CHAPTER III

GURU NANAK BANI AND MUSIC
Scholars have attempted comprehensive discussion from varying perspectives about Sri Guru Nanak Dev's contribution in the fields of literature, religion and philosophy. However, in the context of music, research work about the Gurmat Music tradition established by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has not been possible. Divinely enlightened, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji provided ideological transformation of the ancient values relating to human life. This transformation comes out as a kind of link between the past and the future of mankind. The eternal truth of experience, deep reflected knowledge, spiritual vision and the realistic portrayal of different aspects of life in the compositions of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji is rare in the world literature. On the one hand, the hymns of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji quench our spiritual thirst, and on the other familiarizes us with the deep reflection of philosophy, literature and art. Whosoever has realized this Divine Word(\textit{Sabad}) has been able to experience the eternal truths of life and the wonderful and inexpressible taste of 'Wismada'.

Music has been an important medium of realizing the self. It was used by many saints and Bhaktas of the Bhakti Movement, to sing their compositions. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, while uniting text(Bani) with music, established a distinct music tradition. To comprehend the inner elements of this tradition, it is necessary to study Sri Guru Nanak's
life and compositions in the context of music.

The personality of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji possessed peculiar features from the artistic standpoint. He had fully studied and reflected upon all contemporary traditions of folk, classical or devotional music. This becomes evident from the use of music in his hymns. The lifetime of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji begins with 1469 and terminates in 1539. He was born in a Khatri family. From his early childhood, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was of serious and reflective nature. So as to make him proficient in the affairs of the world, his father, Mehta Kalu, wanted him to undertake formal study, but his mind was not in the mundane affairs. The father tried to occupy the mind of his son with farming, trade and such other jobs, but such efforts could not quench the spiritual thirst of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Spiritual discourses with the saints and performing kirtan were part of his temperament from his very childhood. Mardana, son of Bhai Baadra and a mirasi of his village, was Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's constant companion. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's friendship with Mardana is a clear indication of his musical disposition. It cannot be termed a simple coincidence that while Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji practised singing and composing hymns, chose a very fine musician as his companion who also evolved the instrument of rabab. It was rather a conscious attempt at uniting verse with music, an attempt which materialized...
after years of creativity. It was the result of these efforts that Gurbani music (Gurmat Sangeet) got a systematic or institutional form.

Sri Bhai Mardana was Guru Nanak Dev's close companion, humble servant, ragi, rababi and his first disciple. He was a man of great potential as can be ascertained from the Sikh history. An important point to note here is that Mardana was the first singer as well as the first listener of hymns. Mardana was a constant companion of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji during his preaching odysseys (Udassi) to different lands. An ordinary man and a seeker, Mardana played significant role in the establishment and expansion of the Sikh faith.

1. (i) First Odyssey (Pehli Udassi) - (1507 to 1515):
   Emnabad, Pakpatan, Syalkot, Changamanga, Panipat, Delhi, Hariduar, Banaras, Patra, Kamroop, Kasoor Patti, Sultanpur etc.

(ii) Second Odyssey (Doojee Udassi) - (1517 to 1518):
   Rameshwar, Saloor, Shivkunj, Madras, Kolumo, Bombay, Amravati etc.

(iii) Third Odyssey (Tisri Udassi) - (1518 to 1521):
   Kashmir, Sumer, Noorpur, Kot Kangrha, Hemkund, Kathmandu, Nepal, etc.

(iv) Fourth Odyssey (Chauthi Udassi) - (1518 to 1521):
   Jammu etc.
According to Dr Balbir Singh, "Mardana symbolizes that art which has to overcome 'kaliyuga'. He was the first person whose mana (mind) was blessed by the Guru, with the Divine Sound(Sawar Barham). Mardana was a servant, a Sikh, a disciple, ragi and rababi. Whatever may be the epithet appended to him, he took pride in considering himself a friend of the Guru.¹

Bhai Mardana belonged to a mirasi family and thus inherited his interest in singing and playing music. He took his training in music from Bhai Firanda. It was also from him that Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji got a special rabab shaped and assembled. This instrument suited the exigencies of journeys. During his sojourns, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's companions were Mardana and his rabab. Some internal references in the Guru's hymns and the study of the janamsakhis reveal that Mardana plays an important role in the process of composing hymns. In the Puratan Janamsakhi, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji says to Mardana:

"0 Mardana! Fix your mind on the Word(Sab̄da). Hymns (Bani) do not get constructed without your help. Play the rabab."²

¹. Balbir Singh(Dr.), 'Rabab', Gurrmat Sangeet Par Hun Tak Mili Khoj, (Part I), page 71.
Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji sang the Divine Word (Dhur Ki Bani) as Mardana accompanied him with the rabab. In this way, text (Bani) and music jointly became the means of propagating Sikhism. This activity of uniting music with the creative process of composing hymns was the seed which was later to sprout in the form of a distinct tradition of kirtan different from the traditions of devotional music then prevalent.

After completing his four preaching odysseys, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji settled down at Kartarpur and took to farming. The town of Kartarpur was established by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji as the first centre of 'Gurmat Sangeet'. It was here that the beginning of kirtan in its institutional form, apart from other rites and ceremonies connected with the faith, took place. The tradition here had been to sing 'Asa di Var' in the morning and 'So Dar(U) and 'Aarti' in the evening.

The study of Sri Guru Nanak Dev's hymns is of fundamental importance for studying the distinctness and the meaningful organization of Gurmat music because the aim of using music with the text was to express, feel and realize

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1. Phir babā Aiyā Kartārpur, Bhekh Udāssī Sagal Utāra, (Bhai Gurdas, Var I, Paurī 32).
2. So dar Aarti Gauiai, Amrit Vele Japu Uchāra (Bhai Gurdas, Var I, Paurī 38)
the spiritual feelings. In this tradition, music without any spiritual object is of no consequence:

"Rāg Nad Man Dooje Bhae(i), Antar kapat Mahā Dukh Pae(i)"¹

With a view to studying the musical system established by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the study of different poetic forms and musical elements used in his hymns and an understanding of the overall musical arrangement are required.

Poetry and Music: While discussing poetics, scholars have counted music and rhythm among different elements of it. In poetry, music stands for versification and it provides melody, uniformity and cadence to poetry. Though independently, Music and Poetry are highly complimentary to each other. Sound, versification and tone of poetry are directly related with music. Sound is the fundamental element in music and poetry, and it has been accepted in the Indian tradition as blissful. It is the source of song, sound and dance, and the entire world is in its will.² The certain and distinct cadence of poetry versifies it. Metre

¹ Sri Guru Nanak/ Adi Granth, page 1343.

² "Na Naden Vina Geetan Na Naden Vina Sawara Na Naden Vina Nritya Tarmamadatamakan jagat". (Nibandh Sangeet, page 319)
is the basis of its musicality because it is in metre that the modulational form of tone is active. In this way, cadence of poetry is present at the level of internal perception of metre. In music, swar (sound) is based on Naad or tone, and special kind of swar-chhand produce musical effects which are based on distinct aesthetic cadence patterns. In this way, we see that 'Nad' and 'Laya' are the source of musical creation.

The body of poetry is determined by word and its meaning. Without word which is based on sound, the birth of poetry is not possible. The meanings of the word make the listener realize the feeling and communicate a special rasa. Thus, word is the root of poetry. In music, the rasa of feeling can be enjoyed even without comprehending the meaning of the word. Even if there is no word, 'rasa' can be enjoyed only with the sound or tone. Because in music, the swar (in place of the word) remains active owing to its unlimited tonal power. Every pitch or intonation possesses a particular rasa and the different chhand of these tones, according to the related rasa forms are capable of producing 'rasa' independent of the meaning of the word. That is why the language of music is universal, beyond the limitations of time and space, and comprehensible not only to the human being but even to the animals and buds.  

1. Thakur, Onkar Naath, Parnav Bharati, (Partham Veena), page 19.
or sentiments and establish the following relationship between \( \text{notes} \) and chhand:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Chhand</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shadaj</td>
<td>Anushtup</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Rishab</td>
<td>Gayeetri</td>
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<td>3. Gandhar</td>
<td>Trishatpu</td>
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<td>4. Madhiam</td>
<td>Brahti</td>
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<td>5. Pancham</td>
<td>Pankti</td>
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<td>6. Dhwat</td>
<td>Ushnik</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Nishad</td>
<td>Jagti</td>
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It is obvious from the above discussion that the aesthetic relationship of music and poetry is useful and pleasure-giving only due to the unusual values emerging from that mutual identification. This occupies a place of primary importance in the hymns of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Before discussing the different poetic forms used by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji for his compositions, it is necessary to understand its basic nature and tendency. This implies the necessity for discussion on the difference between Bani (Word or Logos) and poetry.

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DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BANI AND POETRY

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji expresses his spiritual knowledge and experience through the common, united medium of bani or Word and 'music'. No doubt, the compositions of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji can be analysed and evaluated according to the parameters of poetry and music. However, we shall be able to make a correct evaluation of 'Guru Nanak Bani' only when we rightly comprehend the difference between ordinary poetry and music on the one hand and 'Guru Nanak Bani' and its music on the other.

The fundamental difference between Bani and poetry is that the latter is dualistic and attracted towards the beauty of the empirical world. Poetry gives the beauty of main forms and that provides us pleasure, but bani communicates the knowledge of one 'Divine Name'. Bani is not the musical kirtan of some crammed incantation or poetry which is ecstatic for human heart because of its tone and cadence, rather it is a process of understanding the spiritual knowledge and experience conveyed therein. The object of its presentation is not simply to provide anand or bliss through music but to provide intellectual consciousness and knowledge. Bani is the whole of the aesthetics of the entire system and the coalescing of all the elements and images. There it should be discussed only in the context of this 'whole' and coalescing of all the elements. This Bani is not the
attainment of fearless poise through the tone of consciousness and Word. 'Sabda' in the form of sound is indicative of the Divine Name in which Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, as the dhadi of God, adopts music and text as the joint medium to sing, on the basis of his spiritual experience, the adoration of God who is Infinite, Eternal, Inexpressible, Self-Existent and beyond Time. In this way, these inexpressible experiences have been brought to common man at the level of feeling and knowledge in a very sharp, serious and effective manner. This is not possible in the one-dimensional presentation of an ordinary poem or song.

DIFFERENT POETIC FORMS IN 'GURU NANAK BANI'

It is obvious from the study of 'Guru Nanak Bani' that universally accepted and approved poetic forms have been used in the distinct and particular system of the Bani. The use of these poetic forms is not traditional but follows the distinct poetic organization of gurmat. They have been composed in different musical measures under established systems of singing. That is why all but a few of Sri Guru Nanak Dev's compositions are traditionally sung. Classical

1. Vāje bāj(U) Siñī Vājai
tau Nirēhau Pad(U) Pālai
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 730)

2. Surat(i) sabad(U) dhun(i)
   antir Jagī
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 917)
and folk poetic forms have been used in the Bani which retain the originality of their poetic form but are otherwise spiritually-oriented. In the hymns of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the basic nature and musical form of these poetic forms have had the artistic touch of the Guru who infused new meanings into them.

Among the classical poetic forms used in the 'Guru Nanak Bani' are padas (hymns), Astpadis (octaves), Arti, Patti, etc. These poetic forms follow different styles of singing. Their fundamental temper is that of classical music and they are sung in the classical mould. Of the folk forms of poetry used are Var (ballad), Baramaha (calendar poem), Pahre, Chhand, Sohila, Alahunian, Kuchajji, Suchajji, etc. All these poetic forms have been discussed independently in the following pages.

PADA: Pada is a poetic string. In the compositions of 'Guru Nanak Bani' we come across padas of two, three, four, five and six strings which are called dupada, tipada, chupada and chhepada, respectively. Pada is a known poetic form of lyrical poetry. In it, ethico-moral values are discussed in the context of social, political and religious milieu. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has composed padas in almost all the ragas of the Guru Granth. This poetic form enjoys a special place in kirtan. It has also remained a significant part of the compositions of saints belonging to the medieval Bhakti Movement. Padas are sung in the mould of dhrupad.
The word 'dhrupad' literally means dhruv + pada or the pada that is as stable and everlasting as dhruv or the Pole Star. In the musical context, dhruv is the verse of 'rahaom or pause, and the pada following it is called dhrupad. In the pada compositions, the different verses/ rhymes are sung in the forms of antras. We shall take up, a little later, the musical construction of this poetic form while discussing the singing technique of dhrupad in the context of singing styles of 'Guru Nanak Bani'. This poetic form can well be called the principal style of singing in the Gurmat musical arrangement.

ASTPADI: As is evident from the Name of this poetic form, astpadi is a hymn comprising eight (ast) verse. It is acknowledged as the finest specimen of 'prabandh'. This poetic form can be counted as part of classical poetry in which the serious religious and philosophical doctrines are presented, as we can find in the astpadis among the compositions of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The astpadis composed by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji are found in the Guru Granth Sahib under ragas or musical measures Sri, Majh, Gauri, Gauri Guareri, Gauri Bairgan, Asa, Asa Kafi, Gujri, Sorath, Suhi, Suhi Kafi, Bilawal, Ramkali, Dakhani, Bhairav, Basant, Sarang, Malar, Prabhati Bibhas and Prabhati Dakhani. In these astpadis, the number of padas is eight in each astpadi except in a few which contain nine padas; each pada is constituted of verses
which vary in number. The verse, rahau is included as a distinct indication of containing the central theme of the entire astpadi. The poetic form is also sung from the angle of 'prabandh' which we shall discuss further while dealing with the theme of singing styles suited to the 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

AARTI: Aarti is a known ritual in Indian religions. In this ritual, the devotee puts incense, lamps, flying-whisk, flowers, etc. in a salver, while singing devotional songs. When Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji saw Aarti being performed in the temples of Jagannath Puri during one of his sojourns there, he found it a form of graft and a vain ritual. He composed a hymn entitled Aarti which has completely transformed the concept of Aarti. In this composition, the Guru portrays the aarti being performed all the time by Nature in devotion to the Almighty. The historical researches have proved that in 1510-12 Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji along with Chaitanaya Prabhu sang sabdas in the temples of Jagannath Puri.¹

For singing Aarti of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, there are available in the text itself indications to the verse titled rahau as well as to the numbering of verses. Therefore, it should be sung in accordance with these indications.

The poetic form of this Aarti is as under:

Ek Onkar Satt(i) gur(U) Parsad(i)  
Dhanasari Mahala 1: Aarti

Gagan mai thālu Ravi chand(u) Dipak bane 
Tarikā Mandal janak motī. 
- - -- -- -- -- -- --  
- - -- -- -- -- -- --  
Kripā Jal(U) Deh(i) Nānak Sāring Kau.  
Ho(i) Jāte Tere Nām(i) Vāsā.¹

Besides the poetic form of Aarti, Patti, Siddha Gosti, and Onkar also fall in this category. These are included in the Sikh Scripture under different ragas. Of these poetic forms, the composition Patti in raga Asa is of special note as the same poetic form in raga Asa was also popular in the folk music of Punjab. Similarly, Siddha Gosti was composed in raga Ramkali, the favourite raga of the Siddhas, and Onkar, which was composed during Sri Guru Nanak Dev's sojourn in the south is in raga Ramkali Dakhni. There are specific instances of the uniformity and importance of the interrelationship of text and raga. We shall now discuss briefly the folk forms of poetry used in 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

VAAR. Vāma is a prominent poetic form. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

adopted this poetic form because of its popularity and suitability. Apart from being acceptable among the masses, this poetic form is in a distinct tradition. While still remaining within folk music, this tradition enjoys an independent entity. The singers of VaaJaare called 'Dhadi' who sing them according to the musical tunes of the region. VaaJa had been sung by the bards in the courts of kings since ancient times. That accounts for its traditional popularity. We shall have a detailed discussion of this poetic form in the following pages.

The word 'VaaJa' has been given various meanings such as the challenge to route, to stop, etc. It is believed to have emanated from the Sanskrit root 'Vri' and the Punjabi 'Varan'. VaaJVis said to mean singing repeatedly, to sing at the bar or portal, to eulogize, to seek to attack. VaaJa as a poetic form deals with the theme of war in which the valour and the fighting skill of the brave warriors are sung to music. The VaaJa are generally sung keeping the local and regional sentiments in view. The kings as well as their subjects enjoyed listening the valorous deeds of their warriors.

VaaJapoetic form is constructed on 'Pauris' or stanzas and slokas or couplets. 'Pauri' as a metre will be discussed

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1. Charan Singh(Dr.) Shri Hari Charan Vistharu, (Ed.Balbir Singh(Dr.) page 365.
later, It should now suffice to say, that paurl and slokas are used in all the three Vars written by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji under ragas Majh, Asa and Malhar. Of them, the Var under raga Asa has been more popular in the Sikh kirtan tradition. According to the Sikh tradition, it is sung to music at the ambrosial hour in the morning. The theme of these Vaar is spiritual. They make human psyche the battleground of the opposing forces of good and evil. In these Vaar, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji shows the individual soul the way to the Absolute Truth. They are the finest poetic works because of the novelty, distinctiveness and spirituality of theme. They also follow distinct musical tradition. It is worth note in this context that the tunes mentioned at the head of all Vaar and the tradition of singing them in Gurmat Sangeet under specific ragas is not incidental, but the object behind the conscious use of this folk song in a systematic arrangement is indicative of the cognition of its individuality. We shall now take up the musical construction of these Vaar of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the context of 'singing styles' used in the Bani of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

PAURL: Pauri is the poetic metre of the Vaar genre. In the 'Guru Nanak Bani', Vaar have originally been composed in pauris, and the slokas added thereto later on, are meant to sharpen, clarify or stress the ideas in the pauris. The
metre pauri was used in the va'rs, under ragas Majh, Asa and Malhar. In all, the number of pauris is 116, and each pauri comprises five to seven verses. In its style of singing, these verses follow a certain form and are not sung in the form of regular antara but its continuity is retained in a certain specified tune. This provides intensity to the flow of presentation. Var as a poetic form and its intonation will be discussed later on in the context of the use of other 'singing styles' in the 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

CHHANT: In 'Guru Nanak Bani', 'Chhant' is present as one of the forms of folk-songs. They are included under ragas Gauri, Gauri Purbi, Asa, Vadhans, Dhanasri, Bilawal, Bilawal Dakhni and Tukhari. They are songs to be sung on the occasions of marriage and are the rare specimen of romantic poetry. Their nature is pleasant and adoring. In Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's chhants, the union of the soul-bride with the Lord-husband is described. These chhants retain the vocabulary, imagery and symbolism of their original poetic form. To preserve its lyrical tune, alliteration as well as the use of certain suffixes to the last words of the verses helps in retaining its folk-tune. The verses ending with 'eh' and 'ai' also serve the same purposes. Repetition of words and verses is also used to retain the folk tune. The below-mentioned chhant in raga
Vadhans is one of the best chhants of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji:

\[
\text{Tere Banke Loian Dant Reesālā} \\
\text{Sohne Nak Jin Lāmrhe Vālā.}^1 \\
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
\]

The musicality of the text of the chhant, quoted below, needs no other evidence:

\[
\text{Too Sun(i) hama kalia kee vārhāi Rām.} \\
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
\text{Sach(u) kahā Nānak(u) chet(i) Re Mun} \\
\text{Marh(i) harnā kāliā.}^2 \\
\]

The pahare, Baramaha and chhant written in Tukhari raga are considered best because of the lyrical nature of their poetry.

The very fact that these chhants were compiled under different musical measures shows that they actually belong to those ragas. Most of the ragas have developed from the tradition of folk-music, and these chhants can be easily sung in tune with them. There may be difference of opinion about Gauri and Bilaval, but the singing of the chhants in these ragas to the folk-tune is not difficult.

SOHILA: There is a special use of sohila poetic form in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji composed a total of 22 sohila in raga Maru, and one of them, in Maru Dakhni, falls under Dakhni variety of main measure.

The word 'sohila' is said to be derived from 'sohar' which in Sanskrit are called 'sohila'. 'Sohar' are those pleasant songs which are sung at the time of child-birth. The women in the family sing them specially on the sixth or the 12th day of the birth of the child.¹ On the whole, Sohila is a song related with happiness or joy.

Sohila is a 'matric' and is a constituent of sixteen verses, but in 'Guru Nanak Bani' the number of verses has in a few instances been 15 or 17 also. The poetic vocabulary in Sohila is specially lyrical in which the rhyming of suffixes such as 'he', 'malaida', 'paia', 'chalaia', etc., remains active with its distinct 'bahir' and provides 'ananda' or pleasure even with an ordinary text. Its singing in itself is the exponent of extraordinary rasa. In the musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani', it has to be sung in its pure tone.

In 'Guru Nanak Bani', the poetic form of Sohila is used only under raga Maru which produces the feeling of valour.

¹ Gill, Mohinder Kaur, Adi Granth Lok Roop, page 45.
It is usually sung at the time of war or death. In the Sikh tradition, so long as the dead body is lying in the house, before being taken away for cremation, the hymns of Raga Maru are recited and the rababis sing the Maru ki Var. The composition of Sohila in raga Maru is the unique tradition of Gurmat. Although there are indications in it towards fighting against the wrong values of life, yet this fact can be linked to the valorous nature of the raga Maru. But in the context of 'Guru Nanak Bani', it is more correct to say that in this tradition the singing techniques and raga completely surrender their fundamental, folk or classical nature and have been presented a new perspective in the poetic and musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani'. Like raga Vadhans, Maru also is quite popular raga. 'Vadhans' is of pleasant nature whereas 'Alahunias' are elegies. Similarly, 'Maru' is valorous of nature, but Sohila are pleasant songs. If we analyse them empirically, these make man enjoy the feeling of equanimity and anand even in unfavourable circumstances, birth and death are taken in the metaphysical context where they are nothing, but the manifestation of the Divine Will. In this context, it must be noted that text (Bani) and raga in the system of 'Guru Nanak Bani' come out prominently in relation to their mass popularity whereas

2. Charan Singh (Dr.) Gurmat Sangeet Par Hun tak Mili Khoj, (Part I), page 32.
their fundamental nature has been given an entirely new orientation in the metaphysical context.

PAHARE: It is a poetic form which describes the external activity of passing of the day in four pahirs in the context of man's internal conscious. This poetic form is related to the 'Vanjaras' in which individual soul (Jeev Aatma) is advised. The Pahare represent the Vanjara's fear (which begins with the first pahira of night) of getting robbed at night as he puts up in an alien land. In the 'Guru Nanak Bani', this poetic form is used in the metaphysical context and is included under raga Sri. It is the raga of evening, having a solemn nature and thus capable of communicating the intensity and solemnity of the sentiments. Thus, it is a composition that is sung in a continuous sequence and in which the fundamental nature of the poetic form is kept in tact. A poetic specimen of Pahare is as under:

Ek onkar Sattiguru Parsad(i)
Sri Rag Pahre Mahala 1, Ghar(u) 1
Pahle Pahrai Ren(i) kai vanjaria Mitra
Mitra Hukm(i) Paia Garbhas(i)
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- --
-- -- -- -- -- -- -- --
Kah(u) Nanak Prani Pahlai Pahrai
Hukm(i) Paia Garbhas(i).1

BARAMAHA: Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has composed a Baramaha in raga Tukhari. This poetic form belongs to the ancient poetic tradition of India. In 'Guru Nanak Bani', it is written in the chhant form. Besides the twelve stanzas, each belonging to one of the twelve months of the year, there are four stanzas which comprise the essence and the significance of the poem, and another stanza the soul-bride is advised to ever enjoy the marital bliss with her Lord-husband during all seasons and changing times. In this poetic form, the fundamental form of chhant is preserved, and there are no indications like rahau for the distinct style of its singing. A specimen of its poetry is as under:

Chet Basant Bhala Bhavro Suhāvarhe.

Nānak chet(i) Sahaj(i) Sukh(u) Pavai
Je Har(i) var(u) ghar(i) Dhan Pavē.1

ALAHUNIAN: It is a poetic form in which the deceased is eulogized for several of his qualities. Its use was quite popular in those days. In the 'Guru Nanak Bani', the fact of death is described with a view to advising man that he should do good deeds, keep death in mind and remember God in this very life. In the Bani of Guru, the elongated pausative words have been used in Alahuni according to

its fundamental musical temper, and all such words have been taken from the vocabulary of the folk-poetry. We shall discuss the singing technique of this poetic form separately in the context of the singing style in the 'Guru Nanak Bani' because this has a special significance in the 'Gurmat Sangeet'. Apart from the above mentioned poetic forms, some forms of folk poetry, such as 'Thiti', 'Suchajji' and 'Kuchajji', are also used in the 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

From this discussion on the different poetic forms used in the 'Guru Nanak Bani', we conclude that Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji attempted a fine synthesis of both the classical and folk poetry and the synthesis of these poetic forms has been used from the metaphysical perspective. While using these poetic forms, not only their fundamental nature has been kept in mind, but they have also been disciplined in accordance with the organization of Bani and its musical arrangement. In these poetic forms, music is inherent in the style. That is why, in spite of following the singing styles of classical and folk songs they have been able to establish an independent identity in the practice of musical tradition of 'Guru Nanak Bani'. The different styles of these poetic forms will be discussed later on as we take up the style used in 'Guru Nanak Eani'.

Only those poetic forms have been used in 'Guru
Nanak Bani', which are related to tradition of either classical or folk poetry of India. In these poetic forms, the Ultimate Truth has been expressed through various organs of poetry. There has been established in the 'Guru Nanak Bani' nam-culture parallel to the man's worldly life and culture: the medium of the former is bani and music. In the context of this cultural transformation, Bani and music are not two element or organs of an ordinary presentation, but they communicate the Divine 'hukm'. Although these can be tested against the parameters of ordinary poetry and music, yet for their comprehensive, multi-dimensional and multifarious study, the presence of extraordinary and unlimited possibilities for the achievement of their fundamental object will, also have to be kept in mind.

MUSICAL ELEMENTS IN 'GURU NANAK BANI'

Music is the chief medium of presentation in the 'Guru Nanak Bani'. That is why different elements of music come out of this bani. These musical elements are capable of establishing a new, unique and practical musical tradition in the context of Indian music. There are elements on which the Guru based the Gurmat music and brought it into practice at the organizational level. The following pages contain a discussion on the musical elements as they come out of this bani.

SINGING: At the very outset, it is imperative to discuss
the importance and usefulness of singing, the principal organ of music in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. The fundamental medium of the creative process in 'Guru Nanak Bani' is singing. It is obvious from the 'Janamsakhis' that bani is the Divine Will or blessing that comes to man through the medium of Guru. It comes to the Guru through the medium of singing and it is through the same manner that the Guru presents it. In the beginning, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji himself was the first singer of his bani. Bhai Mardana is the second link of this chain of singers. He used to play rabab with three singing of Bani and thereby sought the Guru's blessing. Here singing means adoring the Supreme Lord for spiritual experience and knowledge. The art of singing is a Divine gift which one gets out of his benevolence. For getting this gift it is absolutely essential for man to realize his true self, removal of ego

1. Jā tis bhāvā tad hī gāvā
tā gāvai kā fal(u) pāvā
gāvai kā fal(u) hōī Jē āpe devai solā.
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 599.

2. Gāvah(i) gīt nā chīnain(h)i āp(u)
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 917.)
and other impurities complete surrender,¹ and to absorb himself heart and soul in the Divine Name.² Whereas 'Guru Nanak Bani' directs its construction in accordance with the raga,³ it also shows the way to bani's (Geet's)⁴ knowledge and rasa.⁵

**SABDA**: Sabda is the main element for singing the 'Guru Nanak Bani'. In this Bani, the sabda has been used in tonal and

1. Gavia sunia Man Rakhia Bhao
   (Japuji, *Adi Granth*, page 2.)

2. Gaytfih(i) gite chit(i) anite
   rāg sunāe kahāva(i) bite.
   bin(u) Nāvai man(i) jhuth(u) anite
   (Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*, page 414.)

3. Ik gāvah(i) rāg parīyā rāg(i) nā bhijai
   (Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*, page 1285)

4. Gian Vihuna gāvai Git
   (Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*, page 1245)

5. Ikna nad nā bed(i) nā gia ras
   ras kas nā jaṅnant(i)
   (Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*, page 1246)
word forms. A good deal of emphasis has been laid on awakening the 'anhat dhuni' through the medium of singing the sabda. Sabda is also the word-medium to express the inexpressible description of God. The presentation of Sabad is the aim of the music or singing of 'Guru Nanak Bani'. Stress has been laid in the Bani on improving, knowing and comprehending the literal form of Sabda. Man can achieve real bliss only through fulfilling this object. The attainment of the anhat form of Sabda is made possible by the use of literal form. With the help of consciousness born out of this use man can awaken the tune of sabda saddled in human conscience. Therefore, there is the provision for the movement of the self-propelled tune of the 'anhat'sabda.'

1. Je sabad bujhai tān sach(u) nihalā
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 412.)
2. -Anahad(u) sabad(u) vajai din rātī
   (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 917.)
   -Surt(i) sabad(i) dhun(i) antur(i) jāgī
     (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 917)
   -Vaje bajh(u) sini vajai
     tau nirbhau pad(u) pāīai
     (Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 730)
The above view is confirmed from the hymn of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji as quoted below:

Panch sabad dhinikar dun(i), tah bāje sabad(u) nīsān(u) -- -- -- -- -- -- --
Tar ghor bajint-rāb tah sāch(i) takhat(i) sultan(u)
Sukhmān ke ghar(i) Rāg(u) sun(i) Sun(i) Mandal(i) liv lae.1

VADAN: Vadan is also of special significance in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. It is clear from the life of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji that his first follower and disciple, rababi Bhai Mardana, was an excellent singer and player of music. The Janamsakhis tell us that whenever the Guru felt inspired to ταίττι Bani, he asked, "O Mardana! play rabab, I feel inspired to utter Bani."2 In this way in the creative process of 'Guru Nanak Bani', vadan provides inspirational environment for singing. Rabab was the first instrument for the purpose. Mardana, who was the first listener to the bani of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, also played rabab to the bani throughout his life.

In 'Guru Nanak Bani', the word 'vaja' is used for vadan. The words like 'vāje', 'vājant', 'vāvanhāre' and 'vājahī' are its derivatives the context of which is vadan. In this Bani, vadan follows singing, and the medium of

2. Puratan Janamsakhi No.11,12,13,14 etc.
singing is sabda both the literal and 'anhat' forms which have already been discussed. Vadan has an intimate inter-relationship with singing. Consequently not only the significance of singing sabda is described but also on the multi-dimensions and multiple meanings of vadan of the tonal form of sabd. In 'Guru Nanak Bani' the reference to the vadan of 'Panch Sabda' has occurred repeatedly, for example in the following verse:

Panch sabad dhunikār dhun(i)
tah bāje sabad(u) nīsān(u)¹

In 'Guru Nanak Bani', five types of musical instruments for the purpose of singing bani have been accepted. They include tat, bit, ghan, mukhar and sukhar.² while discussing the importance of vadan at the practical level in the musical tradition of 'Guru Nanak Bani', we learn that it aims at providing an inspirational environs to singing and thereby sharpen its effect. At the metaphysical level, it is the basis of the origin of the automation of 'Anahat Nad', (Dhuni). When a being gets freed from the vadan of worldly instruments and gets absorbed in the Divine Word, the vadan of 'kinguri' follows naturally and the 'Anhad tura' starts functioning and serves as the means to achieve the highest bliss and

2. Gurmat Sangeet Par Hun Tak Māli Khoj, page 35.
fearlessness. A few verses of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji expressing this kind of feeling are as under:

Vaje bajh(u) sīnī vājai
tau Nirbhau pad(u) pāi.a

Tār ghor bājintraok tah Sāch(i) Takhat(i) Sultan(u)

Dhun(i) Vāje anhad ghorā.

Apart from the above quoted lines, instances of the use of vadan, with multiple meanings, in numerous contexts are available in 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

DANCE: A cursory reading of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji would reveal that in the tradition of its singing, dancing has been denounced time and again, and it has been rejected at the practical level. In the 'Guru Nanak Bani', dancing in other tradition of bhakti has been declared prudery and hypocrisy and has been severely condemned. In this tradition, dance has not been accepted as means of devotion.

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5. Ek Nach(i) Nach(i) Purah(i) Tāl Bhagat(i) Nā keejeā.

(Guru Nanak, Adi Granth, page 1285)
Presentation of sabda through dance is incapable of providing equanimity to human mind, though it might provide pleasure in the empirical sense of the word. The presentation in dance is external. In 'Guru Nanak Bani', the idea has been expressed in a metaphorical language, i.e., from the metaphysical perspective, the dance-presentation of mana'is possible only if the metaphysical forms of truth and contentment are strictly adhered to. In this respect Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji says:

\[
\begin{align*}
Vājā \text{ mat} & (i) \text{ Pakhāvaj(u) bhā(u)} \\
& -- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
& -- -- -- -- -- -- -- \\
\text{It (i) rang(i) nach(u) rakh(i) rakh(i) Pair.}^1
\end{align*}
\]

The above-quoted hymn presents the entire technique of the dance as it prevailed in the Indian bhakti, kābut presented in metaphysical context. The above hymn thus strictly forbids dance in the practical Gurmat music.

It is clear from the above, that the different parts of Indian music have not been accepted in 'Guru Nanak Bani' as they were, rather there have been creative changes in them with the special object of bringing them in tune with Gurmat. Out of dance, singing and vadan, only the last two

are accepted in 'Guru Nanak Bani', and the former is forbidden. In this tradition, the word gayan(singing) is used prominently for presentation of sabda, and vadan only follows it. Other musical symbols emanating from the 'Guru Nanak Bani', establish a distinct system of singing which is based on diverse signs and musical elements. First of all, we shall take up these musical signs in the context of this musical tradition.

RAGA: Every hymn of 'Guru Nanak Bani' is preceded by directions written at the top of each composition such as 'raga', 'mahla', 'gharu' and poetic/singing style. Of them, raga comes first of all. The tradition of giving ragas at the head of the composition in the form of title had been popular among the poets of the medieval Bhakti Movement, but a distinct raga organization/arrangement does not come out of their works. The raga mentioned in the form of title at the head of a composition in 'Guru Nanak Bani' follows an established system. In the Adi Granth, the very basis of the entire corpus is the raga. We shall discuss the raga's definition, theory, form, classification and its varying use and importance in 'Guru Nanak Bani' in a separate chapter. In the meanwhile, it should suffice to record that it is in 20 main ragas (Mukh Raga) that Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji composed his hymns. These include Sri, Kajh, Gauri, Asa, Gujrati, Bihagra, Vadhans, Sorath, Dhanasri, Tilang, Sahi, Bilaval, Ramkali, Maru, Tukhari, Bhairav, Basant
Within these 20 ragas are given their different varieties such as Gauri Guari, Gauri Cheti, Gauri Bairagan, Gauri Purabi, Gauri Deepaki, Gauri Purabi Deepaki, Asa Kafi, Sahi Kafi, Maru Kafi, Basant Hindol, Parbhati Bibhas.

Some southern varieties of these ragas are also mentioned as titles in 'Guru Nanak Bani', e.g. Gauri Dakhni, Vadhans Dakhni, Bilawal Dakhni, Ramkali Dakhni, Maru Dakhni and Parbhati Dakhni.

In 'Guru Nanak Bani', raga has been spelt as Rag(u) and its sub-ragas or raginis have not been acknowledged as independent Ragas. The classification of this bani into ragas, time, climate and mood of raga, and the adherence of these rules are all found in the 'Guru Nanak Bani' itself. We shall take up this subject in the chapter on Raga-Prabandh of the 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

**Ghar(u):** Ghar(u) is musical symbol next only to raga in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. But its practical use in the context of contemporary music has ceased. In 'Guru Nanak Bani', titles such as Ghar(u) I, Ghar(u) II, Ghar(u) III etc. are used. The total of Ghar(u) in gurbani is seventeen. On the basis of the available research, most of the scholars have accepted Ghar(u) as tala or beat. Defining Ghar(u)
Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha says, "According to the Gurmat music, Ghar(u) has two meanings- Taal and computations of Swar and Murchhana in relation to 'Sargam Prastar of the raga.'\(^1\)

Those who consider Ghar(u) as beat or taala hold that this tradition seems to be deeply influenced by the rhythmic style of Iran. In this style the different beats are termed ik (one) gaha, do gaha, sih gaha, chahar gaha, etc. It is just possible that Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji might have used Ghar(u) in the sense of 'gaha' because literally they mean the same. According to another view, Amir Khusro invented 17 beats taalas in accordance with the Persian poetic metre which are named. Pasto, Zobhar, Qwali, Sulfakhta, Jat, Jalad tetala, Sawari, Aakha chaual, Jhimka, Janani Swari, Dastan, Khamas, Frodast, Ged, Pahalwan, Pat and Chapak. These Taalas are almost identical with their Indian counterparts which became popular in their Persian names. It is also said that Amir Khusro replaced the old Indian taalas with his own taalas.\(^3\) The seventeen taalas popularized by Khusro retained their popularity throughout the medieval times. Maybe, the 17 Ghar(u)s of the Guru Granth are the same 17 Indian taalas which adhere to a special style of poetry. Anyway, most of the scholars identify Ghar(u) with

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taal. In the medieval Indian music, the tradition of Ghar(u) is absent, and in the Gurmat music it has ceased to be in practice. Therefore, to analyse it at the practical level is an impossibility. However, it is clear from the foregoing discussion that 'Ghar(u)' when given as title in the Guru Nanak Bani' is indicative of different musical taalas.

**POETIC FORMS AND SINGING STYLES:** Along with the indications of raga, mahla and ghar(u), the indication of poetic form is also there in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. These different poetic forms have prescribed different singing styles. Both classical and folk forms of poetry have been used in 'Guru Nanak Bani'. Pada, Astpadi, Aarti, Patti are classical forms and Chhant, Alahunian, Solhe, Suchajji, Kuchajji, Baramaha, etc. are folk forms. The classical poetic forms in 'Guru Nanak Bani' are based on the singing styles popular in the medieval Indian classical music, except the Astpadi which is sung from the 'Ang' of 'Parbandh Gayan'. This tradition remained alive in the medieval India. Pada is the finest specimen of dhrupad singing. Similarly, the singing styles of the form of folk poetry also followed an established and specified form. In 'Guru Nanak Bani', the classical forms, due to its devotional spirit were provided special kind of simplicity which frees it from the orthodox and strict discipline of classical music. Similarly, the forms of folk-singing have too been given a particular kind
of discipline. The catholicity of folk-singing have been put under the discipline of special rules of Gurbani singing. Thus, 'Guru Nanak Bani', establishes a new tradition by intermingling the classical music with the folk variety. These will be discussed in detail in the chapter on singing-styles of 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

JAT(i): In the 'Guru Nanak Bani' under raga Bilawal, there is one title which quoted in full reads: Bilawal Mahla I, Thitti ghami 10 Jat(i). Here Jat(i) is said to be related to a 'Gat' kind playing on jori. According to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, "the cadence of music is also called jat(i) or yat(i), and the pause in the beats of mridang is also called jat(i). Dr Charan Singh, in his 'Bani Beora' states jat(i), gat(i) and 'sapath' are all the artistic manipulation of the taal. While playing on Jorhi (Tabla), when the right hand is active, i.e. works both on the edges and the middles of the jori, and the left strikes with open palm, it is called jat(i) whereas when fingers of both the hands produce the liole called 'patachhar' and the sound produced is soft, it is called gat. When both the hands work freely and there is free flow of sound also, it is called 'sath', another name given to it is 'karkutti'.

2. Sahib Singh (Prof.), Sri Guru Granth Sahib Darpan (Volume VI), page 229.
The above discussion on jat(i) makes it clear that 'band bole' had come into vogue on the joti (Tabla). But all this fails to clarify the nature of Jat(i). Only the view of Kahn Singh Nabha seems to be correct. The modern musicologists define jat(i) as the process of the taala which is produced when the right hand on the Tabla produce 'khulah bol' and the left hand plays the 'band bol'. This mention of jat(i) is important in the context of Indian music also wherein it is called 'yati', and it means the position of pause in the constant rhythmic movement. Through it, any Taala can be transformed into different 'Chhandas'.

It becomes clear from the above that laya (rhythm) is not only related to beat but to the pauses used in the constant movement of the prescribed laya according to the flow of the poetic/singing style. Therefore, the title 'Bilawal Mahla 1 Thitti Gharu 10 Jat(i)' means that this hymn in raga Bilawal, is to be sung in the modulation of the ghar(u) 10, with the specific pauses and thitti is a poetic form. This is symbolic of the highest scientific comprehension and variety of taala in the musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

Dhun(i) : In the poetic form of 'Vadh' in the 'Guru Nanak Bani', the word 'Dhun(i) is also included in the title. Vadh of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji are included under ragas Majh, Asa and Maru. The heading of the Vadh in raga Majh is as under:

"Ek Onkar Sahitmanan"

Kartā Purkh
Gur(u) Parsād(i):

Vamā Majh kī Tathā Salok Mahlā 1
Malk Murid Chandranhra
Sohā kī Dhunī gāvī.  

The heading of the Var in Raga Asa is as under:

"Ek Onkar Satīnām
Kartā Purkh
Nirbhau Nirver Akāl Murt(i) Ajunī Saibhan
Gur Parsād(i).

Asā Mahlā 1, Vamā Salokān Naal(i)
Salok Bhee Mahle Pahile ke
Likhe, Tunde Asraje kī Dhunī." 

The above-mentioned Vars in the 'Guru Nanak Bani',
contain, in their headings, the specific tunes (Dhuni) of
other Vars e.g. that of the Var of 'Malk Murid Tatha
Chandhrara Sohia' and of 'Tunde Asraje kī Dhuni.'

The object of these directives is that these two
Vars in ragas Majh and Asa are to be sung to the tunes
(Dhunīs) of those two Vars. About their mention in the
heading, their musical structure and their relationship

with the Raga, we shall discuss in the chapter on the singing styles of 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

**Rahaao:** 'Rahaao' is a significant symbol in the musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani'. It has also been called 'tek'. The saint-poets of the medieval times have used the word 'tek'. In the language of music, 'tek' or 'Rahaao' are called 'sathai'. If we look at the placing of 'Rahaao' in the compositions of saints and of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, we shall see that the former placed it at the beginning of a hymn, but in 'Guru Nanak Bani' it comes after expressing one or two ideas which are specified by numerals (Ank). In this way, the symbol of 'Rahaao' in bani adheres to the basic rules of the 'prabandh' and 'dhrupad'. If we consider it in the context of prabandh style of singing, 'udgrah', 'melapak', 'dhruv', 'sanchari' and 'abhog' are different constituents of prabandh. Of them 'dhruv' is such a part which is the pivot of these compositions around which the activity of singing revolves. This very 'dhruv' got a stable form in 'dhrupad' style, and in 'Guru Nanak Bani' it is used as 'Rahaao'.

In 'Guru Nanak Bani', singing begins with 'rahaao' and is repeated after every 'Antara'. The verse of 'Rahaao' contains the central theme of the hymn which is stressed and confirmed with the help of different arguments, evidence and instances. These different arguments, evidences and instances are sung in the form of refrains (Antara). Singing
of the Bani in accordance with the established symbols is necessary for the fulfilment of the object of the hymn. The special feature of 'Guru Nanak Bani' is that whenever there is a thematic change in a hymn or the problem delineated therein has been resolved, more than one 'Rahaao' have been used to bring out that resolution. For instance, the use of 'Rahaao' is clear from its use in the following hymn of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Sri Raga:

Sri Rag(u) Mahla 1 Ghar(u) 5

"Achhal chhalai nah chhalai nah ghao
katara kar Sakai.
-- -- -- -- -- --

How many "men" escape delusion of Maya that is not herself deluded?

How escape her rapier wound?
Let man abide by the Lord's Will.
Greedy man a restless mind bears.(1)
How may a Lamp without oil be lighted? (RAHA AO 1)

Let man live as by scriptures guided
Let the wick of fear of God in self be put
Let this wick with realization of holy truth be lighted.2
Thus will this oil and lamp be lit
In its light will union with the Lord came about. (RAHA AO 1)

As the self with the holy word is penetrated
by devotion to God comes joy.

Know, the whole world is evanescent.(3)

By devotion in this world,
Shall ye get a place at the divine Portal.(4)

Then, says Nanak, in joy may you gambol(4)

In the above hymn, the verse 'how may a lamp
without oil be lighted?' is the 'Rahaao' verse. It
presents the problem of keeping the lamp lighted up
without putting the oil in it. In this hymn, Sri Guru
Nanak Dev Ji shows us the way, with the help of metaphor,
of alighting the lamp without oil. Earn the knowledge
of religious scriptures by considering that human body is
the lamp; wick is of the awe of the Divine; and this lamp
should be kindled with the realization of Truth. This is
the resolution of the above problem. Thereafter, Sri Guru
Nanak Dev Ji says, "Thus will this oil and lamp be lit.
in its light will union with the Lord came about." This
second verse of 'Rahaao' is to be sung after the third and
fourth refrain of the hymn.1

There are available several such examples where there
are more than one 'Rahaao' with the change in the theme. For
example:

1. Gauri Chati Mahlā 1
Amrit kāyiā Rahai Sukhālī bāzi
lhu Sansārō2

2. Gauri Chōti, Mahlā 1

Mundrā tei Ghat dhitar Mundrā kāṁyā (कांम्या) keejai khinhtātā II

As has been said earlier, 'Rahaao' is also called 'dhruv'. While defining 'dhruv' or the 'dhruv pad', it has been called stable and absolute. Taken in this context, only God is 'dhruv' and a hymn in His praise is called 'dhruv' pada. If we analyse 'rahaao' in this context, eternal truth of spiritual knowledge is present in the form of 'Shabda's 'rahaao' in Guru Nanak Bani', this is stable and this absolute and stable 'dhruv' or 'rahaoo' is indicated to be sung repeatedly.

From the above discussion, 'rahaao' comes out as an important, certain and predetermined unit in the distinct singing organism of the musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani'.

Ank(Numeral): In the 'Guru Nanak Bani', each hymn is divided by different Ank(numerals). These Ank(numerals) provide a sequence to the contents of the hymn and help us to comprehend its meaning. They are also important in the music as well. Apart from rahau, Ank(numerals)1,2,3,4,5, etc. are found after each verse of the hymn. The total of these numerals expresses the style of the concerned poetic form such as in

chaupade, tipade, dupade, astpadi, solhe, etc. which are denote Ank(numerals) is 4, 3, 2, 8, 16, respectively. This helps us in understanding something about the concerned poetic form. These numerals are even more important in the singing style of a hymn. As we have said earlier, the verse of 'raha\textsuperscript{a}' contains the thematic essence of the hymn. This verse is to be sung repeatedly—before starting the hymn and after every refrain. The refrains of a hymn are established by these numbers. For the first refrain of the hymn Ank(numerical) 1 is used, and 2 for the second, 3 for the third, and so on. This refrain might comprise one verse, two verses or more. Wherever a Ank(numerical) has been put by the Guru, that becomes one refrain and is to be sung as such, to be followed by the singing of the rahau verse. If the 'raha\textsuperscript{u}' presents the central idea, the different refrains illustrate that idea, each refrain giving one or the other instance, evidence, etc. to illustrate it. Repetition of 'raha\textsuperscript{u}' emphasizes to sink the central idea of the hymn in the mind. In this way, both 'raha\textsuperscript{u}' and Ank(numerals) play significant role in the distinct system of the presentation of the hymn.

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that in 'Guru Nanak Bani', text and music are complementary of each other. This Bani is not ordinary poetry, rather it is God's blessing, Divine Will and the Creator's decree. The
writer of this Bani, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji calls himself only a 'dhadi' who presents that Bani and who communicates Divine Will (Hukam) to the people. In the presentation of the Divine Will, text and music are cojointly performing a significant role as two important elements. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has composed his hymns in different to suit the mood and nature of the hymns. For the presentation of the bani, directive and symbols like "Raga, ghar(u) poetic/singing form, jat(i), Dhuni, rahau and Ank" (numerals) help in establishing a certain musical system. 'Guru Nanak Bani', through the mingling and amalgamation of the classical and folk music and poetry establishes a new and original musical system in which devotion, sobriety, poise and equanimity are present. The matter will be fully discussed later on; regarding the musical system and poetic style of this Bani so that a detailed analysis of the form of the musical system of 'Guru Nanak Bani', is possible.