Chapter II

Religious Paradigms of the Sikh Identity

This chapter deals with the religious paradigms of the Sikh identity that how faith, commitment and institutions emerge from the Sikh thought. Religious paradigms are the models of spiritual thoughts, which contain in the scripture. Guru Granth Sahib is a main source of the Sikh thought because it is a living Guru.

Sikh Faith and Identity:

Faith is a central part of the religious identity. Every religion presents a profound description and projection of particular identity. Thus, faith is a basic requirement of religious identity. Prophets or spiritual personalities propagate every faith. In the Sikh faith, Guru is the central personality, which illuminates the seekers and creates different faith towards Ultimate Reality. Sikh Panth has been founded by Guru Nanak. He was born at Rai Bhoe Ki Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib in Pakistan). Various scholars conceive him as a religious leader, thinker, philosopher, revolutionary and reformer. Bhai Gurdas, first Sikh theologian writes that 'The benefactor Lord listened to the cries (of humanity) and sent Guru Nanak to this world. He washed His feet, eulogized God and got his disciples drink the ambrosia of His feet. He preached in this dark age (kaliyug) that sargun (Brahm) and nirgun (Parbrahm) are same and identical. Dharma was now established on its four feet and all the four castes (through fraternal feeling) were converted into one caste (of humanity). Equating poor with the prince, he spread the etiquette of egotist high heads bowing to feet. Baba Nanak rescued this dark age
(kalyug) and recited ‘satinam’ mantra for one and all. Guru Nanak came to redeem the kaliyuga'.

The nature of God or Ultimate Reality plays an important role in the formation of religious identity. Once, Jaques Derrida said in an interview that philosophy’s first and last question is “What is being”? But till now, philosophy could not reach at any conclusion on this point. To solve this question, the thinkers turned to look upon at the world scriptures. Inarguably, it has been accepted that in every religion, the questions about God, being and nature are basic around which all the paradigms of life are moving. To understand the faith of the Sikhs, which is created by the Guru Nanak, there is need to examine the nature of the Ultimate Reality as per the Sikh vision.

The world has two major religious traditions. One starts from Judaism and goes from Christianity to Islam, known as Semitic tradition and the second Vedic or Indian tradition comprising of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism.

In Judaism, the name of God is known to as Yahweh. During nomadic stage of Hebrew culture, power in various forms of manifestation, was essence of deity. Yahweh was associated with storm, fire and war: the imagery was always anthropomorphic. In the Old Testament, Moses received a revelation (Exodus 3.2-15 and 6.2-8) from God

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as “He Who Is”, unique and without any possible rival. This God is just and merciful. He demands absolute fidelity and total devotion and will no brook any philandering with other so-called gods’.\footnote{Geddes Macgrogor, \textit{The Everyman Dictionary of Religion and Philosophy}, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, London, 1990, p. 278.}

Yahweh is the God of ‘chosen people’ who are the native of Isreal. W.T. Diavison writes that ‘the utterance of Dt 6.4, ‘Jahweh our God, Jahweh is one’, is the watchword of the religion of Isreal in no artificial or perfunctory sense throughout the national history……..The God who spoke to Moses from the bush was not an unknown Deity; He was the ‘God of thy father’ and ‘the God of your fathers’; even His name was previously known – ‘Jahweh the God of the Hebrews’ (Ex 3.6.15.18).\footnote{W.T. Diavison, “God: Biblical and Christian”, in \textit{Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics} (vol. vi), James Hastings (ed.), T. & T. Clark, New York, 1967, pp. 252-53.} Thus, Yahweh is the God of Hebrew peoples only.

In Christological account, God is, ‘the Supreme Being, Pure Act, First cause of all, provident conserver and governor of the universe; the Absolute- infinite, eternal, immutable, intelligent, omniscient, all-powerful, and free; the Creator, to whom creatures owe homage, respect and obedience; the Sovereign Good, diffusive of all goodness, toward which everything tends as to its ultimate final cause; the supernatural source of revelation; the Godhead composed of three divine nature – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.’\footnote{\textit{New Catholic Encyclopedia} (vol.4), The Catholic University of America, McGrew Hill Book Company, New York, 1967, p. 535.
After Christianity, the next phase is of Islam, which was founded by the Prophet Muhammad. ‘Muhammad introduced Islam in Arabia that was a welter of cultures and religions. Muhammad’s own tribe, the Quraysh, was pagan. The Quraysh was based in the city of Mecca, which was a center of trade and pilgrimage: travelers from all the surrounding regions passed through it. The Quraysh did a lucrative trade due to the pilgrimages to the local shrine, the Ka’bah, which housed numerous pagan idols - chiefly the image of the god Hubal. The local gods of all the area tribes were represented in the shrine, along with other idols identified with trees and stones near the Ka’bah. One of these gods, “Allah,” not yet identified with the lone god of Islam, may have been the tribal god of the Quraysh. Others included three goddesses beloved of many of the area tribes, al-Lat, al-‘Uzza, and Manat, who played a significant role in Muhammad’s prophetic career’.  

Although Allah’s existence was in various local gods at Mecca before Muhammad but it was the new message of the God, which was said by Muhammad through Quran, known to be the scripture of Islam. According to the interpretation of Quran the Allah is, ‘the Unique One, the creator and Lord of the judgment, polarizes the thought of Islam; He is the sole reason for its existence. Allah was known to the pre-

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122 ‘The Quran is, for Muslims, the revealed word of God. Hence, the interpretation of the Quran (tafsīr) has emerged as one of the most revered disciplines in Islam. Given that the life of the early Muslims revolved around the Quran from the beginning, one of their earliest concerns was to understand the message of the sacred text. The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632) and his immediate followers (known as the companions) used the Quran for day-to-day guidance, prayer, and spiritual enrichment, and for liturgical and congregational use. Although interpretation of the Quran as a discipline developed over time, Muslims engaged with it from the beginning in less formal ways: reflecting on it, reciting it, discussing it, and attempting to explain it to each other. It was such activities that gradually led to the development of the exegetical tradition in Islam’.

Islamic Arabs; he was one of the Maccan deities, possibly the supreme deity and certainly a creation-god. He was already known, by antonomasia, as the God, allah (the most likely etymology; another suggestion is the Aramaic Alaha). For Allah before Islam, as shown by archaeological sources and the Kuran. But the vague notion of supreme (not sole) divinity, which Allah seems to have connoted in Maccan religion, was to become both universal and transcendental; it was to be turned, by the Kuranic preaching, into the affirmation of the Living God, the Exalted One'.

In Indian tradition, Jainism is the earliest tradition. It is also known to as the oldest faith of the world. ‘Jainism is a religion without God……besides it denies the soul also. Jainism believes in the soul capable of attaining the divine status; naturally ‘prayer’ is conspicuously absent’. Prayer is the most relevant part of Jain faith but it denies the existence of supreme spirit or god. Jainism believes in meditations which are much important in this faith. Due to this, mostly, the followers of Jainism are famous for long and difficult mediations. Ultimately, this faith is known to as athesist religion in the traditions of spirituality if the world. As B.B. Raynade writes that ‘Jainism is atheistical, if by atheism we understand the belief that there is no eternal supreme God, Greater and Lord of all things; for Jains flatly deny such a supreme God. Nor need it surprise us that atheism should be essential to a religious system; for even the most

orthodox systems like Mimamsa deny the existence of a supreme God, though, of course, on other grounds than those of the Jains.\textsuperscript{125}

Buddhism is known to be professing the philosophy of Shunya precisely which is the fundamental concept relating with Nirvana. ‘Nagarjuna, the second century AD Buddhist philosopher defines Shunya or void as “co-dependently originated in the principle of Pratityasamutpad”. This is the Absolute of Buddhism, the ultimate form of the world. To intuit this through Prajana, which is beyond reason, as T.R.V. Murti says, means giving up of all views, standpoints and predicaments. Only merging into this Absolute world formation with necessary transformation can lead to Nirvana. In other words, the Buddhistic liberation could also form a memory to remember and organize things in a singular way, that is non-differentially.\textsuperscript{126}

Hinduism is a polytheist religion. There are many gods and goddesses in Hinduism. Vedas are assumed as the sacred literature of Hinduism. Besides this, Upanishads, Smritis, Brahm Bhash, Sutras, Purans, Mahabharata, Gita etc. are also the source of Hindu spirit. Chiefly, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are the prominent gods of Hinduism. As Swami Bhaskarananda says that ‘Vedic statements like “Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti” - “One alone exists, sages call it by various name”, not only emphasizes the oneness of God, but also form a firm foundation of catholicity and

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid. p. 66.
tolerance in Hinduism. The idea of harmony of religions is a fundamental ingredient of Hinduism’.  

Ishvara is also the main feature of the Hindu God, which is projected in the three different energies; creation (Brahma), protection (Vishnu) and destruction (Shiva). These three spirits run the whole process of the universe and these also have their Avatars. ‘Personal God in Hinduism is called Saguna Brahman or Ishvara. From the standpoint of man posited in the world of time, space and causation, Ishvara or Saguna Brahman is the creator of the world. He is omnipotent, omniscient and all-pervading. By His mere will, He manifests Himself as the manifold universe’. So as in Hinduism, the major sign of Ishvara/Brahm occurs with acuteness. In the whole traditions of Hinduism, it occupies a central place.

These signs of God had been shifted in the Meta-Signs and Grand-Narratives. Postmodernist thinkers focus upon the limitations of the grand-narratives, which have been frozen. As Gayatri Spivak says that ‘the grand recites are great narratives and the narrative has an end in view. And I think the post-structuralists, if I understand them right, imagine again and again that when a narrative is constructed, something is left out. When an end is defined, other ends are rejected, and one might not know what those ends are’.  

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128 Swami Bhaskarananda, *op. cit.*, p. 70.  
Postmodernists also focus upon the remains of which are out of structures and narratives. The main problem is that the grand narratives do not leave space for other when they become hegemonic. The articulations of Allah, Shunya and Brahma were in totalitarian structures. As Gurbhagat Singh writes that ‘the Hindu and the Buddhistic memory modes are totalitive and uni-centred. The idea of absoluteive Allah with total unity does not leave space for His multiple revelations. This kind of absolutely unitarian meta-sign of Allah could set up a uni-perspectival memory, not with many signifieds for varied contents. Accordingly, the articulation of this uniperspectival remembrance could also result into a uniforming organization of society and politics doing violence to other memories’.  

The followers of above discussed Gods try to maintain their identity. Formation of religious identity is directly linked with concept of God because the practice of a follower depends upon his/her faith.

The founder of Sikh faith, Guru Nanak re-constructs the spiritual and cultural reflexes. He also gives a new vision of Ultimate Reality with multiple dimensions, which is Ek Onkar. The concept of Ek Onkar (ॐ) is the focal word around which the Sikh spiritual discipline of the Nam revolves. It was adopted as the basic concept of Sikh theology and an esoteric essence of Sikhism from the time of Guru Nanak. It is found in

\[\text{130} \text{ Ibid, pp. 42-43.} \]
\[\text{131} \text{“Definitely Potent; Potential definitely realized (actualised) as ‘Definite Potency’. Unit (Live cell).”} \]
the revelations of the early Sikh Gurus, as preserved in the Guru Granth,\footnote{Kapur Singh, Parasaraprasna: The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh, Piar Singh and Madanjit Kaur (eds.), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 2001, p. 53.} which it is known as Sikh’s supreme and Ultimate Reality. Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture begins with Ek Onkar. It is interpreted and accepted in the Sikh doctrine that entire hymns of Guru Granth Sahib are the explanation of Ek Onkar. First impression of Ek Onkar commences with Mul Mantra\footnote{Ý signwm krqw purKu inrBAu inrvYru akwl mUriq ajUnI sYBM gurpRswid| (SGGS; 1) which is ‘Ek Onkar’\footnote{Ek Onkar can be approximately translated as the one Dynamic Being. Ek Symbolized by the numeral 1 (One) qualifies the soleness, oneness, or wholeness of God but it does not suggest His totalitive Being that may assimilate all. As the Guru explains in the text below. God loves His creation and keeps it under His kind glance to gladden it. Gurbhagat Singh, op. cit., 2009, p. 50.}}, which is ‘Ek Onkar’\footnote{Ibid. p. 50.}, the True Nam (Nam literally means Name, but the thought of God to initiate a holistic and loving meditation on Him, turns into an ecstasy). Here Nam’s near equivalent could be: Luminous Quintessences. In Raga Asa the Guru says that the tranced mind drinks Nam as rasa (relish). The Sikh Gurus have called Nam as amrit (nectar.).\footnote{Ibid. p. 50.} Creator, Puruhk (Purakh may be translated as “person”, but it signifies a sensitive, responsive and powerful person or Primal Being without any gender-limit or hegemonic nuance). In the Indian Sankhya philosophical system, Purakh (Purusha) means Supreme Intelligence.)\footnote{Ibid. pp. 50-51.}, Fearless, Without Enmity, Eternal, Manifest, Immortal, Self-born, Realized by the Guru’s Blessing.’\footnote{Ibid. op. cit., 2009, p. 50.}

Such attributes project the nature of Ek Onkar. On the superficial level, the question may be raised that Sikhism presents itself as monotheism such as Islam with the idea of One God. But monotheism in Sikhism is not exactly as in Judaism and Islam,
with a personified yet transcendent God, Jehovah or Allah. It is rather the Supreme Being in two aspects - the unattributed-transcendent and the attributed-immanent. To distinguish these two aspects of the Supreme Being, a subtle differentiation in terminology has been made: Ek Oankar, standing at the head of Mul-Mantra, meaning the Sole, Indivisible Supreme Being is the unattributed transcendent Par-Brahm.\textsuperscript{138}

Uninterruptedly, Par-Brahm performs in a dual manner - both Nirguna and Sarguna. In dialectics, being is in confusion about God. Someone says He is outside and the other says inside but Guru deals it as:

‘Some aver He is outside of us: some that He is within:

Invisible His hue and feature.

Sisters of wedded bliss! tell me the truth of it.

Pervading all, in all abiding, He from Maya-taint free.

Saith Nanak: Listen, people of the world!

On the tongue of the holy He abides’.\textsuperscript{139}

It means Waheguru exists and the holy beings realize Him through Nam. He is uncountable, immeasurable and unsayable. All the universes are singing His praise of illimitability:

\textsuperscript{138} Gurbachan Singh Talib, \textit{Sri Guru Granth Sahib in English Translation} (vol. 1), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1984, p. xlv.

\textsuperscript{139} \texttt{ko khqo sB bwhir bwhir ko khqo sB mhIaAu ] brnu n dISY ichnu n lKiaY suhwgin swiq buJhIaAu ] srb invwsI Git Git vwsI lypu nhI alphIaAu ] nwnku khq sunhu ry logw sMq rsn ko bshIaAu ]} (SGGS; 700)
‘Placed on the salver of heaven are the lamps, sun and moon, 
With pearls of constellations-Thy offering.

Fragrant mountain-breezes Thy incense, the wind Thy fly-whisk.

The entire blossoming vegetation Thy flower offering- Thou who art light.

How wonderful is this arati, Thy arati, Thou Annihiler of transmigration.

Divine spiritual harmony, Thy worship orchestrates.

Thousands Thy eyes, Thy forms : yet without physical eyes, formless Thou remainist;

thousands Thy lotus-feet, Thy senses of fragrances- Yet without visible organs art Thou!

Wonderful to me are Thy ways.’

Guru Granth Sahib has many attributes of the Ek Onkar. Ek Onkar/Waheguru/Akal Purakh cannot be framed in a single dimension. He is beyond the forms but manifests in various forms. There is no power to express Him accurately and in wholeness. Invocatory verse of Sri Dasam Granth is that ‘you (Waheguru) have no specific physical appearance, nor you have any Varna, caste or sub-caste. Nobody can describe your features, complexion, your outlines or your grab. Eternal being, Self-Effulgent Possessor of infinite powers - this is how you are addressed. You are the supreme among the millions of Indras, the God of gods, and the Ruler of rulers. The Ruler of three worlds, you are called neti neti - this is not He, this is not He, by the

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ggn mY Qwlu riv cMdu dlpk bny qwirkw mMfl jnk moqI ]
DUPu mlawnlo pvNu cvro kry sgl bnrwie PUlûq jcoqI ]1]
shs qv nYn nn nYn hih qoih kAu shs mUriq nnw eyk quohI ]
shs pd ibml nn eyk pd gMD ibnu shs qv gMD iev clq mohI ]2] (SGGS;13)
gods, humans and demons as well as by every leaf of grass in the forest: they all acknowledge your infinity. Who can express all of your names, and that is why the wise men have described only your functional names’.\textsuperscript{141}

The Ek Onkar is one God but he is not signifier. He is out of castes and cannot be frozen in singular aspect/format. The paradigms of Allah and Brahma had been monad at the time of Guru Nanak and it is the grace of Guru’s wonder that he breaks the one-dimensional perspective of God. Within spiritual and practical deconstruction, he creates the new symbol of God, who is full of wonders. He is original but also gives space to other for their originalities and creativities. It is His wonderful attribute, which is imagined by the current thinking of post-modernity. Gurbhagat Singh says that ‘Waheguru is the highest symbol of Sikh revolution whose distinctive originality could not be understood till now. Waheguru is multi-dimensional. He is the idol of polynomial truth. As the “quantum-leap” of quantum-physics, any resplendence of original thought from its multiplicity can come with jump. In unity also, Waheguru is multiple worth seeing and multi-layers. His multicity layer crates probability of multi-revelations’.\textsuperscript{142}

Thus, Waheguru provides chance to world for performance in multi-colours. In Guru Nanak’s paradigm of Vismadic terminology, Waheguru is also Vismadi. ‘Vismad is in fact what Bataille would term “excess” or the self-crossing of the mind and life in the

\textsuperscript{141}\textsuperscript{141} Rattan Singh Jaggi and Gursharan Kaur Jaggi (eds.), \textit{Shri Dasam Granth: Text-editing & Commentary} (vol. i), Gobind Sadan, New Delhi, 1999, p. 2.

non-rational diversity of life. Vismad of the Guru, because of its diversity and high intensity exceeds the excess of Bataille’.\textsuperscript{143} In this universe, all the music, knowledge, creatures, diversities, forms, colours, air, water, fire, earth, beings etc. are in joy and marvellous. As;

‘Marvellous are the varied forms of speech in the universe;

Marvellous the scriptures recorded:

Marvellous the multiplicity of creation, wonderful their distinctions:

Marvellous creation’s forms, wonderful its variety.

Strange the sight of creatures going about naked.

Marvellous the motions of air, wonderful is water;

Astounding the pleasures in which are human beings involved.

Wonderful is union, wonderful is separation.

Inexplicable is hunger afflicting some: Strange the way some are straying.

Wonderful the sight of others following the straight path.

Wonderful some that are close to God; Strange others though far off.

To see much marvels with wonder am I struck.

Saith Nanak : By supreme good fortune only is this mystery resolved’.\textsuperscript{144}


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In Akal Ustati, Guru Gobind Singh gives an account of Vismadic Akal Purakh with his sinewy language, which is full of significant metaphors, signs and symbols. It also shows the Sikh distinctness and there does not seem any narrowness toward others. All over, a Sikh prays in the Sikh doctrine in the nature of ‘Thou’, not in ‘I’ because Sikh always sings Him, and without Waheguru, he is nothing. Guru Gobind Singh explains that, ‘Thou art the earth; And Thou the Sky; Thou art the house; And Thou its owner. Free from incarnation; And given to nobody’s fear; Too subtle to be touched art Thou; Beyond all destruction and decay. Thou art epitome of all virtue; Fast and austerities art Thou; Thou art the libration; Liberation-incarnate art Thou. Thou art, Thou art; Thou art, Thou art; Thou art, Thou art; Thou art, Thou art; Thou art, Thou art; Thou art, Thou art’. 145

As within the musical sounds of Tuhi, Guru fills the aura of being with fragrance of pure-metaphysics which is the journey of Surti to Par-Brahma. It is here known-able and remarkable to say that Sikh experience of God is in neh146 not in fear.

The tradition of Sikh naming of God is very important which performs as an axle of spiritualism. Both the traditions of Aryan and Semitic come in the Sikh experience, that’s why the Punjab is also the centre of world spiritualism. The culmination of Semitic tradition (Sufis through Baba Shaikh Farid) and the climax of Aryan tradition (Bhagats) take breath in Guru Granth Sahib. The practice of attributing of various names to God in

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145 \(ivsmwdu\) ny\(VY\) ivsmwdu du\(Ur\) \(ivsmwdu\) dy\(KY\) hwjrw hj\(Uir\) \(ivsmwdu\) vy\(yK\) ivf\(w\)Nu ri\(h\)aw ivsmwd\(u\) \(nn\)nk bu\(J\)Nu p\(U\)r\(Y\) B\(w\)ig \(SGGS\); 463-64

146 Neh can be called the pure crystallized form of love. In the experience of Neh, there is no place of any ego and such as. To more details see Guru Granth Sahib, p. 60, 83, 399, 966, 1094 etc.
the Aryan tradition manifests itself in Sehsarnamas which define the thousands name of particular Gods and Goddesses like Vishnu, Shiva, Durga, Chandika etc. In Semitic tradition, this tradition performs in Islam’s scripture Koran. There we met with 99 names\textsuperscript{147} of Allah. In both the traditions, the names express a particular form of God, that is static, one dimensional and also hegemonic.

Sikh experience of Waheguru/Ek Onkar is capacious and gigantic. Due to the presence of above both traditions in Guru Granth Sahib and Dasam Granth, the experience of God naming is really extraordinary. Guru Arjan calls Waheguru/Ek Onkar with the name of Karim, Pritpal, Rahim, Allah, Khuda, Bhagwant, Gusai, Jagnath, Jagjivan, Rikhikes, Gopal, Gobind, Mukand, Meharvan, Maula, Pir, Paikambar, Saikh, Narain, Narhar, Dyal, Ram, Basdev, Parbrahma etc.\textsuperscript{148} These names present both the traditions’ spiritual experiences. In Jap and Akal Ustati, Guru Gobind Singh also describes that there are countless names of God. In Jap, thousand names of Ek Onkar have mentioned such as Sehsamama, but it is not in hegemonic mode rather it is in the flow of multi-spirituals. He salutes to the different forms of God. As: ‘Salutation to the Kinless; Salutation to the Fearless; Salutation to the Merciful; [and] Salutation to the

\textsuperscript{147} Thomas Patrick, Dictionary of Islam, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1977, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{148} kwrn krn krIIm ] srb pRiqpw1 rhIm ]
ah alK apwr ] Kuid Kudwie vf bysumwr ]1]
jgMnwQ jjgIvn mwDo ] BAu BMjn ird mwih arwDo ]
irKIkys gopwl guoivMd ] pUrR srbqR mukMd ]2]
imhrvwn mAulw qUhI eyk ] pIr pYkWbr syK ]
idlw kw mwlku kry hkwu ] kurwn kqyb qy pwku ]3]
wrwrieN nzhr dieawl ] rmq rwm Gt Gt awDwr ]
bwsudyv bsq sB Twie ] lIIw ikCu 1KI n jwie ]4]
imhr dieaw kir krnYhwr ] Bgiq BMdgI dyih isrjNhwr ]
khu nwnk quir Koey Brm jeyko alhu pwrbRhm ]5] (SGGS; 896)
Compassionate. Salutation to the Perfect Yogi; Salutation to the Enjoyer of all; Salutation to the One kind to all; [and] Salutation to the One Preserver of all'.

Waheguru/Ek Onkar is the God of livings and non-livings of the universes. He is not in caste, creed, colour and area specific. In the perspective of immensity, Guru Gobind Singh sees all the people of world are singing His praise. He says that ‘natives of France and England, Bilinguals of France; Mridangi of Makran—all sing His eulogies; Resident of Bhakkar and Qandhar, Gakharis of Gor, Natives of Gardeja, Those who live on air alone - remember His name; Plaum, Kamrup and Kamaun - all in the East Thou pervade all places wherever we go; Master with Perfect grandeur, unaffected by magic; None can fathom His grandeur unfathomable’.

Thus, Sikh realization of Waheguru/Ek Onkar by Gurus is radically distinct. Guru Nanak’s experience of God is jahra, which cannot be shriveled among the Vedas/Kateba. Through the conceptualization of Ek Onkar, Guru coins a new identity. Thus, Ek Onkar becomes the center of the Sikh faith which is an essential mark of Sikh identity.

Commitment and Sikh Identity:

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151 (SGGS; 397)
It is an amazing fact that people from various faiths respected Guru Nanak. He was an ocean of Divine love. In the observation of Bhai Nand Lal Goya, Nanak has the true spirit of religion. There is nobody like him. His anchoritic raises the head of the sainthood. Everybody desires to take a mote of his feet. The Janam Sakhi (biographical accounts on Guru Nanak) explains the union between Guru Nanak and Akal Purakh. Guru Nanak was honored by the Ultimate One. God said to Guru Nanak that where there is your grace, there is My grace. My name is Parbram Parmeshar and you are Gur Parmeshar.

Guru Nanak created new identity, which is entirely different from established traditions. Bhai Gurdas explains in his writing that the position of the religion without Guru was in darkness. The sin had spread in the world and justice was weeping. When Guru Nanak came out from the Bei stream, he clearly declares that there is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim.

Ultimately, Guru Nanak has established a new form of religion with the invention of the Ultimate One. He has direct conversation with the Akal Purakh. There is no mediator between them. Due to this, Sirdar Kapur Singh writes, ‘Guru Nanak is the Guru, and he is demonstrably not a ‘reformer’, as Davy Cunningham in his History calls

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153 Bhai Vir Singh (ed.), Puratan Janam Sakhi Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan, New Delhi, 2006, p. 41.
154 Bhai Gurdas, op. cit., p. 11.
155 Bhai Vir Singh, op. cit., p. 43.
156 The discussions about the nature of God in the Sikh experience will study in the next section of this chapter.
him. A ‘reformer’ is one who restores an already established religion to its supposed original purity or amends it to remove its supposed defects. A ‘reformer’ accepts the validity of the already established religion and does not, directly or indirectly, repudiate or foreswear, is emphatic and explicit that he “follows that what is directly revealed to him by God”.\(^{157}\)

To make his followers the distinct disciples, Guru Nanak has transformed himself in ten forms. Gurbani explains that the same Divine light is transforming in the different bodies.\(^{158}\) He has created the third path to achieve the Ultimate One and for their emancipations from the sins. Every Guru of his tradition under a different name has propagated the same vision and ideology. As per Sri Dasam Granth that second Guru, Angad was recognized the great Guru Nanak himself, and in Amardas was accepted the presence of the spirit of Angad. Ramdas was known to be the very self of Amardas. The saints could see it. The ignorant could not realize it. All took them to be different. The oneness was realized by the very few exceptional ones only.\(^{159}\) Guru Gobind Singh describes in details about the same Divine light.


\(^{158}\) joiq Ehw jugiq swe sih kwieaw Pyir plTay \{(SGGS; 966)\}

\(^{159}\) sRI nwnk aMgid kir mwnw{ amrdws aMgd pihcwnw{ amrdws rwmdws khwXo{ swDn 1Kw mUVH nih pwXo{ ibMn iBMn sB hUM kr jwnw{ eyk rUp iknhUM pihcwnw{ ijn jwnw iqns hI isiD pweI{ ibnu smJy isiD hwQ nw aweI{ rwmdws hir so imil gey{ gurqw dyq arjunih Bey{ jb arjun pRB loik isDwey{ hir goibMd iqhTW Thrwey{ hir goibMd pRB loik isDwry{ hir rwie iqhTW bYTwry{ hrI ikRsin iqn ky suq vey{ iqn qy qyg bhwdur Bey{ iqlk jMJU rwKw pRB qkw{ kIno bfo k1U mih swkw{ swDn hyq ieqI ijin krI{ sis d1Xw pru sI n AucrI}

The followers of the Guru realized this phenomenon from the core of their heart. Therefore, Bhai Nand Lal Goya in his writing explains about the oneness of the spirit of Guru and he is the spectator of Guru Gobind Singh in his age. ‘He had witnessed the devotion of the Sikhs for the Tenth Master whom they recognized as Nanak himself. He, thus, confirms the tradition then current and refers to all the Gurus having one spirit excelling all others in greatness, and radiating one another with their spirit. The confirmation of this tradition by a contemporary scholar of Guru Gobind Singh should be considered enough evidence of the complete identification of Guru Gobind Singh with the spirit of the First Master’.160

Not only the Sikhs realize about the oneness of Gurus, but also Mohsin Fani, the contemporary of Sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind writes in his Dabistan-i-Mazahib that ‘when Guru Nanak left his body, he absorbed (himself) in Guru Angad who was his nearest servant (most devoted disciple), and that Guru Angad is Nanak himself. After that, at the time of his death, Guru Angad entered into the body of Amardas in the above-mentioned manner. He in the same manner occupied a place in the body of Ramdas, and Ramdas in the same way got united with Arjun Mal’.161


In Sikhism, the Bani is the Guru and Guru is the Bani. In Siddh Gosti, the Siddhas ask Guru Nanak that who is your Guru and Guru Nanak replies that Sabad is my Guru and the consciousness is his follower. As he writes;

‘What is the origin of existence? What teaching is appropriate to this age? Who is the master whose disciple thou art?

But what discourse from Maya-stain you remain free?

Saith Nanak: Said the Yogis, listen thou novice! Expound to us the discourse, As to the Word that liberation confers.

The air of breath is the origin of existence; the age in need of the holy receptor’s teaching stands.

The holy Word is the Preceptor; by devoted meditation on it I am its disciple.163

Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan compiled Adi Granth and the tenth Nanak Guru Gobind Singh declared finally the ultimate Guru is Guru Granth Sahib for the Sikhs forever. There is no difference between the Guru and the Bani. Both are same. The Bani has all the virtues of the Guru. The Sikh must follow what the Bani says.164 Sobharani Basu writes, ‘Guru Nanak, the guru is the Sabda, the word. He says: “The Word is Guru.” “It is only through the Word that I dwell on Him and so through the Guru the fire of humai

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162 The revealed realizations and experiences of the Guru, which are complied by Guru-self in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
163 kvN mUlu kvN miq vylw ] qyrw kvNu gurU ijs kw qU cylw ]
kvN kQw ly rhhu inrwly ] bolY nwnku suNhu qum bwly ]
eyu kQw kw dyie bicwrU ] BvjlU sbid lUgwnNhwrU ]
pvn arMBu siqgur miq vylw ] sbdu gurU suriq Duin cylw ] (SGGS; 942-43)
164 bwNI gurU gurU hY bwNI ivic bwNI aMimRqu swry ]
guru bwNI khY syvku jnu mwnY prqiK gurU insqwry ] (SGGS; 982)
(ego) is extinguished”. It is evident from his statement that the Guru is the God and Guru is the voice of God, the Guru is the Word, the Truth of God. The Guru is identified with God'.

The Sikhs commit their lives to the Guru. In the Sikh experience, Guru is the manifestation of the truth. He follows the path of the Ultimate Reality and leads his followers on the same way. He recites the name of Akal Purakh and assists the Sikhs in recitation. As:

‘Whoever has truth within, By a truthful tongue the holy Name utters.

Himself treading the Lord’s path, others too on the Lord’s path he guides.

At a sacred spot may impurity be removed;

Bathing in a pond will only with more filth cover him.

The true sacred spot is the holy Preceptor,

Who unceasingly on the name Divine meditates.

Himself along with his tribe finds he release:

By gift of devotion to the whole creation too release he procures.

Nanak, servant of God, is a sacrifice to such

As contemplate the Name Divine and others to it inspire’.  


166 ijs dY aMdir scu hY so scw nwmu muiK scu alwey ]
    Ehu hir mwrig awip cldw hornw no hir mwrig pwey ]
    jy agY qIrQu hole qw mlu lhY CpiV nwqY sgvi mlu lwey ]
    q1rQu pUrw siggurU jo anidnu hir hir nwmu iDawey ]
    Ehu awip Cutw kutMb isAu dy hir hir nwmu sB isRsit Cfwey ]
Guru shows the way to Divine Nam. Without Guru, there is darkness everywhere and the life is worthless. Guru cares for his Sikhs and they are committed to him. There is no fear if Guru is with the Sikhs. He gives all kinds of knowledge to the Sikhs. As;

‘Whoever has the Master on his side, never of wealth should be proud.

Whoever has the Master on his side, what need for him of lakhs of supporters?

Whoever has the Master on his side, in enlightenment and contemplation remains absorbed.

Whoever has the Master on his side the house of truth enters and on the Word discourses.

States the bard in humility: Whoever day and night repeats the Master’s name,

And lodges the Master’s name in heart, is freed from transmigration’.167

On the other hand, it is an arduous task to be a Sikh. The relationship between Guru and a Sikh is the relation of love. Actually, Sikh is the pratice of love. Sikhism is the religion of love and the Guru Granth Sahib gives the message of love. Guru clearly enunciates that if you want to play the game of love, first and formost task is to come

jn nwnk iqsu bilhwrNY jo awip jpy avrw nwmu jpwey (SGGS;140)

167 jwim gurU hoie vil Dinhi ikaw gwrvu idjie jwim gurU hoie vil lK bwhy ikaw ikjie

jwim gurU hoie vil igawn aru iDawn ann pir jwim gurU hoie vil sbdu swKI su sch Gir

jo gurU gurU aihinis jpy dwsu Btu byniq khY jo gurU nwmu ird mih DrY so jnm mrN duh Qy rhY (SGGS;1399)
in my street, with your head laid upon your palm. If you want to walk on this path, there is no need to be proud. If you want to be called a Sikh then you must be obligated. As;

‘One known as disciple of the holy Preceptor, Must, rising at dawn,
on the Name Divine mediate.
At dawn must he no way fail to rise, Should cleanse himself and in
God’s Name, the Pool of Amrita take bath.
Then, as by the Master instructed, must he the Name Divine repeatedly utter – There shall all his sins, evil and foul doings be shed. Then with rise of day must he chant the Master’s Word – In rest and movement on the Name Divine must he meditate.
The disciple that with each breath and morsel on the Lord meditates, shall the Master’s pleasure win.
The Master to such of the disciples his teaching imparts, as the Lord’s grace have received.
Nanak, servant of God, seeks dust of feet of such a disciple
As contemplating the holy Name, to it inspires others.’

168 jAu qAu pRym KyI N kw cwAu] isru Dir qlI glI myrI awAu] iequ mwrIq pYru DrIjY] isru dIjY kwiN n kIjY] (SGGS; 1412)
Guru teaches the spiritual way of an ideal life. A Sikh sacrifices his life in love with the Guru. He infuses the extra-ordinary energy in a Sikh so that he can meet Him. Due to this, a Sikh desires that if there is anyone, who speaks of Akal Purkh to him, he would offer his head to him as a stool to sit and would serve him devoid of his head. It is the climax of Sikh devotion towards his faith and commitment.

**Spiritual Foundations of Sikh Institutions:**

Guruship is the basic institution of Sikhism because Guru is the central point of the Sikh faith. Guruship was started by Guru Nanak to carry the vision and practice of Divine Nam. Guruship is continuing in the form of Guru Granth Sahib. All the Sikh institutions move around Guru. Gurdwara exists within the presence of Guru and all the activities of the Sikhs take direction from here.

In the perspective of social association, Guru Nanak established Sangat (gathering of the disciples of Shabda). In the Dharamsal/Gurdwara the Sangat gather to recite the Divine Nam. In Sangat, which is called the sat-sangat (the gathering of truthful people) and Sadh-Sangat (the gathering of the sages), one can get his/her real identity. Without Sangat living of a Sikh is worthless. Sangat is the place where a devotee can access his/her inner-experience and be in-tune with higher-consciousness. Through the experience of Kirtan (recitation of the Divine Nam with music instruments), a Sikh makes the journey to the spiritual world. As per Gurbani, without Sangat the life

\[ \text{SGGS; 558} \]
is cursed. It must be gotten by very good luck. It can make iron to gold and Guru also wishes to get Sangat of those people who recite the Divine Nam. As;

‘Such as on the Name Divine not meditated are unfortunate, in Yama’s noose caught.

Such as have not sought in congregation the Lord’s shelter,

Cursed is their life passed, cursed the future’.  

‘By supreme good fortune is not found holy company. The unlucky in doubt stumble about.

Without good fortunate is not found holy company; Away from holy company does impurity accumulate.’

‘As iron at touch of the philosopher’s stone, so in holy company does one turn into gold’.

‘Those that by the Master’s guidance have lauded the Name, are universally acclaimed. Lord ! this is the prayer of this supplicant;

Grant me association with such’.

Dharamsal/Gurdwara is the first institution, which was established by the Guru Nanak. Bhai Gurdas explains that ‘wherever Baba put his feet, a religious place was
erected and established. All the Siddh-places now have been renamed on the name of Nanak. Every home has become a daily liturgy. Baba Nanak gave deliverance in all the four directions and nine divisions of earth. Guru Nanak visited four directions to find the truthful person and shared his spiritual experiences with people of different faiths. Gurdwara is a meeting place for his devotees. Gurdwara is the place where a person cleans himself from evil and dirtiness. Gurbani makes their minds pure. Guru writes about Gurdwara:

‘With whomsoever He is pleased, a pure heart He grants him.

A pot filthy in the extreme by washing is not purified.

By listening to the Master’s teaching one acquires enlightenment.

At the Master’s portal alone as washed, is it cleansed.

Himself has He established distinctions of foul and fair.

Let none reckon that despite evil-doing in the hereafter bliss he shall attain- As man’s actions, such shall his reward be.

Whoever the Name ambrosial widely distributes,

With honour departs; his life exalted, Resounding his repute.

Not in the poor world of men alone-in the three worlds shall it be

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175 In Indian tradition, the Dharamsal was the place to stay for the visitors, which were made by the kind and rich persons of society. But in Sikhism, it became the place of Dharma where the people recite the Divine Name of Waheguru. Gradually, Dharamsal converted in the name of Gurdwara because the Sangat gathers around the Guru which the most relevant in Sikhism.

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Gir Gir aMdir D rmswl hovY kIrqnu sdw ivsoaw[ bwby qwry cwir cik nAu KMif ipRQv1 scw Foaw] (Vaar 1:27)
heard.

Saith Nanak: Not himself is he blessed—Saved are all his forebears.

Gurdwara is the place of Sikh devotees and seekers, where the Sikhs gather in the presence of their Guru. In Gurdwara, Sangat gathers to remember the Divine Nam and take guidance for the life. There is no discrimination among the devotees whatsoever where they come from. In Gurdwara, there is Langar which is the also a major institution of the Sikhs. In Langar, anybody can have food without any cost and with equally right in the same line, which is called Pangat in the Sikh vision. All the institutions, which emerge through Gurdwara are inter-linked. This shows the distinct identity of the Sikhs because in the whole world, such a vision and practice is unseen.

In Gurdwara, the Sikhs take the decisions for the Sikh Panth. All the decisions, although they are religious, political and social are taken through the institutions of Hukamnama and Gurmata. The Sarbat-Khalsa institution also came into existence through Gurdwara. All the institutions have distinct and significant role to make the distinct identity of Sikhs because all members of Sikh brotherhood are associated with these. These institutions have a significant impact upon the whole life of a Sikh. A Sikh in the faith and commitment with his Guru, make his/her best effort to develop these

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nnwK awip inhwI siB kul qwrsI ] (SGGS; 730)
institutions because ultimately, these institutions guide him/her for the nobleness of the whole universe, which is the most important sacred duty of a Sikh.

The institution of Sangat is playing a vital role in the Sikh identity because Sangat eliminates the idea of other. In these days, the question of the other is becoming a central concept in the post-modern thought. It is significant to know that there is no other in Sangat. Although the problem of understanding and experiencing of other has been contemplated long ago but after the Second World War, the nature of thought and philosophy has taken the question of other seriously. The holocaust in Germany was another factor, which burned the issue of identity and other. Perhaps, ‘philosophy begins and ends with the question of the other. The question of the other is not, of course, a question; it is a complex of questions. In one of its earliest and most recurrent forms, the problem of the other has been posed in terms of the relationship between the one and the many, or unity and plurality. In the modern period, the problem of the one and many has taken the form of the correlative questions of the interplay between subjectivity and objectivity, and the interrelation of identity and difference’.  

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The colonialists tried to suppress and depress the others (native of the colonies) for their self-interest. To criticize this, Frantz Fanon observes that ‘colonisation is not satisfied merely with holding people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all

form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it’.\textsuperscript{179}

The concept of objectification is very significant to understand the nature of the identity. That is a process where the other could be understood profoundly. It unfolds the conceptions of human-psyche and the understandings of self and other. In this perspective, cognitions of the relationship between self and other are very important. The identity of self cannot be imagined without other.

There is need to examine the nature of Sikh thought towards other. The Sikh identity is dynamic as it is formed by the interlinking God who sacralizes life, the sense of awesome wonder that demands acute and ever present sensitivity to the Other in his/her freshness, and handling the Sword to unblock the damned up energy by an ignorant. It is not frozen or pre-defined forever. It finally intends to formulate itself through participation in history in the fight for good, justice and the divine principle. The battle cannot be waged to deny the other’s right.\textsuperscript{180}

Guru Nanak projects the peerless practice of the dialogue with others and establishes the Sikh identity. As J.S. Ahluwalia says, ‘During one of his (Guru Nanak) peregrinations, while on the outskirts of Multan, a centre of the contemporaneous religious sects, the Guru was greeted with a cup of milk filled to the brim sent jointly by the religious leaders residing in the town. The message was very clear; the overfilled religious tradition of India would admit no new element. Guru Nanak also symbolically

\textsuperscript{179} Frantz Fanon, \textit{The Wretched of the Earth}, London, 1963, p. 170.

responded to the gesture by gently placing a petal of jasmine flower over the surface of milk. The message was again very clear; the Guru envisioned his new dispensation, while maintaining its religio-socio-political identity.\textsuperscript{181}

This Sakhi\textsuperscript{182} describes that Guru has respected of the other’s identity. Guru was cognitively aware about the identity of those religious personalities who offered to him a cup of milk. The milk is a symbol of their pure existence and Guru Nanak did not deny it but with due respect, putted himself with a petal of jasmine. It means the experience of Guru’s presence is fragrance, which cannot hurt anybody but will give sang-froid and peace to them and make the possibility of genius dialogue.

Factually, history has also proved that religion has acted as a motivating force behind all intellectual/practical endeavors of human society. In the views of Hans Mole, the sacred identity can be understood by objectification, which is a process to sanctify the identity. He defines that ‘objectification is the process of meaning and order into a transcendent point of reference where the essences and archetypes of the mundane can be made to appear more orderly, consistent, and timeless. The contradictions, the exceptions, the contingencies of the mundane can consequently be understood as less arbitrary than they appear to those involved in the immediate situation’.\textsuperscript{183}

The essence of discourse in the transcendental situation performs differently rather than this existing world. Hegel also faced the problem when he observed that

\textsuperscript{182} Bhai Mani Singh Wall Janam Sakhi, in Janam Sakhi Prampra: Itihask Drishlikon Ton, Kirpal Singh (ed.), Punjabi University, Patiala, 2009, p. 421.
there is a big separation between ideal and material world. ‘Hegel’s main theoretical influence was Aristotle. What interested Hegel in Aristotle’s work was his rejection of Plato’s doctrine of the transcendent realm of absolutes, which tends to stand above the material world of experience. Aristotle maintained that Plato’s separation of the material and ideal realms was unnecessary, and he took a view that both the ideal and material worlds were in fact immanent in human experience, and thus fundamentally belonged together and should be treated as a philosophic unity.’

Hegel focused upon material world, which had been ignored by classical thought in his essence. ‘Hegel, however thought that the tendency in classical idealism to draw sharp distinctions between the material world and the ideal world ultimately split human experience into two separate spheres and this, he thought, canceled out the study of the material world of experience. Hegel’s most important contribution to the development of social theory, therefore, was his re-introduction of the material world back into thought’. Hegel contributed the western philosophy by his formation but here we also see a lack of union between abstraction of supra-reality and the mundane. In the essence of objectification, Guru Nanak has engraved the new dimension in the world of philosophy and he seems to practice it entirely. He explains the material world’s reality or actuality. For example, Guru Nanak writes;

‘Bear not wrath to any; quaff amrita of the name:

Know, our stay in the world is not lasting.

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185 Ibid. p. 30.
Kings, noble, the poor-none shall last;
None follows adjuration to the way of life or instruction -
To whom shall I carry my supplication?
The sole Word, the Name Divine is of unfailing power to turn away evil:
By instruction in this the Master exaltation grants’.

Philosophy of Sikhism tells about the achievement of the Ultimate Truth (Akal Purkh) and does not reject this corporeal world. In the essence of other, the dialogue plays vital role to understand the identity. Guru Nanak is the first person who taught the lesson of genuine dialogue and he established a new tradition of dialogue. Martin Buber was much influenced with his theory of dialogue, as seen in his genius work I and Thou. He elaborates in detail the difference between I-Thou and I-It relationship.
In his essence, the whole phenomenon of the self and the other happens in dialogue. ‘A relationship that has the ability to produce dialogue is referred to and as I-Thou relationship. This means that one will relate to and experience another person as another person. It requires having regard for both self and other. The opposite type of relationship is referred to as the I-It relationship. This relation contains only regard for self’.

Guru Nanak’s dialogue with the Sidhas and Yogies demonstrates the highest peak of spiritual discourse. Sri Guru Granth Sahib contains so many examples of
dialogue that show the flashes of Sikh identity. Actually, the message of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is in the form of dialogue as many Sabadas clearly adopt dialogical style to state various themes. Siddha Goshti composition in Sri Guru Granth Sahib is an instance of beautiful dialogue on various subjects related with human, spirit and supra-reality.

Piar Singh says about the structure of this composition that ‘the Goshti begins with the usual invocation. Then it unfolds the panorama of the debate. Guru Nanak is seated in an assembly of saints. The Siddhas appear there and join the congregation. The Guru sees Siddhas appear there and join the congregation. The Guru meets Siddhas’ salutation by beseeching benedictions of the Lord. This is in the nature of a prologue. He then initiates a debate by stating the proposition, which is to serve as a refrain in the whole poem. It sets out the problem and also gives an answer to it’. 188 No doubt, Siddhas and Yogies were highly spiritual personalities and their questions show their intelligence. In the starting of discourse, seeing the young age of the Guru, they say that;

‘Heed my prayer, O Master, 
Impart unto me the true insights.
Be not offended, pray answer my query;
How may the portals of the True Master be reached?’ 189

189 suIN suawmI ardwis hmwrI pUCAU swcu b1cwro ] rosu n kIjY Auqru dIjY ikAu pwelaY gur duawro ]
It is the best example for the respect of others. Without mature dialogue this cannot happen and there is no room for any eagerness, ego or disrespect. During the dialogue, Siddhas feel the energetic spirituality of Guru Nanak and use Purkha word for young Guru. Purkha is a respectable word for eminent personality. As;

‘How have you undergone a transformation in life?
What is it you have attuned your mind to?
How have you curbed your cravings and yearnings?
How have you sought the Eternal Light within.
How may one munch steel without teeth? O Nanak, may you this truth reveal’.

Guru Nanak gives the answers with sedateness and forbearance. Thus, Sikh philosophy gives respect to others and their identity. There is just an acceptance. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, we see respect of everybody without consideration of caste, religion, tribe, blood, nation etc. According to Bani, the attributes of a Mussalman are;

‘A Mussalman should bear a tender heart;
And wash off from heart inner impurity.
Then will worldly dye not touch him, leaving him pure
As flowers, silk, ghee and dear-skin’.

(938) iehu mnu clqAu sc Gir bYsY nwnk nwmu aDwro } awpy myil imlwey krqw lwgY
swic ipawro } (SGGS; 938)

(939-40) ikqu ibiD purKw jnmu vtwieaw } kwhy kAu quJu iehu mnu lwieaw }
  ikqu ibiD awsw mnsw KweI } ikqu ibiD joiq inrMqir pweI }
  ibnu dMqw ikAu KweIaY swru } nwnk swcw krhu biCwru } (SGGS; 939-40)

(1084) muslmwNu mom idil hovY } aMqr kI mlu idl qy DovY }
dunlaw rMg n awY nyVY iJau kusm pwtu iGAu pwku hrw } (SGGS; 1084)
The Gurbani makes everyone relax and free from any rigidness and fanatics. The Bani extols the excellence of different people of this planet. For a Musalmaan, the Namaj (prayers) are very important and the Bani describes it as;

‘Five are the Muslim prayers; five their appointed hours, five their names.

These be the true prayers: truthfulness is the first, legitimate earning the second;

The third, prayer to God for universal weal.

The fourth is sincerity of heart and mind; the fifth, laudation of God.

Recite the Kalima of noble acting – thus may one be truly called Musalmaan.

Saith Nanak: Of all hypocrites, ignoble is the end’.192

The Brahmins (Hindu priests) were also very rigid during those times and they were living in false practices. According to Janam-sakhies, after coming out from Bei stream Guru Nanak expressed the words that there is neither Hindu nor Musalmaan. It was a direct indication that Guru wanted to establish a new identity and he established it with his fresh vision and pure practices. He suggests to live a true religious life. According to Guru Granth Sahib, a real Brahmin who is;

‘Saith Kabir: Among us is he alone known as Brahmin,

who the Supreme Being contemplates’.193

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192 pMij invwjw vKq pMij pMjw pMjy nwAu ] pihlw scu hlwl duie qIjw KYr Kudwie ] cAuQI nlaiq rwis mnu pMjvi isPiq snwie ] krNI klwI awIK kY qw muslmwNu sdwie ] nwnk jyqy kUiVawr kUVY kUVI pwie ] (SGGS; 141)
193 khu kbIr jo bRhmU bIcwrY ] so bRwhmNu khIaqU hY hmrwY ] (SGGS; 324)
‘A true Brahmin is one who the Supreme realizes,
And is ever in the state of devotion’.\(^{194}\)

‘One realizing the Supreme Being is truly a Brahmin,
Should he by the Master’s will abide.

Those bearing in heart the Lord are from malady of egoism freed;
Contemplating Divine attributes, garnering these,
With Divine light is their light merged.
Rare are the Brahmins in this age,
That with devotion the Supreme Being realize.

Saith Nanak: Those favoured with Divine grace,
Devoted to the Name abide’.\(^{195}\)

‘Say not that the Vedas and Muslim books are false.
False is he, who reflects not on them’.\(^{196}\)

So, in this essence, Sikhi respects the freedom of life.

Sikh institutions are not the Utopian concept rather these are playing an important role in the organization of Sikhism. In the sociological perspective, it has brought out so many improvements in the social structures of life. Nam japo, Kirat karo,

\(^{194}\text{i}b\text{Rhmu}\ i\text{bMdy}\ \text{so}\ \text{bRwhmNu}\ \text{khIaY}\ \text{ij}\ \text{anidnu}\ \text{hir}\ \text{ilv}\ \text{lwey}\ )\ (\text{SGGS; 512})

\(^{195}\text{i}b\text{Rhmu}\ \text{ibMdih}\ \text{qy}\ \text{bRwhmNw}\ \text{jy}\ \text{c}l\text{i}h\ \text{s}l\text{qgur}\ \text{Bwie}\ \text{]ijn}\ \text{kY}\ \text{ihrdY}\ \text{hir vsY}\ \text{hAumY}
\text{rogu}\ \text{gvwie}\ )

\(^{196}\text{guN}\ \text{rvih}\ \text{guN}\ \text{sMrhhih}\ \text{joqI}\ \text{joiq}\ \text{imlwie}\ \text{]iesu}\ \text{jug}\ \text{mih}\ \text{ivraly}\ \text{bRwhmN}\ \text{bRhmu}
\text{ibMdih}\ \text{icqu}\ \text{lwie}\ )

\(^{197}\text{rwnk}\ \text{ijnA}\ \text{kAu}\ \text{ndir}\ \text{kry}\ \text{hir}\ \text{scw}\ \text{sy}\ \text{nwi}\text{m}\ \text{rhy}\ \text{ilv}\ \text{lwie}\ )\ (\text{SGGS; 850})

\(^{198}\text{byd}\ \text{kqyb}\ \text{kkhu}\ \text{mq}\ \text{JUTy}\ \text{JUTw}\ \text{jo}\ \text{n}\ \text{ibcwrY}\ )\ (\text{SGGS; 1350})
Vand chhako are the central bases of Sikh thought, which are practiced by Sangat. The Sikhs have faith in Akal Purkh and they have commitment towards Guru. Guru Gobind Singh has transformed the Sangat and into the Khalsa, which is an ideal form of social arrangement in the world. The Khalsa is the highest form of Sikh experience. Khalsa is the real and ultimate identity of the Sikhs. In the next chapter, we shall describe that how the Khalsa was created by the Guru Gobind Singh. The historical treatment of Sikh paradigm through the creation of Khalsa and the other praxis shall also discuss.

**Conclusions:**

1. The concept of one God in its new form makes a distinct identity of the Sikhs. The vision of the higher truth, which is Wahegur/Akal Purakh is distinct due to its formation, symbolization and projection. Ý, the Sikh spirituality, experience, vision and symbol of Ultimate Reality has multiple layers. The single interpretation for this is not adequate. It cannot be monad/frozen/static in any position. Akal Purakh is the Master of universe, which cannot be limited to any particular region/group/community. The naming tradition of the Ultimate Reality in Sikh experience is also distinct which accept the revealed experiences of spirituality of the various traditions of faith.

2. Guru Nanak is the founder of Sikh identity. He is regarded as Gur-Parmeshar in the Sikh vision. The concept of Guru is much distinct in the contrast to other religious traditions. There is no difference between the Guru and the concept of Sikh God. Guru is the way to make union with Waheguru/Akal
Purakh (ultimate reality). Guru is the junction of sabda-surta experience. The life of a Sikh revolves around the Guru. A Sikh gets all the directions of both worlds (transcendental and mundane). Sikh, in his great love for the Guru, has a commitment towards him and Guru grants all his spiritual powers to Sikhs.

3. The creation of Sangat in the Sikh vision is also important in the formation of Sikh identity. It is the symbol of equality and plurality. In Sangat, one feels his/her own distinctiveness. It is the major institution of the Sikhs, which lead all the institutions of Sikhs, under the supervision of Khalsa.

4. The other is also important which cannot be marginalized in the Sikh vision. The Sikhs have commitment with the Guru, which is essence of God. In Sikh vision, there is no division in self and other. I and Thou are interlinked. Khalsa is the best example of this combination.