CHAPTER - II

SURVEY OF RELATED STUDIES

Guru Nanak gave a social philosophy for the society and did not write separately and specifically about the education at one place. However, while writing about the social atmosphere, cultural heritage and spiritualism he so often wrote about education too. If all his sayings about education can be arranged together and put up systematically, one will find that his concepts about education were quite clear and can be embodied in one unit as a systematic philosophy of education. This will, however, be a great work to do, but its commencement will have to be exercised at one point or the other.

Those scholars, who have tried to study the Guru's life, teachings and writings did not try to evolve a systematic philosophy of education as conceived by Guru Nanak. The authors tried to find if some deliberate efforts have been made by some one; but they did not come across any such compilation except some articles written hither and thither by some authors and other prominent scholars. Those articles, too, were not based upon some systematic research but were the thoughts of great scholars based upon the Bani of the Guru Nanak. Some of the studies which are, no doubt, not exactly related to the present study but are in line with it, are as under:
Sikka (1963) conducted a study on the thoughts of Guru Nanak. He has tried to summarise the contribution of the Bani of the Guru to Indian thought in particular and to world thought as a whole in a general way.

Taran Singh (1969) has published two volumes of Guru Nanak Bani Parkash. He has given Bani of Guru Nanak along with its meaning and teeka (criticism). The important point of this book is that the sequence of Banis and Ragas are the same in Guru Granth Sahib.


Gursaran Singh (1972) studied Japu Ji Sahib and gave the meaning of each pauri included in Japu Ji Sahib with many other examples from other Bani.

Vinoba Bhave (1973) gave commentary on Japu ji Sahib, using the translation from the book "Sikh Religion, Volume-I as the basis. The version is the format of commentary on philosophy as portrayed in Japu Ji Sahib.

Harbans Singh (1975) conducted a study on educational philosophy of Guru Nanak. He wrote that Guru Nanak had philosophy of education because he formulated some principles which helped him in educating others.

Shan (1977) published a book "Masterpiece of Japu ji". It is no doubt a contribution in the field of ethics of the
Guru and his contribution to this world but much has not been done so far as the ideology of the Guru on his philosophy of education is concerned.

Narain Singh (1965) made an attempt to give meaning of Japu Ji Sahib. He wrote the book in English named "The Jap of the Nam".

Teja Singh (1957) wrote an article about the ideas of education of the Great Guru, and the importance of Teachers (Guru). He laid emphasis on four stanzas following the 7th stanza in Japu Ji Sahib.

Amrit Kaur (1980) conducted a study with the main objectives of the educational philosophy of the Sikh Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh. Her study revealed:

1. Education is self-realization in all its powers and potentialities.

2. The main aims of education are individual development, social development and preparation for a life for action.

3. Contents of education include religious education, study of biographies, teaching of mother tongue, calligraphy, arithmetic, book keeping, manual labour, arts and crafts, music and poetry, training in arms, study of history and politics.

4. To educate adults, non-formal methods of teaching are required like kirtan, katha, celebration of festivals, discussions and debates, travelling etc.

5. To educate children, methods required are oral-cum-memorization, use of poetry and song, recitation and play.

6. The teacher is one who has
realized the True Lord and is a seeker of truth. (7) Intellectual social, moral and spiritual development is possible only when there is a conscious endeavour on the part of the educand to discipline his life. (8) A disciple is one who follows the discipline of the gurus and is a fully dedicated soul and seeker of truth. (9) Woman has her role in the preservation and proper functioning of society as mother, wife, sister and daughter. (10) Female education consists of reading and writing of Gurmukhi and study of Holy Granth. (11) The method of evaluation consists of correction by the teacher while the student recites or repeats.

Khosla (1983) evaluated that to the gurus, the truth is the only norm and truthful living is the peak of all excellence which determine the entire realm of values, which embodies truth, goodness and beauty in itself. He said that according to Guru Nanak Dev the world is a pious place and man must enhance its piety and holiness by making truth the focus of all his conduct and character. So the main aim of education is to awaken man to his true merit. Education must make man spiritually whole and awake him to perceive a perfect divine design in life and to realise the best in him which is God, the primal truth. The study of philosophy was the most important subject but the humanities and liberal arts, music and poetry, languages and literature, history and theology etc. were made integral part of the curriculum at the centres set up by them. Guru made the techniques of deductive and inductive logic, observation,
demonstration, analysis and synthesis etc. as important tools of education. They explain the concept of the teacher of guru in two ways, namely, the Pawan Guru and the Human Guru. The very term 'Sikh' signifies a learner, a seeker of truth and righteousness in all his learning, education and his life, conduct and character. The Sikh gurus take into consideration the philosophy of various schools of thought, Eastern as well as Western, in building up their philosophy of education. They put it in practice in their own life styles, as also at their great centres of education and culture.

Dáljit Singh (1993) in his article, "Sikhi Theory of Evolution: Haumai" evaluated that Guru Nanak's spiritual experience highlights four facts about the Basic Reality. First, He is the creator and is both transcendent and immanent, but He does not incarnate. Second, He is the Fount of all values. Third, He being Love, is interested in the evolution and progress of the world, and is its Guide and Enlightener. Fourth, in view of the first three qualities of God, the goal of the spiritual man is to be the instrument of such a God or Reality.

Sodhi (1993) explains in his book "Educational Philosophy of Guru Nanak" that Guru Nanak was an original thinker, who had touched almost all philosophical and practical aspects of education. It is high time that the educational thought of Guru Nanak be worked out and practised in India and the world at large.
Diwan Singh (1994)'s "The Revolution of Guru Nanak" derives his interpretation from this fundamental doctrine of Guru Nanak that life is a game of love, and martyrdom, which in its expression not only involves total commitment but also total responsibility that may cost the seeker his very life.

Gurjit Kaur (1994) in her study on the "Educational Concepts of Guru Nanak in Japu Ji Sahib" concluded that educational concepts of Guru Nanak Dev are relevant to the present day classroom problems situation for inculcating values among the students.

Sikh Missionary Center USA's article Sikh Religion (1994) gives the interpretation that Waheguru is 'Wonderful God' or 'Thou art Wonderful'. God is without description. The word 'Wah' is uttered when we have no words to describe what we see or hear in our personal experience. The adding of 'Wah' to 'Guru' - Divine Light - is the best combination to name God as 'Waheguru'.

Daljeet Singh (1995), in his article "Guru Nanak - Prophet of a Unique Ideology" describes that the fundamental principle of Guru Nanak's religion is the establishment of a spiritual link between the individual salvation and the social salvation of man and to emphasize that there can be no social salvation of man till his spiritual level is raised and there can be no spiritual salvation of man till it is
integrated with his social salvation or till it is reflected in man's social field.

James Massey (1995) while commenting upon "Guru Nanak Dev and complete Indian Culture" states that Guru Nanak Dev has recognised the existence of different religions, cultures, ideologies etc. and strengthens through his constructive and positive criticism. It is possible through Inter-Faith Dialogue approach which needs to go at all levels in our pluralistic society on the model, which Guru Nanak offers to follow.

Gurbaksh Singh (1995) explains in his book "The Sikh Faith - A Universal Message" that Sikhism does not consider religion as merely a spiritual path. It is a way of life where spiritualism has to be practised along with day to day mundane affairs.

Kharak Singh (1996) in his book "Current Thoughts on Sikhism" tried to establish that Sikhism is a whole life religion of unique features.

Kirpal Singh (1996) views in his article, "Asa-Di-Var—A Source of Historical Information" that Asa-di-Var focuses on the importance of the Guru who transforms the individual soul and leads it to union with God. Asa-di-Var is an important source of history as it supplies rare information e.g. milch animals of Hindus like cow, goat, buffalo were taxed by the Government.
Prabhjot Kaur (1996) writes in her essay "Women - As Gurmat Portrays Her" that according to Guru Nanak, the role of mother gave women a unique status. Guru Nanak dismissed the prevailing values downgrading women, in, Asa-di-Var. Many verses from Gurbani authenticate that Sikh philosophy not only accords equal status to woman but she is also considered man's guide on the spiritual path. A woman who has lost her ego in the love of her husband, and through him loves humanity knows how to love the Lord. Patience, humility and sweetness of demeanour are some of the qualities that help woman in the fulfilment of love. It is the very qualities which pave the way for the attainment of the Lord.

Harchand Singh (1997) in his book "Sikhism - An Original Faith" clarifies that Gurbani tentamounts to an independently revealed religion with its concepts of monotheism, transcendental, immanent nature of reality, equality, continuous spiritual development of human beings, freedom from tyranny, a faith inspiring all ages including present, modern and future space ages.

Daljeet Singh and Kharak Singh (1997) edited "Sikhism - its Philosophy and History" brought out Guru's positive approach to life which distinguishes Sikhism from other faiths which are essential otherworldly.

Shan (1997) in his "Guru Babe Di Bani" sketched the conditions prevailing in the country during the 15th and 16th centuries based mainly on Guru Nanak's own Gurbani and inter-alia
also expresses that Japuji contains the essence of Gurbani which can be considered as an epitome of Sikh Philosophy.

Muthumohan (1997) while reviewing "Sikhism its Philosophy and History" found that Sikhism cannot be understood properly within the traditional framework of dichotomy of spirituality and temporality and thus creating a new paradigm of unity of spirituality and earthliness, otherwise called a whole-life philosophy. In this newly created space, God is not only transcendent but also immanent in life. One sided transcendent idea of God is the characteristic feature of Brahmamic Vedantic thought (Neti marga) and it fails to work out an ethical criterion for life.

Charanjit Singh (1998) writes on his essay "Sikhism—Religion of Pragmatism and Knowledge", that the inception, development and growth of Sikhism has been entirely due to a pragmatic philosophy, preachings, education and practice. The Gurus strove to replace ignorance and build faith with knowledge and pragmatic faith through open discussions and discoveries. Guru Nanak travelled (presumably on foot) all over the Indian sub-continent and the Middle East in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, accompanied by one or two companions (one Muslim), on his mission to spread his message of pragmatic religious practice.

Gurmukh Singh (1998) states in his article "Sewa; A Global Concept" that Sikh thought has to do with the total
approach to life. It provides the tools, the thought processes and self-disciplines for dealing with the problems of modern day living and the threats and challenges to which every modern civilised society is exposed: uncontrolled sex, drugs, breakdown of families and marriages, greed at all levels leading to environmental hazards and so on. Sikhism addresses all these issues, but like material sciences, even basic understanding of this life philosophy requires self-motivated research.

There are some key words on which basic Sikh concepts are based. These key memory joggers include words like sewa, sangat, pangat, udham, ghal, gurmat, nukam, bhana, nadar and so on.

Tharam Singh (1998) gives views in his article "Significanc of the Khands in Japju ji Sahib" that the four khands - Dharam, Gyan, Saram and Karam of Japuji signify the four stages in the spiritual progress of the devotee in order to reach his goal of a perception of the Sach Khand, the fifth stage of the Brahm Gyani.

Jasbir Singh Cheema (1999) writes in his article "Guru Nanak founded Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh shaped it" that Guru Nanak's meditation is a way of living to live that way we must surrender to five principles of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak cautioned that it is not going to be an easy task to follow these principles. The essence of Guru Nanak's invitation
translates like this:

"Only those who are ready to sacrifice their lives are invited to follow my path".

Navkiran Pal Kaur (1999) writes in her article "Guru Nanak - The Great Sociologist" that Guru Nanak gave humanity a radical humanistic doctrine for its welfare and prosperity. Biased writers and people who are ignorant of this doctrine portray him as a mere reformer. Guru Nanak's thought completely rejects the ideology of asceticism, renunciation, ritualism, parasitic living, and discrimination on the basis of sex, caste and birth. Guru Nanak taught love for all and hate for none. Unlike modern academicians and theorists who construct hollow models without considering their applicability or practicability, Guru Nanak himself practised and demonstrated whatever he preached.

Sodhi (1999) views in his article "Japuji—A Theocosmocentric-Meditative Prayer on Truth" that he internalised after extensive readings of and reflections on Japuji Sahib. He ended with the words of famous Sikh Philosopher Sirdar Kapur Singh 'The Japuji has thirty-eight pauris i.e. the stairs containing a systematic and complete statement of the basic philosophy of Guru Nanak.

But so far as we know, very rare attempts have been made to evolve the educational concepts of Guru, especially as described in Guru Nanak Bani. Therefore, further research is required in this field.

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