district in 1850, 20 Shastri schools, had 244 students on roll. Speaking of the district, the Gazetteer says that the 'district was over
run with **Majids, Thakardaras, Dharamsals** which most probably catered to the educational as well as religious needs of the people. In the Gurdaspur district, there are on record 89 Nagri scholars, in Amritsar, 267, and in Lahore district 8% of 4225. Most of these would have taught reading and writing in Nagri characters with Sanskrit.

As a rule Sanskrit schools did not include the teaching of Arithmetic or accounts. In Sialkot district in a very illuminating survey, Prinsep found seven Sanskrit schools with 152 students while the total number of Brahmins under instruction in the district in all subjects was 291. It shows that while all the students of Sanskrit were not Brahmins all the Brahmins did not study Sanskrit or Sanskrit exclusively. Records of landed grants mention a Pathshala or Sanskrit school kept by Goshaen Sheoran Das, the grantee and present occupant in the village of Keylas, Amritsar district age 68 in possession of Rs. 1000 of Jagir given by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1881 V.S.,. The school is still maintained; the present number is 15, instruction is in Sanskrit literature and daily provision is offered from the majfidar Sheoran Das assisted by his son Hurditta Ram in teaching the boys. Sheoran Das demised on 21 September, 1852 and was succeeded by his son in the management of the institution. But the allowance was resumed on the death of the grantee. The charge, however, was maintained by the son at his own expense.¹

3.4.3. Nature of Education in Sanskrit

The aims of education in Sanskrit were both utilitarian and cultural. The sons of Brahmins studied as a rule for their vocational training, while Nirmalas and Udasis studied medicine or philosophy or even both. Nirmalas, as we have seen above, and Udasis, most probably like Balanand, went to Benaras to complete their education. Others like Pt. Gulab Singh Nirmala went nearer home to Kurukshetra. The Punjab also imported learned Brahmins from Hindustan.¹

The Sanskrit schools, noted the Hunter Commission, are similar to those found in other parts of India. Most of the pupils are studying for religious order and they are educated gratuitously. The higher Hindu schools teach rhetoric, logic, philosophy and grammar.

The Brahman boys learned the ritual of their office: Pandhais and Misrati functions; in all the important towns and most of the villages. Their teacher was known as Padha (Sanskrit Upadhya), a specialist in ceremonies and rites. After finishing their primer, besides the study of grammar they took up a course of professional studies which considered in four five books describing ceremonies or rites:

1. Har Chakra ... Astrological primer.
2. Sheghra Bodh ... Principles for fixing dates and hours for wedding, etc.
3. Viwah Padhati ... The wedding rites.
4. Sanskar Padhati ... Ceremonies and rites.
5. Garud Katha ... Selections from "Gurud Puran" describing the Progress of soul after death, recited as a part of funeral ceremony.

¹. Phulkian Gazette, September, 1885, p. 79.
The instruction began early in the morning. At noon came the interval. Students attended again in the afternoon for two or three hours. The method of teaching was typical: One book was taught at a time, first by rote and then by explanation. At other hours the student would serve his teacher, beg for his living or revise his lessons.¹

A keen student would continue his education further with the Pandit or teacher of Sanskrit while an average Brahmin boy would drop away at this stage. Studies in grammar and astrology would be pursued beyond the early stage. A student would often combine in him the office of the priest and the profession of an astrologer for that would improve his chances of earning a better living. Niyāya Vedant and Dharam Shastras were the most important subjects which an ambitious scholar would take up later one after the other. For each subject, sometimes, he would sit at the feet of different Pandit, for specialisation was a characteristic feature of higher education in Sanskrit. At Kurukshetra and Benaras the Panjabis would spend a number of years in the study of Bhagwat Gita, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, Siddhant Sharomani, Siddhant Kaumadi and Puranas like Bhagwat.

Medicine was also studied through the medium of Sanskrit. Mahant Ganesha Singh, for instance, studied elementary medicine at his village Dharamsala in Hoshiarpur, but went to Jammu for higher studies which he carried on at the temple of Raghunath in the medium of Sanskrit. It was also studied at the deras or

¹ Phulkian Gazetteer, p. 76.
monasteries of the Udasis, Nirmalas and Sadhus, like the Akharas of Balanath and Brahmbuta. The books in common use were Charak, Nidhan, and Megh Vinod, treating the subjects of surgery, anatomy and medicine.

3.4.4. The Curriculum

While classifying the indigenous schools, the Annual Report for 1881-2 (para 10) defines Pathshala as a school for teaching Sanskrit, however, elementary, one of the aims being religious. The Nagri character is also taught through Hindi language (leading up to Sanskrit) whether the eventual teaching includes high or elementary, secular or only religious teaching.

In other words, the teaching of Sanskrit began after a fair skill in the reading and writing of Devnagari script had acquired. An elementary knowledge of grammar including particles of speech, number, person, gender and tense, declension and conjugation is also a pre-requisite of the study of Sanskrit. The formal study of Sanskrit was, therefore, commenced two or three years later. Since Sanskrit is a difficult language and the literature or philosophy is studied for its own sake, a small percentage of students can undertake its study for a fairly long period. No wonder, therefore, if Sanskrit schools were, and, are, not popular. They were invariably single teacher schools.

In the high stages or in the higher teaching, the number of students ranged between 3 and 6 only, while teaching itself was limited to one or two books which a student could
master or specialise in. The Brahmin teacher could teach both secular and sacred studies 'the higher branches of learning almost indissolubly connected with religion and its ministers'.

In Gujrat district, for instance, Pt. Ishar Das taught Sardha, Vyakaran and Plarhi; Govind Sahai taught his boys Ujhurra, and Bed Pak while Har Bhaj Misra had specialised in Vyakaran and Shastar. In Jullundar 'astrology' was favourite with students. At Kapurthala one often came across a distinguished student of astronomy. A young ambitious Pandit would often study grammar, logic, metaphysics, mathematics and astronomy, and welcome a discussion on any of these. 

In Kangra district, Dutto taught Siddhant; Ganpat, Amar Kosh (lexicology); Danto Sighra Bodh (Astronomy, Astrology); Sheodas, Viwaha (Padhiti) (Marriage Ritual); Narsingh Dass, Bheem Singh and Mungal taught Siddhant, Amar Kosh, etc., Thakar Dass, Nyaya, Vyakaran (Grammar), Vedant; while Narain, the most learned Pandit in the district, took students in Sarsoot (Poetry), Raghuwansh (Poetry), Singhra Bodh (astrology), and Siddhant, etc.

Most of the books are classic works of Sanskrit literature and are as popular even today among the students as they were in the past. Astronomy and astrology had always been necessary for priest-craft and as such a part of Brahamic studies. For recitations in the houses of the pious people and in the courtyard of a temple the study of Gita, and other

2. Kangra District Gazetteer, p. 36.
popular Puranas was also a necessary equipment of the Brahman priest.

The subjects studied by the Nirmalas in Sanskrit, in the Punjab as well as abroad, were chiefly, Vyakaran, Vedant and Shahstras, some of them like Pandit Tara Singh specialised in Niyaya, some in Mimansa like Pandit Ram Singh. Scholars like Pandit Diwan Singh and his pupil Pandit Basant Singh studied Vedas and Vedangas as well. Some included in their education Jyotish as well. Pandit Udhai Singh a well known scholar and teacher, studied all the books on Vedant and Nyai. Numerous pupils of various sects sat at his feet and distinguished themselves as scholars. The particular texts mentioned by Mahant Ganesha Singh are Aaduit Sidhi, Chitmukhi Satik, Vedant Muktavali, Hanumna Khand, Gada Dhar, Jagdishi, Shaktiwaad etc. etc.

A further testimony, given in the Calcutta Review, is equally illuminating. There were, it records, 86 Sanskrit schools kept by the Pandits in the Punjab, 9 in Lahore district, 9 in Amritsar, 12 in Kangra Hills, 5 in Nabha district, etc. The Shastras were taught in 11, Nayaya in 15, Vedant in 4, Bhagwat Purana in 8, astrology in 10, Grammar in 35, Medicine in 2, and Literature in 13, schools. It will be evident from the curricula that these institutions were colleges pursuing higher education.

3.4.5. Maintenance of Schools

Some of the teachers of Sanskrit, like others, charged tuition fees which came, at least, to Rs.2/-p.m. and at most to Rs.5/-p.m. To some food, as well, was provided.¹

But those teachers who possessed land rent-free land charged nothing from their pupils for they were financed by the Government or the community. In Gujrat², both the Pandits held Jagir, at a village Fukkanwal, one of which was worth Rs.300/-p.a. In the Kangra district, two teachers possessed 5 ghummaos of land each; another possessed 28 ghummaos, while a third 42 ghummaos for the maintenance of his school and family. In Sheikhupura,³ the greatest number of scholars was 145 found in the village school of Culukh which receives grant in Dhurmurth. The children were fed and clothed free. In Wazeerabad, too, indigent pupils were supplied with food.

In Jullundar, at Rahon, Pandits Duni Chand and Beni Ram sons of Chujjo Brahman, possessed 50 ghummaos of rent-free land. The total area of land possessed by 210 Pandits or teachers in the Jalandhar district was 387 acres, by 247 teachers; in Hoshiarpur district it was 290 acres; and by 2 teachers in Mukerian it was 11 acres. At Keylas in the Amritsar district, Goshaeen Sheo Ram Dass held a Jagir worth one thousand rupees

¹ GR, 43-4; xv, 17-12-1853.
² GR, 43-4; xv, 17-12-1853.
³ E.R. 6-10, 23-11-1850.
⁴ E.R. 37-68; 4-12-1854.
for maintaining a Sanskrit school and feeding the students. In the city of Lahore, one Bhagwan Das kept a free school of 40 pupils, the poor amongst whom were provided with food. His grant was held in the village of Patookeu, the whole of which was shared by Brahmins in separate grants. There are many other cases in which good teachers were fully supported by the people or Government in their education efforts.²

1. Ibid.
Arnold in his Report for 1856-7, gives a return of 289 Hindi schools in the Punjab. A real Hindi school is very rare*, affirms he, adding, 'I think a great majority of these 289, if strictly looked into, would have to be classified as Shastri or Lande'. This statement requires a careful examination!

The Administration Report for 1881-2, however, incidentally tries to clear up the confusion between the Hindi Schools and Lande Schools. Speaking of Muhajani Schools, the Report points out that these schools also sometimes teach the Nagri character for which as also for Lande, the term Hindi is mis-used. This mistake is further evident in the Revised Settlement Report of the Lahore District November 17, 1858 in which Hindi is called debased Nagri.

Secondly, it is no doubt true that Hindui was taught in Sanskrit schools as a primary subject. Besides, a number of boys never passed beyond the vernacular school. It is, therefore, not wrong to assume that there was a very large number of Hindi schools particularly in the Hindi-speaking area of the Punjab. Hindi, according to the Calcutta Review, conversed a greater area than any other, Indian dialect. The western boundary may be placed about Sirhind 76.30 longitude, 30.45 Latitude, and goes side by side with Punjabi southward

2. For an account of the Mahajani schools see Appendix, VII.
through the deserts of Patiala and Bhawalpur till it meets Sindi near Jaisalmer. In the eastern districts, of the Punjab, however, there was an admixture of the Hindee and Sanskrit languages with the Nagri character and other characters debased from the Nagri.

The teaching and learning of Hindi was, however, not confined to the linguistic region, east or the south of Sirhind. In Hindu villages, stated Bhai Dit Singh, a Punjabi, in 1850, inhabited principally by Brahmins, the children are generally taught Devnagri or Hindi character. The books taught in their schools are Balbodh (Primer), Sarasuat, Prem Sagar (a Hindi Standard book) Tulsi's Ramayna, Sanskrit Grammar, and Viah Paddhati (marriage Ritual).

The evidence indicates that the teaching of Hindi literature and of priestcraft were combined in Brahmanic schools. The testimony of the Ludhiana Gazetteer is however, clear and definite. There were, in the district, it says, 20 Lande schools, 5 Sanskrit schools, and 36 Shastri schools also described as Nagri schools with 351 students.

There is no confusion in the returns here. The classification into Sanskrit, Lande and Shastri is definite and it is difficult to say that the returning authority could make no distinction between the Lande and the Devnagri on the one hand, and between the Sanskrit and the Hindi on the other.

2. Ibid.
Speaking of the indigenous education in the Phulkian States, the Gazetteer records that Hindu girls and women got education in Nagri script. Hindu widows used to teach them the Gita, the Ramayana and Ishnu Sahasr nama etc.¹

Hindi was thus spoken in a fairly large area of the East Punjab, employed as a medium of education in Sanskrit, and taught as a literature in many parts of the province, side by side with or in place of Sanskrit, Gurmukhi or Persian.

3.4.7. The Extent of Education in Hindi

In the Revised Settlement of the Lahore District, (dated Nov. 17, 1858), it is on record that of 4225 students 7% learn Hindu or ‘debased Nagri’, while 8% learned Nagri. There were (in 1856), in Lahore district, 89 scholars in Nagree and 9,45 in Lande. In Ferozepore district there were besides 13 Sanskrit schools and 8 Hindi schools in which only reading, writing, arithmetic were taught. In Gujranwala district, (in 1850) 36 Hindee schools with 1609 scholars. In Amritsar District, in the same year, there were 267 students of Nagri and 1,487 of ‘Lundee’. In Sialkot district there, are on record, 15 Hindi schools with 329 students on roll. In Pakpattan district, also, are recorded several schools with eight students in all on their roll. In the Multan district there were 14 Hindi schools with 251 students in them. In Hoshiarpur district Melvill settlement officer recorded

¹ Phulkian Gazetteer, p. 370.
39 Hindee schools but no Sanskrit school at all. Now all these 39 Hindee schools cannot be Sanskrit schools; for Kangra, and not Hoshiarpur, has been known as a centre of Sanskrit studies. Some of the 39, therefore, may be Sanskrit ones, and the others Hindi ones. In Kangra district two Hindu schools taught each all the three Rs: Accounts, reading and writing. In Mukerian Settlement Report (dated 29th May, 1852), it is stated that the great majority of schools 31/75 are Hindi where little more is taught than simple reading and writing and a little arithmetic. In Hazara district there were 34 Hindi schools besides 12 Sanskrit ones.

Hindi was taught in its vernacular schools, in Sanskrit Pathshalas and sometimes in Lande schools. Some times it was taught in the Mandalis also. Pandit Tara Singh, for instance, studied Bhakha in a Mandli. These Mandalis, as already discussed, were orders of intinerant learned Sadhus like Buddhist monks of older times. Besides Udasis, Nirmalas, the Garib dasis, the Ram Sanehis, the Sadhs etc., studied Hindi, both as a language and as a literature. They translated classics like the Gita, Bhagwat Puran, besides composing their own verses, and taught these to their followers.

3.4.8. **The Hindi Literature**

Devotional verse was a peculiar features of the new Hindi poetry into which the Bhakti movement flowered in between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century. A book of devotional lives known as Nabhaji's Bhakt Mal became popular. A large number of the earliest as well as the most important specimens
of Bhakti poetry written in Hindi in that period like those of kabir, Namdev, was included in the Adi Granth. Surdas and Mira Bai were the greatest Krishna poets in Hindi. It is, therefore, fairly reasonable to suppose that poetry was popular among the people of the Punjab. The story of how the verses from Mira were included in the Granth, indicates how popular her devotional poetry had been in the Punjab of the days of Guru Arjan.

The Renaissance of Sanskrit Learning, which set the vernacular literature on their feet, showed itself principally through translation and adaptation of Sanskrit, epics notably the Mahabharata, and the Ramayana by Tulsi Dass. 'The one Bible of a hundred millions of people'. The Mahabharata was a favourite of the tenth Guru, and recitations from the text were given in his darbar. His example was catching. The study of the Mahabharata became popular, recitations from it became a vague. Recitations were also given from the Mahabharata in the Akharas of the Nirmalas, as a regular feature of the daily life of the inmates.

Another book which Guru Gobind liked most of the classics, was Bhagwat Gita. He translated it himself as Gobind Gita for the benefit of the masses in a mixed language part Punjabi part Hindi. Since then it has became very popular among the Sikhs like Nirmalas and others. They studied Hindi or Sanskrit for the love of learning. Bhai Narain Singh found a copy of the Govind Gita in the house of a carpenter in the

Jhelum District. Some ruling Sikh chiefs also were fond of reading the Gita at day break daily, after the study of the Sikh scriptures.¹

The Puranas were equally popular among the orthodox Hindus. Recitations from the Puranas had always been a regular feature of temple, and a study of the Puranas has therefore been a part of a Brahmin's professional training or equipment. The Garud Puran was recited as a part of the funeral ceremony; otherwise Bhagwat Puran was very popular among the masses, particularly for its XI chapter, which is a prose rendering of the Bhagwat Gita. S. Sher Singh of Attariwala used to listen to the recitations from Bhagwat with great devotion.²

3.4.9. **Hindi in the Punjab**

Hindi covered a greater area than any other Indian dialect. The western boundary may be placed about Sirhind 76,30 long; 30,45 lat; and goes side by side with the Punjabi southward through the desert of Patiala and Bahawalpur till it meets Sindhi near Jaisalmer³. West Bengal on the east, is still considered to be the other frontier of the language. In fact, the vernacular speech of the whole of north India is described to be Hindi, though according to Grierson, it can be divided into four varieties, Bihari, East Hindi of Tulsi Dass and Kabir, Rajasthan and West Hindi of Sur Das, Miran Bhai and Garib Dass of Rohtak.⁴

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² Ibid.
The Punjab comes within the range and influence of the western Hindi of which Braj Bhasha is the chief dialect. Punjabi is closely connected with it in its origin while Bangaru of the South eastern hills is a dialect of it. Hindi, therefore, covered an appreciable sector of the Punjab during the period under review.

3.4.10. The Ashrams

There was another agency of higher education to which seekers after learning like Nanak resorted. It was a relic of ashramas founded by rishis and saints of yore, and flourished not merely far from the madding crowd, but away from the reach of the invader or tyrant. In the dense forests around Talwandi, now called Nankana, in the present district of Lahore, were to be found ascetics and anchoress who sought the extreme retirement of the locality. Later on, in the time of Mislás, Babu Muldas and his band of Bairagi followers dwelt on the place, now known, as Attari 18 miles west of Amritsar. Some of them were profoundly versed in the Indian religious literature of the age. They had also travelled far and wide within the limits of Hindustan and met its renowned religious teachers.

Nanak thus became acquainted with the latest teachings of Indian philosophers and reformers. Guru Nanak's son Shri Chand, who later founded the Udasis sect, used to retire to the desert and pass his time under trees. He wore

1. Earnest Trump, op.cit., iii, viii.
long hair and lived like a hermit. Bhai Budha, the second great disciple of Guru Nanak, retired in his old age to the Guru's forest wherein he was accessible only to few disciples. Guru Gobind Singh built for himself a retreat first beside the Jammuna and then in the beautiful hill of Naina Devi besides the Sutlej for his literary activities.

Besides the famous forest groves inhabited by anchorites or ascetics, there were monasteries like the one at Batala tenanted by Jogis, Sids, or others who belonged to particular schools of philosophy, Yog, Vedant or Bairag. They welcomed disciples and initiated them into the forms and philosophy of their respective creeds. ¹

Sometimes these Jogis, Sids, or others would wander forth from place to place to beg for alms and hold discussions with the learned or heads of different creeds or persuasions. In their discussions, they would add recruits to their creeds, often they succeeded in converting to their views learned people like Nand Lal of Multan, (Mir Munshi of Prince Muazzim) and Lachman Dev, otherwise known as Narain Dass or Banda Bairagi, both of whom were later converted to Sikhism by Guru Gobind Singh. Some of these wandering persons, it appears, were very learned and fostered the tradition of religious scholarship. Siri Chand the eldest son of Guru Nanak founded a sect of his own called Udasis. ²

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¹ Ibid., I, p. 57, 157.
² For details see under the Udasis.
Some learned scholars or theologians, also wandered about from province to province, inspired by the spirit of quest, discussing or disputing, philosophical or religious questions. Pandits from Benares, Kashmir, Batala and other places visited the Sikh Gurus for theological or spiritual discussions with them. Such discussions were great events in the life of the people who flocked to witness intellectual contests.1

Some of the wranglers carried their library with them for reference and support. Once a Brahman had to send his son back to Benares to fetch the remainder of his library.2 The Brahman from Batala, Nityanand by name, was a specialist in the Puranas. He would go about discussing religious questions even though he could not walk steadily and would lean on the staff for support.3 Brahm Das, the most eminent of Kashmiri Pandits paid a visit to Guru Nanak during his itinerary in Kashmir, and in order to impress him with his learning, he carried two cart loads of sanskrit books to help him in his discussions with a fakir from the Punjab.4

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1. A particular mention is made of a Pandit called Beni who expounded the Veds and Shastaras and who had committed Sanskrit, syntax, etymology and prosody to memory. He travelled round India and visited every famous Pandit that he heard of. He vanquished whomsoever he met and took possession of all his library. The Pandits at Govindwal refused to enter into discussions with him for he had gained so many victories. M.A.Macaulifie, op.cit., Vol.II, p.134.

2. Ibid., vol, III, p.53.

3. Ibid.,Vol. IV, p.123.

4. Ibid., vol.1, p.163.
Some learned men or scholars whose fame spread far and wide drew their pupils or disciples from many parts of the country. Benares and Haridwar, which Guru Nanak and Guru Amar Das visited, respectively were full of specialists in various branches of learning. The Punjab too, possessed a fair number of them. The author of the Dabistan himself met a number of them even though he was a Muhammadan by faith. He found them in Lahore, in Gujrat, in Sialkot and in Kashmir. Some of them were Vedantistes, some, followers of the Sankhya school of philosophy; some, Bairagis; others, Buddhists, etc. Besides a distinguished Brahman Sri Manu Rama, Mohsin Fani came across a Vedantin Kesayi Tiwari, one of the Brahmans of Benares, who left his house and settled on the bank of the river Ravi.¹

The most learned and wise people were these, the Vedantistes. In 1640, he met a Vairagi in Lahore, Narain Dass by name. Even a great number of Muslims were followers of this creed. Mirza Salim and Mirza Haidar were distinguished names among them. In Wazirabad, too, he met Ananta and Piranah of popular figures of the Vairagi sect.² In Sialkot there flourished one Pertabmal Chadah of Kashatriya tribe, a learned and pious man who, had a large following. To the district of Gujrat belonged, Mehir Chand, a disciple of the famous yogi Saint Akam Nath a Srivara, gifted with occult powers and one of the Mian Lal Sect, Atam Chand, and Mahadev of the Sankhya Schools.³

2. Ibid., p.266.
3. Ibid., p.232.
Kashmir continued to flourish as the home of higher learning next to Benares. Here, Mohsin Fani met many scholars. Among others, he met a Yogi Jnani who was the master of encyclopaedic knowledge, who had his son, his nephew and his sister's son for his pupils. Fani found great delight in the society of another Jnanundra who had distinguished scholars for his disciples. A Sanyasi who had settled down in Kishtwar, became the teacher of prince Maha Singh, the son of Bahadar Singh, the Raja of Kishtwar and educated him both in sacred and secular lore. The author also associated with Hindu poets, Sufis and astronomers.

Mohsin Fani also visited Peshawar where he saw many Yogis, one particularly, Sanja Nath of Lahore who had retired there for the end of his life. He went, also, to Karitpur in the Kohistan of the Panjab, in the country of Raja Tara chander, where he came across a new sect of Sanyasis called Bharti. He also found Jatis or Buddhists; frequently learned, who spent their life in celibacy and sanctity. The Maha-atmas, who appeared to him a branch of the same class, were 'eager for science' some of them inhabiting the district of Gujrat. In the hymns of the Sikh Gurus and elsewhere, there are frequent references to Jatis and Jogi, Sidha and Sadhus who were, indeed, symbols of the India's spirit of the quest of truth or the meaning of life.

1. Ibid., pp. 228-30.
Lastly, the Hindus had recourse to the Persian school kept by a private Muslim teacher or to the mosque school, in which the Mulla taught Persian as well as Quran. There were purely Quranic schools, too, but these the Hindus did not need to attend. The study of Persian was a necessary avenue to employment as a clerk in private or government service. Nanak's father, who was a village accountant or Patwari that kept the land revenue records in Persian, felt that for the simple purpose of obtaining a livelihood, his son must study Persian. Rai Bular, also, promised that if Nanak learned Persian, in which all the state documents and accounts were then written, he would appoint him village accountant in due course. ¹

Nanak, therefore, had to study Persian, like his father. It is evident from the acrostic on the letters of the Persian alphabet, which Nanak had to learn up, that his teacher was Rukn-ul-Din, who seems to have composed the acrostic, for, the name occurs five times in its thirty one verses. On the authority of the Siar-ul-Mutakharin we learn that Nanak was carefully educated by a private teacher Saiyad Hasan, a neighbour of the family, who having no son of his own showed great affection for the boy and taught him a good deal of classical Persian literature.²

Guru Nanak's brother-in-law, Jai Ram, who introduced Nanak as an educated youth to the governor, Daulat Khan, at Sultanpur, now in the Kapurthala state, and got him appointed storekeeper,

was himself a revenue official of high repute and had risen to this position by dint of education in Persian. The last of the Gurus, too, studied Persian with a private teacher and his *zafranama* to Aurangzeb is a further evidence of his acquaintance with the court language.

Todar Mal, the revenue minister of Akbar, Raja Bir Bal, once a prime minister of Akbar, one Partap Mal a learned Hindu youth who designed to embrace Islam, Munshi Nand Lal of Multan, a Bairagi, who fled from the court of Aurangzeb for fear of being converted to Islam, like the poet, Luwar, son of a famous poet Kesho das of Bundhel Khand; Diwan Kaura Mal; the financial minister of Zakaria Khan, satrap of Lahore, Kabuli Mal, Ahmad Shah Abdali's (nominee) governor of Lahore; Diwan Lakhpat Rai, and his brother Jaspat Rai of days of Sikh Misl's all those had received education in Persian, by dint of which they rose to be high officers in the State. Haqiqat Rai and Shahbaz Singh, the boy martyrs, were the sons of educated fathers holding responsible posts under the Government in Sialkot and Lahore respectively. These boys attended the mosque schools kept by Mulla with a view to acquiring efficiency in Persian, and were still studying at the age of 18.

The study of Persian poetry left, no doubt, a stamp of mystic culture on the impressionistic youth. It is highly probable, writes Macauliffe of Guru Nanak, that his habit of free thought, and toleration for other men's opinions were

assisted by his perusal of the Muhammadan writings with which the Persian language abounds.\(^1\) His visits to Muslim saints or fakirs at Multan, Pakpattan, Pasrur and elsewhere probably explain this mental leaven of Persian poetry. Guru Nanak created, thus, a tradition of new religious eclecticism which his followers Guru Amar Das, Guru Arjandev, Guru Hargovind and Guru Gobind Singh maintained and handed on to posterity. The Hindu mystic poets whom Mohsin Fani met and associated with, seem to have been deeply influenced by the Persian culture.\(^2\)

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3.5.1. THE PERSIAN MADRASAH

The Maulvi incharge of the Madrasah must have been well-versed in Persian which, being the sweetest and most polished language of the time, was in those days the most popular language of the Muslims in Asia. The demand for the study of Persian alone must have largely increased. One can well imagine that with the establishment of the civil Government and, in course of time, with the devolution of administration into various departments, an increasingly large number of petty posts of clerks would have been thrown open to Hindus, and Muslims of middle classes. It is fairly logic to assume that in order to meet the increasing demand for the study of the Persian language, for practical purposes, and that a new type of school also, which taught only the elements or working knowledge of Persian, would have been set up by some enterprising learned foreigner, immigrant, or refugee. The Persian school became, in due course, very popular and for two very strong reasons. In the first place the Hindus would have in the beginning a prejudice against attending mosque schools of maktabs for fear of possible conversion. Although in course of time they overcame this fear as is remarked by Arnold in his first educational Report or as it is evident in the story of Haqiqat Rai, the boy martyr, who was a student of a mosque school, yet in the beginning the religious prejudices must have kept them away from the mosque school. Since the Persian school was a secular, they would have flocked to it.
The second reason is much the stronger. Arabic like Sanskrit is a very difficult language to learn on account of its numerous inflexions and conjugations which a student with a weak memory cannot master. No less a Muslim than Aurangzeb who was a king of extremely orthodox type, realized this difficulty of the classical language; and in his famous letter to his old teacher quoted by Bernier, he dwells on the inherent defects of the language and points out the huge waste of time in acquiring it. He chides his tutor for sacrificing so large a portion of his time to the study of a language wherein 'no one can hope to become proficient without 10 or 12 years of close application' and which had become as good as a dead language in India in the 13th Century. For this very reason the study of Arabic became very unpopular among the average though sought by others and as time passed, many maktabs introduced Persian for the benefit of renegades or weaker students.

The Persian school thus played a very important part in the secular education of the province. To begin with it equipped many young men with adequate skill for clerkship in Government Offices. Guru Nanak's father, for instance a Khatri by caste, was a village accountant or patwari, who kept land records and accounts in Persian. He realized that the early education of his son in Hindi (Old Hindwi) and religion would not advance his secular interests and sought, therefore, the advice of the Rai Bular, the landlord of the village, who promised to appoint his son
as the village accountant in due course when he himself retire provided the boy learned Persian which was the court language. Nanak, accordingly, sat at the feet of one Muslim teacher Rukn-ud-Din and made a rapid progress in Persian. According to Cunningham whose authority is based on "Siar-ul-Mutakharin" '(1,110), Nanak was carefully educated in Persian at his own village Talwandi. From the very beginning of the Muslim rule, the Hindus had, as noticed above, a monopoly of the lower ranks of the revenue department or Diwani. In Akbar's time, Toder Mal, passed an order requiring all the Hindu officials to have all their revenue and account papers written in Persian instead of one set in Persian and a duplicate set in Hindi, as under Sher Shah. This order made the mastery of Persian obligatory on them. The effect of this change was quick and became manifest in the next century. The Hindus adopted Persian and studied it eagerly. They filled the accounts departments of the State and rose to be deputies, office superintendents and heads of many departments. Most of the nobles and even princes engaged this race of docile, abstemious, hardworking and intelligent Hindus to write their Persian letters for them, down to the time of the English and Ranjit Singh. Almost all the Head Bakshis or paymasters General were Persian by race, and enjoyed a very high reputation for ability, polish of manners and power of office management. But it was a costly

1. J.D.Cunningham, op.cit., p.39 f.n.
luxury to import Persia-born or Persia-trained Muslim clerks. The Indian Muslims, it is believed, were unsatisfactory for clerical work. They could not retain Persian or Turkish as their mother tongue, and the prospectus of military life drew them away from the drudgery of pen. Even Aurangzeb could not but recognise it when in 1671, by an ordinance he ordered Hindu head-clerks (Peshkars) and accountants (Dwania) to be dismissed and replaced by Muslims. He, however, found it to his discomfiture that the machinery of his administration was going to collapse but for them, and conceded, therefore, that upto 50% of the Peshkars might be Hindus, if necessary. But he vindicated his authority when he laid it down that Hindus could rise to Canungo-ship only by turning Muslims.

3.5.2. THE ARABIC MADRASAHs

The Arabic Madrasah or college, on the other hand, was the resort of the scholarly few. It imparted the highest Muhammadan education through the medium of Arabic. Books of sciences, philosophy, grammar and mathematics not to speak of theology were written in Arabic. It was the highest ambition of most advanced Muslim students to visit Mecca in order to give finishing touches to their education. A Mecca degree commanded the highest respect in India and was often considered as the necessary qualification for the office of Chief Qaziship. Arab, Turani and Khurasani scholars who came to India were highly welcomed as men of
superior attainments and were promptly installed in high offices of the State and Church. Hindus and Muslims of average talents, on the other hand, attended the Persian school.

Persian was, then, not only the court language, the lingua franc but also literary language of the Mughal India. Persia was in those days the fountain head of the culture, thought and fashion of the entire Islamic world. The courtiers, in high ranks, were Persian, the court poets were mostly Persian, and the court physicians, too, in most cases, Persian. The Persians were highly honoured and patronised by all the emperors, except Aurangzeb, for his anti-Shah views. Persian, therefore, was studied more as an accomplishment, like French in Europe, than as the key to serious knowledge. Even Aurangzeb quoted, to his last day, Sadi and Hafiz whom he had learnt by rote in his youth. The noted Sufi poets such as Jalal-ud-Din Rumi and Hafiz were widely read by Hindus and Muhammadans alike. Since the 12th century down to the middle of the 19th the more spiritually minded among the men of the world in Northern India, especially member of the writers class (Kayéths) in U.P. and Khatris in the Punjab devoted themselves to the composition of Sufi verse of their own in Persian. The clerks and other office subordinates of the Mughal empire both Hindus and Mussalmans formed a brotherhood for their love of Sufi philosophy which formed the common meeting
ground for the Persian-cultured official class of India. Their letter books often end with a collection of sufistic verses of their own composition or garnered from their favourite authors.

The Persian school did not, therefore, confine itself merely to the teaching of two or the reading and writing of the new lingua franca of India but under competent teachers, it offered to teach Persian literature, philosophy, medicine, etc., to its students, both Hindus and Muslims, to equip them for higher posts, in Government service or for medical profession. The poetry of mysticism, as hinted above, was introduced by those learned teachers who had received liberal education in Persian humanities, and under the impulse of the mystic movement, it became a very popular subject of study. The study of Persian literature and of arts and sciences through the medium, came to be regarded as liberal education and the ability to quote from Persian poets as a mark of culture. The Persia school therefore became very popular among the Hindus, particularly the Khatris of the Punjab and Kayesths of U.P.¹ and among

¹ Two classes of Hindus have particularly distinguished themselves in Persian scholarship. The Kashmiri Pandits and Kayasthas. Sir Lap Griffin Re Chiefs and Families of Note (276) gives an account of certain families who won distinction in royal darbars by dint of their high learning and scholarship.
those Muslims who like Aurangzeb, were either afraid of Arabic, or who were not obsessed with religion. The motives which prevail with the Muslim students who prefer in these days the study of Persian to that of Arabic, were, to all intents and purposes, the same in those old times. The age of Akbar was the golden age of Hindustan which gave birth to too great movements, the Renaissance of learning and the Reformation or comparative study of religion. The Persian literature for once, in India came into its own and the creative output of the period was voluminous; monumental works in history, classical translation of Hindi literature, scriptures and sciences into Persian and original literary works marked the achievement of the period.

The Persian school produced, besides the rank and file of clerks, many Hindu writers of note. The earliest Hindu Munshi of note was Chander Bhan, "Brahman", a protage of Shah Jehan's wazir Saaddulah Khan who has left works in elegant prose and conventional verse besides some letters. Anand Ram "Mukhlis" rose to be the Mir Munshi of Emperor Muhammed Shah; Bhim Sen, a hereditary civil Officer of the Mughal Government, has left, "Nuskha-i-Dilkusha", a most valuable contemporary history of Aurangzeb; Ishwar Dass of Patar composed a chronicle, "Fatuhat-i-Alamgiri", another valuable record of Aurangzeb's reign. Siddha Mal compiled a series of Aurangzeb's letters, "Ramz-wa-Ishara-i-Alamgiri". Munshi Jeth Mal wrote, "Karnamah-i-Hindu", the letters of
Atal Khan, the governor of Kalian. Udraj, Secretary of Jai Singh has left a collection of letters which his son edited under the title of "Haft-Anjuman". Shushtery has compiled a list of six Hindu poets, Zanaqi Ram Hasrat, unshi Har Gopal, Raja Rattan Singh, Saheb Ram, Munshi Ram Dass and Daya Shankar Kaul (1811-43), who left their Divans or poetical works of some merit; and of thirteen historians; Sujan Rai (Kulasat-ut-Tawarikh), Sada Sukh (Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh); Soham Lal (Umdat-ut-Tawarikh) Bahadur Singh (Yadgar-e-Bhahaduri); Rai Kirpa Ram (Julzar-e-Kashmiri), Bahwati Das (Rajavali ancient history of Hindus); Bhagvant Das (Shah Jahab Nama); Munshi Hari Man (Awahar Nama); Bandra Ban Das (Lubh-ut-Tawarikh), Ishwar Das (Futuhat-e-Alamgiri); Kamraj (Azam-ul-Harb); Jag Jawar Das (Muntakh ut-Tawarikh); Bhim Sen (Dilkusha).

Among Hindu translators of Sanskrit works into Persian were Mitra Das, a contemporary of Shahjahan; Bhersamul (Sinhasan Battisi); Guru Hardas (Ramayana); Chander Bhan (Ramayana); Devi Das (Ramayana); Amar Singh (Amar Parkash). Raja Kiran wrote Kushayash Nama and Brahman Hisari, Tfatul-Hikayat, both being works of fiction. There were other Hindus who wrote text books for

1. There was one more writer Subhan Rai of Patiala, ED, i, 297 – 302, ED, viii, 5.
students:

Dharam Narayan wrote *Badaye-ul-Fanun* (Arithmetic)
Hari Sukh Rai wrote *Zubdatul-Gawanin* (grammar)
Kanjhi wrote *Khazinatul-Ulum* (Mathematics)
Harkiran wrote *Insha-e-Har Kiran* (1031 A.H)
Munshi Sobha Rai wrote *Khulasatul-Makatib*
Madhu Ram wrote *Insha-e-Madhu Ram*
Rup Narayan wrote *Bish-Jahat*
Lal Chand wrote *Nigar Nama*
Odhe Raj wrote *Haft Anjaman*

Besides these there were other writers of note:

Rai Chatarman who wrote "Chahar Gulshan" or "Akbar-un-Nawadid", (1959); Shiv Parshad, author of "Tarikh-i-Farah" (Faiz) Bakhash (1776); Kanshi Raj, a trusted servant of Shuja-u-Daula who gave an authentic account of the battle of Panipat, 1780; Behari Lal writer of "Ahwal-i-Najib-ul-Daulah", a nephew of the Munshi to Najib-ul-Daulah (1787); Harcharan Dass, author of "Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai", (1784); Diwan Bakhtmal author of *Khalsa Namah*, 1807; Khushwaqt Rai, author of "Kitab Tarikh-i-Punjab"; Khushiwal Chand author of "Mohammad Shabhi" 1741, etc. The Punjabi Hindus, too, did not lag behind, but contributed not a little to historical literature of Pre-Annexation times; Sujan Rai Bhandari wrote "Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh"; Janesh Dass, belonging to distinguished family of Qanungos, in the Gujarat district, wrote "Hisala-i-Sahib Numa", or "Char-Bagh-i-Punjab" (1849);
Sohan Lal Suri, Court chronicler of Ranjit Singh, wrote "Undat ut Twarikh" (1812). Anand Ram of Lahore wrote "Tazkira-i-Anand Ram Mukhlas"; Rattan Chand, Munshi to the celebrated Sardars of Atari, wrote "Khalis Namah". Diwan Amr Nath, was a historian of Lahore Darbar and Diwan Kirpa Ram of Jammu and Kashmir State, an oriental scholar of repute wrote 'A History of Kashmir and G lab Nama'.

Other Punjabis of note were Tahmasp Miskin (1780) a personal attendant of Muin-ul-Mulk, author of "Tazkira Tahmasp Miskin"; Ghulam Ali, author of "Shah Alam Nama"; Ahmad Shah of Batala, author of "Tarikh-1-Punjab"; Harnam Singh, author of "Saddat-1-Jawed", a Sarswati Brahman, born at Brahmanabad, in the province of Lahore, resided at Malwanur near Lucknow where his father Gurdas Singh was in public employ under Nawabs of Oudh; Raja Majlis Rai, another Sersuti Brahman of Lahore, was Diwan of Kamrud-Din Khan, the minister. His eldest son Raja Khushal Rai was superintendent of Bath and private chapels. Lakhpat Rai and Jaspat Rai, so well-known in the history of Sikhs, were secretaries and consellers of Zakariya Khan the Governor. Lakhpat Rai, the elder brother, had the proud honour of saving the city of Lahore from plunder and pillage and its five hundred thousand people, men, women and children both Hindus and Muslims from the slavery of cruel Nadir SHAH.  

1. Elliot and Dowson, op.cit., vol.VIII, pp.336, 346.
With their knowledge of finance, coupled with their accomplishment in Persian, the Hindu Khatris made competent Diwans of the Muslim rulers, governors or viceroys. Lakhpat Rai, for instance, was a Diwan of Zakariya Khan as well as of his son Yahiya Khan, Subhadars of Lahore; Lachhmi Narain, that of Zain Khan of Sirhind; Kaura Mal of Shah Nawaz Khan who replaced his brother Yahiya Khan as Viceroy at Lahore; Sukhjiwan was that of Ahmad Shah appointed later as Governor of Kashmir; and Kabuli Mal, Viceroy of the Punjab, appointed by the same Afghan raider and conqueror. Other administrators of note were Dianat Rai, who entered the service of Nadir Shah, conqueror of Kabul and Delhi; 'Anand, head of the Diwan family of Bhera who held both revenue and military appointments under the Mughals; and Hari Singh Nalwa, the veteran General of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
III

3.6. PATRONAGE BY MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

3.6.1. Introduction:

with the rise of Sikh Misals, but particularly with the coming of Ranjit Singh into power in 1799, the Punjab came into its own for the first time since the viceroyalty of Dara Shikoh in the reign of Shah Jahan. Ranjit Singh ushered in a new era of peace that saw the transition of the middle ages into modern age, and brought about the revival of art and learning in the Punjab.

A number of factors contributed to the revival of learning. In the first place, the Maharaja restored internal peace and order, and put down with a severe hand 'social' crimes like sati and traffic in women and children. Secondly, he made the Punjab immune from invasions from without, and thus made normal life safe for the average person. The bazaars became crowded with people of all religions and tribes; and they began to move about freely from town to town. Trade and industry began to revive. Thirdly, the Maharaja created a cosmopolitan court and a new aristocracy of the Punjab talents, and rewarded them liberally. The arts of peace as well as the luxuries of life came in demand, with the result that literary and artistic activities as well as the manufacture of arts and crafts received a great impetus.

The Maharaja organized a new secular form of Government administered by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims together like a team. The state opened up new avenues of employment to young and old, and to unrecognised talents of all creeds and castes. Lastly, the Maharaja himself patronised learning both secular and religious, and arts, both fine, and industrial. His example was followed by his courtiers who began to vie with one another in the patronage of arts and learning.

The classical languages as well as vernaculars came again in favour. Persian became the Court language, while Sanskrit and Arabic received the patronage of the new aristocracy. Punjabi was the mother tongue of the Maharaja himself. In dealing with his people and on most occasions, the Maharaja spoke Punjabi. Some of the courtiers who had come from other provinces, particularly Kashmiris and Purbias, spoke Hindustani and the Maharaja welcomed the foreign visitors, interviewers and diplomats in Hindustani. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din and his brother spoke in a highly polished style and frequently quoted from Arabic and Persian. All these languages thus received a fillip and for the whole period of 40 years (1799-1839) of his reign and a decade more, education in these media became exceedingly popular.

1. B.R. Chopra, op.cit., pp.239-44.
Indigenous Education under Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Hindi or Sanskrit and Persian languages received full attention and were taught the royal children during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Pandit Radha Kishan son of Madhusudan, the Darbar Pandit, and Zahir-ud-Din nephew of Fakir Aziz-ud-Din, and Bhai Ram Singh were entrusted with the education of princes Kharak Singh, Hira Singh and Dalip Singh. They prepared, it appears, a picture book for the young beginners, with the help of court painters. Besides containing the portraits of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and princes Kharak Singh, Nao Nihal Singh, Sher Singh, it had pictures of common or familiar objects like the Potter. It indicated that our indigenous teaching was not crude or lacking in method.

Kanwar Nao Nihal Singh, Ajit Singh and Lehna Singh, according to Leitner, studies the higher branches of mathematics and Astronomy under the famous Khwand, Ali Ahmad who was specially called from frontier to Lahore. Kanwar Nao Nihal Singh, adds Leitner, combined a knowledge of Sanskrit Arabic and Persian. Ranjit Singh took a keen interest, in the education of the sons of his court officials also. Rattan Chand, who rose to eminence after annexation, was the son of Karam Chand, and Assistant to the financier Bhowani Dass. As a boy he was inconstant attendance on court and when he was 21 he was appointed in the Postal Department on Rs.200/- p.m. After the Sutlej campaign he was appointed Post-Master General in the Punjab. Ram Chand, grand son of Nanak Chand, a revenue collector of Multan and Kashmir, came to the notice of the Maharaja when he was 12 years of age. After education
and training he was given charge of the Maharaja's private seal, as a chancellor. He founded a Sanskrit school at Amritsar.¹

Dewan Ganga Ram brought with him two Kashmiri boys of 15. One was, Shankar Nath son of Pandit Hari Ram, and another Ajudhia Parshad brother of Pt. Lachhman Parshad. They also came to the notice of the Maharaja early. Both completed their education in Lahore. The former earned the title of Mumtaz-ud-Doullah.

When Gyani Sant Singh of the Darbar Sahib, whom the Maharaja honoured greatly, went to Benaras, the court took his grand son (who was only 13) under its protection and made a handsome provision for his education.²

3.6.3. Grants to Educational Institutions: Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave liberal grants in money or jagir for the maintenance of educational institutions, housed in temples or mosques kept by teachers of repute. Faqir Aziz-ud-Din, for instance, fonded a college of Persian and Arabic and attracted scholars of Arabic from every part of the province. Pandit Madhusudan, who was himself a great scholar of Sanskrit, maintained a college of Sanskrit. The Kashmiri Pandits founded several schools or Pathshalas in the city of Lahore.

¹. R.L. Ahuja, op.cit., p.278.
³. Ibid., p.295.
Amritsar, the greatest centre of Sikh religion and learning, received the Maharaja's greatest attention. His beneficial aid to the Har Mandir, with its many religious and cultural activities, was unstinted, and unlimited. His grants to Udasis, Nirmalas and Brahmans or Bairagis were liberal. The Udasis built their first Akhara and later the Nirmalas, too, through his generous aid. The Maharaja appreciated their educational activities and their cultivation of the learning. Like Guru Gobind Singh he got hundreds of copies of the holy book copies and distributed among far off temples, the number of which increased rapidly during his reign.2

Formerly, in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time, writes, Leitner quoting from a statement furnished to him by a Sardar' there were many Gurumukhi schools in Amritsar which imparted instructions of a high order and enjoyed jajirs and stipends from the Maharaja. These were, however resumed after annexation.3

These are a few particular instances which indicate Maharaja Ranjit Singh's high sense of educational values. Further light is thrown on the patronage of indigenous learning in his maintaining a Dharamarth Department.4

1. For further details see account under the Udasis and the Nirmalas.
4. Ibid.
After annexation some of the indigenous schools which enjoyed muafis or 'rent-free' grants of land, closed down because the state help was withdrawn, and diverted to the financing of a new system of education. The instances given below have been extracted from Letter No:418 dated 31st March, 1849 of the Punjab Government, by Leitner himself.

1. Bhai Bhagel Singh held at (Kaluki), Gujranwala District (Hafizabad tehsil), 22 ghumans, 4 kanals for dharamsala and instructing boys. At his death 17 ghumans were resumed by the Board and the rest spared for dharamsala. Kishan Singh and the sons of the Bhai closed the school for want of maintenance.

2. Bhai Jewan Singh and Bhai Ram Singh had a jagir of Rs.1,200/- p.a. from the Sikhs Government for the maintenance of a Gurumukhi school which he kept in his own bunga. After his death, his sons, Bhai Karam Singh and Bhai Bishan Singh continued to teach the boys and a jagir of Rs.800/- p.a. was left to them.

3. Bhai Jai Singh conducted a Gurmukhi school in the village dharamsal and lived on the produce of a mu'afi of a half of tirkhanawela well and 26 ghuman which he held for the purpose of maintaining a Gurmukhi school and defray the expenses of the dharamsal at Muradyan village tehsil Hafizabad, district Gujranwala.

4. Bhai ki Darwajri, dharamsal in Kaipur held about 60 bighas with 2 wells of land as muafi (then at Delon, District Ludhiana).

5. Amir Singh and Wazir Singh held 2/3 of 68 ghumaons of land as a muafi for the maintenance of Gurmukhi schools in the village dharamsal at Kila Murad Bakhsh.
6. At Killa Murad Bakhsh, tehsil Hafizabad, district Gujranwala, 1/2 of 31 ghumaon of land attached to Chucha Kanwala well held by Bawa Puran Dass who conducted a Gurmukhi school.

7. Nirmal Dass, the Gurbhai, held 50 ghumaon of land attached to dharamsala with a well-attended Gurmukhi school, attached to it in the village of Waniki Tahsil Hafizabad.

8. Pandit Jaswant, son of Bhowani Dass, held in the villages of Buhlupur, Chuharpur and Hasanpur, tehsil Samrala, district Ludhiana, 7 bighas and 14 biswas for the furtherance of Sanskrit instruction.

9. A dozen muafis at Rohtas fort, District Jhelum: (1) 25 bighas in Rampura; (2) 15 bighas in Kotra Ahmad; (3) Village Chak Mulan, (4) 2 ploughs in Mirpur (5) Land in Chhabaryan Gujran (6) 20 bighas in Manoharpur village, together with many others were given to Pandit Tukta Sahai of Rohtas, one of the most distinguished scholars in the Punjab, by Maharaja Ranjit Singh for the maintenance of a Pathshala which was the first of its kind in the province.

10. Maulvi Sirajuddin of Gujranwala kept a school which had a muafi of 60 ghumaon of land in the time of its founder Maulvi Sultan Ahmad, on whose death 35 ghumaon were resumed.

11. The Mosque of Qari in the village of Taizpur, in tehsil Sharakpur, district Lahore, which now contains 3 quran schools, held a muafi in the beginning.
12. The school in the grand mosque (which is now conducted by Maulvi Fazil Muhammad, a distinguished Arabic scholar) held in the times of the nawabs of Multan and the Sikhs, a muaf of town duties, and the teachers attached to the schools also received pensions.

13. A dozen cases in Shansara villages one mosque, one gur-iwar, two dharamsalas and 7 more, held grant of land for their support.

14. 10 muafis in Mauza Raja Sansi, 4 mosques, 1 takia, 3 dharamsalas, etc.

From a study of the educational records of the districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Shahpur and Gujrat, it appears that beside one Hindu and one Sikh school there were 118 Muhammadan schools in possession of 1061 bighas of land, with an average of 9. Only one of them had 1/2 bigha, and only one, 144. There were also 4 other schools which got rent free lands from the village community or zamindars. The jagir of the Brahman school in Gujrat is not specified while the Sikh teacher possessed only 5 bighas. All these grants were made during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Only a few among these were confirmed on annexation.

3.6.4. Dharamarth Grants

In the Hindu or Muslim governments before Maharaja Ranjit Singh, there was no such department as Education. In his own time, too, the East India Company which governed the rest of India, gave no place in its administration to such a department; nor did it make any provision for the education
of the millions of people over whom it ruled. It was only in 1813 that the Directors of the company allotted rather reluctantly under the pressure of the Clapham school a lakh of rupees a year for the encouragement of the learned natives of India.\(^1\) For about seven years even this recommendation was not carried into effect.\(^2\) In the year in which Macaulay was appointed Law Member of Government, Maharaja Ranjit Singh reduced Peshawar and made the Punjab and India for first time, since the death of Aurangzeb, immune from foreign invasions. And he had only five more years to live. Yet from the very day of his coronation in 1799, long before the charter Acts of 1813 and 1833, he honoured the educated community, welcomed them into his service and gave money for the education of the people in temples, dharamsalā and mosques.

In this, as in other activities of a civilized government, Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried, under the circumstances, his best to live up to the traditions, both of the Hindu and the Muslim governments. Education was regarded by them as a part of religion and helped as such by the charities, or Dharam-Arth, department which was under the charge of the Sadr. The head of the ecclesiastical department advised or executed endowment of lands for pious and learned men, and the distribution of sums in charity.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's also maintained a Dharamarth department which was run by Nur-ud-Din (brother of Fakir Aziz-ud-Din). Pandit Madhusudan, Pandit Raja Ram, Pandit Rama Nand

Sahu and Bhai Gurdit Singh, were his almoners and dispensers of his charities. The grants or gifts were made to the religious people like Sahib Singh Bedi, Bhai Harbhaj Rai etc. to the learned people like Fakir Aziz-ud-Din, Pt. Madhusudan and his son, to the poor, to temples, dharamsalas, mosques, dera and akharas.

It was estimated in 1844 that religious grants worth 5,00,000 were held by Sodhis, worth 4,00,000 by Bedis and worth 11,00,000 were made to Akalis, Fakirs, Brahmanas and the lands attached to Amritsar. These grants or charities were not confined to one community but were dispensed to deserving applicants from all the three communities as judged by almoners who represented each of them. Nur-ud-Din, the youngest brother of Fakir Aziz-ud-Din, and his close associate in foreign affairs, and other matters, not only dispensed royal bounty to Muslims but also kept one key of the royal treasury.

The educational grants made by the Maharaja were of two kinds. In the first place came the personal grants made to learned men or scholars as mentioned above. These were intended, no doubt, to enable them to carry on their literary traditions. But in considerable cases it helped them to run their schools or colleges as in the case of Fakir Aziz-ud-Din or Pandit Madhusudan. Secondly, religious grants, too, were

2. J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 413.
3. Ibid.
partly educational in as much as they were made not to the individual as such for their individual needs and requirements but at the same time for the maintenance of their institutions, temple, Dharamsalas or Mosques also. Ranjit Singh gave, writes kept Griffin, large gifts on convenient occasions to Sikh temples and priests; and several of the most influential of the religious leaders Babas and Phais.

The Maharaja granted endowments for objects of sanctity, charitable denotions and annuities to religious characters. Most of the schools of those days were housed in temples or mosques and the same endowment would support both the institutions. After annexation, however, the endowments though occasionally reduced in amount, had on the whole been regarded with liberality and in confirming them the officers had the report adds, mainly regarded the utility and efficiency of institutions.¹

Once in 1815 Raja Ram Pandit, one of his almoners, made a complaint to Maharaja Ranjit Singh that certain charities were being withheld from their beneficiaries. Thereupon the Maharaja emphatically ordered Mehr Singh jagirdar not to discontinue the charities, to Hindus and Muslims, which had become customary. On another occasion the Maharaja deputed Sardar Mat Singh Bharania with Munshi Karam Chand to prepare a detailed list of all the possessions of the aggrieved who were Muslims, to examine and scrutinize their title deeds and then make a report to the Maharaja for sympathetic action.

¹ Administrative Report, 1849-51, pp.119,321.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh showed frequent 'generosity in
rewarding good service' and 'gave liberally in peace of what
he had plundered in war. Fakir Aziz-ud-Din was in the beginning
given two villages and a cash assignment on the custom of
Lahore, but in the end the jagir possessed by him and his
brother was calculated to be worth one Lakh.¹

Amritsar was a stronghold of Sikhism, the Doaba was
dominated by the Bawas; like the district of Gujrat; while
Gujranwala was the home district of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
These districts, therefore, got most of the endowments from
the Lahore Durbar. A large number of grants for the support
of a host of Hindu and Muslim shrines, nearly every village hav­
ing two or three of such places. These districts were over-run
with masjida, thakurdwaras and dharamsalas. The figures for
this district are also available. There were, according to the
revenue Report quoted in the Gazetteer, 462 rent free holdings
covering an area of 480 acres retained under Sankalap or Dharm-
Arth department. As regards grants the figures are not
insignificant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Grants</th>
<th>The grantee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>898</td>
<td>Masjids (Mosques)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1284</td>
<td>Khankahs (Muslim Monasteries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>538</td>
<td>Takiahs (Muslim Monasteries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>336</td>
<td>Dharamsalas (Sikh Temples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294</td>
<td>Thakurdwaras (Hindu Temples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>579</td>
<td>Samadh (Hindu or Sikh shrines)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ J. D. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 412.
Figures for other district may be quoted from the same provincial authority but it would suffice to make out the point that Dharam-Arth department of the Maharaja worked without making any distinction of creed or caste and that it helped the cause of education by making personal grants to the learned men as well as religious grants to the mosques and temples, holy persons, priests and preceptors.  

3.65. **Fine Arts:**

The fine arts, writes Lepel Griffin, were not much patronised in early days at the Court of Lahore. But when it is borne in mind what Captain Hurry, Political Agent, at Amritsar, observed that all that was educated and refined had disappeared from the Punjab before Ranjit Singh was born, a more sympathetic view of Ranjit Singh's Court be taken by his critics as Herr Schofft did. Miss Emily Eden who paid a visit to the Royal Darbar at Lahore in the company of her brother, Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, and got an opportunity to make a sketch of the Maharaja, noticed some of his native painters one of whom was sketching. The lithographic engravings in the first volume of Hoingverger's thirty years in the East are faithful copies of protraits and sketches taken by a native at Lahore.

The English officer who visited Maharaja Ranjit Singh's capital on, May 24, 1809, found the walls of the buildings erected in these times were gaudily and roughly painted with scenes of religious, war-like or sportive character—Guru Nanak, Krishna and conflicts with Afghans etc.

In the Khuda Bakhsh Library, at Patna, there is a collection of specimens of Eastern paintings—Chinese, Central Asian, Persian and Indian, warmly praised by a critic like Havell. Many of the Indian specimens are illuminations of manuscripts from the Mughal Imperial Library, while some of them are from Ranjit Singh's collection. For Ranjit Singh is stated to have made the last attempt in about 1825-39 to revive Indo-Saracen Paintint, though it did not survive for long. It appears that Ranjit Singh's war with Sansar Chand, which resulted in the collapse of the Raja and the annexation of Kangra to the Maharaja's territory (in 1827) inaugurated another migration of artists some of whom retreated into the inner hill states, while other sought the patronage of the Sikh court. (The previous migration had taken place during 1748-1760 when chaos ruled in the Punjab and when artists left the Punjab and sought refuge in small hills corners like, Chamba, Guler, Kangra, Kulu, Suket etc. where there was witnessed later 'a flare-up of Mughal art').

The Kangra transformation of the Oudh architecture was taken over by the Sikhs and evolved into a wonderful though occasionally gudy Indian Rococo. Likewise Sikh painting retained all the technical conventions of the last phase of the Kangra school but twisted its aristocratic idealism,
romance and love etc. into a democratic realism puritan and not seldom vulgar. It was with the help of the court painters, as noted above, that the Royal tutors, Pandit Radha Kishan and Zahur-ud-Din prepared an illustrated primer for the use of the princes.

Besides painting, calligraphy and music were also patronised by the Lahore Darbar. An excellent specimen of calligraphy is found in the inscription on 'Ram ban', a well known gun of the Maharaja. The art of calligraphy flourished in the time of the Maharaja, in Lahore, and the specimens of the art were in great demand in the western countries. Peer Rakhsh, embroider, was a past master in the art. He was held in great esteem by the courtiers and the Maharaja Ranjit Singh desired much to employ him in the court but the artist had a very high sense of his art and would not like to sell it. He lived by his profession of embroidery and taught calligraphy free in his leisure hours.¹

Some of the sands, grants, or title-deeds indicating grants of jagirs made to the incumbents of shrines, holy persons or priests by the Maharaja, are good specimens of penmanship and promise to wear well. Ranjit Singh was also very fond of music, and had some musicians always present in his court. One of them whose name is met with in records was Attar Khan. He was specially known for his flute play. The bards of Ranjit Singh recited not only the sacred verses of the Sikhs Gurus but also brought about a revival of the traditional poetry or ballads, and songs of the Punjab.

The Library of the Maharaja was, probably, the biggest in the Punjab of those days. It contained four hundred and twenty three volumes, three bundles of papers, a marble inscription, and a box of Muslim relics. Of the three bundles, one contained papers in Sanskrit, another in Persian; while the third, five books in Gurmukhi. Nothing is known about the contents of the three bundles. The number of books given in the record is 424 including the box of Muslim relics. Of the 423 volumes, the titles of 158 are not given. Whatsoever they were, the record does not indicate. The titles of 265 volumes are, however, given. It has, however, been found difficult to judge of the contents of the volumes from their titles only, which are often too vague to indicate anything of the subject matter or even of the language, whether it is Persian or Arabic, one cannot make out, for the learned words of Arabic used therein are often found in the Persian texts also.¹

¹. Administrative Report, 31 May, 1849. For further details of the books in the library of Maharaja Ranjit Singh see separate Appendix ix.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Patronage of Gurmukhi:

Speaking of education in the Punjab in 'The Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India', Edwin Arnold wrote in 1862 that 'Education indeed, always held its place among the Sikhs, and shared as one of their institutions, the astonishing vitality' of the Khalsa in their education is found in Hunter Commission's Report (1882-3) which records that in Bombay Presidency chiefly in Sind, in the Deccan Hyderabad, small colonies of Sikhs are to be found, who have carried on their indigenous system and have jealously preserved the special character of their schools.

This 'astonishing vitality' of education as an institution, was built up in course of time by the Sikh Gurus, as we have elucidated it above. The first Guru gave education its new basis, substance or content; the Second Guru started the new literacy movement; the sixth Guru made training in arms a part of a Sikh youth's education; while the tenth Guru, the greatest educationist that the Punjab had ever produced in medieval or modern times, broad-based and liberalised it by drawing upon the classics and thus enriched both the language and the educational literature. His dynamic genius discovered new values for his age in the life and education of the Pandus and other khatries of the days of yore and he imparted these values to the new culture that radiated from him at Anandpur. When Anandpur was razed to the ground, this Phoenix cried. "Damdama will be my Kashi." The place of his death like that of his birth, also,

2. Earnest Trumpp, op.cit., xcii.
became a centre of his cultural propaganda. This propaganda, partly educational and partly religious, became the tradition of the Sikh Church or community.

Guru Gobind Singh gave it a permanent impulse as discussed above, by declaring the *Granth* as his successor and the last Guru of the Sikhs, by issuing an authorised version of the Holy book and sending copies of it as gifts to *pharamsalas* and by explaining and expounding its *shabads* to his disciples, Bhai Mani Singh, who became the first chief priest of Har Mandar and founded the school of Exegesis, which produced a long line of Gyanis or scholars of the *Granth Sahib*.¹

This tradition came further to be incorporated in the book of injunctions of which there are several versions. Religious instruction from the *Granth*, according to Nand Lal's *Rahit Nama*², became an article of faith with the Sikhs in later times. The modern *Rahit Nama* goes a step farther and lays down that a Sikh ought to learn the use of arms, to read Gurumukhi and to ride. The *Rahit Nama* of Prahlad Rai written in 1697 forbids taking meals without reading the *Japji* and the *Jap Sahib* (clause 12) and holds the expounding of Guru hymns, as a spiritual merit (clause 38).

Another great authority that enjoined education as an article of Sikh religions faith is *Param Sumara* (The Path of love and Righteousness) believed to have been written by Guru Gobind Singh himself.³

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¹ M.A. Macauliffe, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, p.IXXV.
² Cited in R.L. Ahuja, *op.cit.*, p.244.
The extract on education lays it down as one of the fundamental duties of the faithful to receive education Gurmukhi, to teach others Gurmukhi, to keep accounts in Gurmukhi and to transact all affairs in Gurmukhi. The faithful are further exhorted to read, and teach the Holy Book in general, and the Jap Jī in particular, and to follow the rahit both in letter and in spirit.

Religious culture thus occupied a fundamental place in the life of an educated Sikh. The child's education, writes Sir Joginder Singh, begins with the name of God and the teachings of the Guru (as embodied in the Granth) in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib and recital of the general prayer. The child is instructed to recite the first hymn of the Jap Jī Sahib.¹ The child's education commenced thus with religious instruction which was oral to begin with. He was further asked to take a vow before being administered the baptism, that he would, as one of the sixteen conditions, promote improvement of education and arts.²

But individual conditions and private circumstances often interfered with or handicapped one in carrying out this part of the religious obligation. While and whereever, literacy was not practicable of achievement, religious instruction, was given and received orally. This is nothing unusual in a vast and poor country like India even in the whole of the East.

5. Ibid., p.12.
3.6.8. The Revival of Sanskrit Under Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Peace in the province and patronage by the court, the new nobility and by the trading class with its growing prosperity, once more helped the Brahmans to come into their own, after centuries of obscurity and decline. They held, like Pandit Madhu Sudan, important positions in the court and administration of the province and enjoyed free grants of land for their maintenance and their educational activities. These pandits kept their private schools of sanskrit and were famous for their learning in Sanskrit literature, Shastras or philosophy and astronomy-astrology.

The Vedas were, comparatively speaking, taught in the Punjab in Ranjit Singh's time the teachers coming from Deccan, but in Sanskrit, as in Arabic, grammar Punjab learning was proverbial throughout India, whilst Punjabi Pandits also excelled in Niaya (logic) Kimansa, the Dharam Shastras, Vedant and Sankhya (six Shastras), Patnichant and SiChant (astronomy).

Kanhya Lal gives a long list of the Pandits who pursued learning and educational activities in their schools in Lahore. The Maharajas of Patiala, Kapurthala and Kaithal were great patrons of Sanskrit learning and scholars of Sanskrit, some of whom lived in their courts for generations. Sanskrit Shalokas particularly from the Bhagwat Gita, were recited in their courts and Brahman tutors were employed to educate the princes.

1. See under Dharam-Arth.
3. Kanhya Lal, Tarikh-i-Lahore (Urdu), Lahore, 1884, pp.4-7.
4. Ibid.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh adopted Persian as the official language of his Court for all the revenue and judicial records of the previous governments were in Persian. It, therefore, facilitated the working of the new administration to adopt Persian instead of making a radical change. The Misl's before had kept their records and struck their coins in Persian, according to the old usage, and the new government, accepted the political tradition of the last eight centuries or so. Dewan Bhowani Dass, the genius of the new administration and the Maharaja's finance minister, carried on the tradition which Todar Mall had introduced two centuries before him.

The setting up of the first sovereign state in the Punjab gave the people a feeling of freedom and an opportunity for development; and, in particular, the twelve departments of the new administration created a large demand for vakils or agents, gazis and adaltis or judges, kardars or revenue collectors munshis or clerks, assistants, and secretaries, accountants, newswriters, etc. The knowledge of Persian with a skill in correspondence or in drawing up documents, the art of polished conversation in Hindustani and Persian, and a beautiful penmanship came in great demand. The knowledge of accounts also became necessary for employments in the revenue department, in managing the affairs of the new aristocracy. The study of Persian and next to it, of arithmetic became very popular and the schools that undertook to teach both flourished in the Sikh period.

The Sikh youth however, did not avail themselves of the openings offered to the people for employment in the administration of the government. They preferred a military service to the civil. A close study and analysis of the rank and file of the court from The Events of the Court of Ranjit Singh, suggests some interesting observations. These included vakils and munshis, besides casual attendants. Agents or representatives of the nawabs of Thatta Bahawalpur, Multan, Mankera of the Rajas of Jind, Jasrota, Kangra and Patiala were generally present in the court. Besides these, were present the munshis of officials, governors and commanders etc. There were different men on different occasions.

The accomplishments of reading and writing are uncommon among the sikhs wrote Captain Murray and are chiefly confined to Hindus and Moossulman, kootuddiees, or clerks who acquire a sufficient knowledge of the Persian language to enable them to keep accounts and to conduct epistolery correspondence of chiefs. The Gurmukhi or Punjabi written dialect is familiar to many Sikhs but, in general, they express a rooted aversion to the acquisition of Arabic and Persian languages resulting chiefly from the ideas instilled and prejudices imbibed in early age against everything however useful and rational that bears relations to, and is connected with, the religion and education of the Muslman.

It is a common place of the history of the Punjab, that much less having a place in the political economy of the country, the Sikhs were a persecuted and hunted community and it appears ridiculous to expect them to study Persian and Arabic the languages of their persecutors. Arabic was the language of Qur'an and Muslim theology. The Sikhs and Hindus had little to do with them. The views of Aurangzeb against the study of Arabic are too well-known to be repeated here. It is, however, difficult, to agree with Murray, that Sikhs had 'a rooted aversion' to the acquisition of the Persian language. The Sikh coins\(^1\) struck in or about 1758, 1765, 1778 and 1798 bear inscriptions in Persian. The Sikh records of this period were kept in Persian. Persian was adopted the official language of the Sikh States. Even Guru Gobind Singh whose father was put to death so mercilessly by the then Muslim king when he was only fifteen, engaged a maulvi, to teach him Persian.\(^2\)

If the Sikh youth did not take to the study of Persian, it was because he found no use for it. Punjabi was his mother tongue and Punjabi too was the language of his religion, unlike the Muslim's or the Hindu's. He, therefore, made his first or earliest acquaintance with Gurmukhi. When he grew up, he took to agriculture, industry, army or police,\(^3\) in which walks of life the need for further study or for matter of that for the study of Persian was not felt.

2. J.D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.65.
A large percentage of the Sikhs particularly of the Jat community was no doubt 'impatient of education', or learning, but there was no lack of education, no paucity of talents, no poverty of scholarship, among other Sikhs. They were, as we shall see later, proportionally, equally, if not more, literate than the others. Some among them acquired proficiency in their religious learning, others like Gyanis specialised themselves in the study of the Granth. The Udasis and the Nirmalas went beyond the domain of Gurmukhi and inspired by the example of Guru Gobind Singh himself, ventured into the classical world and made valuable acquisitions. There were still others who studied Persian as well, either because it was a court language and offered them an opportunity for employment in the administration of the country, or preferably for the ethical and mystical spirit of the Persian poetry. There were numerous instances of Sikh youngmen and grown-ups who studied Persian for the purposes of its utility or culture. A few of these may be given here to support our point of view:

Hari Singh Nalwa, the great general and diplomat of the Maharaja for instance, was educated by his father Gurdial Singh at Gujranwala in both Gurmukhi and Persian. A maulvi was specially engaged to teach him the court language at home.²

Munshi Mohan Lal who accompanied Burnes and Dr. Gerard to Afghanistan, Turkistan, Khurasan and Iran on their diplomatic mission, noticed at a solitary fort at about 30 miles from Lahore,

a very young boy' who looked sharp and brave' studying Persian
the court language of Ranjit Singh. This boy was the son of Mian
Singh who kept the fort for the Maharaja.1

Bhag Singh, son of a father with a war-like disposition,
who had a territory of his own in the Kanhya Misal, was an
accomplished scholar of both Persian and Sanskrit. He was also
a painter, at the same time acquainted with the art of casting
guns.2

Rattan Singh, son of Rai Singh of Kotla Budla family
was a man of culture. He was a scholar of both Persian and
Gurmukhi. At the instance of Captain Murray, Agent at Ludhina
to the Governor General, he wrote a history called Panth Parkash
of the various Sikh families then celebrated in the Punjab.3

Bhai Charanjit Singh was a good scholar of Persian
Sanskrit, Hindi and gurmukhi. Later he learnt English and took
great interest in the education of the people when the new system
was introduced. In appreciation of his researches in Gurmukhi
he was introduced. In appreciation of his researches in Gurmukhi
he was presented in the Darbar of 1878, with a copy of Trump's
Adi Granth.

The family of Sindhanvalia, writes Leitner, had always
had private tutors and, besides the sons of Sardars, others were
also allowed to benefit by their teachers. Among these teachers

2. Ibid., p.273.
3. Ibid.
were Mian Mohsan Shah and Shahbaz Khan, masters of Arabic and Persian. Sardar Attar Singh, Lehna Singh and Ajit Singh of the family were distinguished literary men of the age\textsuperscript{1}. They combined a knowledge of Arabic and Sanskrit, in addition to considerable efficiency in Persian.\textsuperscript{2}

C.W. Leitner knew two natives in the Punjab, who knew both Arabic and Sanskrit and both were Sikhs. They were Sardar Gurdial Singh, and Sardar Thakur Singh who received their early education in the indigenous system and later on got employment by dint of their literary distinction. The later was a Persian and Gurmukhi scholar as well.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] G.W. Leitner, \textit{op. cit.}, p.153.
\item[2.] \textit{Ibid.}, p.31.
\item[3.] \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}