CHAPTER IV

GURU GOBIND SINGH'S CONCEPT OF

AND

EFFORTS TOWARDS CONCRETION OF AN

IDEAL MAN
There is a great deal of debate on Guru Gobind Singh's concept of an ideal man. Many historians, Indian as well as European, have been critical of Guru Gobind Singh's teachings and have alleged that the Guru deviated from the teachings of Guru Nanak and changed completely the character of his religion. The veritable picture of Guru Gobind Singh's ideal man is thus blurred by extreme and conflicting views. Its strength and relevance can only be judged by a discreet study of:

a. Guru Gobind Singh's life history as recorded by his contemporaries, and
b. Guru Gobind Singh's own compositions and writings contained in Dasam Granth.

Dasam Granth in its present form contains 1,428*1 pages and its various portions are composed in Braj, Hindi, Panjabi and Persian languages. It comprises of sixteen compositions versified in different forms of poetry in the following order:

1. Jāp
2. Akāl Ustat
3. Bachittar Natak
4. Chandi Charitar 1
5. Chandi Charitar 2
6. Chandi Dh Vār
7. Gian Pradodh
8. Chaubis Avtar
9. Brahm Avtar
10. Rudar Avtar
11. Shabad Hazāre
12. Swayyae
13. Khalsa Mehmā
14. Shaster Nam Mālā
15. Triyā Charitar
16. Zafarnāmā and Hikayats

Historically, the Dasam Granth was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh on the instructions of Mata Sundri, Guru Gobind Singh's widow, in 1711 A.D. The first voice raised against the authorship of the Dasam Granth was at Damdama Sahib in 1740 A.D. Since that date, two schools of thought have existed on this vital issue. The first school which considers that the whole Granth was composed by Guru Gobind Singh consists of:

1. Bhai Sher Singh - 'Dashmesh Darpan' (1935)
2. Dr. Tarlochan Singh - 'Sikh Review' (1955)
3. Bhai Randhir Singh - 'Dasam Granth Da Itihas' (1955)
4. Dr. D. P. Ashta - 'Poetry of the Dasam Granth' (1958)
5. Dr. Harbhajan Singh - 'Gurmukhi Lipi Vich Hindi Kave Di Alochna' (1959)
6. Dr. Taran Singh - 'Dasam Granth: Roop te Ras' (1961)
7. Dr. (Miss) Prasinni Sehgal - 'Guru Gobind Singh-Jeewni Te Sahit' (1961)
8. Mr. Piara Singh Padam - 'Gobind Sagar'
9. Dr. Mahip Singh - 'Dasam Guru De Sahit Bare' (1963)

The second school regards only some of its compositions as the work of the Guru, and others as those of the Guru's court-poets. The advocates of this school of thought are:

1. Bhai Santokh Singh - Suraj Prakash (1844)
2. J. D. Cunningham - 'History of the Sikhs' (1849)
3. M. A. Macauliffe - 'The Sikh Religion' (1909)
4. Dr. G. C. Narang - 'Transformation of Sikhism' (1912)
6. Indubusan Bannerjee - 'Evolution of the Khalsa' (1947)
7. Dr. Mohan Singh Divana - 'Introduction to Panjabi Literature' (1951)

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*2 Mohinder Singh Sahdev, Dasam Granth: a Study, Gurmat Praksh, Jan, 1979 p.166
*3 Ibid., p. 171
In the midst of this controversy, references required for the present study have been drawn mainly from those compositions which are accepted by the majority of scholars as Guru Gobind Singh's own.

The concept of an ideal man as established by the first nine Gurus was, in a way, extended by Guru Gobind Singh through the creation of the Khalsa. It was certainly not a departure from the concept of an ideal man as presented by the first nine Gurus and as is described in the Guru Granth Sahib. The extension was an evolution and not a revolution.

The ideal man of Guru Gobind Singh was an embodiment of the greatest virtues - Truth, Justice, Compassion coupled with Valour and Fearlessness. Universal brotherhood, Physical development through education and sport, Service and Help, Humility and Simplicity, 'Nam Simran' and Company of the saints, Congregational prayers and submission to His Order, Self-discipline and Love for God and Nature, Nursing of the sick, 'Jiwan Mukt' and self-sacrifice had already been established as the essential attributes of an Ideal man. To these were added the Tegh (the Sword) by the Tenth Guru. He said, "The cauldron and the Sword shall prevail in the world ....... fighting and dying for the preservation of the highest values is a sign of courage."*5

In order to get a right perspective of the institution of the Khalsa, it must not be forgotten that Guru Gobind Singh:

1. was an heir to a religious mission,
2. was ordained by the Almighty to uproot evil and administer justice,*6 and
3. was to declare the mission of Guru Nanak fulfilled.

The Guru was confronted with a difficult and complex task of upholding a faith which had been created by Guru Nanak and nursed by his successors. He had succeeded to that religious and spiritual office which involved

*5. Ibid.
innumerable responsibilities, far-sightedness, dynamism, courage, fearlessness and boldness. He had accepted this role with great enthusiasm and challenge. He was a man of destiny in his own words. The Guru affirmed,

"The Lord sent me for righteousness' sake,
On this account I have come into the world,
To extend the faith everywhere and,
To seize and destroy the evil and the sinful.
Understand this, all holy men in your hearts,
I assumed birth for the purpose of spreading the faith,
For saving the saints and
For extirpating all tyrants."*7

His identity with the Khalsa was to the point of asserting that:

"Khalsa is my True Guru
Khalsa is my Perfect Teacher."*8

His respect for the Khalsa is nowhere better seen than in one of his compositions:

"All the battles I have won against tyranny,
I have fought with the devoted backing of these people.
Through their help I have escaped from harm,
The love and generosity of these Sikhs have enriched my hearth and home.
Through their help in battle-field I have slain all my enemies.
I was born to serve the Khalsa, through whom I attained eminence.
What would I have been without their kind and ready help?
There are millions of insignificant people like me.
True service is the service of these people.
I am not inclined to serve others of higher caste.
Charity will bear fruit in this and the next world,

*7. Bachitar Natak, Chapter VI, Verses 29-33
*8. Sarb Loh Granth, Quoted in Amrit Kirtan, p.291
If given to such worthy people as these.
All other sacrifices and charities are profitless.
From head to foot, whatever I call my own,
All I possess and carry, I dedicate to these people.  

Looking for a right interpretation of the Guru's concept of an ideal man, it must be firmly understood that the Guru's fundamental assumption about the basic and most important obligation of a human being, was to worship One - Formless and Deathless God. It was on this basic assumption that the moral failure of God's heavenly and earthly beings was explained by the Guru. The failure of the creatures, in general, consisted chiefly in their forgetfulness of the Creator and the failure of the divinely appointed instruments was due to their interposing themselves between God and His creatures.  

The Guru said,

"...... The immortal One told me how the demons were first created, but they trusted their own arms and so were destroyed.
Then the gods were created; but they became proud, made a big show of their own strength and called themselves Supreme God......
Then the so-called Witnesses - Earth, Sun, Moon, Wind, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh - were created, but people began to worship them. Some people worshipped stones, some worshipped water and many others became engrossed in egoism......."

It is to be noted with care that the Guru's main concern, here, was the wrongful identification on the part of the above-mentioned divinely appointed witnesses with God Himself. To prevent his own worship by his followers he warned them,

"...... Those who call me Supreme God shall fall into the pit of hell,
Know me as His slave only and have not the least doubt of that,
I am the slave of the Supreme Being, and have come to behold the spectacle of the world.

What the Lord told me, I tell the world and I will not remain silent through fear of mortals.*14

Though the Guru showed interest in so-called incarnations (avtars), he had no belief in them. He said that he did not accept the opinions of the Puranas or of the Qoran, nor the doctrines of the Smritis, Shastras or Vedas. In the Guru's words:

(i) "I do not at the outset propitiate Ganesh,
Never meditate on Krishna or Vishnu,
I have heard of them but I know them not.
I love only God's feet."*15

(ii) "The Puran of Ram (the god of Hindus)
And the Qoran of Rahim (the prophet of Muslims),
Express various opinions, but I accept none of them.
The Smritis, the Shastras and the Vedas all expound many different doctrines, but I accept none of them."*16

(iii) "Forsaking all other doors I have clung to Thine.
It is to Your prerogative to protect me
O God, Gobind is your slave."*17

In the Guru's philosophy, the forces of evil and good, vice and virtue were continuously at work in the world and God intervened in this endless cosmic drama from time to time in different ways, to uphold good against evil. One of the many ways employed by the Almighty was to send His messengers to this mortal world as ordinary human beings, who would mix with ordinary folks, speak their language and win their confidence with Wisdom, Ideal way of living, Purity of thought, Truthfulness and through worship of the Formless One. Their ordained duty was to destroy unrighteousness and uphold

*17. Ibid.
justice, to uproot evil and establish good, to rescue the weak and
to guide the innocent, to protect saints and redeem devotees and to
uplift downtrodden people. This idea of the duties
of God's messenger also appears in Bhavagad Gita*19 and Hebrew literature.*20

In the Guru's views, the ceaseless cycle of life and death emanated
from God and would ultimately end in Him. As everything has come out of
Him, He is, in a sense, both matter and spirit. In the Guru's words,

"From one fire, millions of sparks of fire arise and
in course of rising remain separate, yet they again merge in the same fire. From one heap of dust
innumerable particles of dust fill the expanse in a distinct way and yet they again unite with the dust.
From one stream millions of waves arise and yet these being made of water again become water. In the same way all sentient and non-sentient forms have emerged
from the One Universal Being, yet having sprung from Him they all are bound to blend again in Him."*21

Explaining the uninterrupted cycle of life and death, the Guru says,

"There are many that swim and many that waddle
And many that eat them up,
There are myriad birds, the feathery beings,
That in a trice can take to wings,
But up in the sky are many others
That on these warblers sup,
Where are the waters, where the land
And where the vaulted blue?

*18. D.P. Ashta, Poetry of the Dasam Granth, pp. 73-74
*20. The Book of Jeremiah, I, Verses 5-10
*21. Akal Ustat, verse 17(87)
Yet all that "Time" has brought forth
Both "Time" itself subdue,
As darkness mingles with light
As light embraces dark,
All will at last dissolve in Him
From whom they got their spark."*22

According to the Guru, God's messengers are allowed to make use of force to uproot evil. The examples of Krishna, Rama, Shiv, Durga, Moses and Mohammed are known to all. This power to the messengers is God's and is given at a particular time and for a particular purpose.*23 Thus a very important attribute of God's messenger was the use of this power.*24

In one of the scenes in the Chandi Charitar*25, the god Indra appeals to Chandi for help. She mounts her tiger and rides into the demon-army. A bloody battle follows; and whoever is struck by her arrows 'never even asks for water' and dies instantly. Finally, she kills the 'Buffalo-demon' and then disappears.*26

In the Chandi di Var, a struggle between the forces of Evil and Good is depicted, in which Divine Aid weighs the scales in favour of the Good.*27

In the Ram Avtar, which the Guru completed on the eve of instituting the Khalsa*28, some sages who were being harassed by the demons approached Brahma who asked Vishnu to take birth in the world to remove the terror of demons and proclaim the rule of peace.*29

Again in the Chandi di Var, the Guru has referred to the physical forces used by Krishna, Rama and Durga for uprooting evil. The Guru said,

"The Lord created first, the Sword,
which begot the universe,
Nature is the pageant, Holy Three,
Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh,
Heavens hanging sans support,
   hills, oceans, earth.

*22. Akal Ustat, verse 17(87) (Dasam Granth, p.19)
*23. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, p.77
*24. Ibid.
*25. Chandi Charitar I, verse no. 40
*26. Ibid.
*27. Chandi Di Var, stanza no. 2
*29. Ram Avtar, verses 2 & 4
And He made all gods and devils grim,  
set as rivals fierce,  
And then, O Sword, thou Durga made  
the devils' pride to pierce.  
Ram you blessed who Dehsir felled,  
with his arrows fast,  
Krishan who dragged the evil Kans,  
and his flock in deadly grasp.  
For aeons long sat god and sage  
in meditation profound,  
Thy secret was not found.\*30

It is an established fact of the religious history of the world that whenever God thought that his saints and innocent people were in trouble and being harassed by the wicked and whenever evil had overpowered good, God's anger had manifested itself on this earth. It took the form of thunder, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, famines, epidemics and droughts; and sometimes the form of super human-instruments (weapons) like the magic stick used by Moses, the arrows employed by Rama, the steel boomerang utilized by Krishna, the spear used by Durga, and the sword used by Mohammed and Guru Gobind Singh. A strict control and balance between the parameters of good and evil through the use of force is an essential feature of the moral world.\*3

The idea that God protected the good and cast down the wicked was also expressed by Guru Nanak.\*32 According to Guru Gobind Singh, God subdued the enemies of virtue, so did the sword; therefore the sword was God and God was the sword.\*33

It is in the context of these basic facts that we should examine Guru Gobind Singh's presentation of his own mission in the *Bachitar Natak* which was composed in 1698, about one year before the institution of the Khalsa.\*35 The long composition of *Bachitar Natak* which the Guru wrote when he was 32 years old also gives us the clues of his proposed additions, and definitely not the alteration, to the mission of Guru Nanak.

\*30. Chandi Di Var, stanzas 1 - 5, 21.  
\*31. Bai and Grewal, p.109  
\*34. Bai and Grewal, p.109  
\*35. G.S. Mansukhani, *Guru Gobind Singh: Cosmic Hero*, p.106, Macauliffe, however has quoted different date - 1692 A.D. p.1 note 1
The composition of Bachitar Natak begins with a couplet invoking the blessings of the Holy Sword. Many Hindu historians maintain that in Guru Gobind Singh's writings, the word Bhagauti or Kharg or Sword meant Durga, a Hindu deity. Macauliffe has given sufficient proof against this notion.\[^{36}\] Bhai Gurdas (II), a contemporary of the Guru, has also given the true significance of the word in his Vars,\[^{37}\] which according to him meant the Invincible Power and thus God. In the Guru's words,

"I bow with love and devotion to the Holy Sword, 
Help me that I may complete this work."\[^{38}\]

The rest of the composition (Bachitar Natak) is divided into fourteen cantos. The first canto contains the praises of God. The second to fourth cantos are devoted to the geneological tables of the descent of both the Bedis and the Sodhis. There is at the end a prophecy that in Kalyug, Nanak (Guru Nanak) would bestow blessings on two Sodhis, and would, on his fourth mortal appearance, become one of that tribe.\[^{39}\] Guru Gobind Singh elaborating the mission of Nanak, said:

"He established religion in the Kali age, 
And showed the way unto all holy men. 
Sin never troubles those, 
Who follow in his footsteps. 
Those who embrace his religion. 
Pain and hunger never annoy them 
And they never fall into Death's noose."\[^{40}\]

In the fifth canto, he describes how Guru Nanak came with a Divine message and the Divine light was passed on to his successors, one by one in different bodies. The Guru said,

"Nanak assumed the body of Angad, 
And made his religion current in the world. 
Afterwards Nanak was called Amardas, 
As one lamp is lit from another ........ ....... 
And Amardas became Ramdas."

\[^{36}\] Macauliffe, op.cit., p.81. 
\[^{37}\] Bhai Gurdas II, Pauri, 6, Var 25 
\[^{38}\] Bachitar Natak, Chapter 1, verse 1 
\[^{39}\] Chapter IV, verses 7 & 9 
\[^{40}\] Ibid.
The pious saw this, but not the ignorant,
Who thought them all distinct;
But some rare persons recognised that they were all one.
They who understood this obtained perfection —
Without understanding, perfection cannot be obtained.
When Ramdas was blended with God,
He gave the Guruship to Arjan.
When Arjan was going to God's city,
He appointed Hargobind in his place.
When Hargobind was going to God's abode,
He seated Har Rai in his place.
Har Krishan, his son, afterwards became the Guru,
After him came Tegh Bahadur
Who protected the frontal marks and sacred threads of the Hindus."

The sixth canto describes the Guru's own story, wherein he mentions the order of God telling him to go to the world to uproot evil and restore justice. He narrates the details of his own mission in this canto. The Guru says:

"On the mountain of Hem Kunt .........
I performed great austerities
And worshipped Great-Death (Maha Kal) ......
The Supreme Guru was pleased .......
When Great God gave me the order,
I assumed birth in this Kali age.
And He sent me into this world with the following order:
........'I have cherished you as My son
And created you to extend My religion.
Go and spread My mission in the world,
And restrain the people from senseless acts.'"

The last canto is again an invocation in praise of the Almighty.
The Guru says:

"O God! You have always preserved Your worshippers from evil,
And have inflicted punishment on the wicked;

*41. Bachitar Natak, Chapter V, verses 7-13
You have treated me as Your devoted slave,
And nursed me with Your own hands;
Now all that I behold,
And all Your glories which I have witnessed,
Will I faithfully relate to the world.
What I beheld in the pre-birth world,
By Your blessings will I make known to all.
In all my undertakings, Your goodness has been showered upon me.
Your sword has been my preserver,
Through Your kindness and goodness have I become strong.
And all that I have observed and seen during the various ages,
I will put in a book,
And everything shall be fully made known to the world.\(^{101}\)

In the couplets quoted above, from the Bachitar Natak, we observe that——
the praise of All-Steel God; an account of the Guru's ancestors; his autobiography, (covering a period of thirty-two years of his mortal life); a description of his life before birth; a satire on the religious practices of ascetics and the ultimate reason for his taking to the sword, form the main subject matter of this composition. It is in this long poem that we find the seeds of the Guru's concept of the Khalsa, the saint-soldier of tomorrow. It should also be observed that most of the ancestors in the Guru's family were warriors. Some of them had conquered parts of Northern India, singing the hymns of Vedas.\(^{102}\) These Vedic Aryans could be classed as crusaders. They had lost their image and identity under the haze of time and the Guru was ordained to improve on that image. The methods of refinement and the zeal for reform could take many different forms. Sometimes, it could take the form of a missionary and gentle spirit as of Lord Buddha, Mahavir, Jesus Christ and Guru Nanak. At other times, this zeal took the shape of a martial spirit as of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Moses, Prophet Mohammed and Guru Gobind Singh. The second mode of resurrection was the under-lying philosophy behind the Guru's concept of the Khalsa.

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*43. Bachitar Natak, Chapter XIV
Many historians while discussing the necessity of the creation of the Khalsa have stressed the point of 'changed times' as the basis of their argument. Their contention had been that the Guru had to resort to the sword for that was the demand of the time. A critical analysis of the historical background of Guru Nanak's and Guru Gobind Singh's times does not, however, prove this point satisfactorily. The political and social environments of these two periods were not much different.

When Guru Nanak appeared on the world scene in 1469, India had already experienced about sixty foreign invasions dating from 960 A.D.*46, including one by Alpatigin of Ghazni around 960 A.D.; three by Sabbixin between 977 A.D. - 977 A.D.; seventeen by Mahmud of Ghazni between 1175 to 1206; ten by Shihab-ud-din Ghori between 1175 - 1206; twenty-five of Mongols between 1220 - 1399 and five of Babar between 1497 and 1524 A.D.*47

All these invasions had caused destruction of Indian people and their cherished possessions. The invaders had killed innocent people including women and children. Looting, destruction, killing and raping had been inflicted upon Indian masses by foreign hordes during the five hundred years which preceeded Guru Nanak.

At the time of Guru Nanak's birth, India was being ruled by Lodis who were as cruel and tyrannical as the previous rulers. In their rule, Hindu temples were demolished and priests butchered. The arts and seats of learning were wilfully wiped out.*48 Sikander Lodi's hatred of the Hindus had figured very prominently in history. He many times 'went beyond the bounds even of excess.'*49 At many religious places, famous Hindu Temples were destroyed, their stone images were given to the butchers to serve as meat-weights, and the Hindus were prohibited from shaving their heads and performing their ablutions in the sacred river Yamuna.*50 Guru Nanak himself witnessed the great massacre at Sayyidpur when the town was ransacked by the soldiers of Babar in 1520 A.D.*51 In 1524 A.D., after a great deal of bloodshed of innocent people, Babar also conquered Lahore. In the next six years, the Mughal rulers were firmly established in India. In several verses of Guru Nanak, known as Babar - Vani, there is

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*46. H. R. Gupta, History of Sikh Gurus, p.1  
*47. Ibid. p.18. See also R. Majumdar, Advanced History of India, pp.172, 173, 270, 272 and 418  
*48. Ibid., p.2  
*49. Tabaquat-i-Akbari, Volume 1, p.335  
*50. Tarikhe-i-Daudi, translated by Elliot & Dawe, IV p.447  
*51. Beveridge, Babar's Name I p.429
a description of that inhuman destruction and devastation.*52 In the prophetic words of Guru Nanak -

(i) "As the Word of the Lord comes to me, So do I make it known,  O Lalo. With a mighty force Babar has come from Kabul, Like a bridegroom with a sinful crowd as bridal procession. With brutal force has he snatched India's wealth as his bride. Woe and misery has disfigured this unfortunate land. Modesty, honour and righteousness have all vanished Evil and open vice have held its sway, O dear Lalo...... Just is the Lord, true is His verdict, true the Justice, That He sentences all according to their deeds. Nanak has spoken the Word of the True Lord now, And will proclaim the rest at the time of occurrence."*53

(ii) "How strange is your dispensation,  O Lord, How incomprehensible are your ways! All is death and confusion now, All happens as it pleases Him,  O Nanak, How can man resist His Will."*54

(iii) "You have sent death disguised as the Mughal, Terrible has been the sufferings of the poor, Helpless people,  O Lord of pity! So terrible that they all cried aloud in deep agony. Did You feel no pang or pity at all, my God? You belong equally to all,  O Creator! You must equally feel for all. If a strong man attacks another who is equally strong, One need feel no grief or anger. But when lions and hungry wolves are let loose, On herds of sheep and cattle,

*52. Guru Granth Sahib, p.722  
Translation by Gobind Singh Mansukhani, Life of Guru Nanak, Guru Nanak: Apostle of Love, pp. 27 - 32; pp. 5 - 7  
*53. Ibid., p. 722  
*54. Ibid.
The Master of the herd must be held responsible,
For the wanton and avoidable destruction.
The hounds of war have licked many a precious jewel of life,
How mysterious are Your ways, O Lord!"*55
Speaking about his times, he tells us at another place:
(iv) "The kings are tigers and their courtiers are dogs,
They go and disturb the sitting and the sleeping,
The officials dig their claws, causing wounds,
They lick up the blood and flesh that come out,
But at the Divine court where they will be judged,
Their noses will be chopped off, denigrating them as unworthy."*56

Guru Angad received the spiritual light from Guru Nanak in 1529 A.D.
During his pontificate, the whole Indian political scene was chaotic and
confused. Hamayun, son and successor of Babar, was on the run after his defeat
from Sher Shah at Bilgram in May 1540 A.D.*57 In July 1555 A.D., when Hamayun
returned from Persia and reoccupied the Imperial throne, the light of Guru
Nanak had passed to Guru Amardas. But the thirteen year period of Guru Angad's
pontificate was full of political and religious persecutions and torture, social
uncertainty, and restlessness and economic bankruptcy. The periods of the
Guruship of Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas were relatively less eventful. It
was the era of Akbar's reign and this was the only period in the whole Muslim
rule in India, covering roughly about seven hundred years, when there was
relatively less religious discrimination and cruelty. Akbar had a feeling
of respect for the holy men of all religions and he also paid them homage.*58
On the other hand, strangely enough, he was charged by the orthodox Muslims
as an enemy of Islam.*59

The uneventful political horizon and comparative calm and peace of
Guru Amardas's and Guru Ramdas's times must not be mistaken to mean that the
Gurus faced no problems in propagating the message of Guru Nanak. Though
there was no external oppression, there was a great deal of internal strife
and jealousy among the existing communities and resistance to the egalitarian
aspect of the Gurus' mission. The greatest opposition in the way of Guru
Amardas came from Guru Angad's sons, Dasu and Dattu,*60 and in the way of Guru

*55. Guru Granth Sahib, p.1245
*56. Ibid., p.360
*57. A. C. Bannerji, Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, p.104
*58. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.87
*59. P.S. Gill, History of Sikh Nation, p.125
*60. M.A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, pp.64-66
Ramdas from the sons of Guru Amardas, Mohan and Mohri. Guru Amardas was compelled to leave Khadur for Goindwal to avoid the hostility of Dasu and Dattu and Guru Ramdas left Goindwal for the newly established township of Guru ka Chak to avoid an open conflict with Mohan and Mohri. Other obstacles in the progress of the Gurus' mission were also formidable. For example, at the times of Guru Amardas, several jealous Khatris and Brahmins filed an official complaint against the Guru before Emperor Akbar for the Guru's egalitarian and unorthodox views. On another occasion some Muslim priests raised voices against the Guru's teachings and preaching of Guru Nanak's doctrines to the Muslims. But relatively speaking, the times of Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas were peaceful.

Guru Arjan received the Guruship in 1581 A.D. at the age of eighteen when Emperor Akbar was still alive. The period from 1581 A.D. to 1605 A.D. i.e. till Akbar's death, was uneventful in relation to external persecution. The only obstacle in the functioning of the Guru's house came from the Guru's elder brother, Prithiv, who had become inimical on account of his supersession by Guru Arjan in the line of succession to Guruship. During the first twenty years of Guruship, Guru Arjan did remarkable work to consolidate and strengthen Guru Nanak's religion. He constructed many important Sikh shrines including Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), Taran Taran and Santokhsar. He also compiled and edited Guru Granth Sahib the holy scripture of the Sikhs. He took the important step of bringing the Jats of Manjha into the fold of Sikhism, thus sowing the seeds of the growth of the infant Sikh community into a future Sikh Nation. Akbar died in 1605 A.D. and a week after his death Jahangir, his son, succeeded to the throne at the age of thirty-six. Unfortunately, Jahangir did not inherit his father's liberalism in religion. Meantime, the Sikhs had also increased considerably in number. Whereas the total number of the Sikhs in the time of Guru Ramdas appeared to be insignificant, the number increased quite considerably in the times of Guru Arjan. In every town in the country a few Sikhs were definitely found. The rapidly growing number of the Sikhs, who were mainly converts from Hindus and Muslims, made the Islamic

*61. M.A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, pp.64-66
*62. Ibid., pp.102-109, see also I.B. Bannerji, Evolution of the Khalsa, I, p.21
*63. M.A. Macauliffe, op.cit., II, p.213
*64. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.91
*65. P.S. Gill, op.cit., p.107
*66. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.456
*67. J.D. Cunningham, History of Sikhs, p.46 f.n. 1
*68. Mohsin Fani, Dabistan, 225, 233
*69. Ibid.
Government highly suspicious. The Guru's relations with the Mughal government were further complicated by the intrigues of the Guru's elder brother, Prithia. He persuaded a Mughal army officer, Sulhi Khan, to kill the Guru. Sulhi Khan tried but failed. In Guru Arjan's own words:

"God preserved me from Sulhi
Sulhi by no means succeeded;
Sulhi died unclean,
God drew forth His axe and smote off his head,
and in a moment he became ashes.
He who practised evil was consumed,
He who created him thrust him into fire."*71

Besides this, Chandu Shah, another officer in the Mughal government, became the Guru's enemy on the Guru's refusal to accept Chandu Shah's daughter in marriage with his son, Har Gobind.

This trio—Prithia, Sulhi Khan (while alive) and Chandu Shah—also repeatedly made representations to Jehangir stating that Guru Arjan was an enemy of Islam and the holy book—Guru Granth Sahib which he had compiled, contained derogatory remarks against Islam and Prophet Mohammed. Jehangir was, thus, becoming alarmed with the Guru's religious, economic and social activities, and was looking for an excuse to punish the Guru. When Prince Khusrau, the eldest son of Jehangir, revolted against his father and during his run took refuge with the Guru, who as usual showed kindness to him as to any man in distress, Jehangir got an excuse to put the Guru to death on a fictitious charge for harbouring and assisting an enemy of the Throne. The Guru was tortured to death in 1606 A.D.*72, thus becoming the first martyr in Sikh history.

The period beginning 1606 A.D. to 1799 A.D., was an era of the persecution of the Sikhs, along with Hindus and other non-Muslims. Guru Arjan was succeeded by his son, Guru Har Gobind, who was only eleven years old at the martyrdom of his father.

*70. E. Trumpp, The Adi Granth, p.lxxxii
*71. Guru Granth Sahib, Bilawal, p.825
*72. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.457
According to some historians, the last message of Guru Arjan to Guru Hargobind was that the young Guru should arm himself and should maintain an army to the best of his ability. The seventy years period from Guru Hargobind to Guru Tegh Bahadur (1606 A.D. to 1675 A.D.) was once again an era of religious torture, bigotry and oppression. Jahangir died at Rajauri on 29th October, 1627 A.D., when Guru Hargobind was thirty-two years old. Before his death, he issued a warrant for the arrest of the Guru and his imprisonment in the fort of Owaliar. Historians disagree on the term of imprisonment. Whereas many historians state a period of two years, Mohsin Fani, a Persian writer and a contemporary of the Guru, refers to the period of imprisonment as twelve years. Jehangir was succeeded by his son, Shah Jahan, who too was an orthodox Muslim and far less liberal in religious policies. Under his orders, a large scale destruction of Hindu temples was carried out. Persecution of the Hindus now became the persecution of the Sikhs as well. The Guru, in his life-time, had to fight six battles against the Mughals for survival and for affirming the mission of Guru Nanak.

Guru Hargobind, thus, became the first religious hero of medieval times who combined the qualities of a saint and a soldier. He taught the art of carrying a sword along with a rosary. The Guru infused a military spirit into the disciples of Guru Nanak. He, with his new teaching, saved the Sikh nation from a premature annihilation and separated them a longway from other religious groups. According to Greenlees, 'Though it is true Guru Hargobind's somewhat martial temperament led him into ways different from those of his predecessors, it seems clear to us now that the One Guru Nanak willed through his body, to propose to the Sikhs to become a manly fighting nation.'

Guru Hargobind was succeeded by his grandson, Guru Har Rai, at the age of fourteen in 1644 A.D., when Shah Jahan was still on the throne.

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*74. Ibid.

*75. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, A Short History of the Sikhs, p.40, f.n.1; P.S. Gill, op.cit., p.157, He, however, refers to this period of imprisonment as three years.

*76. Mohsin Fani, op.cit., 234

*77. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.115

*78. A.C. Bannerji, op.cit., p.143

*79. Ibid.

*80. P.S. Gill, op.cit., p.159

*83. C. Payne, Short History of the Sikhs

*84. J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.33

Shah Jehan's reign ended when he was imprisoned by his youngest son, Aurangzeb, who declared himself the emperor of India.  

During this period of fourteen years the relations of the Guru, the Sikhs and the Moghuls remained peaceful. But Aurangzeb wasted no time, after taking the throne, to show his hatred for non-Muslims. He summoned Guru Har Rai to his court in 1661. The Guru sent his son Ram Rai to represent him. The young Ram Rai, out of fear, changed a verse of one of Guru Nanak’s hymns when he was asked to explain the meaning of the hymn in Aurangzeb’s court. Guru Har Rai was greatly disappointed at his son’s behaviour for having insulted Guru Nanak and the Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru declared Ram Rai unfit for Guruship and ordered him not to come into his presence. Soon after this, Guru Har Rai died at the young age of thirty two. Thus nothing unusual happened during this period of Guru Har Rai. The Guru was succeeded by his younger son, Har Krishan, who was only five years old at his father’s death. On a complaint from Ram Rai, Aurangzeb summoned Guru Har Krishan to Delhi to justify his right to Guruship, but the Guru suffered from smallpox at Delhi and died on March 30, 1664 at the age of eight. This short period of Guruship was also politically eventless.

Guru Har Krishan was succeeded by his grand uncle, Guru Tegh Bahadur, in 1664. He held his pontificate for eleven years. By the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur’s succession, the reign of Aurangzeb had been well established. In his acts, he surpassed the theocracy of both Jahangir and Shah Jahan. He let loose an unprecedented oppression on Hindus. In 1671 he sent one of his officers, Sher Afghan, as the new officer-in-charge of Kashmir to spear-head the imperial policy of destruction of temples and forcible conversion of the Hindus to the fold of Islam. Emperor Aurangzeb’s policy was that if the Kashmiri Brahmins, who had the reputation for scholarship, were converted to Islam, the other Hindus would readily follow their example. Moreover, Peshawar and Kabul, the centres of Islam, were near, and if the Kashmiri Brahmins offered any resistance to the policy of conversion, the Mohammadens might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them. It was also believed by the Emperor, without any foundation as it turned out, that the Kashmiri Brahmins might be tempted by promises of money and government

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*86. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.484  
*87. P.S. Gill, op.cit., p.170  
*88. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.131  
*89. Ibid.  
*90. Tirlochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.108  
*91. H.R. Gupta, op. cit., p.178
Aurangzeb was a very zealous Sunni Muslim. According to his interpretation of the Qoranic law, it was the birth right of every Muslim to wage holy war (Jehad) against non-Muslims till they were converted into the fold of Islam. This was the reason for his launching such an aggressive policy in Kashmir. The persecution of Hindus in Kashmir was brutal and ruthless. In 1669, Aurangzeb issued a general order for the destruction of all schools and temples of Hindus. In Delhi, war elephants were let loose against the Hindus who had come to beg the Emperor for relief from exhorbitant Jazia (a kind of tax for non-Muslims). Many hundred Hindus were trodden to death by elephants. In this way the panic and terror caused by the bigoted policy of Aurangzeb entered into all sections of Indian life.

When completely demoralised by the atrocities of Aurangzeb, the Kashmiri Brahmins were about to surrender and accept Islam, they were advised by some of their leaders to go to Guru Tegh Bahadur for help. As a result, a large deputation of Kashmiri Brahmins came to Anandpur to request Guru Tegh Bahadur to help them in that hour of need. The Guru was deeply moved on hearing their tales of woe and realised the gravity of the situation. He told the delegation to petition the Emperor that if by any means he could convert the Guru to Islam then all the Brahmins would follow his example. This was a big challenge for Aurangzeb. He immediately decreed that the Guru be arrested and brought over to Delhi. As expected, Aurangzeb offered the Guru a choice between death by torture or conversion to Islam. Obviously, the Guru preferred his faith to his life and was executed after five days of severe torture. The most authentic account of this incident is contained in Guru Gobind Singh's autobiography:

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*94. M. A. Macauliffe, op. cit., IV, p.369
*95. R. Majumdar, op.cit., p.489
*96. Saqi Mustad Khan, Masiri- Alamigiri, p.60
*97. M. Latif, History of Punjab, pp.156-157
*98. J. N. Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, III, p.156
*99. P. N. Bamzai, History of Kashmir, p.544. On the same page, P. N. Bamzai mentions that some Brahmins got the revelation of Lord Shiv, at the sacred Amarnath Cave, to go to Guru Tegh Bahadur for help.
*100. W. Haigh and Richard Burn, The Cambridge History of India, IV, p.245.
"When I was mature enough,
To shoulder duties and responsibilities,
My father left for the heavenly home;
He sacrificed his life,
For protecting the rights of the Hindus,
To wear their sacred thread and frontal marks;
In this Kali Age of ignorance,
Guru Tegh Bahadur performed a supreme heroic act;
He gave up his head without uttering a word of sorrow,
For the sake of righteousness;
He did this great heroic deed,
He readily gave up his head,
But did not give up his faith.
He refused to perform miracles,
A cheap way of fooling people;
True prophets of God are ashamed of displaying their occult powers."*101

From the evidence produced, it is proved beyond doubt that the times before and after Guru Nanak were as bad and oppressive as during Guru Gobind Singh's lifetime. Thus the 'Time Theory' advanced by many historians does not answer all the questions in full and the answer has to be found somewhere else.

Commenting on the message, the teaching and the personality of the Sikh Gurus, one must not be tempted to view them in isolation. The basic truth that the Divine Spirit in all of them was the same and the mission before them was the same must not be confused and forgotten. The strategy, sometimes, did differ, as the mission reached different stages at the times of the various Gurus; but this does not mean that their objectives and teachings were different. Thus we might conclude that the 'Time Theory' did not actually mean the environmental time but the time of different stages of the mission.

*101. Bachitar Natak, Chapter V
Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.311
Guru Nanak had given his first sermon of the Divine message in 1496 A.D. at Sultanpur. The work was carried on, as ordained, by the succeeding Gurus till 1699 A.D. when the Tenth Master realised that the time had come to give finishing touches to that Divine duty. The last step, as explained by Guru Gobind Singh, was to bind all the followers of Guru Nanak in a unique type of brotherhood-bond. It was an unusual type of act completely impersonal in nature. The Guru explained this in his composition, *Bachitar Natak*, as below:

"The Eternal Being thus addressed his worm (the Guru):
- 'I have regarded you as my son,
And appointed you to establish a perfect panth (organisation)
Go into the world, establish virtue, expel vice,'
- for this sole reason, to establish virtue -
Was I sent into the world by the Divine Guru,
 Everywhere, to establish virtue and exterminate the wicked,
 and the vicious -,
 For this purpose have I got mortal birth ......."

The Guru also said,

"Recognise all mankind as one,
The same Lord is the Creator and Nourisher of all.
Recognise no distinction among them.
The temple and mosque are the same,
So are the Hindu worship and Muslim prayer.
All men are same and one!"

He also affirmed,

"God, the Lord, said to me: 'When mankind was created,
The Daityas were sent into the world, who became each other's enemies,
And being strong and possessed of too much power forgot me as their God,

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*102. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.39
*103. Ibid.
*104. *Bachitar Natak*, Chapter VI, verses 29-33
*105. Ibid.
*106. *Akal Ustat*, verses 85-86
Then Devtas were sent into the world,
But they caused themselves to be worshipped by men as Shiv, Brahma and Vishnu.

The Sidhs were afterwards born,
But they, following different ways, established many sects;
Then Gorakhnath appeared in the world,
And he, making many kings his disciples, established the sect of Yogis.
Ramanand later came into the world,
And he established the sect of Bairagis after his own fashion.
Mahadin (Mohammed) too was born,
And became lord of Arabia.
He established a religion of his own and required his followers to repeat his name.
Thus they who were sent into the world to guide mankind perversely adopted modes of their own and misled the world.

None taught the right way to the ignorant. *107

Guru Gobind Singh rejected the claim of other prophets as being the incarnation of the Supreme Lord. To avoid the repetition of old mistakes and to instruct the world to worship only God and no one else, the Guru said,

"Whosoever regards me as the Lord (and worships me),
Shall be dashed into the pit of hell,
For I am, as other men are, a beholder of the wonders of His Creation." *108

It is in the light of the above quotations from the Guru's hymns that his teachings and achievements must be examined. The Guru was creating the Brotherhood of Khalsa in pursuance of and in keeping with the commands he had received from the Almighty. *109 The Command had already warned him against letting the new institution become a communal and personal organisation, *110 working not for the Commands of God but for its own selfish and limited

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*107. Bachitar Natak, Chapter VI, verses 6-38
*108. Ibid. VI, verses 32-33
*109. Ibid. verse 29
*110. Ibid. verses 6-28
interests, like the Daityas, Devtas, Sidhs, Gorakhnath, Ramanand and Mohammed. The Divine Command had also made it crystal clear to the Guru that different prophets had appeared from time to time with God's Command which they had failed to carry out in full. The communities which the prophets had created had later turned themselves into sects and groups at war with one another, for their own domination. The new Panth (organisation), the Khalsa Brotherhood, whose seeds were sown by Guru Nanak and nursed by his successors, was not to be allowed to decay or form itself into a denomination, nor were its new teachings and principles to be contracted into mere monastic discipline. The Divine Command had also informed the Guru of the injustice and tyranny which had engulfed humanity from time to time and had given the Guru full discretion to exterminate it by any means. The new organisation had to be a champion in the field of annihilation of wicked and vicious. It had to be an 'Army of the Immortal Being', which would be always ready to defend the innocent and establish truth and justice. The new Brotherhood was founded, unlike any other religion, to make oblation and sacrifice only for God and His mankind in general.

The Guru, in his own words, had said that all human beings were the same, no one was inferior or superior on the basis of religion, caste or colour. The new Brotherhood was open to every person irrespective of his denomination. The Khalsa was destined to be a world-wide movement, always ready and specially designed for the service and help of mankind. The religious ideology of the Khalsa was the worship of One Formless, Fearless and All-Powerful God, and those other attributes of God which the circumstances demanded. The Guru has made this expression clear in one of his hymns -

"Eternal God, You are our Shield,
In the battlefield You are our Dagger, Knife and Sword,
For us You are the Protector,

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*111. Bachitar Natak, VI, verse 28
*112. Ibid. verses 6-28,
*113. Ibid. verse 28
*114. Ibid. verses 42-43
*115. Ibid.
*116. Akal Ustat, verses 16-86
*117. Ibid.,
*118. Narain Singh, Guru Gobind Singh Samajpan Granth, p.22
O Timeless, Deathless Lord of Heaven,
You are All-Steel, You are the greatest Power,
For us You are the only Protector.
But, I know it for sure, that You save only brave people,
And all those who are Your servants.\textsuperscript{*119}

The Guru has used new and different attributes for God in his compositions, e.g. Akal (the Immortal), Sarbloh (All-Steel), Mahanlohom (Supreme-Steel), Sarbkal (All Death), Mahankal (Mighty Destroyer), and many others.\textsuperscript{*120}

The Guru has envisaged God as the protector and destroyer of the world, compassionate to the poor, punisher of enemies, cherisher of all and free from death's noose.\textsuperscript{*121} In his message, amongst other attributes of God, the Guru was also stressing the All-Powerful, the Punisher of enemies and All-Steel aspects of God. The Brotherhood of Khalsa, described by the Guru as an 'Army of Immortal Being', had to have the attributes of Power, Fearlessness, Upholders of Justice and Restorers of Righteousness. However, this power of Steel or Sword, the Guru stressed, was to be used only as the last resort. In the Guru's words:

"When all efforts to restore peace prove useless,
And no words avail,
Then it is lawful to lift the sword."\textsuperscript{*122}

The Khalsa was to be a group of Saints plus Soliders, an army of a very high moral character,\textsuperscript{*123} a band of fearless soldiers. Thus along with the spiritual teachings and saintly life-style of the House of Guru Nanak, the Tenth Nanak infused in the followers of the House a new spirit of self-sacrifice, fearlessness, bravery, boldness, truthfulness, benevolence, brotherliness and graciousness. According to the Guru, these were to be the requisite attributes of the Khalsa. The Khalsa was to be a tough saint.

To create the great Khalsa and to announce the completion of the mission of Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh appeared before a huge gathering of the Sikhs at Keshgarh (Anandpur) on 30th March 1699 A.D.\textsuperscript{*124} The Sikhs had been ordered

\textsuperscript{*119} Akal Ustat, verse 1
\textsuperscript{*120} H.A. Macauliffe, V. p. 261
\textsuperscript{*121} Akal Ustat, Verse 75
\textsuperscript{*122} Zafarnama, verse 22
\textsuperscript{*123} Qazi Nur Mohammed, Jang Nama
\textsuperscript{*124} Santokh Singh, Suraj Prakash, iii 21
Sainpat, Gur Sobha, V.
to come to Keshgarh with their hair and beards unshorn. In front of this huge gathering, in a very firm and commanding voice and raising his sword aloft, the Guru stood up and asked whether there was any amongst the gathering who was ready to lay down his life for Dharma (Faith/Truth).

It was an unusual and unprecedented call. By it the Guru did not mean his disciples to come forward and offer their lives for him, for that they had already done in hundreds and thousands. A number of battles had been fought, first during the times of Guru Hargobind and then Guru Gobind Singh's own times wherein very many followers were slain to save Dharma and the faith of Guru Nanak. In almost all these battles both Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh had exerted a powerful influence on their followers. By leading almost all the battles and fighting side by side with their followers, both Gurus had won their utmost confidence, loyalty and devotion much before the creation of the Khalsa. Thus the present call was of a very different kind. It was absolutely impersonal in nature. Sacrificing oneself for an ideology was certainly unique in its character. The objective before the Guru was to create a brotherhood which would ever be ready to stand against evil and tyranny in every shape and form and who could sacrifice themselves only to God. Thus, when the Guru asked for "heads" (sacrifices), it was an impersonal demand, as impersonal as the Sword (Power - an attribute of Guru Gobind Singh's concept of God) was or as Dharma was. The surrender of lives to the Sword symbolised complete effacement of self in the service of God.

Few moments after the call, one after the other, five Sikhs stood up and offered their lives for the Dharma. They included: Bhai Daya Ram, a Khatri (businessman) of Lahore, aged about 30 years, who in the last days of the Guru took the Guru's letter, known in history as Zafarnama, to Aurangzeb and lived with the Guru at Nanded till the Guru's death; Bhai Dharam Singh, a Jat (agriculturist) from Delhi, aged 33 years, who was the Commander of the Guru's army in a number of battles and also remained with the Guru till the Guru's death; Bhai Muhkam Chand, a washerman of Dwarka, aged 36 years, who

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*125. Sainapat, op.cit., p.18
*126. Teja Singh & Ganda Singh, op.cit. p.68
I.B. Bannerji, op.cit., II, p.113
M.A. Macauliffe, op.cit., V, p.91
Kartar Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, p.132
Bal & Grewal, op.cit., p.116
Harbans Singh, The Tenth Master, p.34
Tirlochan Singh, Guru Gobind Singh (a brief life sketch,) p.18

*127. Narain Singh, Guru Gobind Singh Samparan Granth p.22
*129. Ibid.
later died fighting heroically at Chamkaur; Bhai Sabib Chand, a barber from Bidar, aged 37 years, who also died fighting bravely at Chamkaur; and Bhai Himmat Rai, a water-carrier from Jagannath, aged 39 years, who also died fighting fearlessly at Chamkaur.

After the unconditional surrender to the Guru, the five heroes were taken into a tent, robed in new shining yellow uniforms, garlanded and then brought back into the assembly, to the surprise of all, who had thought that the five were killed by the Guru. They were then administered the new baptism of double-edged dagger. The Guru hugged all of them and called them as his Beloved Ones (Panj Piyaras). Individually, each one was called a Singh (Lion) and collectively they were given the name of Khalsa, into which the Guru himself begged to be and was baptised and initiated as the sixth. During the first few days of the month of April, 1699 A.D. some eighty thousand men received the new Baptism to join the Order of the Khalsa.

Thus was created the Brotherhood of Khalsa. Just as the Guru was the chosen prophet of God, deputised to punish the wicked and vicious people, so the Khalsa was to act as the Guru's proxy to carry on the mission of the Guru for ever.

The Khalsa so created was to wear a distinctive look and was not to fall back to be a mere ordinary and closed sect as had happened in the past and as was narrated by the Guru in the Bachitar Natak. The distinctive look of the Khalsa was to be their uncut hair - 'Keshas' as well as their arms. Some writers state that the distinctive look of the Khalsa was the wearing of Five weapons; others state that it was the wearing of Uncut hair (Keshas), Comb (Kangha), Dagger (Kirpan), Steel wristband (Kara) and Underpants (Kachha). In due course, a well-formulated code of conduct - 'Rehat' also was prescribed and the Khalsa was expected to conduct his personal and social life in accordance with that code.

The name 'Khalsa' which the Guru gave to the new brotherhood had a special meaning and significance. In Persian, a language in which the Guru

*131. Ibid.
*132. Ibid., p.135
*133. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.184
*134. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.68

(References continued overleaf)
References

*135. Kapur Singh, Parasharprasna, p.2
In this book, also known as 'The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh,' The author says, "...... The five ideas to which Guru Gobind Singh gave concrete expression on the day of Baisakhi are: (1) The absorption of the individual into the Infinite Soul, as the ultimate aim and Summum bonum of human life, and as a corollary the religion and religious activity, as the activity, par excellence, worthy of serious minds, (2) An egalitarian and global fraternity into which this ideal must permeate, (3) Acceptance of new principles of Politics, subordinated to those of Ethics, resulting in the universal acceptance of the tradition of open Diplomacy, (4) Organisation into the Order of the Khalsa, of those who agree to dedicate their lives to these ideas, and, (5) the vision of a new and regenerated humanity, heralded by the Baisakhi of March 30, 1699 and symbolised on the day of Baisakhi." (pp.11-12)

*136. Ibid., p. 2-3


*139. Bachitar Natak, VI, verse

*140. Ibid., VI, verses 6-28

*141. Sainapat, op.cit., pp.20, 21, 22, 28

*142. Randhir Singh, Prem Sumarag, p.45

*143. Ibid., p.188

*144. Sainapat, op.cit.

There are Rehat Namas (Books of the Code of Conduct) composed by some eminent and devoted contemporaries of the Guru. These are -

Bhai Nanad Lal: A great Persian poet and a very dearly loved disciple
References (Cont.)

of Guru Gobind Singh. He wrote two Rehatnamas, one before the creation of the Khalsa and the other after the creation of the Khalsa. The second Rehatnama is known as Tankhanama.

Bhai Daya Singh: The First of the Five Beloved Ones. He wrote his Rehatnama after the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

Bhai Desa Singh: Bhai Desa Singh was Bhai Mani Singh's son. Bhai Mani Singh was Guru Gobind Singh's class mate. Bhai Desa Singh also wrote a comprehensive Rehatnama.

Bhai Chaupa Singh: Bhai Chaupa Singh was an attendant of Guru Gobind Singh from the boyhood of the Guru. He wrote a code of conduct during the lifetime of the Guru.

All the above Rehatnamas are available in small printed tract form but are not regarded very authentic as there are later interpolations in the main text. See Randhir Singh, op.cit., pp.78-79

*145. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.187
was a great scholar, the word 'Khalsa' consists of Five letters, a sacred number which even Guru Nanak had blessed as holy and supreme, and which meant 'Pure'.

For the preparation of the new Baptismal nectar for the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh used five things, all of which had special significance and meaning:

(i) **All-Steel Bowl:**

The word 'All Steel' has a special mention and significance in the Guru's writings. According to Edmund Candler, the Guru proved himself very wise and farsighted in inaugurating the sacrament of the steel, for the steel represented Truth and Firmness. According to Evola, it represented the Transcendent Toughness of the principle of the all-conquering spirit.

(ii) **Water:**

In Guru Nanak's hymns, water represents the first source of life. It also denotes Truths, the natural truths which are knowledge from the Word. In Gaskell's Dictionary of all Scriptures and Myths, water is described as the symbol of creation and the origin of life. According to Upnashids, water is an embodiment of God.

(iii) **Sugar Pellets (Patashas):**

According to the historical narration, the sugar pellets were mixed in the Baptismal Nectar by Mata Sahib Kaur, later called the Mother of the Khalsa. While Steel and the Sword (referred in point (iv)) represented valour, fearlessness and the fiery pacifism of an unconquerable spirit, the Sugar Pellets instilled feminine grace, tenderness, sweetness and compassion.

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*148. Trilochan Singh, The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs, p.63
*149. Edmund Candler, The Mantle of the East, pp. 120-121
*150. Evola, A Dictionary of Symbols, p.312
*151. Guru Granth Sahib, p.8
*152. Swedenborg Apoe Rev: no. 50
*153. Gaskell Dictionary of all Scriptures and Myths, p.804
*154. Brihad, Upnashid V 5.1
*155. Kartar Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, p.139
*156. Trilochan Singh, op.cit., p.71
(iv) Two Edged Sword (Khanda)\textsuperscript{157}:

The two-edged sword represented 'All-Powerful God.' The two edges symbolise - (a) the Power of Protection of the good; and (b) the Power of destruction of the evil.

The Guru says in one of his hymns:

"God first created the two-edged Sword, And then He manifested the whole phenomenal world. He created Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv, As Divine instruments of Creation. This way He created the playful drama of Nature."\textsuperscript{158}

(v) Five Prayers (Banis):

The most important part of the preparation of the baptismal nectar was the recitation of the following Five Prayers (Banis):

(a) Jap Ji - A composition of Guru Nanak consisting of Mul-Mantar (invocation), 38 Pauris (Stanzas) and 2 Saloks.

(b) The Jasp - A composition of Guru Gobind Singh consisting of 199 verses.

(c) Das Sawaiya (quatrain) - A composition of Guru Gobind Singh, forming part of his long poem, 'Akal Ustat,' numbering from 31-40.

(d) Benti Chaupai (quatrain) - A composition of Guru Gobind Singh consisting of 25 quatrains.

(e) Anand Sahib - A composition of Guru Amardas consisting of 40 stanzas, symbolising Divine Power and Grace.

For the guidance of the newly created Khalsa Brotherhood, Guru Gobind Singh also prescribed a Code of Five Principles, each governed by Five Rules. The five principles were:

(a) Five Beliefs; (b) Five Symbols; (c) Five Vows; (d) Five Deliverances; and (e) Five Rules of Conduct.

\textsuperscript{157} Sainapat, op. cit., verse 33 (149), 34 (150),

\textsuperscript{158} Var Bhagauti Ki, Verse 2.

\textsuperscript{159} G. S. Mansukhani and S.S. Kohli, op.cit., p.107
I. FIVE BELIEFS

(a) BELIEF IN ONE GOD

The fundamental belief of Guru Gobind Singh, like all other Sikh Gurus, was based on the philosophy of Idealism - that there is only One Reality, One God and that all that exists arose from the function of that One Reality and must eventually merge into that One Reality.

The Guru advocated the concept of God as preached by Guru Nanak and later expanded by the Subsequent Gurus. According to the Guru, the Khalsa would believe in only One Supreme God, Absolute yet All-Pervading, the Eternal, the Creator, the Cause of Causes and would bow to no one else. God the Creator has two aspects - the Transcendental, Impersonal or the Absolute One (Nirgun); and the Related, Immanent and Personal (Sargun). Before the creation of God's play, the whole universe was a big void. There was nothing except the Transcendental God and all else was within Him; the subject and the object were still not distinct. God existed in the form of Consciousness - this was His Absolute aspect. But when He willed, He created the Universe and manifested Himself in it. It is He from Whom in the beginning all came, it is He who acts in all who act, Who lives and loves in all who live and love, Who is the final refuge and home of all. When He revealed Himself, He presented His Personal aspect. In the Guru's own words:

(i) "He is the Absolute One, the Invincible and the Imperishable Lord. His Light manifests itself in many worlds."*162

(ii) "To Him I bow, at whose Will the world was created; To the Fearless One I bow; I bow to the God of gods, who is in the Present and in the Future."*164

(iii) "When You, O Creator, projected Yourself, All creatures of the Earth assumed diversed shapes. But whenever, O Lord, You draw the Creation within Yourself, All embodied beings are absorbed in You."*165

*161. Guru Nanak, Maru Solhe, 15:1,4,6,13,15. "In the very beginning all was darkness; no earth, no sky, no day, no night, no moon, no sun.......
  Guru Granth Sahib op. cit.

*162. Akal Ustat, verse 1

*163. The literal translation however, is - 'One who holds the Arrow in His hand, meaning the Creator, for the 'Arrow' symbolises God's purposive Will, which none can resist.

*164. Bachitar Natak, verse 1:3

*165. Benti Chaupai, verse 13
Though God Himself is distinct from His creation, He pervades in all that He has made. Apart from Him nothing exists.

In the Guru's own words:

(a) "At first, when God extended Himself,
The world was created by Him.
He Himself created and then recognised Himself."*166

(ii) "I bow to the Supreme God,
Who created sea and land, the earth and sky."*167

(iii) "Some live in water, some on land and some fly in the skies; God made them and He will destroy them too.
As light blends with darkness and darkness with light,
So all things have sprung from Him and shall be united in Him."*168

God is everywhere and is ever-existent. He is the sole source of existence. As sparks cannot exist without fire, similarly souls cannot exist without Him, the Creator of endless flow of individual souls. He is both matter and spirit. He is not merely within and without; He is Himself everything.

In the Guru's own words again:

"You are Space, You are Time,
You are the Place as also the Dweller."*170

Yet You are unborn, fearless, impalpable and indestructable."

There was never a time when God did not exist. He was there all the time. Never will time see His end. His greatness is untold. Every one hears and calls Him great but no one can ever describe His greatness. His extent can neither be grasped nor described. Those who try to speak of Him are held lost in Him. To quote from his own Bani:

(i) "The Supreme Spirit is without birth and death,
Every possible spot in the vast universe is filled with His Glory.
He has unlimited forms, He has unbounded Light."*171

*166. Bachitar Natak, verse 2:10
*167. Akal Ustat, verse 1
*168. Ibid., verse 80
*170. Ibid., verses 66-70
*171. Ibid., verse 1 (31)
(ii) "The Supreme Spirit is in water, and on the dry land, 
He is near as also far in the forest. 
He is in the mountains, in the caves, in the earth 
and in the skies, 
He is here, He is there, He is in time and in space. 
Yet He is unknowable and without form."*172

(iii) "God is not confined to any place or work, 
His honour is universal so is His worship. 
He is One and is present in different forms and in us all; 
He is One and is the only producer of this worldly drama. 
His secrets are not known, even to the gods and holy books. 
His description is a secret and no one knows about His profile 
and colour."*173

(iv) "God is self-created and is beyond all descriptions, 
His characteristics cannot be explained."*174

God has made this universe to please Himself and to watch the play of His Creation. He knows all, sees all and understands all. The Inner-Knower of all hearts knows everything. In the Guru's own words:

(i) "The Supreme Lord knows the past, present and future of all. 
He knows every secret hidden in every bosom."*175

(ii) "......He is the Creator, 
The Healer of diseases, 
Remover of griefs, and 
Corrector of mistakes."*176

(iii) "The Kind-One becomes sad when His saints face sorrow, 
He finds happiness in the happiness of the righteous, 
He knows and is pained for the sufferings of everybody. 
He knows the innermost secrets of every man's heart."*177

*172. Akal Üstat, verse 4(54)  
*173. Jap, verses 81-82  
*174. Ibid., verse 85  
*175. Akal Üstat, verse 7(10)  
*176. Ibid., verse 10  
*177. Benti Baupai, verse 12
God alone is real and everlasting. He is omnipresent. The greatest of men appeared in this world, did the work the Creator gave them to do and went back to Him at His call. The prophets and gods are all His slaves. It is blasphemy and treason to exalt God's servants and slaves to His uniqueness. To quote from his own Bani again:

(i) "God created and extended this world and other worlds, He created all of them with utmost thought ........
He made millions of Indras and Kings.
Many Brahmans and Vishnus meditate on Him,
Many Ramas, Krishanas and Muhammads He created, And they were acceptable to Him only for their devotion."*178

(ii) "Many deities and sons of Brahma,
Many incarnations of Krishna and Vishnu,
And many Indras sweep before His door."*179

(iii) "Abandoning help of all, O my Lord,
I take Your protection and refuge,
The honour and dignity of this humble servant of Yours is entirely in Your holy hands."*181

God is unincarnated. He is beyond all births and deaths. He is created from no one. He is the cause of His whole Creation. He is self-created. He is beyond Time. He has no beginning and no end. He is above worldly entanglements. The Guru tells us:

(i) "God is unborn, garbless and unseen, but is contained in all things; He is the Creator ...... of the whole Universe, All acts ultimately proceed from Him, though they appear to be done by His human instruments."*182

(ii) "God is not subject to birth or death."*183

*178. Akal Ustat, verses 37-38
*179. Ibid., verses 39-40
*181. Ibid., verse 864
*182. Chaubis Avtar, verses 13, 15, 34, 35, 6, 5
*183. Akal Ustat, verse 31
(iii) "God has no father, no mother;
He has no Creator;
He is above birth and death."*184

(iv) "God is without passion, without colour, without form, without outline,
He is without worldly love, without anger, without enmity, without jealousy;
He is without karma, without error, without birth, without caste;
He has no friend, no enemy, no father, no mother;
He has no worldly attachment, no house, no desire, no home;
He is invisible, without distinguishing dress, He is unborn;
He has no disease, no sorrow, no worldly love, no caretaker;

I bow to Him as Unique, I bow to Him as One."*185

God's relationship with His Creation is not only of a Creator and Creatures, but of Father and Child, Man and His Beloved, Provider and Recipient.

According to Guru Gobind Singh:

(i) "The Timeless is our Infinite Father........"*186
(ii) "God is the Mother of the world........"*187
(iii) "God is the Companion and Friend of all."*188
(iv) "God is the Supreme Lord who feeds us all from His treasures without being seen."*189
(v) "God is the Benefactor of us all ........
He has all the wisdom....... He is the Giver of lives,
He is the Giver of shelters,
He is the Giver of happiness,
He is the Giver of knowledge.
He gives us all, He cares for us all."*190

*184. Jap, verse 82
*185. Akal Ustat, verses 91-93
*186. Bachitar Natak, 14, verse 5
*187. Jap, verse 52
*188. Ibid., verse 36
*189. Ibid., verse 60
*190. Ibid., verses 76-78
Apart from the above-mentioned description, analysis, narration, expressions, definitions, attributes and concepts of God, Guru Gobind Singh wanted His Khalsa to believe in, he also symbolised God in the weapons of war. He called God 'All Steel'¹⁹¹ 'All Death'¹⁹² and with many more similar attributes. In Guru's own words:

(i) "You are the Arrow, You are the Spear, 
You are the Hatchet, You are the Sword, 
You are the Goddess of Death, You are the Sword and the Arrow, 
You are the Symbol of Victory, You are the Hero of the World. 
You are Lance, Chisel, Axe and Spear. 
You are Knife and Sword, You are Arms and Missiles .......
You appear in all these forms."¹⁹³

(ii) "I bow to the Scimitar, the Two-Edged Sword, the Falcon and the Dagger, 
I bow to the Holder of the Mace .......

According to Guru Gobind Singh, the war weapons are the symbols of God Himself. They perform the dual role of destroying the evil and protecting the good. Addressing Him thus in his autobiography, he states:

"You bestow happiness on the Good 
You terrify the Evil, You scare the Sinner. 
I seek Your protection. 
Hail! Hail! to the Creator of World, 
The Saviour of Creation, 
Hail to Him, Hail to Sword."¹⁹⁵

Guru Gobind Singh, in his compositions, as mentioned above, has contemplated a wide variety of names for God. But it is not in any way a concession to polytheism, rather in this way he led people to feel that though they might use different names, there was but One God.¹⁹⁶ Guru Gobind Singh, with his own style and way of living in the love and fear of God, brought to fulfilment

¹⁹¹. Akal Ustat, Introductory verse ¹⁹². Ibid. ¹⁹³. Shastar Nam Mala, verses 4-7 ¹⁹⁴. Bachitar Natak, I, verse 87 ¹⁹⁵. Ibid., I, verse 2 ¹⁹⁶. D. P. Ashta, op.cit., p.199
not only the vision of a society in which Right must assert itself to prevail, but also that flaming spirit of God-Consciousness which was issued in the Word of God as revealed to Guru Nanak and his successors.

(b) BELIEF IN THE GURU

Guru Gobind Singh, like his predecessors, laid great stress on the need of a Teacher-Guru to help in the communication with God; and warned not to give, under any circumstances, the position of God to the Teacher-Guru. He himself stated in unequivocal terms:

"........Whosoever regards me as Lord,
Shall be damned and destroyed."*200

The Guru said that he was warning everyone against the repetition of this blasphemous act of equating Teacher-Guru with God as had happened in the past; he would not allow it to be repeated in the future. The Teacher-Guru, according to Guru Gobind Singh, was only an instructor, a guide and a minister of the Lord, chosen by Him to serve and guide His Creation.

In the Sikh scriptures, the word 'Guru' has been used in at least three senses. Firstly, it has been used for God Himself. In Guru Granth Sahib, God has been called and addressed as Guru again and again. Gobind Singh has also mentioned God as True and Supreme Guru, as below:

(i) "Give me Your hand, O God, for protection,
The desire of my heart is fulfilled,
When my mind seeks refuge in You
Support me as Your slave,
Destroy all my enemies,
Give me Your hand, and save me.
From the beginning to the end there is only One God.
And only Him know to be my True Guru.............."*205

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*197. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.199
*198. Bachitar Natak, VI, verse 34
*199. Ibid., VI, verse 28
*200. Ibid., verse 32
*201. Ibid.
*202. For details see - Darshan Singh, Sikh Dharam Vich Guru Da Asthan, in'Sikh Phalsaphay di Roop-Rokha' Edited by Pritam Singh, pp. 79-100
*204. Guru Granth Sahib, pp. 599 (Sorath Ml), 759 (Sahi M4), 802(Bilawal M5)
879 (Ramkali M1), 930(Ramkali M1)
1025 (Maru Sohilay M1), 1043 (Maru Sohilay M1)
(ii) "The Almighty God, A King of Kings,  
Is our Supreme Guru ......."*206

(iii) "God, our Lord is the Great Guru,  
To compare with Him there is none ......."*207

Secondly, the word 'Guru' has been referred to as 'Teacher-Guru'. In this form the word 'Guru' is used to denote a divine institution or the eternal spark of the divine light which continuously and eternally shows in the form of divine word through the chosen men to inspire mankind and to guide their destiny.*208 The institution of Sikh Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, falls in this category. The Sikh Gurus, in their attempt to fulfill their duties, simplified, crystallised and chiselled the form of Dharma and gave the divine light a new lustre and shape.*209

The Teacher-Guru in this sense is an enlightened soul, a perfect being, through whom the Revelations of God or the Word of God is spread.*210 The ten Gurus of the Sikhs were the manifestations of the Divine Soul and were entrusted with the Divine Work.*211 Commenting on the Divine Light in Guru Nanak and his successors, Guru Gobind Singh said,

"The holy Nanak was revered as Angad,  
Angad was recognised as Amardas,  
And Amardas became Ramdas,  
The pious saw this but not the fools,  
Who thought them all distinct.  
When Ramdas blended with God,  
He gave the Guruship to Arjan.  
When Arjan was going to God's city,  
He appointed Hargobind in his place.  
When Hargobind was going to God's house,  
He seated Har Rai in his place.  
Har Krishan, his son, afterwards became Guru.  
After him came Tegh Bahadur,  
As one lamp is lit from another."*212

*206. Zafarnam, verse 71
*207. Ibid., verse 75
*208. Taran Singh, Guru Nanak, p.54
*209. Ibid.
*210. S.S. Kohli, Outlines of Sikh Thought, pp. 89-90
*211. D. Greenlees, The Gospel of the Guru Granth, p.6
*212. Bachitar Natak, V, verses 7-12.
In his historic address at Keshgarh, on March 30, 1699 A.D., the day of his administering Khanday-di-Pahul, the Guru told the Khalsa to:

"......Believe in Guru Nanak and his successors......"

Bhai Gurdas, a contemporary of Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind, accepted the unity of the six Gurus known to him. Mohsin Fani, a contemporary of Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai, also commented on the unity of the soul of the Sikh Gurus. He stated in his Dabistan,

"......The belief is that all the Gurus are identical with Nanak."

Thirdly, the Guru is referred as Word of God - The Nam. The Nam represents the qualitative expression of God's personality. The Nam is a symbol that treasures within itself all that God is, and is not. There is one Divine Personality that pervades universally without any difference and, which the Guru called Nam or Shabad. Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed:

"I will pay no regard to any one but God,
What God told me I will do,
I will worship only His Nam, who is our protector from the evil.
I will not repeat any other Name,
Nor will worship any other object.
I will meditate on the Nam of the Immortal-One,
And obtain the Supreme Light."

Nam is God's Word revealed to the world through His messengers. Shabads contained in Guru Granth Sahib are thus collectively known as Nam. In this sense, Nam is the all-pervading spirit which sustains and gives meaning to the whole creation. Guru Gobind Singh condemned all religious rituals, worship of idols, gods and goddesses and other religious ceremonies except meditation of Nam. He stressed that all the worldly and religious duties without meditation on the Nam were of no value.

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*213. This address is based on a report of a newswriter sent to the Mughal court and is vouched for by the Persian historian, Chulam Mohiuudin. This report is quoted in a number of Sikh histories, e.g. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh; p.68 Khushwant Singh, The History of the Sikhs, p.85, M.A. Macauliffe, V, pp93-94; Kapur Singh, The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh, pp.4-5.

*214. Bhai Gurdas I, Vars 1 (45-48), 3(12), 20(1) 24(5-25), 26(31,34)


*216. Bachitar Natak, VI, verses 34-35
In the Guru's own words:

"Some wear the garb of Yogis and become ascetics,

......

Know that all these acts are vain,
Know that all rituals are futile,
Without the assistance of His Nam,
Consider all deeds and ceremonies to be a delusion."\(^{218}\)

The Nam, however, was not a mere word to be uttered mechanically without its essence being realised. It should be uttered with concentration realising its ultimate truth. The traditional concept of 'Mantras' (repetition of holy words without concentration and understanding) was a fruitless exercise. One also did not necessarily have to resort to Yogic practices in order to recite Nam. The only thing required was the control over one's passions by submitting one's mind to the Nam. In Guru's words,

(i) "One who concentrates on His Nam even for a moment,
Is freed from the bondage of death for ever."\(^{219}\)

(ii) "Many practice Yoga for ages together,
Even then His whereabouts are not known.
Many million indulge in other branches of knowledge,
Even then, they see not the Lord......

......

"Without absorption in Nam, all religious practices are useless!"\(^{220}\)

True love is the basic requirement for God-realisation. The unity with God is possible only by practising love. The Nam, thus, must be uttered with love. Love is the essential nature of God. Stressing true love and Nam, the Guru says:

(i) ".......I speak to all, hear me -
Those who love truly God and Nam blend with Him."\(^{221}\)

\(^{218}\) Akal Ustat, verses 42, 50
\(^{219}\) Ibid., verse 10
\(^{220}\) Ibid., Verses 39-40
\(^{221}\) Ibid., verse 29
(ii) "O Lord of Universe!
May these two (Lover and Beloved) join together in devotion
and love to God."*222

(iii) "How to kill a fish and a love-lorn woman?
Separate the one from water, and the other from her lover.
They will breathe their last within moments."*223

(iv) "All are doomed to die........
But he alone does well.
Who sacrifices himself at the altar of love."*224

Those who realise Nam, see unity in diversity as they attain a clarity of vision. The illusion of duality is removed. The whole universe is seen to belong to one Brotherhood. The Guru says,

(i) "Some become Hindu, some Musalmaan (Muslim),
Some become Pandit (Hindu priest), some Imam (Muslim priest),
But all are essentially the same."*225

(ii) "The Temple and the Mosque are the same,
The Pooja (Hindu worship) and Namaz (Muslim prayer) are the same.
All men are one, it is through error that they appear different...."

The Nam, as a form of the Guru, is thus the sound (Nad) which emanates from God and is revealed through Teacher-Guru. When God's Word was revealed to Guru Nanak, he said—

"As the Word of the Lord comes to me,
So I make it known....."*227

Guru Nanak and his successors, one after the other, received Nam and broadcast it through themselves as the transmitting medium. The corpus of the Nam is now Guru Granth Sahib. The hymns of the Granth are the Nam.

*223. Ibid., Charitar, 308
*224. Ibid.
*225. Akal Ustat, verse 85
*226. Ibid., verse 86
*227. Guru Granth Sahib, Tilang, p. 722
When Guru Gobind Singh, like Guru Nanak, said that he did not believe in Vedas, Purans and Qoran, he was not questioning the validity of truth revealed in them, but he was asserting that he was not bound to recognise the teachings of Vedas, Purans and Qoran, as authoritative, for himself.

(c) BELIEF IN GURU GRANTH SAHIB

On 6th October, 1708 A.D. more than 270 years ago, Guru Gobind Singh assembled his followers at Nanded and told them that the line of Teacher-Gurus was to end with him and the Sikhs were, thereafter, to look upon the Granth (Guru Granth Sahib) as the symbol of Nam. In his last farewell message, the Guru told the Khalsa:

"I have entrusted you to the Immortal God ... I have infused my mental and bodily spirit into the Granth Sahib (Guru Granth Sahib) and the Khalsa should henceforth obey the Granth Sahib. It is the visible body of the Guru."

According to Sainapat, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, a day before the Guru's death, on Saturday 6th October 1708, the Khalsa asked the Guru about his successor. In reply, the Guru said that he had given his physical self to the Khalsa and his spiritual self to the Nam. Henceforth the Granth would be the spiritual guide of the Khalsa. According to Bhai Nand Lal, a learned disciple and contemporary of the Guru, the Guru had told him that one of the Guru's future forms would be Guru Granth. Whosoever would wish to talk to him could fulfill his desire by reading the Granth Sahib; Whosoever would wish to listen to him could do that by reciting the Guru Granth with concentration. No one should have any doubt that Guru Granth was his own form. Bhai Prahlad Singh, another contemporary of the Guru, has also mentioned this fact of the bestowing of Guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib. In his Rehat Nama (Code of conduct), he has recorded the Guru's words as under:

"With the order of the Eternal Lord has been established the Khalsa Panth (Organisation); all the Sikhs are hereby commanded to obey the Granth as the Guru." Bhai Chaupa Singh, yet another contemporary of the Guru, has also vouched for this fact in his Rehat Nama.

Bhai Sohan, the Guru's court poet, has also recorded the Guru's command regarding the Guruship of Guru Granth. He wrote, in the following words:

References overleaf.......

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References

*228. Guru Granth Sahib, Var Sarang, p.1243
*229. Tav Prasad, Swayyas no. 9
*231. Khuswant Singh, op.cit., p.95; See also Ahmed Shah of Batala - *Tarikh-i-Hind* (manuscript) Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar.
*235. Ibid.
*236. Ibid.
"Hear you all, this precept of mine (Guru Gobind Singh) as true and certain,
Recognize the Granth to be the same as the Guru,
Think not of any difference between the two.
In the Dark-Age, the Guru Granth has assumed the form of the Sri Guru,
Recognize the Guru Granth to be the very self of the Gurus
He who wishes to see the Guru, let him see the Guru Granth,
And, he who wishes to speak to the Guru, let him read the Granth with a devoted mind."^237

Koer Singh wrote in 1751 A.D.:

"After hearing an assembly of Sikhs, the Guru said from his holy mouth

........ All my Sikhs will henceforth believe Granth Sahib as the Guru,

........ He who wishes to talk to me should read Guru Granth and gain peace of mind.

There is no other Guru equal to Guru Granth,
Without any hesitation, I utter this truth.
There is no other Guru like this anywhere,
Therefore, it should be accepted as the True Guru ^238

Kesar Singh Chhibar, whose ancestors had been in the service of the Guru as Diwans (ministers) wrote in 1769-70 A.D.

"The Granth is the Guru, seek the protection of the Timeless God

Guru Granth is the Guru and no one else is to be recognised as the Guru

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^237. Gur-bilas Chhevin Patshahi, Chapter IV, verses 409, 412, 413. This book is said to have been completed on July 22, 1718.
^238. Gur-bilas Patshahi Das, Chapter XXI, verses a, b, (86-93), c-e (100-102) This book is said to have been completed in 1751.
Bhai Sukha Singh, wrote in 1797:

"The Guru entrusted the Khalsa to the care of God and asked them to read the Bani (Hymns) of the ten Gurus." *240

Bawa Sarup Das Bhalla, a descendent of Guru Amar Das, stated in 1801 AD:

"...... The Guru said ...... Our ten forms have come to an end. Now recognize the Guru Granth Sahib in my place. He who wishes to talk to me should read the Granth. This will be like talking to me ......." *241

Munshi Sant Singh, a munshi of the Bedis who completed his work in 1865 AD composed the most popular verse which every Sikh recites daily after Ardas (Prayer):

"All community should recognize the Guru Granth as the Guru, And obey the commandments contained therein. Recognize the Guru Granth as the visible body of the Guru, The Sikh who wishes to meet me should find me therein. (Guru Granth Ji Manayo, Pargat Guran Ki Deh, Jo Mujh-Ko Mil-Bo Chahay, Khoj IsiMeh Lay)" *242

From the evidence produced above, there remains no doubt that the Granth is, now, and for ever, the Spiritual Teacher of the Sikh Nation. The Khalsa must accept this fact and pay no regard to the claims of any others to be the living Teacher-Guru of the Sikhs. The word Teacher-Guru, here, must not be confused with holy men and saints of any religion and denomination.

(d) **BELIEF IN FREEDOM**

Freedom refers to a state of being free. Broadly it includes freedom of action, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of religion and freedom of way of living. Though the whole question of freedom and

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*240. Bhai Sukha Singh, Gur Bilas, Chapter XXX, verse 27
*241. Sarup Das Bhalla, Mehma Prakash, Sakhi 27, pp. 892-893
*242. Munshi Sant Singh, Bayan-i-Khandan-i-Karamat Nishan-i-Bedian, pp.64-65
control has been a difficult one in all religious and philosophical systems, it has been the most important question. When the Sikh Gurus appeared on the stage of the worldly drama, none of these freedoms existed on the Indian sub-continent. The whole Sikh movement was a growing protest against tyranny and injustice. It was a movement to restore freedom and honour to the Indian people. All the Sikh Gurus were uncompromising theists, and thus did not believe in any sort of materialism. To them the concept of determinism was, to some extent, wrong and irrelevant; God, the Creator of the Universe is not under the control of any one's laws. He has a free Will. Man, who has been made in His own image is the chief evolutionary being. He has been given a mind to think, a heart to love, a measure of capacity to act, and some basic strength to protect himself. In Guru Granth Sahib, the Gurus have repeatedly tried to educate the men at large to avail themselves of this opportunity of becoming God-oriented beings. This very option implies a freedom and a choice to make the needful effort. The opening lines in Guru Gobind Singh’s historic letter, Zafarnama, to Aurangzeb highlight this point of ‘Freedom.’ It reads,

"Glory to God Almighty who is eternal and merciful, Miraculous are His gifts, He is the sustainer and the bestower of Peace and Freedom."

The situation in which the Sikh Gurus entered the wonderful play-arena was a scene of slavery and chaos. The concept of freedom had long been lost. The Gurus were, in a sense, ordained to infuse a new spirit of freedom and courage amongst their followers. Guru Gobind Singh in fact fertilised with his dynamic and spiritual thoughts and teachings the seeds of the revolution which were sown by Guru Nanak to win back the lost freedom. The Sikh Gurus imbued the enslaved mankind with a sense of equality as members of society, and a concept of freedom in religious centres and free will to enjoy their cultural heritage. The most striking landmarks of Sikh religion, such as (i) Golden Temple, the greatest and holiest seat of the Sikh community, with its four gates opening in all the four directions, meaning the freedom of entry to the temple

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*245. Ibid.
*246. Ibid., See also G.S. Mansukhani, Introduction to Sikhism, p.52
*248. Guru Granth, pp.12, 855, 913, 932
*249. Zafarnama, verse 1
by any one irrespective of one's religion, belief, colour, creed and sex;\(^\text{252}\)

(ii) Guru Granth Sahib, the spiritual Guru of the Sikhs and the Universal scripture containing the Word as revealed not only to the Sikh Gurus but also to various other holy men and saints irrespective of their beliefs and social order. For example, it also contains hymns of a Muslim - Farid, a Brahmin - Jaidev, a King - Pipa, a Vaish - Tirlochan, a Butcher - Sadhna, a Farmer - Dhanna, a Barber - Sain, a Weaver - Kabir, a Cobbler - Ravidas, six Kshatriya Sikh Gurus and eleven Brahmin Bhattas;\(^\text{253}\) (iii) Khalsa Brotherhood, an emblem of equality and unity representing the faith of Sikh community in the freedom of mankind.

Commenting on the personality of Guru Gobind Singh, Dr. Balbir Singh once said,\(^\text{254}\) "Guru Gobind Singh's life is symbolic. It is an emblem of sacrifice. It represents the price the spirit has to offer to redeem freedom."

Like the Sikh Gurus' philosophy and strong belief in freedom, Alexandre Solzhenitsyn, the Russian Nobel Prize winner said in his Harvard speech\(^\text{255}\) that most of the world democracies upheld freedom as one of the rights of man because man was created by God. Man was to be granted freedom in recognition of his spiritual nature and with it went a responsibility to God. This implies that Man's spiritual nature is a proof of his right of freedom.

On the social front, at the times of the Sikh Gurus, there existed yet another type of slavery and hatred. The two predominant Indian religious groups, the Hindus and Muslims looked down upon each other with contempt and hostility. The Hindus considered the Muslims malechhas (unclean), while Muslims regarded the Hindus as Kafirs (infidels). Then, within the religious groupings there were numerous caste sub-groupings, and each group was at loggerheads with another group. The Sikh Gurus denounced this idea of social apartheid and religious exclusiveness, and upheld the concept of social mobility in which people were free to work out their destiny according to their different potentials.\(^\text{256}\) In order to translate this idea into reality, the institutions of Sangat (Congregation) and Pangat (Dining together in the Community kitchen) were introduced.\(^\text{257}\)

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\(^{252}\) Joginder Singh, 'Nahin Tudh Jeha', pp. 53-54

\(^{253}\) S.S. Kohli, A critical study of the Adi Granth, pp.2-9

\(^{254}\) Balbir Singh, Message of Guru Gobind Singh, The Tenth Master, p.44

\(^{255}\) One World, no. 127, January 6, 1979, p.4

\(^{256}\) Fauja Singh, 'Social and Economic Ideas of the Sikh Gurus', The Sikh Review, January 1966, p.57

\(^{257}\) Ibid.
On the political front, too, the Khalsa was commanded to believe in total freedom. Freedom in this context meant doing good to oneself and for others, avoiding evil at any cost, living in peace and letting others live in peace, obeying the just command of the government in power and rising against all injustices and tyranny. The Gurus' teachings emphasised that religion should preach tolerance and love, not hatred and violence. People should be free to choose their own religion and way of life. Here, on the one hand, Guru Gobind Singh preached discipline and respect for law, on the other hand, he taught resistance and war against oppression and despotism. Commenting on this point, the Guru wrote to Aurangzeb:

(i) "Your Commanders, who had taken the oath (not to disturb us), attacked us from the back without a moment's notice with arrows, bullets and swords.

"In this desperate situation I was left with no other alternative except to jump into the battle and face the onslaught. In that critical situation I, too, was compelled to shower volley after volley of arrows, bullets and spears; I, too, was compelled to take up the sword and fight.

"When all other possible remedies fail, it is but lawful to resort to the sword."*259

(ii) "You are the Emperor of a vast country. Your rule extends over millions of people; but pitiable is your sense of justice.

Pitiable, indeed, is your sense of justice. Still more pitiable is the way you are serving your faith. Deplorable, yes, a hundred times more deplorable, is the despotism of your rule."*259a

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*258. Baldev Singh, The Sikh Review, April 1977, p.18
*259 Zafarnama, verses 20-22
*259a Ibid.
"Deplorable is your application of Qoranic laws to oppress and convert people. For a ruler, it is a sin to depart even a bit from truth and the righteous path."

"Do not indiscriminately and fearlessly use your sword of power to shed the blood of innocent people. Remember that the sword of God will fall on you also one day and bleed you to death."

"You should now do everything with utmost wisdom and sagacity. Undo all evil and oppression with a strong hand."

"If you have any power, do not use it to inflict pain and suffering on the poor and helpless. Do not hack the innocent with the axe of false oaths."

The message of freedom removed the fear of torture and death from the minds of Khalsa and inspired the simple and crushed people of India to challenge the mighty Moghuls. There is hardly any parallel in Indian history to the way in which Guru Gobind Singh elevated the low with his new message of freedom and made them rise against slavery and injustice. He exalted them by placing the power in their hands. Under his command, they wielded the sword and acquired the dignity that goes with the office of army-men. After taking the 'baptism' as initiated by the Guru, all became equal in spirit, mind and body.

(e) **BELIEF IN DEMOCRACY**

The unique community of fearless saint-soldiers, the Khalsa Brotherhood, was established and administered by Guru Gobind Singh on the basis of a staunch belief in democracy. Guru Gobind Singh was the first Indian leader who taught democratic principles and made his followers regard each other as 'Bhai' (brother) and act by 'Gurmata'.

*260. *Zafarnama*, verses 66-69
*261. *Ibid.*, verse 77
*262. *Ibid.*, verse 109
*263. *Balbir Singh, The Tenth Master*, p. 42
The Guru had stipulated that the future heir to human civilization was not the genotype, a racial group; not the phenotype, the votary of a language for the elect; not the behaviour type, the traditionalist, but the democratic type, one who believes and follows up values meaningly manifest in the conscience of mankind. He founded the Khalsa Brotherhood with these ideas in mind, and was thus surely a true forerunner of modern socialism. The Guru by raising his disciples to his own level and by abolishing the distinction between himself and the Khalsa, established complete equality of expression and thought with his community of saints-soldiers. He organised a socio-political body of the spiritually awakened but earth-aware people who were to spearhead the movement for the liberation of a whole society. He transformed the whole socio-political set-up working alongside the people and for the people, in the interests of the whole people, in every sphere of their lives. Sher Singh has called the Khalsa Brotherhood a 'Gobindian Republic' and has differentiated it from the extreme leftist republic of U.S.S.R. and the extreme rightist republic of U.S.A. The Khalsa Brotherhood in the early days of their inception, when they were confined only to the boundaries of India, met once a year on Diwali at Amritsar, to choose an executive committee called Sarbat Khalsa for administering the affairs of the Brotherhood of the Khalsa for the following year. In the truest democratic sense, the whole Sangat — i.e. all Sikhs, baptised or unbaptised, present on the occasion elected the executive committee. These days when the Khalsa has multiplied in numbers and has spread all over the globe, the election of old-type Khalsa assembly is not possible. But the basic principle of electing at least 'Five Beloved Ones', from however small a Sangat (congregation), for taking decisions, still exists. Everywhere in the Sikh world, the Gobindian Democratic Republic (Khalsa Brotherhood) consists of a Sangat, a congregation of True Sikhs, which elects its Government of a minimum of Five — symbolically the First Five Beloveds of Guru Gobind Singh — all of whom are to be baptised Sikhs. The election, or rather the selection, is held in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, beginning and ending with Ardas and each time invoking the grace and strength from God.

*265. G.S. Doel, Philosophy of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh, pp.116-117
*266. Gurmukh Nihal Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, the Saviour, p.40
*267. Gopal Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, p.82
*268. Ibid.
*269. Sher Singh, Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh, pp.228
*270. Ibid. p.233*
*271. Ibid. p.234*
As the Khalsa Brotherhood represents an organisation of brave but God-fearing saints and fearless but God-loving soldiers of the Immortal One, so every God worshipper and virtuous man should be entitled to join the Sangat. *274 Until the enactment of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925 AD, most of the Sangat's decisions were unanimous except one big vote in 1725 A.D. which was taken to settle a dispute between Bandai Khalsa (the followers of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur) and Tat Khalsa (the orthodox section of the Khalsa). *275 According to Teja Singh, *276 "Resolutions were not voted upon individually or passed by majorities, but were carried nem.con. (without opposition) - a thing very difficult to contemplate these days.'

In Guru Gobind Singh's times, the Sangat was known as Sarbat Khalsa in whose name all prayers were offered and all formal decisions taken. person, however highly placed, was considered above the jurisdiction of Sarbat Khalsa rules. Even Guru Gobind Singh was once fined Rs.125 for lowering his arrow in salute before the tomb of a Muslim saint, Pir Dadu, an act which was strictly forbidden in the Khalsa Brotherhood, and which the Guru had done deliberately to test the discernment of his followers. Thus the whole decision making power was vested in Sarbat Khalsa selected by the Sangat. No one was above it, not even the Guru. *278

The supremacy of the Sikh Sangat can be compared with the supremacy of the British Parliament which also is the supreme body of the United Kingdom and has no-one above it, not even the monarch. Another historical example of the supremacy of the Sangat over the Guru can be given when the Guru was besieged in the fortress of Chamkaur in December 1704 A.D. and was later ordered by an assembly of 'Five Sikhs' from amongst a small Sangat of seven Sikhs, to leave the fortress at night, *280 which the Guru did, to set an example and as a token of respect for and obedience to the Sangat of the Sikhs. The Guru, as ordered by the 'Five Sikhs' left the fortress in the dark, throwing dust into the eyes of the allies who were waiting in eager expectancy of his...

*274. Sher Singh, Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh, pp.228
*275. Ibid., p.235
*276. Teja Singh, Sikhism, p.43
*277. Sangat usually assembled at Baisakhi.
*278. G.L. Chopra, Punjab as a Sovereign State, mentions that Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not submit himself to 'gurmata'. P.S. Gill, History of the Sikh Nation, p.329, mentions that after 1783 the power-hungry Sardars did not submit to 'Gurmata.'
*280. I.B. Bannerji, op.cit., pp.135-136, see also M.A. Macauliffe, V, p.190
Before leaving the fortress, the Guru said to those who were with him, 'I shall ever be among five Sikhs. Wherever there are five Sikhs of mine assembled, they shall be priests of all priests. Wherever there is a sinner, five Sikhs can give him baptism and absolution. Great is the glory of five Sikhs. Thus the supremacy of the elected body of the 'Beloved One,' usually 'Five,' has been a main feature of Khalsic Democracy. Guru Gobind Singh, till his death, always stressed to his followers the utility and glory of freedom and democracy.

Even before his death, his last instructions to his followers were to stick to the path of democracy and hold Khalsa Sangat in high esteem. According to Sainapat, when the Guru was asked about his last instructions to the Sikhs, the Guru said,

(i) "Khalsa is my own image,
I will always be with the Khalsa." *284

(ii) "To be a Khalsa,
One has to be Pure and Truthful,
One has to be God-fearing and God-loving
And Khalsa will be the last judge of everything." *285

Koer Singh has stated that the Guru surrendered his personality to the Khalsa Sangat and reminded the Sikhs of the following writ as his last commandment:

"Sarbat Khalsa Sangat is my image ........
And I will always be with them." *286

Sukha Singh wrote that the last commandment of the Guru to the Sikhs was to obey the Khalsa Sangat and that he was entrusting Khalsa Sangat to the care of God. *287

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*281. I.B. Bannerji, op.cit., pp. 135-136, see also M.A. Macauliffe, V. p,190
*282. M. A. Macauliffe, V, p.189, See also J.N. Sarkar, op.cit., p.362
*283. Sainapat, op.cit. verses 42-43
*284. Here, Khalsa represents Sarbat Khalsa, the Sangat. Thus the Guru had declared that the Sangat was always the Supreme body of the Sikhs.
*285. Sainapat, op. cit., verses 42-43
*286. Koer Singh, Gur Bilas Pathshahi Das, verse 56(125)
*287. Sukha Singh, Gur Bilas, XXX, verse 27.
According to Bhai Santokh Singh, some time before the Guru's death, he was said to have declared that he had transferred his 'Light' (Spiritual power) to the Khalsa Sangat.*288

Thus the establishment of Sarbat Khalsa produced a new societal institution.*289 The socio-religious congregations established by Guru Nanak reached their culmination when Guru Gobind Singh bestowed the spiritual sovereignty on the Guru Granth Sahib and the temporal sovereignty on the Khalsa.*290

Guru Gobind Singh thus stood for a new pattern of society, a new socialism of the spirit.*291 The position of transcendental self in man not only ensures against reduction of man's essence to an 'ensemble of social relations' but also serves to provide a metaphysical basis for equality of all men. The empirical inequalities—social, economic, political—appear irrational and contrary to the Divine teleology in the context of the transcendental unit of all men. Hence the historical thrust of the Sikh movement for creating a non-hierarchical democratic, egalitarian, 'open' society.*292

II. FIVE SYMBOLS

According to Teja Singh, "The Sikh forms (symbols) were not conceived in a spirit of exclusiveness, or as essential to the spiritual advancement of individual souls. They were simply intended to serve as aids to the preservation of the corporate life of the community, and any man who likes to serve humanity through the Sikh Panth can wear them. It is possible for a man to love God and cultivate his individual soul without adopting these forms; but if he wants to work in a systematic manner not only for his own advancement but for the good of others as well in the company of Sikhs, he must adopt the disciplinary forms of their organisation."*293

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*288. Bhai Santokh Singh, Suraj Prakash, N.2, Chapter 34
*289. Jasbir Singh Ahluwala, 'Sikhism and Marxism,' Journal of Sikh Studies, August 1977, p.46
*291. G.S. Mansukhani, Guru Gobind Singh, p.50
*293. Teja Singh, op.cit., p.33
The Sikh history stands witness to the fact that these symbols have effectively helped the Sikhs to live and die together and to keep their ideals unsullied even in the times of the greatest trial. *294 Undoubtedly, the symbols are very important as an indication of the type and personality of an individual. *295 They constantly remind the wearer not to do anything against the erosion of his faith and plighted word. *296 It is as ridiculous to wear the symbols without practising the virtues they represent as dressing an ass in a lion's skin. Without a good life and excellent moral character, these symbols have little meaning. Therefore, the devotee's life should show in practical living the great qualities which the symbols stressed. *297 According to Khuswant Singh, *298 there is little doubt that Guru Gobind Singh did prescribe five symbols, though the disturbing and unrestful period that followed the new baptismal ceremony did not give him any time to explain the significance of those symbols. The Guru created Khalsa in 1699 A.D. and from 1699 A.D. till 1705 A.D. he had to fight eleven *300 battles for the survival of the Khalsa. The next three years, from 1705 A.D. to 1708 A.D., were relatively quiet and peaceful; but the Guru had to work and travel a lot to give the finishing touches to the mission he had to fulfil. In 1706 A.D., *301 the Guru went to Talwandi Sabo; early in 1707 A.D., *302 he left for Deccan on the invitation of Aurangzeb. In the same year he returned to Delhi on hearing of Aurangzeb's death. *303 The Guru himself died in 1708 A.D. *303 at Nanded. Thus he passed through a turbulent period after the creation of Khalsa till his death and had no time to answer a number of questions which are perturbing the students of Sikh history of the present era.

The first and most important question is that did Guru Gobind Singh really prescribe five symbols, popularly known as the 'Five K's'? Randhir Singh, *304 in the introduction of the edited version of his book, Prem Sumarag, has stated that in the early literary evidence, though there are numerous references to 'Five Weapons', there is no reference to 'Five K's'. Bal and Grewal *305 have quoted Randhir Singh twice in their book.

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*294. Teja Singh, op.cit., p.35
*295. G.S. Mansukhani, op.cit., p.102
*296. Ibid.
*297. Ibid., p.103
*298. Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.86
*300. H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.198-220
*301. Ibid., pp.222-236
*302. Ibid.
*303. Ibid.
*304. Randhir Singh, Prem Sumarag, p.45
*305. Bal & Grewal, Guru Gobind Singh pp. 228-229, see also: footnote *47, p.188.
Randhir Singh, Bal and Grewal and Loehlin have not gone any further to explain what the 'Five Weapons' were and on what evidence they are based.

I will endeavour to look at the available historical account of the Sikh Symbols and will then try to draw some conclusions. Amongst the eighteenth century and nineteenth century Sikh writers, mention can be made of Bhai Gurdas II who composed his 'Var' (ode) during Guru Gobind Singh's lifetime, Sainapat who compiled his work 'Sri Gur-Sobha' in 1711 AD, Kesari Singh Chibbar who compiled his work 'Bansawali Nama' in 1769-70 AD, Sarup Das Bhalla who wrote his 'Mehma Prakash' in 1801 AD, Bhai Santokh Singh who finished his work 'Suraj Prakesh' in 1843 AD, Giani Gyan Singh who completed his works 'Panth Prakesh' in 1880 AD and the 'Twarikh Guru Khalsa' in 1891-92 AD, and Bhai Mangal who compiled his work 'Life of Baba Buddha Ji' in the early nineteenth century.

Sainapat, who was a contemporary of the Guru Gobind Singh, has mentioned that like the Guru himself, his Khalsa were to keep their hair as well as arms. Sainapat has also stated that in order to be a Khalsa the Sikh should not have any relations with the massands, was not to smoke, was to give one-tenth of his earnings directly to the Guru, was to carry out all the orders of the Guru, was to be an example of generosity and sacrifice, was to have the new baptism of the double-edged dagger, was to meditate on One Immortal Being, was to regularly attend holy congregation, and was to be ever-ready for war against injustice and tyranny.

According to Kesari Singh Chibbar, the Khalsa of the Guru was not to shave or cut his hair, was not to indulge in bad deeds, was always to be ready to rise against religious persecution, was not to move in bad company, was to worship only One God, was to regularly recite the Word of God (Gurbani), was to regularly attend religious congregations, was to love his own wife, and was to use honest means for livelihood.
Bhai Santokh Singh wrote that after the creation of the Khalsa the Guru had made it obligatory that all who had received the new baptism must not cut their hair, must wear a wrist-band (Kara), must wear underpants, and must always keep a sword. He also wrote that the Khalsa must not believe in caste-distinctions, the Khalsa must not frighten any one and must also not live in fear and slavery.

Giani Gian Singh has written that the Khalsa must not cut his hair, must not eat Halal meat (Kosher meat), must not smoke, must recite everyday five Banis (Prayers) viz., Jap Ji, Jaap, Shabad Hazare, Rehras and Kirtan Sohila, must not socialize with Minas, Massands and Dhirmalis, must always wear underpants, must keep uncut hair, must wear sword, must keep a wrist-band, and a comb. He has also stated that after the Guru’s call for heads at Keshgarh in 1699 A.D., he decorated all the ‘Five Beloveds’ with weapons and thus gave each of them his own image. Sarup Das Bhalla wrote that the Khalsa was ordered to keep uncut hair and take new baptism. the Khalsa was also ordered to wear weapons and keep ready for war in case of need.

Bhai Gurdas II has written in his Var that Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the Immortal One and with His command created the Singhis (Khalsa) and that hundreds got converted to Khalsa Brotherhood and decorated themselves with shining weapons. In another Verse he wrote that Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth Nanak; he worshipped only One God and was ordained to create a new fearless and brave community of the Khalsa, and that the Khalsa with saint-like long hair and steel-swords defeated all the enemies and that the Khalsa wearing underpants and holding swords in their hands repulsed all the enemy attacks.
Bhai Mangal Singh wrote that when the Guru brought the Five Beloved Ones out of the tent, they were all wearing five Ks—sword at the waist, underpants on the under-half, steel band on the wrist and comb in the hair. They all had a shining glow on their faces which represented the image of the Guru.

Lastly, Kanhaya Lal wrote that when the Guru created the Khalsa, he ordered them not to worship anyone else except the Immortal Being and that the Khalsa would keep long unshorn hair, would wear underpants and steel wrist-bands and would always carry all-steel weapons.

Amongst eighteenth century European writers on the Sikhs, mention can be made of Colonel A.L.H. Potier (1780 A.D.), Charles Wilkin (1781 A.D.), George Forster (1783 A.D.), and Major James Brown (1788 A.D.).

Colonel Potier wrote a paper The Siques and read it at a meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal at Calcutta on December 20, 1787 A.D. According to him, Guru Gobind Singh had laid the foundation of a kind of republic, which proved very formidable to its neighbours. The Sikhs were required to wear an iron bracelet on one arm and let the hair of the head and beard grow.

Charles Wilkin wrote his observations on the Sikh institution, titled The Sikhs and their College. (College here does not mean an educational institution; it refers to the Temple built at the birth spot of Guru Gobind Singh—at which Mr. Wilkin conducted his enquiries regarding the Sikh religion from some of the priests and attendants at the Temple, called Takht Patna Sahib). Though Wilkin made no mention of the Sikh symbols, he did mention a Five-man Sikh executive of the Sikh Commonwealth and new baptismal ceremony.

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*352. Bhai Mangal Singh, Life Baba Budha Ji
*353. Kanhaya Lal, History of Punjab,
*354. Copy of the manuscript is in India Office Library, London, Reference Number Orme Ms., XIX, pp 73-83. This work of Potier is the first known European account of the Sikhs.
George Forster, in a letter to Mr. Gregory written in 1783 A.D. had given his observations about the Sikhs. In it he stated that the Sikhs permitted the growth of their hair of the head and the beard, and wore an iron wrist-band on the left hand (though it is always worn on the right-hand side) and that they were completely forbidden the use of tobacco.

Major James Browne's History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs (Sikhs) was presumably the first complete account of the Sikhs by an Englishman. This book is partly Browne's own work and partly a translation of an abridged Persian version of a Devnagri manuscript. Mr. Brown has mentioned this in the introduction of the book. According to him, *357 Guru Gobind Singh had established a new ceremony for the reception of new proselytes, had worn a dark blue dress, had let his hair and beard grow to their full length, and had instructed his disciples to follow his example on those points. He had also directed them to arm themselves.

Nineteenth century European writers on Sikh History include Sir John Malcolm (1812 A.D.), the Honourable W.C. Osborne (1840 A.D), General Sir Charles Gough (1842 A.D), W. L. McGregor 1846 A.D., Captain J.D. Cunningham (1849 A.D.), and Dr. E. Trump (1877 A.D.)

John Malcolm wrote*358 that true disciples of Govind (Guru Gobind Singh) were required to devote themselves to arms, always to have steel about them in some shape or other, to wear a blue dress, to allow their hair to grow, to exclaim when they met each other 'Wa! Guru Ji ka Khalash! Wa! Guru Ji Ki Fateh!' (Waheguruji Ka Khalsa, Wahegurji Ki Fateh, meaning the Khalsa is of the Wonderful Lord who is always victorious.)

*356. George Forster, A Journey from Bengal to England, I, letter no. XI.
*357. James Browne, History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs, p.5
*358. John Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs, p.48
According to W. G. Osborne, Guru Gobind Singh's plans were very different from those of his predecessor Nanak (Guru Nanak). He had ordered his Khalsa to wear arms, to be grouped into troops, to be marshalled under trusty leaders. He had also instituted Guru Mata by which he had given a federal form to the commonwealth of the Sikhs.

General Sir Charles Gough wrote that all who participated in the new ceremony of baptism received the surname of Singh, signifying 'Lion', and were admitted to the Khalsa Brotherhood. The Guru introduced the curiously distinctive custom of not cutting the hair or beard, and prohibited the use of tobacco.

According to W. L. McGregor, the Guru had selected 'Ten Beloved Ones' and not 'Five Beloved Ones' as the Sikh tradition asserts. From the day of initiation of the new baptism, he had changed his name from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh.

Captain J.D. Cunningham wrote that the Guru hailed and baptised Sikhs as Singhs, and declared them to be the Khalsa. He further added that Gobind (Guru Gobind Singh) had thus abolished social distinctions (by mixing all the Hindu castes and the Muslim social classes) and had taken away from his followers the useless rituals and superstitions. Henceforth the Khalsa was to have one form of initiation, the sprinkling of water by five of the faithful, was to worship only One God, was to show honour to the memory of Nanak and his successors, was to have a new watchword, 'Hail Guru' (Wahe-guru), was to bow only to the Granth, the book of Gurbani (it must be noted that at this period of time the Granth had not been declared as the Guru) and to no one else, was to bathe from time to time in the pool of Amritsar, was to keep their hair uncut, was to name himself as Singh and was always to carry arms.

*359. W. G. Osborne, The Court and Camp of Ranjeet Singh, pp. XIV-XV
*360. Charles Gough, The Sikhs and Sikh Wars, p.19
*361. W. L. McGregor, The History of the Sikhs, I, p.75
*363. Ibid.
*364. J. D. Cunningham op.cit., p.66
*365. Ibid
*366. Ibid.
According to Dr E. Trumpp367 after the Guru had given baptism to the five Sikhs, in the new manner, he took it likewise from them; and in this way all the rest of his disciples were initiated, to whom he gave the name of Khalsa, adding to the name of each of them the ending of Singh. Then he gave the order that whoever desired to be his disciple, must always have five things with him, which all commenced with the letter Kakka (i.e. K)—viz., the hair (Kesh), a comb (Kanga), a knife (Kard), a sword (Kirpan) and under-pants (Kuchch) reaching the knees. Here, it must be noted that Trumpp has not mentioned 'Iron Bracelet' (Kara), instead has mentioned Kard which is completely foreign to the Sikh tradition.

The last noteworthy writer of the nineteenth century on the history of the Sikhs in English is Syed Mohammed Latif. He wrote about the Khalsa Brotherhood and the Sikh symbols stating that the faithful disciples were hailed as Singhs and declared to be Khalsa, or purified and unalloyed. The Guru ordained that whenever five Sikhs would be assembled together, it would be considered as if the Guru was himself present. The Guru also declared at the same time that whoever wished to be the true follower of the Guru must not be without 'Five Things,' all commencing with the letter 'K', namely, Kangi (comb), Kachch (breeches reaching to the knee), Kard (knife), Kesh (long hair) and Kirpan (sword); and whosoever was without these, would not be considered a true disciple. Latif further wrote370 that the disciples of Guru Gobind Singh were required to dedicate themselves from birth, or on initiation to arms, always to keep steel with them in some shape, to allow their hair to grow, to wear a blue dress, to refrain from wearing red clothes or eating or smoking tobacco.

The notable European writers of the early twentieth century on Sikh history include John J. H. Gordon, C. H. Payne, M. A. Macauliffe and Dorothy Field.

*367. E. Trumpp, op.cit., p.Xci
*368. Ibid.
*369. M. Latif, op.cit., p.263
*370. Ibid. p. 264
According to C. H. Payne, Dorothy Field, J. H. Gordon, and M.A. Macauliffe, the members of the Khalsa were required to carry arms, to keep 'Five K's', to salute one another with 'Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh' to surname themselves as Singhs (ie, lions) to abstain from the use of tobacco, wine and other stimulants, to avoid all the superstitious practices of the Hindus—such as pilgrimages, idol worship, suttee (burning alive of young widows on their husbands' pyres) and female infanticide and to eat only that meat which was from the animal slain by one stroke of the sword.

By analysing the evidence of Guru Gobind Singh's contemporaries—Sainapat and Bhai Gurdas II produced above my conclusions are:

a. Guru Gobind Singh initiated a new type of baptism;
b. He forbade his follower to shave or cut his hair;
c. He made it compulsory for his followers to wear arms;
d. He fixed a number of other duties and obligations for the Khalsa, and
e. He made it obligatory for them to wear underpants.

By analysing the evidence of eighteenth and nineteenth century Punjabi historians and writers, produced above, my conclusions are:

a. Guru Gobind Singh forbade the Khalsa to cut hair or to shave;
b. He ordered the Khalsa always to carry arms;
c. About the obligation of other three Ks i.e., Comb, Under-pants and steel wristbands, however, the accounts are different. K. S. Chibbar does not mention any of them; Bhai Santokh Singh mentions only steel wristbands and the underpants; Giani Gian Singh mentions iron wristband and the comb; Sarup Das Bhalia does not mention any; Bhai Mangal Singh mentions all the Five Ks and Kanhaiya Lal mentions only underpants and the Iron Wristband.

*371. C. H. Payne, A Short History of the Sikhs, p. 32, 35
*372. Dorothy Field, The Religion of the Sikhs, pp. 26-27
*373. J. H. Gordon, The Sikhs, pp. 40-41
We see from the above conclusions that apart from Uncut Hair and Steel Weapons (including Sword), all accounts differ about other obligations. No one, except Bhai Mangal Singh, has mentioned the word 'Five K's' believed in the Sikh tradition to have been used by Guru Gobind Singh at the time of the creation of the Khalsa.

By analysing the evidence of eighteenth-century European writers of the history of the Sikhs, as produced above, my conclusions are:

a. Guru Gobind Singh initiated a new type of baptism and created the new brotherhood of Khalsa from amongst the Sikhs;

b. He forbade the Khalsa to cut hair or shave;

c. About other obligations of the Khalsa, the accounts are different. Potier and Forster have mentioned the wearing of Iron Wristband and Forster has also mentioned the prohibition of the use of Tobacco.

By analysing the evidence of the nineteenth-century European writers produced above, my conclusions are:

a. Except Trumpp no one else has mentioned the 'Five' obligatory 'K's';

b. All have affirmed the Guru's instructions not to remove hair and not to shave and

b. All have emphasised the obligation to wear arms.

Lastly, by analysing the evidence of Mohammed Latif and early twentieth century European writers on the subject, as produced above, my findings are:

a. All have mentioned the term 'Five K's';

b. All, except Dorothy Field, have mentioned the Khalsa's duty to carry arms;

c. Some of them have mentioned Kard (Knife) as the obligatory symbol instead of Iron Wrist-band.

We see from the above conclusions that the term 'Five K's' was first used amongst the non-Sikh writers, by E. Trumpp (1871 A.D.) and later on it has been invariably used by other writers, Indian as well as European. How Trumpp got hold of this term of the Sikh tradition - 'Five K's, is a real mystery, as Trumpp has not given any references about these obligations.
Other sources of contemporary evidence which are produced to support the case of Five K's are the Tankhah Nama of Bhai Nand Lal and Rehat Namas of Bhai Prehlad Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Desa Singh. Unfortunately, all these sources are regarded as not fully satisfactory.*375 All available copies of the Rehat Namas are supposed to contain later interpolations,*376 to be misleading on some points,*377 and though claimed to be of Guru Gobind Singh's times, some of them cannot be authoritatively traced to the period of the Tenth Master.*378 However, mention of Five K's it means today is not found in any of these Rehatnamas.

Yet another piece of reference to the 'Five K's occurs in the following Persian verse of Sarb Loh Granth:

"Know these 'Five Ks' to be emblems of Sikhism,  
Under no condition can one be exempt from them.  
Sword and Wrist-band, Under-pants and Comb - these four  
Without hair, the fifth, all other emblems are meaningless."*379

The above verse has been quoted by a number of Sikh historians*380 in support of the directive on the Five Ks, but the authorship of the Sarb Loh Granth is itself doubtful. Though the precise date of its compilation is not known, it is believed that it was compiled long after the compilation of Dasam Granth. Some writers believe that it reached Panjab in 1860 A.D., and before that it was somewhere in the south of India.*383 It is also believed that a number of hymns of Guru Gobind Singh which Bhai Mani Singh was not able to acquire are preserved in it.*384

Almost all Sikh historians of the twentieth century, except Bhagat Lakhman Singh (1909) *385 have mentioned, without quoting any source, the Sikh obligation to wear 'Five Ks'. The important names are: Kahn Singh (1913)

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*375. Randhir Singh, Prem Sumarag, pp. 78-79  
*376. Bal and Grewal, op.cit., p.229 n. 47  
*377. Trilochan Singh, The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs, p.90  
*378. Avtar Singh, Ethics of the Sikhs, p.18  
See also S. S. Kohli, Sikh Ethics, pp. 6-7; Sher Singh, Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh, p.85; Jodh Singh, Gurmatt Nirnay, p.282.

References continued overleaf ..........

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According to Harbhajan Singh, (Vishesh Gurmat Lekh, p.121) the verse was written by a Persian Scholar, sometimes in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Quoted by Satbir Singh, Rehat-te-Kurehet, p. 1 (21)
Bhagat Singh, The Tenth Master, p.93

Sampuran Steek, Sri Sarb Loh Granth Sahib Ji.
Trilochan Singh, op.cit., p.105 n 1
Kahan Singh, Mahan Kosh (ie, Encyclopedias of the Sikh Religion)
Khazan Singh (1914), Puran Singh (1929), Teja Singh (1938),
Ganda Singh and Teja Singh (1950), Kapur Singh (1959), Khushwant Singh (1963),
Rambir Singh (1965), Harbans Singh (1966),
Gopal Singh (1966), Narain Singh (1966), R. S. Ahluwalia (1966),
Sahib Singh (1967), Gobind Singh Mansukhani (1967), Sher Singh (1967),
Taran Singh (1976), Tirlochan Singh (1977), Pritam Singh Gill (1978),
Surjit Singh Gandhi (1978),

Again, almost all known non-Sikh writers on the Sikh history, except Jadhu Nath Sarkar, have mentioned the obligation of wearing the 'Five Ks.' These writers have also not mentioned any original source to support their viewpoint. The important names are: G.C. Narang (1912), I. B. Bannerji (1947), D. Greenlees (1952), H. R. Gupta (1973), C. H. Loehlin (1974), and O. Cole (1978).

Finally, I also wish to produce two more pieces of evidence from the records of the Muslim writings about the Khalsa, its creation and the much debated obligations of the 'Five Ks.' Firstly, a newsletter published just after the emergence of the Khalsa in 1699 reads, inter alia, as follows:

"The Sikhs however became converts to the Faith through the Massands (the delegates appointed by the Gurus to spread the mission of Guru Nanak) and made offerings etc. Guru Gobind Singh totally did away with the Massands some time back and created the Khalsa, and it was ordained that the Sikhs coming under the Order of the Khalsa should grow hair on head and keep moustaches and beards and they came to be known as the Sikhs of the Order of the Khalsa."

Secondly, a manuscript written by Ahmed Shah Batalia in 1818 A.D. and partly published by Sohan Lal Suri, in his history book as an appendix to the first volume also mentions the incident of the creation of the Khalsa.

References cont.
*395. Gopal Singh, Guru Gobind Singh, p.30
*396. Narain Singh, Guru Gobind Singh Retold, p.240
*397. R. S. Ahluwalia, Deshmesh Pita Guru Gobind Singh, p.80
*399. G. S. Mansukhani, Guru Gobind Singh, Cosmic Hero, p.64
*400. Sher Singh, Social and Political Philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh, p.196
*401. Taran Singh, Bhagti Ta Shakti, p.8
*402. Trilochan Singh, The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs, p.197
*403. P. S. Gill, History of the Sikh Nation, p.222
*404. Surjit Singh Gandhi, History of the Sikh Gurus, p.432
*404a H S Shan, Chardi Kali De Punj Guru Gobind Singh,
*405. J. N. Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, III,
*406. G. C. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, p.135
*407. I. B. Bannerji, Evolution of the Khalsa, p.115
*409. H. R. Gupta, History of Sikh Gurus, p.188
*410. C. H. Loehlin, The Sikhs and their Scriptures, p.10
*411. O. Cole, The Sikhs, p.106
*412. Akhbarat-i-Darbar -i-Mualla, May 13, 1710. Quoted by A. S. Baagh, Banhur had orders, p.85

See also - Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, op.cit., p.68
Khushwant Singh, op.cit., p.85
Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.4
It reads, inter alia:

"I (Guru Gobind Singh) wish you all to embrace one creed and follow one path, rising above all differences of the religion as now practised. Let the four Hindu castes, who have different dharma (faiths) laid down for them in the Shastras (holy books of the Hindus), containing institutes of Varnashramdharma, abandon them altogether, and adopting the way of mutual help and cooperation, mix freely with one another. Do not follow the old scriptures. Let none pay homage to the Ganga (river Ganges) and other places of pilgrimage which are considered to be holy in the Hindu religion, or worship the Hindu deities such as Rama, Krishna, Brahma and Durga, etc., but all should cherish faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. Let men of four castes receive my baptism of the double-edged sword, eat out of the same bowl, and feel no aloofness from, or contempt for one another. When the Guru had thus addressed the crowd several Brahmans and Khatris stood up and said that they accepted the religion of Nanak and of the other Gurus. Others on the contrary, said that they would never accept any religion which was opposed to the teaching of Vedas and Shastras, and that they would not renounce at the bidding of a boy the ancient faith which had descended to them from their ancestors. Thus, though several refused to accept the Guru's religion, about twenty thousand men stood up and promised to obey him, as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission."*414

From all the evidence produced above, it is doubtful if the Guru had prescribed the wearing of 'Five Ks', as is understood today, but we know for certain that he did prescribe at least two essential things; Keshas (uncut hair)*415 and weapons,*416 and that the Guru banned the use of tobacco.

--- *(Footnotes)

*414. Sohan Lal Suri, Umadatat-Twarikh, p.5, see also - Bute Shah, Twarikh Punjab, pp. 405-406 (translation: Kapur Singh, Parasharprasna, pp. 4-5

*415. Hair of head and face,

*416. No historical account is found regarding the description of these weapons.
Guru Gobind Singh is beyond any doubt a historical personality. He had declared that he had come into this world to fulfill a divine mission. The creation of the Khalsa and the prescription for its Uniform and the Code of Conduct was, no doubt, a part of that mission.

Referring to the significance of the Sikh symbols, G. C. Narang says, "If it was not a copy of the uniform of Bhim's army mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit work Nala Champa by Trivikram Bhatt; it was a strange coincidence that the Guru prescribed a similar uniform for his followers. The observances at once singled out the genuine Sikh from the mass of the luke-warm Hindus and produced a cohesion in the internal body of the Khalsa which in a short time was to make a strong Panth (organisation) of them."*417

The Sikh symbols have not been made obligatory without any purpose. They have their social and metaphysical functions and they also have definite connection between themselves.*418

Socially, they have promoted group-consciousness and have fostered the brotherhood feelings.*419 They have also worked as a reminder of the Sikhism's spiritual ideal, which stands for the secular as well as the spiritual good.*420 They are the fence or a protective mechanism surrounding the Sikhs' daily life, though they are not their daily life itself. They make it possible for Sikhism to survive, but they are not the reasons for that survival.*421 In the words of Bhai Gurdas, "Just as a fence is necessary to keep away stray cattle from the farm, just as the thorny Kikar (a type of tree) guards the orchard, just as the snake protects the Sandal (another type of tree which gives very pleasing and lasting odour; the sandal wood is one of the most expensive woods in the world), just as the dog guards the house against the strangers, in the same way, the man of God must protect himself with the sword."*422

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*417. G. C. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, p.136
*418. J. P. Singh Oberoi, The Five Symbols of Sikhism, p.136
*419. Bhagat Singh, 'The Sikh symbolism,' The Tenth Master, pp. 97-98
*422. Bhai Gurdas I, Var 34, pauri 12/13
The Sikh symbols, according to Kapur Singh, are grounded in metaphysical postulates of transcendental aesthetics, in the basic aims and objects of Khalsa Brotherhood, which seek to show human beings a path of liberation and self-realisation through organised social and political activity, in contradiction to the renunciation of the world and non-cooperation with the generative impulses of the Universe and in the cultivation of a mature and integrated personality, which deliberately outgrows personal vanity and boyishness, and accepts the principle of growth and ageing as fundamental to religious discipline."

In the Islamic and Hindu world, the political, social and ideological structure rests upon a tripartite division and a system of inter-relation amongst the three stages of human growth symbolised by Hukumat or Rajaya (rule), Shariat or Varna Grihastha (family commitments) and Tariqat or Sanyasa (renunciation). The symbols of Sikhism may be said to signify these inter-relationships, e.g., Hukumat or Rajaya signified by Sword and Wrist-band; Shariat or Varna Grihastha signified by Under-pants and Uncircumcised state and Tariqat or Sanyasa symbolised by Uncut-hair and Comb. *424

III. FIVE VOWS

The Khalsa Brotherhood had also embodied the acceptance of certain vows - negative imperatives; a solemn duty not to commit any of the following heinous sins:

(i) Vow not to remove body hair:

Under point II above on the Sikh Symbols, sufficient historical evidence has been presented to prove that the most important Sikh symbol as prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh was the preservation of body hair. Its inclusion in both the negative and positive imperatives should indicate its vital importance. *426

*424. J. P. Singh Oberoi, op.cit., 136
*425. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189 See also - S. S. Kohli, Sikh Ethics, p.49
Ethics of the Sikhs, p.143
*426. Avtar Singh, op.cit., p.143
(ii) Vow not to eat Halal (Kosher) meat:

The Khalsa was forbidden to eat meat prepared by the process of gradual and painful slaughter of the animal, popularly known as Halal or Kutha. According to Kapur Singh, *427* in the ancient Hindu tradition, only such meat as is obtained from an animal which is killed with a stroke of the weapon, thus causing instantaneous death without exciting fear or gland-secreting poisons into its blood-stream, and without causing harmful psychic waves to emanate from the animal-mind is fit for human consumption. Under the influence of compassionate Buddhism, the flesh became taboo for the generality of the Hindus. With the establishment of Islam and the Muslim political hegemony in India, it became an item of state policy in India not to permit slaughter of animals for food in any other manner except that made lawful by the Qoran, which is the Kosher method of slowly severing the main blood-artery of the throat of the animal, while reciting religious formulae, the main object of slaughtering in this manner being a "sacrifice" to God to expiate sins of the slaughterer and its flesh to be used as food only as a secondary object. Guru Gobind Singh took a rather serious view of this aspect of the whole matter, and while making it permissive to eat meat as food, repudiated the whole theory of this expiatory sacrifice and the right of the ruling Muslims to impose it upon others.

(iii) Vow not to smoke

Under point II above, on the Sikh symbols, sufficient evidence has been given to prove that Guru Gobind Singh had strictly forbidden his Khalsa to take tobacco in any form. According to Kapur Singh, *428* 'the smoking of tobacco is held in peculiar abhorrence by the Sikhs, which originates in the draconian injunction of Guru Gobind Singh to all Singhis (Khalsa) to refrain from this practice absolutely, while previous to this formal injunction it was merely a general precept of the Sikh Gurus.' Similarly, the chewing of tobacco or taking it as an ingredient of Paan or any other similar thing is forbidden to the Sikhs.


(iv) **Vow not to worship tombs, graves and relics of cremation and cherish superstitions:**

According to Guru Gobind Singh,

"He who does not have faith even by mistake in fasting,
He who does not worship cemeteries, places of cremation or Yogis' places of sepulchre,

...............*

He is recognised as a pure member of the Khalsa."*430

The worship of tombs, graves and relics of cremation had been strictly forbidden by the Tenth Guru. His command was to worship God alone and discard all rituals and ceremonies. The Guru said,

"Many Brahmins recite Vedas, many Muslims recite Qoran,
many are Bairagis, others are Sanyasis, many wander in the guise of Udasis.

Know that all these things are vain,
And that all such religion is fruitless.
Without the support of the One Name, all religions and religious ceremonies are useless"*431

(v) **Vow not to indulge in adultery:**

Guru Gobind Singh had strictly forbidden the practice of adultery. It may be noted that on account of the beastly and immoral behaviour of some of the Muslims towards Hindu and Sikh women, some Sikhs approached the Guru to allow retaliation, but the Guru strictly forbade them from any such action.*433

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*430. Swayyas, no. 1
*431. Akal Ustat, verses 49-50
*432. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.69 See also - S. S. Kohli, op.cit., p.51
Avtar Singh, op.cit., p.143
Sahib Singh, op.cit., p.128
*433. G. S. Mansukhani, Guru Gobind Singh, Cosmic Hero, pp. 28,74
According to Qazi Nur Mohammed,*434 the Khalsa did not commit rape or plunder any Muslim woman during their fight against the Muslim rulers. Bute Shah has stated*435 that the Khalsa did not insult, rape or mug any woman. According to Bhai Santokh Singh*436 adultery is a very serious offence in the Sikh moral code. Bhai Gurdas Bhalla has also written*437 that the Sikh is to treat all women, except his own wife, as his daughters or sisters.

IV. FIVE DELIVERANCES

(i) Janam-Nash (The deliverance from the shams of caste system):*438

In the Khalsa Brotherhood all Hindu castes are blended on a democratic basis as all are regarded equal.*439 Though there had been numerous reformers in ancient times who tried to remove the evil of caste system from the Indian soil, each time the disease had outstripped the remedies, for men had got into the habit of living with it, nursing the ulcer thriving within the viscera.*440 According to Dr. Balbir Singh, "there is hardly any parallel in the Indian history to the way in which Guru Gobind Singh elevated the low castes. He exalted them by placing the real power in their hands. Under him they wielded the sword and acquired the dignity that goes with the office of army-men. After taking the baptism devised by the Guru, all became equal in spirit, mind and body. The untouchable shed their inborn inhibition; the men of low origin put aside their innate repression. They stood liberated. The transformation was verily a psychological miracle. He opened the gateway for all to come in. He welcomed the pariah, the castaway, the excluded, the estranged. His original baptismal ceremony extended to five men, three of whom belonged to various categories of the low-born Hindu groups denied, in perpetuity, the privileges of men bred from pedigree stock." The new baptism meant a new birth or rebirth of the Sikh in the Khalsa Brotherhood. The newly baptised Khalsa was thus born in the family of Guru Gobind Singh, with the Tenth Master

*436. Bhai Santokh Singh, Suraj Prakash, Rashi 6, Chapter 26
*437. Bhai Gurdas I, var 6
*439. J. N. Sarkar, op.cit., pp. 358-359
*440. Balbir Singh, The Tenth Master, p.42
*441. Ibid.
as the father of Khalsa; his wife, Mata Sahib Devan as Khalsa's mother; and Anandpur, his abode, as Khalsa's birthplace.

(ii) \textbf{Sharam-Nash} (The deliverance from hereditary profession):^442

Guru Gobind Singh's new baptismal ceremony brought about an immediate and absolute break with the past. It gave the Khalsa new hope and emancipation from the hereditary professional restrictions. All the old professional labels like that of priests, teachers, businessmen, soldiers, weavers, tailors, barbers and sweepers etc., were discarded and all were given an equal social and religious status.\(^443\) The Khalsa was free to choose his trade or profession and not necessarily follow that of his ancestors. In the new code of the Khalsa, no honest profession in itself was to be deemed inferior or superior, and no divisions were to be set up on the basis of professions followed by the Sikhs.\(^444\)

(iii) \textbf{Dharam Nash} (The deliverance from previous religious practices and traditions):^445

The Khalsa Brotherhood was the bridge the Guru constructed across the gulf of hate and misunderstanding among different warring creeds. It brought about harmony, peace and reconciliation in place of strife, enmity and animosity. It taught true religion and true religious practices in place of useless rituals and meaningless customs. It gave a new ethical and idealistic direction to the individual and the society.\(^446\) The Khalsa was to have one faith, one form of worship and one code of rules.\(^447\) The Khalsa started on a clean state; he was a monotheist and belonged to a monist brotherhood; for the Khalsa, God was not only One, but there was also nothing except Him. All that which emanated from God was, in a way, God Himself. Guru Gobind Singh said,

(i) "Recognise One Light in all beings that are known to us."\(^448\)
(ii) "There is no one other than God in all forms and colours."\(^449\)

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\(^{442}\) J. Malcolm, op.cit., pp.148, 151 See also - M. Latif, op.cit., p.263
\(^{443}\) Balbir Singh, op.cit., p.42
\(^{444}\) Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.149
\(^{445}\) M. Latif, op.cit., p.263 See also - J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64
\(^{446}\) Gurbachan Singh Talib, The Impact of Guru Gobind Singh on Indian Society, p.11.
\(^{447}\) Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.149
\(^{448}\) Chaubis Avtar, verse 35
\(^{449}\) Ibid.
(iii) "He alone resides in all, yet all are made to appear different."

(iv) "The One pervades the infinite Creation,
Know ye all that there is only one Supreme Creator,
He makes and moulds and then breaks,
The Sole, the One Creator,
None else can arrogate to himself this power;
All that exists wear His form and colour."

(iv) Karam-Nash (The deliverance from the past deeds)

According to Guru Gobind Singh, the past bad deeds can be pardoned by God's Grace and the sinners can be absolved of their sins and out of time. Guru Gobind Singh's teachings in this direction are clear, understandable and practical. The teachings of other Sikh Gurus are also similar. According to the Gurus, all basic problems of mankind can be solved and past bad deeds pardoned by establishing harmony with Truth, by performing honest and noble deeds, and by completely submerging oneself into the Will of the Supreme Being and bowing unquestionably to His Command. The submission to His Command is one of the major points of the Guru's teachings.

The word Karam (deeds) has been used in Guru Granth Sahib to convey a definite set of meanings, e.g. law of retribution, rituals as liturgical sacrifices and ceremonial, grace and mercy, and moral action.

#450. Chaubis Avtar, verse 37
#451. Brahmaavtar, verses 7-9
#452. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.263, J. D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64
#454. Mohan Singh, The Tenth Master, p.134
#455. Guru Granth Sahib, Japji, p.5; Siri, p.25; Gauri, pp.151, 154, 223;
#456. Ibid.
#457. Guru Granth Sahib, Siri, p.78
#458. Ibid., p.162
#459. Ibid., p.109
#460. Ibid., p.676
Almost all existing Karma theories pre-suppose three basic points: (a) the concept of God; (b) the concept of soul and deliverance and (c) the concept of Nature and Cosmos. Sikhism is a monotheist religion. It advocates family life and rejects all sorts of world-renunciation. It does not approve of penance or fasting to achieve long life or rebirth in a high family as in the Hindu faith. According to Sikhism, man's soul can get salvation out of the cycle of transmigration on the basis of noble deeds, meditation on God's Name, honest living and by God's Grace. The Karma theory in Sikhism rejects all forms of caste-system; however, it divides human beings into two categories as Gurmukh, God-oriented, one who leads holy life and performs noble deeds, and Manmukh, self-oriented, one who follows his ego and performs bad and sinful deeds.

In Sikhism human birth is considered a precious opportunity to achieve salvation. It is in this birth that by good and noble deeds and God's Grace, all the past bad and sinful Karma can be pardoned or erased and the soul freed from the pangs of transmigration and be absorbed in God for good. Truthful conduct and true living are considered good deeds of the highest value. Service of mankind with compassion and sincerity is the highest form of honest living.

Nam-Simran i.e. remembering God through Gurbani, (i.e. God's Word revealed through the Sikh Gurus) is the highest devotion. Good and noble deeds, honest living and Nam Simran win His Grace which can forgive all the bad and sinful deeds of the past.

Guru Gobind Singh prayed:

(i) "Grant me Your Grace, O God,
That I should never refrain from righteous acts."*467

*462. Akal Ustat, verse 1
*463. Ibid., verse 15
*464. Ibid.
*465. Guru Granth Sahib, p. 450
*466. Ibid., p. 62
*467. Chandi Charitar I, verse 231
While writing to Aurangzeb, he stated:

(ii) "....I who trusted your oath on the Qur'an taken with God as witness was protected by the Grace of the same God." *468

(iii) "....Not a hair of my body was touched. No injury whatsoever came to my body, God protected me with His Grace...." *469

(iv) "God alone is my King. I acknowledge no other king and I am God's humble servant. To fulfil God's Will and Command I am always prepared to sacrifice my life." *470

(v) "It is your foremost responsibility to fear God and take up righteous ways....." *471

(vi) "......fear God and fall at His feet before it is too late. God takes no sides in judging Truth. Beg for His Grace." *473

(vii) "In the presence of God you and your men will have to account for all your deeds you have performed in this world." *474

(viii) "To perform true and righteous acts is the noblest deed of a king. This can earn him His Grace." *475

Thus the ideal of good Karma as stressed by Guru Gobind Singh and the Gurus who preceded him, was cognitive, aesthetic and conative. God's Grace and moral action occupies a very important position in the Guru's Karma theory. *476 As the head of a country can pardon even the most dangerous criminal, so does God as the Head of the Universe.

(v) Bharam Nash (The deliverance from all the superstitions, taboos, rituals and austerities): *477

The Khalsa is not to believe in any rituals. The belief and worship of God does not require the observance of any rituals. The Guru

*469. Ibid., verse 44 J.D. Cunningham, op.cit., p.64
*470. Ibid., verse 62 M. Latif, op.cit., p.263
*471. Ibid., verse 65 H.R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189
*472. Ibid., verse 69 *478. Guru Granth Sahib, Asa, p.470,
*473. Ibid., verse 70 Var Bihagra, pp.548-556,
*474. Ibid., verse 70 Wadhans, p.590,
*475. Ibid., verse 84 Sorath, p.635.
deplored any sort of religious hypocrisy. To him the rituals that masqueraded as religion were meaningless and utterly wasteful. The Khalsa is not to be extreme or fanatical in any way. He has not to perform any special ceremonials, or go on pilgrimage or observe fasts or make sacrifices. The Khalsa is to be practical, and is required to lead a family life while practising love and charity. The Guru said:

"Swine eat filth, elephants and donkeys bespatter themselves with dust.
Jackals live at places of cremation,
Owls live in tombs, deer wander alone in the forest
trees ever die in silence;
The man who restrains his seed should only have the credit of the hermaphrodite;
Monkeys ever wander bare-footed.
They who eat grass and renounce the desire of wealth are no more than calves and oxen,
They who engage in meditation resemble cranes, cats and wolves
For grazing on Akk (a type of wild plant,) eating fruits and flowers
And ever wandering in the forests, there is no animal like the goat.
In the cold season the jackals bark five times.
And the elephants and the monkey utter various cries.
What avails it that a fool puts a halter round his neck and gets drowned himself in the Ganges? Thugs put man to death by putting halters round their necks.
If any were to win by penance the Lord who suffers not pain, the wounded man suffers pain of many kinds.

If any one were by repeating God's name to unite with God who cannot be obtained by lip-worship, the warbler ever utters - Tu-hi! Tu-hi.

If any one were to obtain God by flying in the heavens, the bird called 'Anal' wanders in the firmament.

If salvation be obtained by burning oneself in the fire, why should not the 'Sati' be liberated?

If salvation were obtained by dwelling beneath the earth, the snake which dwells in the nether regions should also be saved."*481

The above hymn of the Guru is a satire on various penances and austerities practised by certain Hindu sects and demonstrate their uselessness. The Khalsa is not to practise any rituals or austerities.

V. FIVE RULES OF CONDUCT*482

The Khalsa is to practise the following five rules of conduct:

(i) Life of honesty:

The Khalsa would earn his livelihood only by his own honest, lawful and creative effort and would not dwell on the earnings of others.*483 One-tenth of all the earnings of the Khalsa are expected to be given to the central treasury of the Khalsa, called Daswand. It is not a compulsory tax; it is a voluntary offering for religious and charitable purposes.

(ii) Life of truth:

The Khalsa would lead an ideal life, a life of truth. He should share all his possessions with the needy, he should live under the discipline of the Nam and should always be a responsible member of the Khalsa community.*485

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*481. Akal Ustat, verses 71, 80, 83, 84
*482. H. R. Gupta, op.cit., p.189
*483. Harbans Singh, op.cit., p.71
See also - Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.70
Harbans Singh, op.cit., p.70
*484. Ibid.
*485. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.74
If any member of the Khalsa committed a social wrong he should submit himself to a Khalsa assembly and should accept the penalty imposed on him by the assembly.  

(iii) Life of restraint:

In the world's philosophical literature, human mind has been called 'restless'. The Khalsa is to restrain and discipline this restlessness of mind. With the power of the spirituality of Nam the Khalsa is to develop an inner discipline to control the ego and thus lead an awakened, purified and restrained life. To those who practised yoga to control their restlessness, the Guru's message was,

(i) "O man! practise yoga in this way -
Make truth your horn, sincerity your necklace and apply meditation as ashes to your body;
Make restraint of your heart your lyre and the support of the Nam your alms."  

(ii) "...... know, that it is through mere ignorance that you run after deeds of religious show. Amass the wealth of contemplation, and run away from egoism - the mortal sin."

(iv) Life of a householder:

The Khalsa is to lead a life of a householder. Desires and egoism were to be curbed by leading a life of self-discipline and not by renouncing the life of a householder and rejecting the family responsibility. The householder is a person with a moral duty, which he must face and assume even at the cost of suffering. The Guru recommended the doctrine of detachment while living in all worldly comforts and luxuries. Sikhism allows all comforts and luxuries of life but warns against deep attachment which most of the people develop for worldly goods. The Guru's teachings were not to get involved in worldly affairs but honestly and nobly to enjoy them and to share all comforts and luxuries with others who do not have them. The life of a recluse or an ascetic has thus been rejected by the Guru. To obtain the Grace of God, it is not essential to renounce family-life.

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*486. Kapur Singh, op.cit., p.74
*487. C.S. Mansukhani, Guru Gobind Singh, His Personality & Achievements, pp.109-
*488. Gurbachan Singh Talib, Sikhism, p.89  *490. Ibid., hymn 3 116
*489. Shabad Hazare, Hymn 2  *491. Gurbachan Singh Talib, Sikhism p.95
The Guru said,

(i) "I have seen people bathing at sacred places, performing acts of special mercy, restraining their senses, giving alms, practising complete abstinence ...... I have closely watched thousands of fasting ascetics and celibates ...... but without God's remembrance, even emperors are destitute and of no account."*492

(ii) "What, if a person ...... in the garb of a great ascetic matted hair wanders over different countries; he shall not find the beloved God by these practices ......"*493

The Khalsa is not to enter into any permanent social relationship with the Minas, the Dhirmalias, the Ramraiyas and the Masands who in the past had tried to create schism in the historical growth of Sikhism.*494

(v) Life of Dharma (Gurmat):

The Khalsa is to start his day with prayer to God, to recite Jap Ji of Guru Nanak and Jap Sahib and Ten Swayyas of Guru Gobind Singh in the early morning, Rehras Sahib at sunset and Kirtan Sohila before retiring for the night.*495 He is to be a saint par excellence and was always to be ready to infuse courage and confidence in the downfallen, the depressed and victims of tyranny. The Khalsa is to wield his sword for the defence of the true Dharma, and is not to enforce his faith by aggression on others.*496 The Khalsa is to be the Guru's Warrior-Saint.*497

Thus Guru Gobind Singh expounded his concept of an Ideal man - the Saint-Soldier of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

*492. Swayyas, number 4
*493. Ibid., number 10
*494. Kapur Singh, op.cit., pp. 74-75
*495. Ibid.
*496. Kartar Singh, op.cit., p.141
*497. Ibid.
AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF AN IDEAL MAN
AS PROPOUNDED BY
GURU GOBIND SINGH

As already explained on the foregoing pages, Guru Gobind Singh's mission has to be interpreted in relation to:

(a) His role as the last heir of the Sikh Gurus,
(b) His responsibility to give finishing touches to the mission of Guru Nanak; and
(c) His responsibility to give to the world, in the form of the Khalsa, a community of fearless saint-soldiers, as was dreamt of by Guru Nanak and his eight successors, to uphold Truth and Justice and to annihilate evil and tyranny all over the globe.

Three hundred and sixteen years ago, the world witnessed, in the unique personality of Guru Gobind Singh, a confluence of Bhakti (Devotion), Shakti (Power) and Sarsvati (Knowledge). He took up the sword to annihilate evil. With the Name of God on his lips, he launched a revolution through his Khalsa. It was an unusual revolution in the history of mankind. To date, the world history has witnessed a number of revolutions e.g. capitalist revolution, proletariat revolution, socialist revolution, military coups, religious revival and other economic and social revolutions; but the revolution brought by the Guru was one of its own kind. It was a socio-spiritual type of revolution which opened for its participants the gateway of salvation. It gave a new turn to human history and left behind an indelible and unique impression.

In one of his prayers, the Guru said,

'0 God! grant me this boon,
I may never be deterred from doing good and noble deeds,
I may never fear the enemy when I go to the battlefield.
I may ever be confident of my victory.
I may teach myself only one thing -
To sing only Your praises.
And when the last days of my life come,
I may die fighting in a holy war.'

At another place, he stated,

'...... I speak the truth, let every one hear,
Those who love truly, can only achieve God.'

The Guru taught us love, brotherhood, loyalty and democracy. He taught us how to worship God and how to protect people from tyranny and injustice. Commenting on Sikh religion, Dr Mohammed Iqbal once said that Sikhism was 'Higher Islam' as it does not have two main limitations of Islam, viz., the reference to Allah only as a God of fear and not a God of love, and non-recognition and disrespect for other religions.

Waheguru, the Supreme God of the Khalsa, is God of love and mercy and is also a universal God. The Khalsa of the Guru is to respect all other religions of the world.

(i) In the Guru's words,
   "Recognise all men as equal..."

(ii) "You are the Sustainer; You are the Maintainer;
     You are the Rescuer; Boundless is Your Mercy
     And Superb Your Majesty and Love."
According to the Sikh thought, all the ten Gurus of the Sikhs were one. Though they were born in ten different forms, they had the same soul, the same light. Their teachings, philosophy and ideology was the same. Their sermons and hymns had the same underlying idealism. The concept of Khalsa, though thought by many historians to have been conceived by Guru Gobind Singh, can be traced in Guru Nanak’s hymns. Guru Nanak said,

'The Mother God simultaneously produced three disciples - the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer.'

Guru Nanak had reminded us about the unity of God and His Power. The three creations—Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv of the Godhead—could not have been born simultaneously unless they were one. The three creations so mentioned depict the basic functions of God.

Guru Nanak in his hymns has mentioned a number of functions and forms of a religion. Most important of them are, however, two. Firstly, a religion establishes justice. In the Guru's words:

"The law that regulates the Universe is human, like the law of 'fabled bull' 

The mystic bull is Dharma: the offspring of Compassion, Which is patiently holding the earth in order."  

Guru Nanak and his successors have taught us that the laws of God are equitable, just and merciful. The true religion should establish an organisation in which justice could prevail and the truth could survive. The religion should strengthen the social organisation and make it holy, harmonious, dignified, cultured, moral and amicable.

Secondly, religion saves mankind from degradation and extinction. It follows the middle way of safety. In the Guru's words,

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*505. Guru Granth Sahib, Janji, p.7
*507. Guru Granth Sahib, Jap ji, p.4
*508. Guru Granth Sahib, Siri, p.74
*509. Ibid., Malhar, p.1280
"In complete detachedness and attachedness, the Religion acts as a guide and conductor."

According to the Sikh Gurus, it is the middle way which links man with God. The Gurus reject complete renunciation and too much involvement. Guru Nanak's monotheism is not impinged when he says:

"Wherever I see, there is union of Spirit (Shiv) and Matter (Sakti)."

Guru Amardas also said:

"He created Shiv and Sakti, He Commands all the Powers."

In the above hymns, Shiv and Sakti are shown to be two aspects of the same Reality. Shiv Purana and Kurma Purana have also stressed the same point. These two aspects of the Reality are complimentary and are not in conflict with each other. Every living religion does contain in itself some sort of built-in security devices to save it from the onslaught of fanatics of other religions and the non-believers. These security devices can acquire different forms at different times. In Hindu religion both Rama and Krishna were Kshatriyas and in their own times played the part of War Heroes to save good from evil. Both acquired the status of divine persons (Divyacara) through their heroic life (Viracara).

Islam, from its very inception, was nursed under the shadow of the sword. Prophet Mohammed, in his life, had to fight a number of battles for survival and for the spread of the Muslim Gospel.

Christian kings, too, had to resort to sword for the survival of their faith and for its spread in the West and the East.

*510. Guru Granth Sahib, Siri, p.74
*511. Ibid., Ramkali, p. 920
*512. Shiv Puran - Vayaviya (2) 5-12
*513. Kurma Puran - Purva Bhag, 2-92
Thus the use of Sword in Sikhism for its survival was not a unique phenomenon in a religion, as is affirmed by a number of historians and religious leaders who were hostile to Sikhism. In Sikhism, the idea of Shakti was there right from the beginning. It was that Shakti (moral power) which results from Tap (Devotion to God), one which results from a combination of service to humanity, good deeds and Simran. This Shakti is uncompromising in its conflict with evil and wicked forces. It is different from the Shakti used by Lord Rama, Lord Krishna and Prophet Mohammed. It is certainly unique in Sikhism. This Shakti was not to make others slaves and wage a war to get the fruits of power and territory and to spread the faith. It was to protect morality and the saints of God, and to uproot evil and injustice. It was based on the principles of service and self-sacrifice for the protection and survival of human dignity and moral values.

The concept of Saint-Soldier envisages that Bhakti (Saintliness) without Shakti (Power or Strength) becomes pitiable and debilitated and fails to survive for long. It becomes too weak and too vulnerable. On the other hand Shakti without Bhakti breeds fascism and authoritarianism. Thus in an ideal state Bhakti and Shakti must go together. This theme has been discussed at length by Guru Gobind Singh in his compositions: Chandi Di Var and Chandi Charitar.

In Sikhism, even the architectural unity of Golden Temple (the place of Spiritual Sovereignty) and Akal Takhat (the abode of Immortal Sovereign) represent the necessity of acceptance of the concept of the Saint-Soldier, or Meeri and Peer as is mentioned in Sikh history.

In Christianity, a few hundred years ago, the Pope used to wear two swords to show his spiritual and temporal authority.

*514. David Thomson (Ed), Political Ideas, p.36
In Islam, the Khalifas (successors to Prophet Mohammed) too had the dual authority: spiritual and temporal authority. *

In Sikhism though the concept of Saint-Soldier, was completely concretised in the form of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh, its seeds were sown, as has been discussed above, by Guru Nanak the founder himself. The other Gurus also made their contribution to this unique concept in their own times. Guru Angad, defied the Brahmans (the Hindu priestly class) and the Mullas (the Muslim priestly class) of their monopoly to learn and teach religious scriptures. He invited men of all castes to come forward and rally against this unjustified hold or privilege of Brahmans and Mallas. Guru Amardas, the third Guru, broke the barriers of social stratification. He carried forward the revolution of Sangat and Pangat, and thus established social equality. Guru Ramdas, the fourth Master, laid down the foundation of Amritsar, the city of Immortality and Bliss, to infuse light in the darkness of the hearts of hundreds of his followers to rise and break the chains of slavery and untouchability. He told his disciples to undo the injustice of the caste system and other social inequalities, by settling as equals in the new township of Amritsar. Guru Arjan, the fifth Master and the first martyr of the Sikh history, rose against arbitrary authority and protested against the Mughal dictatorship. He preached the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man to all. He challenged the existing religious traditions by designing Harimander Sahib (the Golden Temple) so as to keep it open to men of all faiths and also by compiling Granth Sahib which included hymns of Muslim saints, low-caste Hindu saints and Brahmin Bhatts, besides those of the Sikh Gurus.

Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, donned two swords to demonstrate his spiritual and temporal sovereignty. In the words of Bhai Gurdas I,*515

"Five cups and the five saints led to the installation of the sixth mighty saint....."

*515. J. S. Ahluwalia, 'The Sociology of Sikhism,' Miri-Piri Da Sidhant, p.29
*516. Bhai Gurdas I, Var I pauri,48
That is, five saints (viz. - Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas and Guru Arjan - practised collectively five virtues - truth, faith, compassion, patience and contentment and the sixth saint, Guru Gobind Singh, in addition practised a sixth virtue, called Shakti (power). At another place, he also maintained:

"Just as one has to tie the pail's neck while taking out water; 
Just as to get Mani (a type of jewel) the snake is to be killed; 
Just as to get Kasturi (musk) from deer's navel, the deer is to be killed; 
Just as to get oil, the oil seeds are to be crushed; 
Just as to get Kernel, pomegranate is to be broken, 
Similarly, to correct senseless people, sword has to be used."

Guru Har Rai and Guru Harkrishan, the seventh and the eighth Guru, also taught protest against tyranny and injustice. Both defied the unjust orders of Aurangzeb and refused to attend his court. Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Master, destroyed the myth of selfish living and gave to his followers the idea of living and dying for others. He sacrificed his life to save Hindu religion, while he himself was not a Hindu and had belief in its doctrine.

Thus we see that all the predecessors of Guru Gobind Singh had made their contribution to the building of the concept of the Khalsa, which the Tenth Master was ordained to declare to be complete and final.

The concept of the Khalsa as finally completed and personified by Guru Gobind Singh has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by a number of historians, statesmen and men of letters including A. Toynbee, J. N. Sarkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammed Latif and Rabindranath Tagore.

*517 Bhai Gurdas I, var 34, pauri 13
*518 A. Toynbee, An Historian's approach to religion, pp. 110-113
*519 J. N. Sarkar, op. cit., p. 359
*520 Mahatma Gandhi, quoted by C. Loehlin, The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Brotherhood, preface
*521 M. Latif, History of Punjab, p. 261
*522 Rabindranath Tagore, Modern Review, April 1911
In the words of A. Toynbee,

(i) "Sikhism, again originated as a concordance of Hinduism and Islam, and it fell from this religious height into a political trough because the Sikh Gurus,Har Govind (Hargobind) and Govind Singh (Gobind Singh), and their eventual political successor, the Sikh war-lord Ranjit Singh, succumbed, like Prophet Mohammed, to the temptation to use force."*523

(ii) "In the encounter between the Islamic and the Hindu civilisations, Sikhism, which had been founded to transcend the division between Hindus and Muslims by preaching the gospel of the higher religions to all men in terms that all men could accept, was diverted — under provocation from a Mughal Empire that grew more intolerant as it became more decrepit — into serving as the instrument of a militant Hindu reaction against the militancy of Islam."*524

According to J N Sarkar,

"Clearly, Nanak's ideal of the kingdom of heaven to be won by holy living and holy dying, by humility and prayer, self restraint and meditation, had been entirely abandoned."*525

In the words of Mohammed Latif,

"Henceforth a new leaf opens in the history of the Sikhs. It is no longer the record of a sect who, following the peaceful tenets of their founder, desired merely to protect themselves and had no wish to injure others; but that of a race which, actuated by a deep sense of the wrongs done by a persecuting Government, strove to make itself prominent in the world by those deeds of valour and patriotism which make nations great and glorious."*526

*523. A. Toynbee, op.cit., p.110
*524. Ibid., pp. 112-113
*525. J. N. Sarkar, op.cit., p.359
*526. M. Latif, op.cit., p.261
According to Mahatma Gandhi,
"Guru Gobind Singh was a misguided patriot."*527

In the words of Rabindarnath Tagore,
"Guru Nanak, as a religious leader, preached universal truths and religion which had immense possibilities of elevating the people of India. It was his aim to hold out before the people the highest ideal of salvation. But Guru Gobind Singh forsook this ideal and put in its place the one single aim of his life, namely: to destroy the enemy of the Sikhs. This has no doubt made the Sikhs a fighting race, but the great treasure leading to salvation which it was the aim of Nanak's life to distribute amongst the people at large, was neglected and lost sight of, with the result that the onward march of the Sikhs was stopped forever. In the place of a Guru or a religious leader, Guru Gobind Singh gave his followers only the sword; and when he died the great truth preached by Nanak remained confined in the Granth Sahib and could not do any service to humanity through a succession of religious leaders. Instead of a flowing river, Sikh religion became a closed pool of stagnant water."*528

Alas! many persons mentioned above and some more like them, failed to realise the causes which led Guru Gobind Singh to resort to the sword and the kind of call he made.

Basically, there is nothing morally or spiritually wrong in wielding sword for the defence of justice and righteousness. Is the act of maintenance of armies by different countries in the world immoral? Are the soldiers who kill the enemy for the protection of their countries not decorated with honour? A soldier is certainly not a killer but a trained protector or defender of his country and a person who carries out his pledge of maintaining freedom from aggression. In almost every country of the world the military profession is one of the most honourable and respectable professions. It carries with it the highest honour, status and prestige.

*527. Quoted by C. Loehlin, op.cit., p. Preface
The soldier created by Guru Gobind Singh was not merely a fighter but had another great and unparalleled feature of saintliness. His soldier was a composite and complete Saint-Soldier. His commonwealth of the Khalsa was a universal brotherhood of the pure in spirit. Guru Gobind Singh was very well aware of the fact that he was the heir of Guru Nanak's throne when he said,

"I have no other ambition but to wage the war of righteousness." *529

It is really amazing how people like Jadunath Sarkar, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore who had such a great regard for the Bhagvad Gita and Ramayna, the epics full of war-glory and instructions for waging a holy war, could misjudge the intentions of Guru Gobind Singh! Were Rama and Krishna not soldiers? How could Mohammed Latif, the follower of the holy Qoran, misinterpret the activities and mission of Guru Gobind Singh when the author and the hero of Qoran, Prophet Mohammed, was himself a preacher and a warrior.

Guru Gobind Singh, the saviour of the Indian nation, did not get the much deserved honour and justice from Indian as well as foreign historians. Mainly because the literature of the Guru had not been available to them in their respective languages.

Dr. R. K. Dasgupta writing about Rabindranath Tagore's remarks about the Guru said, *530

"Rabindranath Tagore wrote a letter to Professor Teja Singh saying that he did not mean any disregard for the Guru and that he had developed his theme from what he had read about the Guru's self-preparation in McGregor and Cunningham."

This shows how historians and other learned people draw wrong conclusions when the right record or evidence is not made available to them or they do not care to obtain it on their own for its proper use in their writings.

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*529. *Krishnaavtar, verse 10
*530. *S. S. Uppal (Ed.), *Guru Gobind Singh the Saviour, p.60
Guru Gobind Singh, author of the concept of saint-soldier, was indeed, the hero of Dharam-Yuda, the Holy War. His wars were different from other wars in this world. A number of points of startling difference may be mentioned:

Firstly, the battles waged by the Guru were without any ill-will, the feeling of hatred and desire for revenge. As a worldly being, the Guru lost, more or less, everything he had. His father, mother, his sons, his dearest disciples, all his possessions and almost all his literary manuscripts were lost; but there was not even a single frown or sign of complaint on his face. Never in his whole life he uttered a word of lamentation, revenge or reprisal against anyone. On the contrary, when Mata Sundri, his wife, asked him about their sons, the Guru told her -

"What if we have lost four sons, Thousands of our Sikhs have survived in the bargain!"

Some misguided writers have mentioned the Guru's anti-Muslim bias. This is incorrect. The Guru fought against Hindu rulers of the hills and also against the Mughal Emperor of India. His army consisted of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh soldiers. He had no bias against any religion, but only against evil-doers. The selfless service of Bhai Kanahaya, a wonderful devotee in the battle-field, amply supports this view and reminds us of the Guru's humanism and magnanimity. The Guru loved all. He did not differentiate between Hindus, Muslims and low-castes. For him all were the same, the sons of God. His war was not

*530 S S Uppal (ed.) Guru Gobind Singh the Saviour p.60
against any religion or sect, but was against the tyrant rulers. His instructions to the Khalsa were not to yield to injustice, oppression and tyranny from any end under any circumstances.

Secondly, his wars were righteous wars. They were not fought for fun or glory but for upholding justice. As the Guru repeatedly said,

"I have no other ambition but to wage the war of righteousness!"

This ambition of his is also reflected in his Divine Mission, as mentioned in his autobiography, the Bachitar Natak, stating that -

"The Divine Lord has sent me for the sake of religion ......
 ........ to seize and destroy the evil and the sinful......"*533

Thirdly, he had no lust for armed victories. Alexander's, Napoleon's and Caesar's militarism reflected their keen desire to conquer the world, but Guru Gobind Singh had no such motive. He fought twenty battles, nine before the creation of the Khalsa and eleven after its creation. Of these, though he had won sixteen, he did not desire to acquire even an inch of territory, nor did he permit any of his forces to plunder the enemy's property or molest their women.

Fourthly, the Guru had no desire or inclination for exercising autocratic power or rule. He did not want to establish a reign of his own, though he had all the opportunities to establish one. Despite being a Guru and leader of such a large number of followers, he was very humble and human. It is a fact of history that having administered the New baptism to the first five Chosen Ones, the Guru stood up in supplication and with folded hands begged the Chosen Ones to baptise him in the manner he had baptised them. This scene has been very well described by Bhai Gurdas II, a contemporary, in the following words,

*532. Krishanavtar, verse 10
*533. Bachitar Natak, VI, verses 42-43
Divine Guru arranged the great drama,
Guru Nanak, the fearless prophet, put Sidhs on the right path

Guru Gobind Singh meditated on the Immortal One,
He was Commanded by God to initiate New Baptismal Order;
Those who came forward and took the new baptism -
Were turned from ordinary men to fearless soldiers;
Great was Guru Gobind Singh who was the Guru as well as a disciple.*534

Fifthly, the Guru's call to wage war was not a political revolt or mutiny. It must be remembered that the Guru was not against any particular political set-up if it was truly democratic. He was not establishing any new political order of his own. He was only craving for justice and equality for one and all. In his letter to Aurangzeb, he wrote as below:

(i) "Laced with sword and the shield,
You, Aurangzeb, must personally take the field.
It is cowardly to fire human beings,
For your evil aims and vanity."*535

(ii) "It is your foremost responsibility to fear God and take up righteous ways. Without being misguided by anyone, you should stop oppressing people."*536

(iii) "People call you Aurangzeb, the ruler of a sub-continent, but alas you are utterly devoid of righteousness and truth."*537

(iv) "If you punish the wrongdoers and oppressors, God will forgive you and bless you......."*538

(v) "To be righteous is the noblest deed of a king. To realize God should be his highest ideal."*539

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*534. Bhai Gurdas II, var. pauri 1 written Fatehnama, verse 24. Guru Gobind Singh is said to have written two letters to Aurangzeb. The first, called 'Fatehnama' and the second 'Zafarnama'. 'Fatehnama' is supposed to have been written when the Guru was at Machchiwara. Although it remained lost for many years, about a third of it (i.e., about 24 verses) has been located. (see Trilochan Singh, 'Fatehnama', The Sikh Review, April 1977, p.26).

*535. Fatehnama, verse 63
*536. Zafarnama, verse 65
*537. Ibid., verse 94
*538. Ibid., verse 83
*539. Ibid., verse 84
Sixthly, the Guru's instructions to his soldiers were to go into the battle without fear, to fight courageously, to face bullets or arrows and not to turn their backs, and always to remember God even in the midst of shower of arrows and bullets. The Guru himself wished to die on the battle-field like a hero:

"And when the last moments of my life come, I should die in the war of righteousness."*540

In his letter to Aurangzeb, Guru Gobind Singh emphasised the faith he had in God, even in the midst of battles and wars:

(i) "When the arrow struck me, The War-spirit in me was strengthened."*541

(ii) "What could the mischievous betrayals, And the wicked attacks of the enemy do, When my Protector, my Guidein those dark hours Was God Himself." *542

(iii) "Even when a single person was chased and attacked, By a hundred thousand swordmen, The Merciful God, my Saviour, Saved him from the least possible harm."*543

(iv) "If you are proud of your armies and wealth, I depend on and am inspired by the strength of God."*544

(v) "Even though the enemy attacked with forces of thousands, Not a hair of my body was affected, Because God the Saviour was with me."*545

Seventhly, the Guru's call for recruits was answered by the people fired by an ideal, by crusaders and not by mercenaries. It was a call to come forward and enrol in the army of God, wherein every soldier was to be

*540. Chandi Charitar I, verse 231
*541. Bachitar Natak, VI, verse 31
*542. Zafarnama, verse 103
*543. Ibid., verse 104
*544. Ibid., verse 105
*545. Ibid., verse 111
ever ready to sacrifice his life, to uphold his ideals. Even the Guru's instructions to keep long hair and unshorn beard are to revive the ancient saintly tradition. The unshorn hair and beard had been symbols of holiness and purity, and only the pure of heart had a right to wield arms to uphold God's ideals. Commenting on the role of Khalsa as the army of God, the Guru said,

(i) "The Khalsa is my image, I reside in the Khalsa."*547

(ii) "The Khalsa is the army of the Immortal One, The Khalsa has been created by His Command."*548

(iii) "So long as the Khalsa retains his individuality, I shall give him all the glory. But when he deviates to misguided ways, I shall not support him."*549

(iv) "I am respected for I raised the Khalsa under God's Command, Otherwise there are millions like me, for whom no one cares."*550

Lastly, the Guru had instructed the Khalsa to wage a war only when all other means and negotiations had been explored and had failed. The war had to be the ultimate and last resort for the settlement of issues. The Guru asserted in his letter to Aurangzeb,

"When all other possible means fail, It is but just to raise the sword."*551

From the above, we see that the theory of war as propounded by Guru Gobind Singh was entirely different from those of an ordinary war. The Guru's concept of a Saint-Soldier was unique in character and unparalleled in history.

It is therefore clear that Guru Gobind Singh had not changed the religion preached by the first nine Gurus. On the contrary, his injunctions, acts

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*547. Sarb Loha Granth, p.667
*548. Ibid., p.668
*549. Ibid.
*550. Cyan Prabodh, Swayyas 2 (645)
*551. Zafarnama, verse 22
and instructions were, in every way, the logical and appropriate
development of the teachings, commandments and traditions initiated by
the House of Nanak.

In Guru Gobind Singh's concept of the ideal man, we find Guru Nanak's
strong belief in the One Universal God and international brotherhood;
Guru Angad's emphasis on healthy mind, strong body, pure consciousness
and Guru Amardas's strong will-power and insistence on service to God, to
the Guru and to mankind. Guru Ramdas's stress on humility in actions and
simplicity in living; Guru Arjan's directive for Nam-Simran and keeping
the company of saints; Guru Hargobind's, Guru Har Rai's and Guru
Harkrishan's instructions to attend to congregational prayers, to bow to
His Command and to offer selfless service to humanity; and Guru Tegh
Bahadur's teaching of the ideal of a Jiwal Mukt and self-sacrifice for the
sake of others. Guru Gobind Singh added to all that, courage, strength and
power, which transformed sparrows into hawks and jackals into lions.