The bright and vibrant calendars of the Sikh Gurus always offer an enigmatic charm and fascination to the viewer and due to a spiritual aura around them the presence of a calendar on the wall of Punjabi household almost becomes an essential decorative element which possesses the capacity to inspire and move the onlooker to be drenched in divinity and piousness. Thus a Sikh Calendar is not only an ordinary painting but a prolific amalgamation of lofty ideals of Sikhism which often provides a peep into the glorious historical episodes of Sikh history seeped in valour and divinity and this decorative article is in fact a mirror to the plethora of ideological, philosophical and ethical developments of Sikh tenets and a visual treat which portrays the artistic and aesthetical saga of the artists, writers, thinkers, preachers and philosophers. Deeply stung with their mystical charm and evocative stance the analytical study of Sikh Calendar art became the topic of my research work. As a plethora of facts pertaining to this captivating genre of Sikh Calendar art remained to be unraveled and explored, this most popular form of Sikh art is deeply rooted in the very psyche of Sikhism which further prodded me on a sacred endeavour to understand its genesis and its progressive journey to the present day. The whole experience of demystifying the true soul and essence of these calendars has enriched the research work as the elements and conceptual contents of these vibrant Sikh calendars derived their mesmerizing power from an array of factors pertaining to Sikh history, ideology, philosophy, spiritual, divine and ethical perspectives. Simultaneously the study has provided sumptuous revelations about its artistic, aesthetical and creative manifestations and influences. This study has covered the period when after the first appearance of Janam Sakhis in 1658 to the present 21st century when this genre is at its pinnacle and enjoys the world-wide popularity as a representative object d'art of Sikh history, art and culture. It was a pilgrimage of sorts to pass through each and every magnificent element of the deep and engrossing study
examining the manuscripts, specimens of original Sikh paintings, books and journals on the subject written by scholars and preachers and engaging interactions with artists, printers, scholars and experts to dig deep into the ocean of mystical aspirations behind these mesmerizing objects of art. These sources provided valuable information and knowledge which guided me to onward exploration of the subject. The visits to museums, art galleries, institutions, corporations, banks and other places of interest related to this art form added a new impetus in holding a firm grasp on this appealing subject. A remarkable treasure of the sources have in fact offered an unfathomed vision and urgency with which several generations of artists and historians have poured in their valuable mental and physical faculties for the development and popularization of this genre of art which has its admirers in all the continents of the globe. This research work is divided into eight significant chapters which deal with various aspects of Sikh Calendar art. The following passages contain chapter-wise summary of the focus of this research work which revealed numerous valuable and absorbing factors instrumental in the present day popularity of this genre of Sikh Calendar art:

**CHAPTER: 1**

**INTRODUCTION TO SIKH CALENDAR ART**

During the course of research the fundamental and basic introduction and definition was dealt with and efforts were directed towards the condensation and explanation of the very meaning and definition of Sikh Calendar art. Having done that the search was pointed towards finding the genesis of this genre of art which has become the most popular form of Sikh art. Popular art as the more general term is used to refer to all those art forms of India that have a mass audience and use mechanical reproduction in their creation and distribution. Calendar art is a generic name for a style of Popular Print art. It was discovered that the popularity and mass appeal of Sikh calendars lies in the themes chosen by the artists which showcases spiritual, religious, literary and historical perspectives. It was further revealed that Sikh Calendar art has
accomplished the position of being the most admired genre of *Sikh Popular art* as it has successfully and emphatically captured the imagination of millions of people inhabiting the northern states of India for decades and decades, due to the spiritual and historical content, stylised form, decorative and ornamental appeal one finds these calendars respectfully and prominently displayed on the walls of the religious places, households, shops and other commercial as well as social establishments. The Sikh calendars carrying the images of Sikh Gurus, Saints and Sikh martyrs are revered as if they are the embodiment of spiritual and religious empowerment. Episodes treasured in the popular imagination of *Sikh Calendar prints* are legends and manifestations of the religious, spiritual, cultural and traditional values and ethos of the Sikhs. The bright and colourful collection of these absorbing calendars depict scenes from the Sikh history from the Gurus to the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, *Janam Sakhis*, Gurdwara Reform movement, *Baramaha Tukhari* and sagas of valour and bravery of Sikhs, Sikh martyrs and episodes of Sikh wars which took place during the course of glorious Sikh history. The research work took me on a sojourn to see the fabulous collections and specimens of *Sikh Calendar art* done in myriad stylizations and techniques adopted by the stalwarts of this genre of art and many minute and fascinating factors and elements came to light while analysing them critically in terms of their aesthetic as well as thematic contents portraying the philosophy, ethos and ethics of Sikh religion which is the hallmark of these calendars. The *Sikh Calendar art* is a true tribute to the valiant and spiritual essence of Sikh religion and is a vivid pictureisation of the visual content contained in the Gurbani and Sikh history. Though many critics may opine and predict that *Sikh Calendar art* will be on the decline in popularity and in churning out fresh talent in this field. But it gives us a sense of great satisfaction and hope that this wave of *Calendar art* which was started at the emergence of *Sikh art* in *Janam-Sakhis* is alive and flourishing today. The ideals of Sikhism are universal and have the capacity to inspire the fresh talent which is found in abundance in small cities and towns and the pivotal creative contribution of the stalwarts of this art acts as a source of
inspiration and motivation for coming generations to further strengthen the vigorously flowing stream of *Sikh Calendar art*. Patronage of Sikh religious bodies, academies, institutions and non-resident Indians who are keenly interested in the preservation of Sikh heritage, culture, religion, art and language deserve praise. Streams of new painters of *Sikh Calendar art* are emerging and silently yet steadily working towards carrying forward this genre of art which brings financial support and artistic satisfaction to the new painters who are establishing small studios in their homes and markets. The role of bodies like Punjab and Sind Bank, Bank of Punjab, Markfed, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), Art Academies, Museums, Art Galleries, Printing presses, Publishing houses, Advertising agencies and Animation and Graphic design houses is of immense significance and in fact the introduction of new printing techniques like Digital and Offset printing have made it easier to spread the popularity and scope of *Sikh Calendar art*.

**CHAPTER: 2**

**THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIKH CALENDAR ART**

While dealing with the chapter of emergence and development of the genre of *Sikh Calendar art* it was established through sustained study that the study of the emergence and development of *Sikh Calendar art* will not be complete without understanding the development of *Sikh art*. While defining the term *Sikh art* the basic ingredients and elements, which have contributed towards its emergence, may primarily be the works of art specifically done by Sikh artists, on Sikh themes patronized by Sikhs or produced within the territory governed or otherwise dominated by Sikhs. To explain the explicit version of *Sikh art*—the early *Sikh art* was a myriad combination of the Sikh religious themes, the life events of Guru Nanak as illustrated in *Janam Sakhis*, portraits of Sikh Gurus, ideals of Sikh life and canons of Sikh faith. At this stage, the Sikh themes were the essence of *Sikh art* rather than style. While *Sikh art* was essentially thematic in content and spirituality was its all-adoring
flavour during this period. The ‘song’ and hymns were the reigning elements in the spread of Sikhism and its values yet the gradual emergence of visuals in the Janam Sakhis aptly and emphatically started establishing the new genre of Sikh art catering to the devotional needs of the faithful. Sikh art was born in the Janam Sakhis and apart from an isolated series of portraits, it was evidently confined to this context for well over a century. Janam Sakhis are hagiographic accounts of the life of Guru Nanak, popular narratives that have enjoyed a considerable popularity throughout the history of the Sikh panth. It was discovered that the first attempt to illustrate Janam Sakhis was made as early as 1658 during the pontificate of the seventh Guru Har Rai. The pioneers who endeavoured in this direction were chiefly Udasi, Ramraiya and Sodhi Deras all offshoots of the mainstream of Sikhism. With the development of illustrated Janam Sakhis, Sikh art saw the emergence of thematic extension, imaginative expansion, fictional dimension, spiritual concern, devotional aura and artistic manifestation. Simultaneously the appearance of frescos and murals on the walls of deras, dharamshalas, temples, akharas, shrines, havelis and palaces depicting the life events of Sikh Gurus, their portraits and those of Mahants and priests established and further channelised the propagation of the emerging genre of Sikh art. Fresco paintings enlarged the scope of Sikh art and at the same time became instrumental in spreading the teachings of Sikh Gurus, Sikh way of life and ethos, amongst all sections of the society. The drawings and paintings on Sikh themes flourished as a number of renowned painters from Rajasthan migrated to Punjab hills during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as there was greater patronage and protection for these painters who had fled the kingdoms of Rajasthan due to perennial turmoil and wars between the Mughals and Rajput rulers. To seek greater patronage from the Sikh ruler-Maharaja Ranjit Singh, these painters from Rajasthan started working on themes relating to Sikh religion, the Sikh nobility and aristocracy and they infused the fundamental parameters of aesthetic richness as well as visual stylization akin to the classical style of miniature painting richly decorative, sprayed with elements of nature-
flora and fauna, landscape and architecture. The Lahore *Durbar* which had great splendour and grandeur attracted hordes of European artists, travellers, historians and generals to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as the stories of his fabulous wealth and emperial power transcended the boundaries of the Punjab. These European artists brought with them new techniques and technologies, the extremely generous ruler of Sikh empire, who was a great patron of art, embrace them in his fold. Thus the *Sikh painting* underwent a sea-change and saw the introduction of various styles and painting techniques. These painters of extraordinary artistic caliber produced magnificent paintings in charcoal, chalk, crayon, water-colours, tempura, gouache, oil colours and even initiated the technique of woodcut, lithography and zinc etching. Seeing the potential of their works being acquired by rich natives at fabulous rates, they saw it as a great commercial proposition and introduced the printing presses to India. After attaining considerable expertise and skill in handling of western painting styles and techniques, the most poignant and landmark endeavour which revolutionalised the *Sikh Calendar art* was the initiation of painting portraits of Sikh Gurus, episodes from Sikh historical perspective, narration of Sikh ideology, ethos and culture in western styles and mannerisms by the Sikh artists. The manuscript-like drawings and paintings which were being painted earlier by hand in limited numbers were being produced now in large numbers by using the woodcut and lithography printing techniques. This facilitated availability of reproduction of the original specimens of *Sikh Calendar art* in large quantities and thus it propelled mass production of *Calendar art* works amply serving the purpose of propagation of *Sikh Calendar art* which is aptly referred to as ‘Bazaar’ or ‘Popular art’. Interestingly, it brought these calendars within the reach of common man at nominal rates. J. Lockwood Kipling, Principal of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore (1875-93) and also Curator of the Central Museum, Lahore, chanced upon seeing these unusually exotic Sikh calendars being sold on the footpaths of Lahore and evinced a keen interest in these calendars so much so he started collecting each available specimen of this art
form for his own personal collection which was later on donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London by his son Rudyard Kipling. This stylized art form passing through the creative hands of Kehar Singh, Kishan Singh, Bishan Singh, Azim, Jeevan Lal, Lahora Singh, Malla Ram, Sri Ram Lal, Hussain Buxe, Allah Buxe and others, saw many phases of transformation from elaborately decorative to photo-realistic versions. Subsequently the touch of individual artistic approach and mannerism exalted expression of divinity and spiritualism, a deep exploration of conceptual essence and visualization marked resonance of the emphasis on visually powerful narration, was witnessed in the works of Sobha Singh, S.G. Thakur Singh, G.S. Sohan Singh, Kirpal Singh, Jaswant Singh, Master Gurdit Singh, Trilok Singh Chitrakar, Amolak Singh, Bodhraj, Mehar Singh, Devender Singh and Jarnail Singh. These artists emerged as torch-bearers of the genre of Sikh Calendar art. Their unstinted efforts were pointed towards finalizing the iconography of Sikh art thereby establishing a separate genre of Sikh Calendar art. Around India’s independence two major developments in Sikh art were taking roots, one was the availability of mass-produced colourful stylised pictures produced by painters in Amritsar and some of them were even carrying on the Bazaar style Calendar art in Delhi and other places which chiefly had paintings of Sikh Gurus, Gurdwaras, prominent Sikh martyrs and warriors. The other development that was taking shape was the emergence of painters who were highly skilled and were able to produce paintings for the more sophisticated patrons though they had started towards this direction much before independence. The main plank of their work was painting portraits of Sikh Gurus from imagination and depicting events in Sikh history underlining the Sikh psyche and ethos which may glorify the ideals of Sikhism. As by now the actual portraits of Gurus had been lost to oblivion and these painters were essentially painting the spiritual and much adored qualities of humanism, piousness and valour enshrined in Sikhism. Though some section of the society in Sikhs were not very much impressed with painting the portraits of Sikh Gurus from imagination. Each one of these artists had endeavoured to
paint the portrait of Sikh Gurus and events related to their life in their own individualistic and specific styles. These artists were successful in attempting to express Sikh history and underlying ideals in a way that they appealed to large audience. The source of the river of Sikh Calendar art essentially and pre-eminently is the slow and steady emergence and development of the art of illustrating Janam Sakhis drifting from one artistic characteristic to another like small rivulets and brooks passing through many rough and uneven terrains but always retaining its essence and undercurrent of this flowing sacred river being the Sikh religious history, spirituality, truthfulness and universal brotherhood which was preached by Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus spreading the aroma of these divine qualities amongst the people of this land. The river got momentum with the advent of printing press and introduction of many printing techniques and technical advancements brought in by the Europeans to Punjab. The works of art which were earlier available to a few rich and aristocratic connoisseurs or patrons of art were made available to the masses in the form of colourful reproductions at a very low cost. There is a glorious and unmatched valuable contribution of the local artists primarily the Sikhs, who strove hard and were quick to learn and pursue the newly introduced marvels in painting and printing techniques. Each one has immensely devoted his life in pursuance of refining the Sikh art in content, style and visual narration of popular Sikh themes by mingling Sikh historical perspective and ethos with European painting trends. Today the genre of Sikh Calendar art is a mass movement and innumerable amateur and professional painters are seriously engaged in covering new grounds in the spread of this most popular branch of Sikh art. A full-fledged iconography of Sikh Calendar art is well recognised and individual and specific artists are busy in their artistic pursuits to pay their distinctive tributes in their own yet collective artistic endeavour using even the digital technology and multi-media processes. The popularity of Sikh Calendar art is increasing leaps and bounds and is covering some strange surfaces and objects, which hitherto were not even thinkable. The forms of Sikh Calendar art are painted and
printed on- notebook covers, diaries, lockets, key chains, pocket calendars, wall calendars, panels, murals, hoardings, T-shirts, mugs and objects of daily use. No doubt the genre of Sikh Calendar art has a bright future as now it is popular not only in Punjab and India but in such parts of the globe where Punjabis had made their homes.

CHAPTER: 3

SUBJECT MATTER, PROCESSES, TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS OF SIKH CALENDAR ART

The third chapter is devoted to the study of subject matter, processes, techniques and materials of Sikh Calendar art where strenuous emphasis was laid on the study of these calendars in relation to the subject matter and other significant factors and processes which have resulted in the culmination of providing a new avatar to the visual appeal and aesthetic sensibilities to this genre of art. Thus the deep study was directed towards analysing the subject matter which provided the essential soul to the content of this genre of art and due consideration was also laid in discovering processes, techniques and materials involved in the enhancement of this art form during the decades. The subject matter of Sikh Calendar art which has travelled through a long capsule of time has attained the fragrance of divinity and spirituality. In fact it has been enriched with values of valour, saga of martyrdom, significance of selfless service and the essence of ‘Miri and Piri’ (Temporal and Spiritual power); further entrenching and fortifying the very humane ideals, preached by Guru Nanak Dev and other Sikh Gurus, Bhagats, Bairagis and Saints whose spiritual compositions or Bani are respectfully compiled in the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Further digging deep into the subject has revealed that these fascinating calendars painted by various artists infact dealt with many known and unknown episodes and themes of Sikh history and other significant paraphernalia of Sikh religion, art and culture and these include subjects such as Events from Janam Sakhis and Udasis (Missionary Travels) of Guru Nanak Dev, Significant Popular subjects related to the other nine Sikh
Gurus, Iconic Portraits of Ten Sikh Gurus, Pillars of Sikh Militant strength, Selfless Service (Nishkaam Sewa) or ‘Sarbat Da Bhala’, Sri Harimandir Sahib- The Supreme Sanctorum, Historical Gurdwaras, Bhagats and Saints, Sectarian Mahants, Saints and Nath Yogis, Barahmaha Tukhari Chhant Mahala-1, Royal portraits of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his courtiers and Punjabi Culture and Traditions. Tumultuous scenes of Wada and Chhota Ghalughara, Sikh wars and battles, Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Kuka movement and Carnage at Panja Sahib also inspired the artists to record these movements in their remarkable works in the celebration of martyrdom. The paintings which are seeped in divinity of Guru Nanak and colours of valour and sacrifices of the tenth Sikh Guru- Guru Gobind Singh present a dominant theme and subject matter. Other significant paintings provide a peep into the history of Sikhs projected in various versions and visual representations. Glorification of martyrdom, respect for humanistic values and service to mankind were the inspirational planks of numerous works of art under this genre of art. These calendars present a complete package of Sikh ideology, philosophy, symbolism and faith. ‘Ik Onkar’ (God is One), ‘Sarbat Da Bhala’ (Welfare of the whole mankind), ‘Deh Tegh Fateh’ (Always ready for fight against tyranny and injustice), ‘Tera Bahana Meetha Lage’ (Sweet is Thou will) and ‘Ekam Pitah Ekas Ke hum Barik (God is One and all Humanity is His children) are the universal messages portrayed in these calendars. An analytical study of these calendars reveal that there is a common thread which runs through various thematic contents qualifying for good specimens of Sikh Calendar art and these can briefly be classified in the following categories: Portraits of Guru Nanak- from head to bust, full length, seated or standing alongside with Bala and Mardana in varying versions. Scenes from Janam Sakhis have been tastefully depicted pertaining to Bal Nanak showing his kotaks (astonishing childhood miracles) like episode of Sarp Chhaya, Miraculous restoration of the fields destroyed by grazing buffaloes, Amazed Rai Bular recognizing the element of divinity in child Nanak, Bal Nanak being rebuked by his father- Mehta Kalu, Nanak debating with a teacher Gopal Pandit, A tender depiction of Bebe Nanaki’s affection
for Nanak, Guru Nanak at a Madrasa writing Ek Omkar on his takhti. Then comes the narration of episode of Sacha Sauda, Nanak uttering Tera-Tera shows Nanak at a grocery shop at Sultanpur Lodhi, the scene from Nanak’s marriage. In addition to that prominent events that took place during the four Udasis (Missionary Travels) of Guru Nanak also became a preferred and popular subject matter for Sikh calendars such as Guru Nanak’s visit to Kuaru-desh and meeting Nuri Shah, the female sorceress, Siddha-Goshti, Guru Nanak meeting Pandits at Har-ki-Pauri, Haridwar, Encounter of Guru Nanak with the demon ‘Kauda’, Encounter of Guru Nanak with Wali Qandhari at Panja Sahib, Reetha Meetha episode, Guru Nanak drawing milk from Bhai Lalo’s bread, Guru Nanak Dev’s visit to Piri Pur (Multan), Guru Nanak meeting Kalyug, Visit of Guru Nanak to Baghdad, Mecca Pherna (revolving of Mecca), Self-rotation of the chakkies (stone grinding wheels) in Babar’s jail, Guru Nanak visiting a leper’s house, Guru Nanak traveling with Bala and Mardana on the back of a fish in the ocean and Guru Nanak alongwith Bala and Mardana seated under a Banyan tree lost in deep meditation. The themes of these calendars were selectively chosen as stories projected one or the other reformatory messages conveyed for dispelling the darkness of ignorance. These were not mere stories but these carried messages to bring the desired transformation in the mindset of people indulging in meaningless rituals and evil practices. The role of a true Guru and a preacher is justified in these events and episodes adopted in the calendars of Sikh art. The social revolution being brought by Guru Nanak has been aesthetically illustrated by the artists in superbly illuminating visuals and their impact carry an indelible impression on the minds of the masses. These episodes are so popular today that their message is enshrined in each and every heart. Yet a large number of calendars dwell on the essence of Nanak’s philosophy of universal brotherhood and harmony. This apostle of peace laments the sentiment in Eti maar payi kurlane- Tein ki dard na aya (religious intolerance shown by Mughals on innocent people), Nanak naam jahaz hai jo chade so uttare par (the true Name or Nam of God is like a ship whosoever boards it crosses the sea of life and attains
enlightenment), Sau kyun manda akhiye jis jamme rajaan (Equality of Gender), Ujad Jao Base Raho (good people should spread and bad should remain contained to one place). Through the medium of these calendars, Guru Nanak’s comments on the prevalence of destruction of human rights, sectarian violence, religious bigotry, low esteem for female gender, inequality in the society based on caste, creed and religion have been highlighted sending an imploring message to the mankind to get rid of these curses. Nanak’s crusade and mission in bringing peace, justice, hope and harmony to the troubled populace soul reeling under the dark and dreary spell of turmoil, tyranny, violence and repression perpetuated by tyrant rulers aptly install Nanak’s persona as that of a saviour. In the similar fashion significant popular subjects related to the lives and teachings of other nine Sikh Gurus which throw light on their mission include: Guru Angad Dev’s establishment of institution of Langar or Community kitchen in a painting showing Mata Khiwi serving kheer and Langar to the devotees. These Sikh calendars bring out the missionary zeal with which the second Sikh Guru carried forward the message of equality and service to mankind. Guru Amar Das- ‘Amru Nithawan’ (a person who has no place for shelter): Guru Amar Das being blessed by Guru Angad Dev as ‘A shelter for the homeless’, Selfless service or Sewa and sacrifice for the comfort of his Guru Angad Dev, Guru Amar Das conferring equal rights to the women to conduct and perform Sikh missionary and parish work, Guru Amar Das giving a bath to a leper named ‘Prema Chaudhari’, Guru Amar Das forbidding the practice of Sati and Gurmukh is always humble. In such symbolic works, the importance of dedication and devotion to the Guru is projected as a ‘Selfless Service’ and can be defined as true mode of meditation which culminates in salvation. Removal of social evil customs against women such as a calendar relating to dramatically descriptive happening done on the practice of Sati is a fine example. Guru Ram Das-Guru Ram Das laying the foundation of the holy city of Amritsar, Kar Sewa (Self-help) rendered by devotees for digging the holy Sarovar and Guru Ram Das Sarovar nahate sab uttare paap kamate (whosoever takes a dip in this Sarovar washes off all his sins).
During Guru Ram Das’s times, establishment and consolidation of fundamentals of Sikh faith were strengthened by establishing the holy city of Amritsar and construction of Sri Darbar Sahib - the holiest of the holy shrines of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan Dev serving the lepers at Taran Taran, Construction of a leper’s home (Pingalwara) at Taran Taran Sahib, Compilation of Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjan Dev and Bhai Gurdas, Guru Arjan Dev initiating the use of six-channel Persian wheel (Chhcharta), Guru Arjan Dev encouraging his followers to learn the skill of horse riding and also advocating the business of buying good horses and Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev at the hands of tyrant Mughals are portrayed in fabulous calendars underlining the consistent endeavours of the Guru towards the establishment of a just and truthful environment where devotees from every religion enjoyed complete freedom to worship their respective religions and faiths. Guru Hargobind - The invincible Guru: showing Bal Hargobind overpowering a poisonous snake, Guru Hargobind proclaiming the concept of Miri (Temporal power) and Piri (Spiritual power), Bandi Chhor Guru: Guru Hargobind leaving the Gwalior fort with fifty-two Rajas, Visit of Mughal emperor Jahangir to Golden Temple, Amritsar to pay obeisance to Guru Hargobind Sahib, Guru Hargobind giving audience to queen Nur Jahan and Guru Hargobind blessing Mata Sulakhani. These events depicted in calendars narrate the importance of self-defense, the concept of humility, love for nature and the propagation of Miri (Temporal power) and Piri (Spiritual power). The establishment of Miri and Piri concept was to counter the onslaught of inhospitable narrow-minded tyrant rulers who indulged in inhuman acts against the innocent people. Guru Har Rai - Tread with care: Guru Hargobind advising his grandson Guru Har Rai to walk gently since flowers and plants are also living organisms and Guru Har Rai curing Dara Shikoh - the elder son of Shahjahan. The message drives from this advice shows respect for humility and sensitivity to mankind. Many other such lofty ideals are captured in the themes of numerous calendars. Guru Harkishan dhayaiye jis dithe sab dukh jaye showing Guru Harkishan eradicating epidemics and curing the worst cases
with his kind and dedicated approach to serve the mankind and Guru Harkishan making a mute and illiterate poor water carrier name Chhajju to recite Shalokas from Gita and explaining its true meaning by just placing a stick on his head. Thus the snobbery and arrogance of Brahmanical preachers was curtailed with words of divine wisdom explained by the eighth Sikh Guru who devoted his life in the service of ailing and suffering humanity. Kashmiri Pandits meeting Guru Tegh Bahadur, a heartrending portrayal of martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Chandni Chowk, New Delhi, Bhai Jaita respectfully carrying the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur from the place of martyrdom, Guru Gobind Singh embracing Bhai Jaita and uttering the words ‘Rangretta- Guru ka beta’: Rangretta is the son of the Guru. Ninth Sikh Guru sacrificed his life for the protection and upholding of one’s right to profess one’s faith and religion thus this supreme sacrifice paved the way for a full-fledged struggle to stand against the unreasonable oppressors who perpetrated a reign of unparallel brutality. Horrifying scenes depicting the Mughal brutality and torture are demonstrative of Execution of Bhai Mati Dass whose body was split into two parts with a saw, gory details of Bhai Sati Dass being wrapped in cotton and burnt alive, Bhai Dyala being burnt alive in a cauldron full of hot oil, Mutilating of body parts of Bhai Mani Singh, Execution of Bhai Taru Singh whose hair were being removed alongwith his skull showcase the gritty resolve of these disciples of Sikhism who had no fear of death. Guru Gobind Singh- Establishent of Khalsa Panth at Anandpur Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh chosing Panj Pyaras (five beloved ones) from the congregation who are ready to sacrifice their lives, Amrit Sanchar Ceremony: Guru Gobind Singh baptizing the Panj Pyaras (five beloved ones), Neela ghoda banka joda hath wich baaj sajaye chalo singho prabh darshan kariye Guru Gobind Singh aye representing a picture of Guru Gobind Singh as a bold valiant warrior with a deep resolve on his face yet the eyes beam with sensitivity and tenderness yet a haloed divinity gives a hint of a Saint Soldier-‘Sant Sipahi’, Chidiyon se mein baaj ladaun tabhi Gobind Singh naam kahaun’ (Call me Gobind Singh only when I transform the
sparrows to fight an falcon) illustrating the concept of Guru’s power of character
building, *Sura sau pehchaniye jo lade deen ke het* showing Guru Gobind Singh as a
saviour of the oppressed and the down-trodden, Guru Sahib embracing his sons
(*Sahibzadas*), *Uch da Pir Banana* showcasing Guru Sahib being dressed as a *Pir* by
his Muslim admirers to get out of the dense forest of Machhiwara, *Guru Sahib tearing
the resignation submitted by the forty Muktas in the battlefield*, *Bhai Kanhaiya
serving drinking water to the wounded and the thirsty Turk soldiers alongwith the Sikh
soldiers*, *Bricking alive two younger sons (Sahibzadas) at Sirhind by Wazir Khan*,
*Sirhind di gadh* showing two elder sons (*Sahibzadas*) sacrificing their lives for the
sake of the nation and their faith, *Thande Burg di kaid* (Jail in cold tower) illustrating
the sufferings of two younger sons (*Sahibzadas*) who were jailed in the cold tower
alongwith their grandmother Mata Gujri before their execution, *The battle of Bhangani
(Paonta Sahib)*, *The fortress at Chamkaur and Darbar of Sri Guru Gobind Singh*. The
artists adopted scenes from life and times of Guru Gobind Singh and justifiably
glorified the concept of being a saint and a soldier who is considered as ‘*Sarbans
Dani*’ (a man who sacrificed his whole family for the protection of religion, faith and
ideology). The *Sikh Calendar art* in right earnest has recreated the deep humanistic
bond entrenched in spirituality and divinity of Sikh religion. Amongst the large
number of calendars which deserve solemn mention are true examples of tribute to the
sacrifices of Baba Deep Singh Shaheed and Banda Singh Bahadur, who besides being
the pillars of Sikh militant strength were carriers of glorious traditions of Sikhism who
placed their lives at the ideals of Sikh Gurus. Tumultuous scenes of *Wada and Chhota
Ghalughara*, Sikh wars and battles, *Jallianwala Bagh Massacre*, *Kuka movement* and
*Carnage at Panja Sahib* also inspired the artists to record these movements in their
remarkable works in a celebration of martyrdom. Apart from several calendars of
Golden Temple, Amritsar in myriad moods and angles, portrayal of historical
Gurdwaras and places of pilgrimage occupy a special place due to their mass
popularity and sacred sanctity. Portraits of *Bhagats* and saints, whose literary
contributions are enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, too reserved a coveted place in the paintings relating to *Sikh Calendar art*. As the Punjabis are spread all over the globe, an urge to capture the rich and vibrant colours of culture, traditions and heritage of Punjab is being felt specially amongst the new generation Non-resident Indians who possess a keen desire to acquaint themselves with their cultural roots and religion. Lately some artists of repute have contributed considerably towards this end and produced breathtaking paintings of the Punjabi way of life depicting the rich cultural fabric in shades of authenticity and rustic flavours. The analytical study of *Sikh Calendar art* is also directed towards ascertaining the processes and techniques which have enriched the painting and printing techniques of these calendars. The journey of *Sikh Calendar art* has passed through various terrains in terms of adopting new techniques and stylizations from Line drawing Woodcuts to Lithography, Multi-block Printing, Colour Lithography, Oleography, Half-tone blocks, Albumen prints, Bromide prints, Photo-lithography, Offset Printing and Digital Printing. In the absence of highlighting these techniques the study of *Sikh Calendar art* would have been incomplete as the techniques and new processes have propelled the very availability of these calendars in the open market thereby flooding the households and other establishments. The main cause for mass popularity and ever-increasing demand was initiated by adopting the technology, techniques and processes in an appropriate manner.

**CHAPTER: 4**

**SOURCES OF SIKH CALENDAR ART**

The sources of *Sikh Calendar art* are both diverse and numerous as being a popular genre of *Sikh art*, it has been successfully catering to the manifestations of humanism and essence of its content is embedded in the high annals of Sikh history, culture and traditions which proliferate a long saga of valour and sacrifices. The hallmark of
Sikhism disseminates spirituality, service to mankind and upholding of high moral and ethical personal piouesness in day-to-day living, as preached and practiced by the Great Ten Sikh Gurus. The art which has taken upon itself to carry forward the flame of spirit of Khalsa has cut a special sacred task for its promoters, propagators, artists and collectors. Thus the all encompassing spirit of Sikhism was primarily featured in the *Janam Sakhis* (traditional narratives of the life of Guru Nanak) - the perennial source of themes, imagery and content of *Sikh Calendar art* which later spread to more elaborate frescoes and wall paintings depicted in a stylized form impacting the minds and souls of a large populace with divine messages of spiritual manifestations. As the lofty aromas of Sikh faith spread far and wide, more and more artists and creative persons contributed in the development of visual presentation of themes related to Sikhism in varied styles and conceptual adaptations. This saw the rapid development of illustrated *pothis* (manuscripts) which covered the plethora of essence of Sikhism. To further promote the visual messages of the Sikh Gurus and episodes related to their lives, the artists/painters adopted the then technologies in vogue that is mass production of these Sikh calendars started in Woodcut and Lithography Printing techniques. With the advent of western techniques in painting and arrival of printing processes, the domain of *Sikh Calendar art* expanded both vertically and horizontally as fantastic works of art on Sikh themes were mass produced and reached both masses and classes at nominal rates. The role of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, Amritsar is unparalleled in the context that it established itself as the pioneer agency in promotion of *Sikh Calendar art* by engaging well-known artists to paint remarkable works of art depicting Sikh history, ethos and philosophical perspectives. Another landmark contribution is the establishment of *Ajaibghars* (museums) attached to historical Gurdwaras in many cities and towns. The intellectuals and literary stalwarts who anticipated the importance of collecting, preserving and promoting the Sikh heritage and art formed a core committee to establish a towering ‘Central Sikh Museum’ in the precincts of The Golden Temple,
Amritsar which has the largest collection of paintings and other artifacts relating to the genre of *Sikh Calendar art*. Many other prominent Gurdwaras followed this example and these set up museums on the similar lines. Due credit should be given to Sir J. Lockwood Kipling, Principal of Mayo School of Art in Lahore (1875-1893) and also Curator of the Central Museum, Lahore who in the initial stages of *Sikh Calendar art* understood its value and collected all available specimens of this genre which are housed in Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The Dharam Prachar Committee, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, Amritsar performed the sacred duty of propagation of Sikhism by publishing aesthetically illustrated books, brochures, calendars, pamphlets etc. Pursuing the same crusade, many government and corporate houses, corporations, banks and educational institutions did tremendous task of producing and publishing Sikh calendars in a big way. During the last four decades, the prominent patrons and promoters of *Sikh Calendar art* whose contribution is significant and astounding are: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, Dharam Parchar Committee: Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, Punjab and Sind Bank, New Delhi, Bank of Punjab, New Delhi, Markfed, PNB Finance, other Sikh institutions like Sikh Foundation, Miri Piri Foundation and museums established in the premises of historical Gurdwaras. The all inspiring and prominent motivational source of course remains the sacred Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Gurbani and the other Sikh scriptures where the essence and soul of Sikh philosophy, thought and religion is respectfully enshrined. The lives of Sikh Gurus and exemplary episodes of martyrdom, valour and sacrifice have always emerged as sources of inspiration to the Sikh intellectuals, literary persons, Sikh painters, preachers and scholars of Sikhism. Infact *Sikh Calendar art* is the visual testimony of universal message of humanism which projects a Pan-India philosophical thought by adopting literary works from saints and Bhagats without the consideration of caste, creed and religion. Glorious Sikh history peeps through the colourful and vibrant Sikh calendars in a monumental manner and universal perspective.
CHAPTER: 5

MAIN FEATURES OF SIKH CALENDAR ART

To identify the main features of Sikh Calendar art due consideration was devoted to highlight the basic features and characteristics employed by the artists in context to their stylisation and use of iconic symbols related to Sikh religion vis-à-vis martial and spiritual aspects. These features amply illustrate the very essence of this art which is embedded in Sikh philosophy and ideology. The main features pertaining to these calendars are benign presence of the sacred scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib, solo and group portraits of Ten Sikh Gurus in profile and frontal poses, use of the Ik-Onkar symbol in many forms, designs and manifestations, presence of a Khalsa symbol (Khanda Kirpan), Nishan Sahib, depiction of Karah Prasad, depiction of Sri Harimandir Sahib, Amritsar, portrayal of presence of all five Takhts and other historical Gurdwaras related to particular Sikh Gurus, depiction of holy inscription Satnam Waheguru and couplets or verses from Gurbani. While talking about the dominance of two main colours in Sikh calendars that is blue and saffron crystallised in earlier iconographic compositions. There is also an abundance of red, maroon, deep green and deep blue shades specially shown in the costumes of important figures and in relatively later calendars there is a touch of natural colours subdued shades of grey, white, pale, blue and light green for attires of common people composed in these compositions. A relative feature which attracts the eye in these calendars is of the understanding of Sikh architecture or the shape of rural structures, houses made of small bricks or of mud walls with typical wooden doors and street scenes. The facial cuts and features of the Punjabi people and their skin tones have been keenly observed and painted in masterly strokes. Means of transport and agricultural implements are among the other spheres of life frozen in these Sikh calendars. Walking on foot was the commonest mode of travelling in those times. People from different strata of society used horses, bullock-carts, chariots and palanquins (Dolis) as means of transport according to their need and economic conditions. Women shown in these
calendars with their heads covered with heavy Dupattas and Chaddars wearing Kurtais, Ghaghras, Chudidaar Pajamas, Salwar Kameez and are generally not wearing any heavy jewellery firstly because they used to lead simple and solemn lives and secondly there was a general fear and anxiety that prevailed due to perpetual invasions by the Mughal, Afghan and Turkish invaders and looters in Punjab being the gateway to India. Saintly people are shown wearing wooden clogs (Padukas) while ordinary people are generally depicted as bare footed. The common footwear was the Desi Juti (country shoe), though the better off classes made use of costly slippers laced with gold and silver thread embroidery. There is also a reference in these calendars to a variety of caps worn by people belonging to various religious sects. The caps were mostly in vogue among the diverse Hindu religious orders of the Sants, Siddhs, Yogis etc. Among the Muslim religious orders, the ‘Dastar’ (large sized Pugree) was more in vogue than the cap. This was why the Ulema were called ‘Dastarbandan’ and the Sayads who tied their turbans around ‘Kulas’ (conical caps) were known as ‘Kulas-Daran’. The rulers and the chiefs generally used the Pugree. Among the vast population of people too, the Pugree was worn by those popular persons who were more respected than the others. The artists have recorded the use of richly embroidered drapery especially in red, green and maroon velvets and the presence of canopy (Chandni) provide a vivid cluster of tinsel, garlands and coloured textiles and in the similar fashion rugs, carpets and other spreads have been painted in the scenes to portray royalty and riches accompanied by intricately carved wooden furniture with inlay work such as Takhts, thrones and foot-rests covered with a soft pillow which usually had golden or silver tinsels. Interiors of ‘Shamiyanas’ (temporary camping fabric structures) have also been decorated with the display of pieces of weaponry-shields, crossed spears and swords mounted on the walls. Depiction of iron bowl (Bata) an article usually carried by Nihangs is a sacred utensil to the Sikh soldiers as Guru Gobind Singh had prepared the first Amrit in such a utensil (Bata Sahib) for baptism of Panj Pyaras on the auspicious day of the birth of Khalsa. Guru Gobind
Singh, at the time of creation of Khalsa with ‘Khande Bate di Pahul’, ordered everybody to wear five Kakars to initiate as Khalsa. These five Kakars, known as symbol of Khalsa, beginning with the alphabet ‘K’, are essential for every baptised Sikh. The set of these five symbols present the distinctive features of the Khalsa, which set them off from the followers of any other religious faith. These are ‘Kes’ (long uncut hair), ‘Kangha’ (comb), ‘Kara’ (iron bracelet), ‘Kachahera’ (shorts reaching up to the knees) and ‘Kirpan’ (sword) are prominently used in these vibrant and ornamental calendars with various frames and in oval and other geometrical shapes. Sikh calendars of war scenes generally show ‘Nagara’ mounted on horsebacks or elephants. ‘Nagara’ is believed to be a thunderous musical instrument of war. Similarly a large brass musical instrument known as ‘Ransingha’ is a ‘S’ shaped, huge windpipe which is blown by the warriors leading the troops to announce the arrival of a procession. A stringed musical instrument called ‘Rabab’ is also shown in many Sikh calendars specially the ones related to Guru Nanak Dev where his constant companion Mardana is shown playing this musical instrument. Other musical instruments shown in calendars which were popularised by Guru Gobind Singh for his sightless disciples such as ‘Tabla’, ‘Saranda’, and ‘Taus’. ‘Dhad’ is an ancient musical instrument in the shape of a tabor (Damru), which is played with the finger’s strokes of the hands. Many contemporary calendars showcase this element in quite appealing form thereby registering their valuable contribution towards the propagation of Sikh history. Repetitive use of symbols such as halos or auras, simarini, lota, Chauri, wooden clogs, bairagan, kamarkasa, chola, kalgi, katar, swords and spears, bows and arrows, turbans and eyes half-closed lost in divine meditation and contemplation are most visible features which are composed in these calendars. The earlier printed calendars were very decorative and ornamental in presence and had magnificent use of compositional juxtapositions alongwith intricately decorative oval and other geometrical shaped frames. Another noticeable feature is the inscription and description of a particular person or a group of persons, their names and designations/titles and the purpose for
their congregation at a particular place either a religious place or a palace are mentioned in Gurmukhi script. This practice was even evident in earliest woodcuts and Sikh calendars. A place of pride is also reserved in the calendars for religious couplets or Bani from the Holy Scripture to impress upon the devout to understand and follow the essence of wisdom enshrined in the couplet. Sometimes these couplets are used as an indication to highlight the sanctity of an event, person or place. The practice of labelling the characters helps in tracing the gist of anecdotes featured in the calendars and to summarise the long episode in few precise stanzas. In the later calendars, the dramatic portrayal precedes realistic and surrealistic presentation of numerous subjects and symbolism.

CHAPTER: 6

DESCRIPTIVE AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANT SIKH CALENDARS AND THEIR ARTISTS

In this chapter a sustained effort was made to make a descriptive and critical analysis of important Sikh calendars and their painters revealing the psyche of the artists in the creation behind a particular calendar and the creative and aesthetic mode the painter employed to express the specific thought in pertinent visual manifestations and stylisations using his mastery in the study of the content and transform the thematic essence to the visual form and at the same time the technical aspects which were the hallmarks of a particular artist and why a specific theme is depicted in a manner which transcends from the very life-style and thought-process of a particular artist. It also deals with the artist’s interest in Sikh religion and his spiritual aspirations and manifestations. Descriptive visual elements used by the artists have been fully analysed to bring in sharp focus the study of Sikh historical material and books on Sikh philosophical dimensions. These calendars are the embodiment of the vibrant spirit of Sikhism and their lofty spiritual as well as temporal values and achievements. The genre of Sikh Calendar art has seen numerous painters during the last century
whose valuable artistic contribution is well acknowledged but the present study has focussed on twelve stalwart painters of *Sikh Calendar art* who are truly instrumental in its progression, development and popularisation. These artists have created magnificent calendars and this study has been devoted in analysing closely the detailed elements and features, techniques, symbolism, popular subjects in portraying the soul and essence of Sikh religion and culture. As each artist possessed a different temperament and background and has developed his own individualistic inimitable style and mannerism which make these calendars all the more appealing and endearing to the masses and the classes. It is discovered that the popular genre of *Sikh Calendar art* which has crossed the national boundaries and reached in all the continents of this globe owes acknowledgment and deep appreciation to the artists included in this research work. The artists included in the study are Sobha Singh, S.G. Thakur Singh, G.S. Sohan Singh, Kirpal Singh, Jaswant Singh, Master Gurdit Singh, Trilok Singh Chitrakar, Amolak Singh, Bodhraj, Mehar Singh, Devender Singh and Jarnail Singh. The critical analysis of the calendars created by the above mentioned prominent painters of *Sikh Calendar art* which have been widely circulated in the large populace are based on various themes and subjects dear to the artists. The following calendars mentioned in this study are: **Sobha Singh**- Nam Khumari Nanaka, Eko Simro Nanaka, My Meditations on Guru Nanak, Iconic Portrait of Guru Nanak in *Ashirwad* pose, Guru Nanak with Bala and Mardana, Iconic Portrait of Guru Gobind Singh in head to bust style, Portrait of Guru Gobind Singh with falcon perched on his gloved hand standing besides a horse, Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh riding a galloping horse, Iconic Portrait of Guru Hargobind, Portrait of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Sohni Mahiwal, Heer Ranjha, Sohni in Heaven, Punjabi Bride, Kangra Bride, Gaddan, Last Desire of Mumtaz Mahal, Shaheed Bhagat Singh in his cell, Portrait of Baba Sheikh Farid, Bhai Kanhaiya depicted in his own perception quenching the thirst of the whole universe, *Let art be to refine the swine and divine the refine, Art is the language of heart*; **S.G. Thakur Singh**- Aurora, Parting Kiss, Her

CHAPTER: 7

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS OF THE PROMINENT PAINTERS OF SIKH CALENDAR ART

The study of various aspects of Sikh Calendar art proved to be an overwhelmingly enlightening and a revealing experience and it turned out to be an extremely enriching phenomenon encompassing all shades and hues of Sikh religion, history, philosophy, culture, traditions, social ethics, psychological and political dimensions in an mosaic of multifarious perspectives. Though initially it may overtly appear to be a visual presentation of imagery employed by some promising Sikh artists to record and document the various episodes from Sikh history, mainly comprising of glorious pages from the lives of Sikh Gurus but it is a heartening revelation that the study of this most popular genre of Sikh Calendar art forcefully brought to the surface a plethora of vistas which go beyond the mere visual depictions and eventually relate to the very soul of the religious, philosophical, psychological and ethical essence of the Sikh religion- nurtured by unmatched divine cultivation of thought processes built on supreme sacrifices and exemplary humble, noble and pious lifestyles of Sikh Gurus. The process of propagation of the divine message of Sikhism had to encounter monstrous resistance from evil and tyrant rulers who abode the very idea of awakening of the masses as a crime fit for severe punishment. While repeeling the veneer of visual stylization of these Sikh calendars, there appears underneath a reservoir of
unfathomed dedication, artistic synergy and personal moral convictions of the stalwarts of *Sikh Calendar art* who reinforced the foundations of these wonderfully painted enchanting works of *Sikh Popular art* after deep contemplation and reinvention of their true selves. Each artist who devoted his lifetime to this genre has infact tried to live the spiritual euphoria. The muse, inspiration and motivation behind their creations stemmed from divinity though the vehicles of imagery displays their own unmistakable personal styles and visual idioms dwelling on the moral values and spiritual ethics carefully cultivated by the Sikh Gurus. The rich and robust cultural traditions and atmosphere contributed to their enthusiasm, excitement and of course the necessity to pursue a career which catered to their mental satisfaction by bringing an aura of spiritual achievement. It is revealed that all the artists who have been featured in this study professed profound respect and dedication in Sikhism and practiced what they believed was the divine task bestowed upon them by the Sikh teachings and tenets. They treated their art as a sacred duty to be performed by them in portraying the ideals inherited from the rich religious and cultural traditions of the Sikhs. Painting these calendars was not merely an occupation to earn a livelihood but it offered them solace and peace of mind to express their ideals while recording the historical facts and perspectives in the right context and through these vibrant calendars they have tried to pay tribute to the humanistic values preached by the great Sikh Gurus.

**CHAPTER: 8**

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The journey of *Sikh Calendar art* has passed through various terrains in terms of thematic content, stylizations and adoption of new techniques and processes from Line drawing Woodcuts to Lithography, Multi-block Printing, Colour Lithography, Oleography, Half-tone blocks, Albumen prints, Bromide prints, Photo-lithography, Offset Printing and Digital Printing. It celebrates the ingenuity and incredible spirit
of enterprise of the Sikh painters who were always ready to stay ahead and strived hard to remain open-minded to learn and adopt latest techniques for improving the quality of reproductions thereby creating a large market for these Calendar art works. Today these calendars are available globally and command immense popularity. Due to the untiring efforts and monumental contribution of Sikh religious institutions, Gurdwaras, organizations, corporations, banks, museums and art galleries, painters, printers, promoters and scholars of Sikh thought and ideology, these Sikh art calendars have emerged as a single most popular mode of Sikh art which exudes essence of Sikh religion, history and vibrant culture. The interest in this form of art can be gauged from the fact that innumerable websites are projecting and popularizing it on the internet and dedicated efforts by foreign based Sikh art cultural associations and organizations that are promoting and printing the finest specimens of this genre. The themes of Sikh Calendar art are now being printed digitally on articles of daily use such as plates, mugs, T-shirts, keychains, wall hangings, dairies, banners, book covers, stickers, lockets, wall clocks, pen stands, mouse pads, necklaces, notebook covers, paper-weights, dials of watches, artifacts of decoration and several gift items. The future of Sikh Calendar art is bright as it manifests the soul of Sikh ethos and psyche, Sikh cultural traditions and heritage and the spiritual and divine messages of the great Sikh Gurus. It aptly projects the true characteristics of this proud, valiant and industrious community. It is a heartening sign that strengthens the fact that this genre of art is well founded in the fertile soil of Sikh psyche and more and more artists of various denominations, calibers and backgrounds are fully engrossed in creating innovative and imaginative works of art rooted in this genre, even the remote hamlets of towns and cities of Punjab have become hubs of artists who identify themselves with the ideology of these calendars and are creatively engaged in artistic pursuits to satisfy their aesthetic impulses and yearnings. It provides them a steady livelihood too. As a matter of fact this form of art has attained wide acceptance and is raring to spread its wings in limitless expansion. Due to its ever increasing demand even highbrow
connoisseurs of art have started evincing a keen interest in *Sikh Calendar art* as a vivid and serious form of art. It is indeed the most visible genre of *Sikh art* which has crossed national boundaries and found a respectable place in every nook and corner of the globe.

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