

## SANGEET PRABANDH OF GURBANI

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The object of Gurbani is the attainment of spiritual knowledge of experience which liberates man through '*Sabda*'. It takes man to a state of equipoise where no temptations of the temporal have any bearing on him. In this process, the wordly-mind gets transformed into an enlightened mind and thus becomes liberated. The musical system of Gurbani sharpens and clarifies the process of spiritual knowledge and experience with the help of different musical organs. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji provided new meanings to the instruments of Indian Music for the purpose of realizing the distinct ideology of Bani. For the attainment of this ideal, his approach is absolutely new, with a scientific basis. In this process, Raga, *Taal Singing Style*, *Musical signs* and the entire presentation of the '*Sabda*' are like the beads strung in one rosary of the Gurmat ideology which has given entirely a new connotation to each one of them. Of all these musical means, none is independently active. These means present the Bhakti musical tradition in their distinct, separate system. The different peculiarities of this musical system, a different approach and its scientific basis, transcends the music of Gurbani from an ordinary one and change it into a distinct musical system. The new context of these musical means, distinct aim and the new approach of '*Gurumat*' towards music will be discussed later on in the context of the organizational form of this musical system.

**SINGING / RECITATION:** In the musical system of Gurbani the recitational aspect is very important. If recitation is the chief means of the creative process of Gurbani, it is also the major means of its presentation. It is clear from the use and aim of music in Gurbani that out of the three branches (singing, instrumental playing and dancing), singing has been accepted as the prime communication while instrumental playing has the role of supporting it. Dancing is not approved as an expression of Bani. In Gurbani instrument playing is the chief assistant in the overall presentation of the '*Sabda*'. It helps in arousing the 'Truth' within man by bringing soul in unison with the 'Supreme Soul' with the help of the sound of the '*Sabda*'. In this Bani, instrument playing has been used in the context of Anhat Naad. In fact, this singing, the Ahat form of playing is the medium of that Anhat position in which '*Sabda*' comes out as a uniting link. If we consider it at the practical level, recitation enjoys prominence in 'Guru-Bani' and playing is just an accompaniment. The third unit of music, i.e. dance, which has remained in use in the different Bhakti traditions of medieval music, was not approved by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, rather it has been denounced by him at numerous places in his Bani.<sup>(1)</sup> One of his hymns says :

"Ik nach (i) nach (i) purah (i) tal  
bhagat (i) na kijae

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(1) Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib, Page 465

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While providing spiritual meaning to dance, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji says :

"Vaja mat (i) pakhavaj (u) bhao  
Haai anand Sda man chao,  
Eha bhagat (i) Eha tap tao,  
It (u) rang (i) nachah (u) rakh (i) rakh (i) pao.1  
Pure Tal Janai Salah  
Hor Nachane Khusia Mun Mah. 1 Rahaao."

So, in Gurbani, of all the parts of music, only recitation/singing is supreme. Singing of Bani is the chief means of realizing its aim.

For the singing of his Bani, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji used a new and specific system which is inherent therein in the form of different signs which we shall now discuss.

***THE STYLES OF SINGING (GAYAL SHALIES)*** : In the musical system of Gurbani, its poetic forms and styles of singing have their own peculiarity. Forms of both the classical and folk poetry have been used. It is a special feature of the singing styles of Indians, that they have developed originally from Indian literature and the folk traditions of drama. That is why they are intimately and inviolably related to each other. The tradition is to present these forms of classical poetry in Indian and Devotional music with a distinct, specified style of singing. In Gurbani also the classical styles of singing such as Prabandh and Dhrupad have been used from musical approach that is new and scientific. Its classical element does not acquire prominence or other attraction in its spiritual presentation, but helps in the realization of its object. The poetic forms like padas and astpadis are sung from the perspective of classical style of singing.

The forms of folk poetry which have been especially used in the Bani are related to the different aspects of our life. They have been presented as a spiritual alternative to the folk music. The folk forms used in the Bani follow their special tunes, popular among the masses. This poetry and tune cannot be separated. Their original style has been accepted in the Bani. It is worth pointing out here that this tradition of singing has been kept under the special discipline of the musical system of 'GuruBani'. This check on the musical system provides specific discipline to the style of folk singing with the help of musical signs such as Raga, Rahaao, Ank (numerals) etc. In this system, the musical power within them remains active and the object of Bani is fulfilled. The prescription of Ragas over and above these styles of folk singing is not meaningless or an unconscious activity, rather the forms of these styles are identical with those of the Ragas which also happen to be native in origin. We have already discussed their mutual relationship in the context of Sri Guru Nanak's 'Asa di Vaar' and 'Tunde Asraje di Vaar'. On the basis of it, we can say that the mention of Raga as title above the style is indicative of its direct relationship with the musical form of the prescribed singing style. The authenticity of their interrelationships is not traceable because these are no longer in practice. About the methodical use of the styles of folk-singing, it is worth considering that in the traditions of Devotional music in medieval India, such a scientific approach to music was not

available. The original and distinct use of this new system of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji can be ascribed only to himself.

In the context of the use of folk and classical styles in the musical system of Gurbani we can say that in this musical system, the use of both the styles of classical and folk singing is balanced and scientific in approach. The classical styles and folk styles have been used for spiritual knowledge and experience, in this special discipline of musical system. In this system, both the classical and folk styles of singing have not only been accepted in their popular musical style, but they have been provided a new context through the scientific approach of the music of Gurbani. And herein lies the originality and distinctiveness of the musical system of Gurbani.

**RAGA PARBANDH :** Raga is an important unit in the musical system of 'Bani'. In this Bani the power of 'Raga-Rasa' has been used for the presentation of the 'Sabda' which is the distinct scientific approach. In this musical system the medieval Raga-Ragini classification has been rejected and all Ragas have been named a "Rag(u)". It will be pertinent to point out here that the above tradition initiated by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji dawned on the Indian musicologists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. No doubt, neither the followers of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji nor the musicologists have ever talked about this practical attitude of Sri Guru Nanak, but nevertheless his scientific approach is invaluable, it is really difficult for a common man to fathom the great deeds done by great personalities. The musical system of Guru-Bani is provided distinctiveness and originality from classical perspective through an appreciation of feeling and sentiment, its ability to bring in unison, not only the compatibility of Raga-Rasa, bhav-Sabda, but also kept the accepted properties of the Raga, such as 'Raga Dhyaan'. This brought out the new possibilities within them through this scientific approach adopted. In this musical system of adhering to the compatibility of the different principles and the Ragas were used in their original forms and also as and when kinds/species of ragas under the main ragas is necessary, the shades of other ragas were intermingled. For instance, Raga Gauri, could be sung in its pure form or Sabda with the other 'airs' such as Gauri-purabi, Gauri-deepki, Gauri-purabi-deepki. This is almost parallel to the Sudha, Chhayalag and Sankiran classification of Indian Ragas. Some new ragas are also used in the Bani. There are mostly Desi Ragas developed from the folk music. Of them, Majh, Asa, Asa Kafi, Bihagra, Tilang, Soohi, Soohi Kafi, Maru, Tukhari, etc. are not available in the contemporary music. Such use of Ragas at the conscious level and the tradition of the use of the southern varieties of Ragas like Gauri, Vadhans, Bilawal, Ramkali, Maru and Prabhati are also the original and distinct features of the musical system of Gurbani.

In the musical system of Gurbani the above approach to Ragas is distinct and scientific. It is a new and rare example in all the religious scriptures, religious and music books. It distinguishes the musical system in Gurbani from the contemporary traditions of devotional music, and marks it as a unique musical tradition not only in India but throughout the world. It is not a claim born of faith or devotion, but of a scientific analysis of the raga organization of 'Gurbani'. And, this realization comes easily after the study of the 'Raga Prabandh' of Gurbani.

**'SABDA', SIGN AND MUSIC :** 'Sabda' is a primary and central unit of Gurbani. The entire process of the presentation of 'Sabda' in Gurbani will help in understanding the musical system of this Bani. It comes out from the poetic/singing style of Bani. The tonal form of Raga is the means of presenting the feeling and sentiment of the 'Sabda'; this form of Raga is prescribed on the basis of its poetry/singing. In the entire construction of the hymn, 'Rahao' and 'Ank' are two new light to mind. It becomes obvious in the context of the above hymn that Raga, poetic form, singing style are cojointly active in the presentation of the hymn in the musical system of Gurbani. There is visible in them in the unity of feeling and sentiment. Musical signs show the way to realize their aim, and all poetic and musical means unitedly act for making us realize the knowledge and experience of the Supreme Truth contained in that hymn. Each and every organ of the musical system of Gurbani helps in the sharpening and intensification of the feeling of the hymn. Thus, the entire process does not remain, an ordinary one, but comes out as a distinct system. Any violation of this musical system can hinder the comprehension of the meaning of the hymn, and even give a distorted version of it. It was with this end in view that Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji established a specific musical system for his Bani, which is absent in the contemporary tradition of devotional music.

#### **SABDA GAYAN : SINGER AND THE PRESENTATION**

In Gurbani presentation means recitation/singing of Bani according to its musical system. It is according to the above-mentioned musical system which aims at making us know and experience the Supreme truth. The presentation of Bani is not like that of an ordinary music which produce a stage of bliss while producing the emotional unity of man, rather of bliss born of the knowledge and experience of the Truth. The ordinary presentation of music produces pleasure through aesthetic satisfaction and freedom of heart. On the other hand, the presentation of hymn in the musical system of Gurbani is based on the equipoise born of the knowledge and experience of the Truth. That is why this presentation is free from I-am-ness or ego. It requires complete submission. The presentation of hymn in Gurbani is word-oriented whereas an ordinary presentation is music-oriented. An ordinary artist externalizes the art inherent in and earned by him whereas the presentation of the hymn is introspective in the presentation of the hymn in Gurbani, the singer is attracted towards arousing the new consciousness in his inner self while knowing and experiencing the truth. Thus, the process of this presentation is two-fold. In it, the singer through this system of Bani presentation, bring about audience/Sangat participation who thereby attain equipoise a stage where the 'Singer' is played without any conscious activity the 'Vaja' is played, sans hands and the rhythm is maintained without physical movement, because of the two-way process of hymn-presentation which produces a stage of bliss and equipoise through Truth.

It is obvious from the above discussion that under the distinct musical system of Gurbani, presentation of hymn does not provide only the ordinary musical pleasure, but it is a two-fold process of making us experience and know the Truth as inherent in our inner being.

***THE PRESENTER :*** In Gurbani the singer is a significant link between the musical system of Gurbani and its presentation. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was the first presenter of this Bani. He calls himself a Dhadi. A dhadi cannot make any changes in the prescribed text. The experience and knowledge of his presentation is more important than his art- because he is presenting an extant story. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji says that Dhadi sings only His Will, and the platform where it is sung is Hind Divine Court. In this way, the singer of Bani presents before the people the Hukm of God. Nowhere in this presentation is found the personality of the singer. It is obvious that the singer has not only to observe the musical system of bani, but also a follow the discipline of the presentation.

From the above discussion we learn of the aim and ideal of the hymn-presentation by the singer. The musical system of Gurbani is the medium of presenting, experiencing and knowing the inherent Truth. To bring out the influence of Bani containing Supreme Truth, it is presented in a distinct musical system. It intensifies and sharpens the effect of Bani, and also enables us to experience and know the Truth leading to the attainment of equipoise and bliss. It is also called the way to liberation. For the establishment of this musical system, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji not only analysed and studied the earlier and contemporary traditions of Indian music but of Indian spiritual/religious music also. Thus he provided them new meanings through a scientific approach which served as the guiding star for the forthcoming musical traditions and musicology. In this musical system of Bani, a scientific use of the popular and not so common means and organs of both the Hindustani and Karnataki Indian music was. In Gurbani the different organs of the different musical traditions are not independent but equally and cojointly active under the musical system produced by the ideal of Bani. On the whole, the musical use in Gurbani is independent, distinct and original in Indian culture because of its scientific approach. And, to understand it, the complete knowledge of the 'Music-ideal' prescribed by Bani is of utmost importance.

# **MUSICOLOGICAL STUDY OF GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

**(As the basic scripture of Gurmat Music)**

**Dr. Gurnam Singh**

The divine poetry of Guru Granth Sahib called Bani in common parlance, is a great contribution of the Gurus to the global fraternity. This Bani has a significance of its own in the whole scriptural literature, because of its attributes of universality and an inlaid spirit of cosmic consciousness. This holy scripture is not only venerable for the followers of Sikhism only but commands the obeisance of all because it enshrines the mystic treasure of five centuries in Indian spiritual tradition. There are a number of religious scriptures in the world which contain the recitations of the concerned religious masters and even their disciples. But Guru Granth Sahib is the only scripture which is bejeweled with the gems of divine utterances made by the masters belonging to various other faiths, castes and regions. We are proud to have it in the original language in which it was written and we revere it as the Guru incarnate.

Guru Granth Sahib occupies a unique position in the world of music as well. This Granth embodies the dominant motif of the tradition of Indian music which depicts salvation (Moksha) as the ultimate goal of music. A part of music belonging to North Indian music is based on this Granth because it is the fountainhead of the Sikh religion and the study of its Bani (which is the embodiment of theory, history, Ragas and singing forms of 500 years) cannot be understood without comprehending first the importance and uniqueness of this Granth. Therefore, if we have to complete the history of ten years of Indian music, then a study of Guru Granth Sahib and its history is indispensable.

Guru Granth Sahib was compiled by the fifth Guru Arjun Dev in 1604 A.D. It was calligraphed by Bhai Gurdas, a great scholar and poet of his times, Guru Arjun Dev, accomplished the historical task of compilation by including the Bani of the first four Gurus, his predecessors, beside the Bani of some other spiritual skyscrapers. The tenth guru Gobind Singh later included the Bani of Guru Teg Bahadur in it. He exalted this scripture to the status of living Guru in 1708.

### **The Spiritual Poets of Guru Granth Sahib**

The poets whose spiritual poetry (Bani) is included in Guru Granth Sahib have been enumerated below –

#### **The Gurus**

- (1) Guru Nanak Dev (Mahala – 1)
- (2) Guru Angad Dev (Mahala – 2)
- (3) Guru Amar Dass (Mahala – 3)
- (4) Guru Ram Dass (Mahala – 4)
- (5) Guru Arjun Dev (Mahala – 5)
- (6) Guru Teg Bahadur (Mahala – 9)

#### **The Saint Poets**

- (1) Bhagat Jai Dev (Bengal)
- (2) Sheik Farid (Vill. Kotiwal Distt. Multan)

- (3) Bhagat Nam Dev (Maharashtra)
- (4) Trilochan (Maharashtra)
- (5) Swami Ramanand
- (6) Kabir
- (7) Beni
- (8) Sadna (Sindhi city Sehwan)
- (9) Sain
- (10) Peepa
- (11) Dhanna (Rajasthan)
- (12) Bhikhan (Kakeri near Lucknow)
- (13) Ravi Dass (Kanshi )
- (14) Parmanand
- (15) Sur Dass
- (16) Sunder

**The Rababis**

- (1) Bhai Satta
- (2) Bhai Balwand

**The Bhatt Poets**

- (1) Kallath
- (2) Jalap
- (3) Keerat
- (4) Sallaya
- (5) Bhallaya
- (6) Nanaya
- (7) Bhikha
- (8) Parmanand
- (9) Bal Haribans
- (10) Mathra
- (11) Kalsahar
- (12) Jalaya Dass
- (13) Sewak
- (14) Reeg
- (15) Tanaya
- (16) Gayand

**MUSICOLOGICAL BASIS OF GURU GRANTH SAHIB'S**  
**COMPILATION AND ITS OBJECTIVE**

Its cursory study of Guru Grant Sahib reveals that the Gurus have made music the basis of its compilation. Entire Bani has been classified into 31 units (Ragas). Every unit has the Bani of the Gurus followed by that of Saints and other poets. This Raga-based

poetry has been notated under different music symbols, titles and references of Raga, Mahala, Rahau, Ank, Ghar, Jati, Dhuni etc. The aim of this musical editing was to communicate this divine recitation in a very special way to the devout congregation. It is only through a proper understanding of this music technique that one can reach the core and content of the Bani.

### **Music Technique of Guru Granth Sahib**

The music technique of Guru Granth Sahib is based on music symbol references and directions. The words like Shabad, Raga, Kav Gyan Roop, Dhuni, Gharu and other symbols of rhyme or rhythm are directly functional. This process starts first of all from Rahau. Since Rahau has the essence of Shabad, its Gayan is started as sthai according to the prescribed singing form and meter. Antras (part of song sung at a higher pitch) divided by different Anks are sung serially after Rahau. Through the medium of such a unique style of singing, stress has laid on discarding ego and total surrender and shabad more than mere music technique in Guru Granth Sahib.

### **Ragas for Bani Kirtan**

The Bani of different poets has been recorded in 31 Ragas in this scripture. A study of these Ragas reveals that each Raga has many of its further sub-categories. Every Raga is a composite form of more than one Ragas. (See the list of 31 Ragas and Raga Parkars (categories) in the end of the chapter).

### **Bani forms for kirtan**

Different forms of Bani have been mentioned in the title form on every Shabad for the purpose of Kirtan alongwith the specific Raga and Mahala (Section). These Bani forms can be divided into two parts according to the nature of music :

- (1) Classical Ang Bani Forms e.g. Ashtpadi, Padey, Padtal etc.
- (2) Folk music Ang forms of Bani e.g. Vars, Chhani, Alauhnis (Elegis Ghorian, Baramah, Pahra, Mudavani etc. Both these Bani forms have to be sung according to the prescribed Rahau, Ank, Dhuni (Tune) directions and tradition.

The important points which come to the fore after a study of Guru Granth Sahib are as following :

- (1) The editing of Guru Granth Sahib is based on Ragas.
- (2) This Bani is classified in 31 Ragas and 31 Raga Prakars.
- (3) According to Gurmat a music technique has been laid down for the kirtan of Gurbani. It is called Gurmat Technique.
- (4) Bani has to be sung according to the Ragas and Raga Prakars.
- (5) Beside traditional Ragas, folk-tunes (e.g. Asa) seasons Ragas (Ramkali, Dakhni etc.) and regional Ragas have been used in the Gurbani.
- (6) Classical Ang and Folk Ang forms have been used for Gurbani Kirtan.
- (7) Alongwith folk Ang Kirtan Banis, Dhunis (Tunes) based on Vars (e.g. Asraja Dhuni on Asa Di Var) have also been given.
- (8) Beside Kirtan Raga and Bani form, the essence of Shabad exists in the next important music symbol Rahau. There are more than one, even up to four



Rahaus have been given in Guru Granth Sahib (e.g. see PP 356) which find place after the concerned Antras.

- (9) The Antras have to be divided according to the digits 1 2 3 etc. given after the shabad. After sthai, again sthai has to be sung on each Antra.
- (10) To glorify the Ragas, directions have been given in Guru Granth Sahib like Indian Raga tradition regarding Raga meditation and Ragas.
- (11) Some necessary instructions regarding Kirtan are –
  - (1) Sehje Gavia Thai Pave Bin Sehje Kathna Badi II (G.G.S.P.P)
  - (2) Aap Gwai Su Hari Gun Gao (G.G.S.PP. 290)
  - (3) Haumei Wich : Gavahi Birtha Jai (G.G.S.PP 158)
- (12) Beside Rahau, Raga, Ank, there are some other musical hints also in Guru Granth Sahib e.g. Gharu, Jati, Sudhang etc.

These hints have a significance of their own in Kirtan.

It is very difficult to fathom the greatness of Guru Granth Sahib. As we perform the Kirtan according to Gurmat musicology, the layers of its musical significance will be exposed to us. In this regard, we can gain more knowledge from the research, study of books and company of the learned musicians.

The above discussion touches the tradition of Gurmat music only very briefly. Since Guru Granth Sahib is the basic Granth of Gurmat music tradition, therefore all canons in this regard lie here in seed form.

Although the practical tradition of Gurmat music has been prevalent since more than 500 years, yet we have to judge it by the touchstone of Guru Granth Sahib only. The greatness of Gurmat Music tradition compared with traditions of world spiritual music and Bhakti, sufi music etc. can yield much more meaningful results. Such a study will definitely be a matter of pride for the music students of Punjab, India and world as a whole.

| S.No. | Raga         | Raga Prakar            | Page Guru Granth Sahib |
|-------|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1     | Siri         | -                      | 14                     |
| 2     | Manjh        | -                      | 84                     |
| 3     | Gaudi        | -                      | 151                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Guareri (1)      | 151                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Dakhni (2)       | 152                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Cheti (3)        | 154                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Bairaghi (4)     | 153                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Purbi Deepki (5) | 152                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Purbi (6)        | 242                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Deepki (7)       | 12                     |
|       |              | Gaudi Majh (8)         | 172                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Malwa (9)        | 172                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Mala (10)        | 214                    |
| 4     | Asa          | Gaudi Sorthi (11)      | 341                    |
|       |              | Gaudi Kafi (12)        | 365                    |
|       |              | Asavari (13)           | 408                    |
| 5     | Gujri        | Asavari Sudhang (14)   | 489                    |
| 6     | Dev Gandhari | -                      | 521                    |
|       |              | Dev Gandhari (15)      | 537                    |

|    |              |                      |         |
|----|--------------|----------------------|---------|
| 7  | Bihagrda     | -                    | 537     |
| 8  | Vadhans      | -                    | 537     |
|    |              | Vadhans Dakhni (16)  | 590     |
| 9  | Sorathi      |                      | 595     |
| 10 | Dhanasri     |                      | 13/66   |
| 11 | Jaitsari     |                      | 696     |
| 12 | Tody         |                      | 711     |
| 13 | Bairadi      | -                    | 719     |
| 14 | Tilang       | -                    | 721     |
|    |              | Tilang Kafi (17)     | 726     |
| 15 | Soohi        | -                    | 728     |
|    |              | Soohi Kafi (18)      | 751     |
| 16 | Bilawal      | Soohi Lalit (19)     | 794     |
|    |              | Bilawal Dakhni (20)  | 843     |
|    |              | Bilawan Mangal (21)  | 844,857 |
| 17 | Gond         | -                    | 859     |
|    |              | Bilawal Gond (22)    | 874     |
| 18 | Ramkali      | -                    | 876     |
|    |              | Ramkali Dakhni (23)  | 907     |
| 19 | Nat Narayan  | -                    | 875     |
|    |              | Nat (24)             | 875     |
| 20 | Malgauda     | -                    | 984     |
| 21 | Maru         | -                    | 989     |
|    |              | Maru Kafi (25)       | 1014    |
|    |              | Maru Dakhni (260)    | 1033    |
| 22 | Tukhari      | -                    | 1107    |
| 23 | Kedar        | -                    | 1118    |
| 24 | Bhairau      | -                    | 1115    |
| 25 | Basant       | -                    | 1168    |
|    |              | Basant Hindol (27)   | 1171    |
| 26 | Sarang       | -                    | 1197    |
| 27 | Malhar       | -                    | 1254    |
| 28 | Kanadha      | -                    | 1294    |
| 29 | Kalyan       | Kalyan Bhopali (28)  | 1319    |
| 30 | Prabhati     | Prabhati Bibhas (29) | 1321    |
|    |              | Prabhati Dakhni (30) | 1327    |
|    |              | Bibhas Prabhati (31) | 1347    |
| 31 | Jai-Jaivanti | -                    | 1342    |
|    |              |                      |         |

## **Gurmat Sangeet, Punjab's Musical Heritage**

**Dr. Gurnam Singh**

Gurmat Sangeet is a global genre of music. This tradition emerges as a harmonious combination of classical and folk traditions of Hindustani, Carnatic and Persian music. The idea of the shabad-kirtan tradition of Gurmat Sangeet is to spread beatitude among all souls through its divine nature.

Gurmat Sangeet is a unique musical tradition in which the divine message is communicated through shabad-kirtan, which is an inseparable part of the Sikh way of life. The kirtan-chauki tradition is more in vogue in gurdwaras and the kirtan traditions, practised on special occasions, is an extended form of this institution. This practical kirtan tradition is in accordance with the concept of Shabad Guru as conveyed by Guru Granth Sahib.

The bani of Guru Granth Sahib, written and indexed according to the prescribed ragas, singing forms, headings and other guidelines issued in the bani, creates original and specific musicology. A scientific approach to music can help in recognising more explicitly the music tradition according to Guru Granth Sahib.

The system of music enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib is exactly in accordance with the musical tenets established by the Gurus. What came to be known as gur shabad kirtan is a unique confluence of shabad and kirtan propounded by the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Dev, with the help of divine music emanating from Bhai Mardana's rabab. This emerged as a unique system in the Indian and world music tradition. In bani, gur shabad kirtan has been assigned a very prominent status. (Guru Granth Sahib, page 1075)

Guru Granth Sahib contains the bani of the Gurus in addition to the bani of contemporary and earlier saints and bhagats. the classification of bani according to ragas makes it clear that bani is written in accordance with a particular system as conceived by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru, while compiling and editing Guru Granth Sahib.

Besides, the ragas, different classical and folk singing styles, rahao and other music signs are elements of the gurmat music system which always remain active due to their original musical characteristics and for the presentation of shabad-kirtan. Bani under shabad-kirtan is to be sung according to the prescribed ragas, raga forms, singing styles, music signs, rahao, ank (digit) etc. Different music elements that govern shabad-kirtan can be understood through an independent systematic discussion about them and their functional aspect may become clearer through systematic thought.

The whole bani of Guru Granth Sahib has been classified under 31 ragas and 31 different raga forms (parkaars), thus making total of 62. Raga markings in Gurbani as heading are an indication for singing a particular piece of Gurbani according to a prescribed raga that has been ordained in Sikh traditions. (Guru Granth Sahib pages 697, 821, 958, 1423)

Many ragas in the Gurmat Sangeet tradition are original melodic forms. This is a tradition that is more than 500 years old. These original raga forms of Gurmat Sangeet are a unique contribution to Indian music's raga tradition.

Bani has different headings on it along with ragas such as Ashtapadian, Chaupade, Ghorian, Alahunian, Vaar, etc., in Guru Granth Sahib. Under the bani arrangement these forms not only assume poetical forms but specific singing styles.

In Guru Granth Sahib, the digits have been marked at different places, viz. 1,2,3,4 etc. as ank. In addition to the signs like rahao, bani has been divided through different digits. Under the Gurmat Sangeet shabad-kirtan, rahao is taken as sthaae and the tradition is to sing it repeatedly after every antra because the rahao line has the central idea of the shabad.

In addition to the rahao, Gurmat Sangeet has other musical signs such as ghar, jati, dhuni, sudhang, etc. Out of the 22 vaaras included in Guru Granth Sahib, nine have different dhuni headings such as Tunde us raajai kee dhunee, Malik mureed tathaa chandarharhaa sohee-e kee dhunee. These dhuni headings are special features of the ballad singing style used for the heroic deeds of the warriors. In addition to their importance in Gurbani, they have great significance for Hindustani music. These headings also provide a new formulation for the division of Indian music into Hindustani and Caranatic systems. In the landscape of North-Indian music tradition, Punjab's tradition emerges as a central source.

According to the Sikh tradition of music, a complete and specific form of shabad-kirtan is called kirtan chauki. Original kirtan chauki tradition of Gurmat Sangeet was started in the period of Guru Nanak, developed and propagated by all Sikh Gurus. Harmandar Sahib has a unique kirtan tradition in the form of different kirtan chaukis such as Tinpahee dee keertan chaukee, Aasaa dee var di chaukee, Bilawal dee chaukee, etc.

The Sikh Gurus also chose special musical instruments. The rabab was played by Bhai Mardana during Guru Nanak's time, Siranda during the times of Guru Amar Dass and Guru Ram Dass, Siranda and Israj during the period of guru Arjan Dev. The taus and dhad-sarangi were played for vaar singing during the period of Guru Gobind Singh's time. These were peculiar to the tradition, which proves the use of special musical instruments. These special instruments are also used in an original way. The tanti (stringed) instruments are especially useful for purity of notes of the ragas and traditional excellence of Gur Shabad Kirtan.

Sikh history bears testimony to the fact that after second Udasi, Guru Nanak set up Sikh Dharamsala (Gurdwara) as an institution, where the tradition of kirtan started by the Guru was specially reiterated. Historical references make it clear that Gurbani was sung twice a day in the morning and evening at Kartarpur. Guru Angad Dev founded Khadoor Sahib and continued with the Kartarpuri standard tradition. Besides, Bhai Sehad and Bhai Saddu and Maddu were also famous rababis at the Guru's abode. Guru Amar Das founded Goindwal as a special centre for the propagation of Sikhism. Gurmat Sangeet was also popularised at Sikh congregations.

Guru Arjan Dev took on the responsibility of developing the Gurmat Sangeet tradition on firm footing. By this time Harmandar Sahib had been founded at Amritsar where shabad-kirtan was sung continuously in different kirtan chaukis. At this centre, where the rababi

kirtan tradition emerged in a distinct form, common Sikhs were also encouraged to perform kirtan.

After Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Hargobind started with vaar music by dhadis along with kirtan. Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishan further propagated the Gurmat Sangeet tradition, Anandpur Sahib was founded by Guru Teg Bahadur and made traditional kirtan an inseparable part of practical tradition. Bhai Saddu and Maddu were the famous kirtan performers at this great Sikh centre.

In the contemporary Gurmat Sangeet tradition some prominent taksals and institutions are Damdama Sahib Taksal, Budha Jor Taksal, Mastuana Taksal, Tarn Taran Taksal, Damdami Taksal, Jawadi Kalan Taksal and Namdhari Taksal etc.

Ever since the beginning of the 18th century, many scholars have been composing shabad-kirtan. This is contemporary to the efforts made in the arena of Hindustani music. Besides this practical performance on record, many scholars have contributed to the establishment of the theory of Gurmat Sangeet as well.

In the contemporary world of music the Gurmat Sangeet tradition founded by the Gurus and developed by the Sikh Panth has established itself as an independent and original entity. In view of the global consciousness, the teaching, research and preservation of this great heritage have become all the more necessary.

## QUALITIES OF AN IDEAL KIRTANIST

In the previous paper you have read the merits and demerits of a vocalist in Part-C. These are applicable on a kirtanist also. But kirtanist is a peculiar type of vocalist who requires some additional qualities also alongwith those of a vocalist. Therefore the qualities of an ideal kirtanist can be divided into three parts.

- (a) Qualities regarding Art of Music
  - (b) Qualities regarding Gurbani Kirtan
  - (c) Qualities regarding Gurmat
- (a) **Qualities regarding Art of Music** – Although these qualities include those of a classical vocalist, yet with deeper meanings. the first quality of an ideal kirtanist is his mellifluous voice.

- (1) Mellifluous of voice is very important in a kirtanist. Alongwith individual qualities, Gurbani also emphasises the importance of a honeyed voice.

Tera Mukh Suhawa Jio, Sahaji Dhuni Bani.

Khoob Teri Pagri Meethe Tere Bol.

Kawal Nain Madhur Bain. Teri chal suhawi Madhuradi Bani.

Mith Bolra ji Hari Sajjan Suami Mora.

- (2) A kirtanist with a melodious voice, may not be well-versed in Ragas, Taals and Gurbani, but if his swara is right, his kirtan will have a deeper impact. If a kirtanist is scholarly in Raga, Taal and Bani but his swara is faulty, his kirtan will have no impact at all. Therefore, a kirtanist should try to maintain the honey of his voice through regular practice i.e. Riyaz.

Every kirtanist has his own kind of swara but Riyaz can infuse a special quality into it. His voice should emanate from his being with no resonance. It should not be sans warmth and nasal. It should fit easily in to all the three saptaks.

Thus an ideal kirtanist should also have a knowledge of tender, pure and sharp swara. He should also know how to start and conclude the swara.

- (3) An ideal kirtanist is also familiar with other Ragas alongwith those dictated in Guru Granth Sahib. He is sufficiently familiar with the types of Raga. He is also rich in the knowledge of the nature, time and essence of Ragas through his erudition. It enriches his act with variety, sobriety and originality.
- (4) An ideal kirtanist has a command over rhythm. With special practice, he acquires the knowledge of popular and obsolete Taals and Padtals (a kind of rhythm in classical music) which bring variety and sobriety in his kirtan.
- (5) An ideal kirtanist keeps practising Alankars and rhythms. These are not just means of embellishment in kirtan but during singing of Shabads they form basis of Swar Sangits. If all this is well practised, there is hardly any need of adding rhythms.

(b) **Qualities regarding Gurbani Kirtan** – An ideal kirtanist practices the qualities regarding Gurbani music with great devotion. His heart is saturated with the feeling that he has to recite quality kirtan to his beloved God. Therefore the elements of devotion and love are essential for practising kirtan. Although all this is a voluntary service for the kirtanist, yet the following qualities are indispensable for him-

- (1) He is well-versed in the Gurbani Kirtan style because it is fully contemplative. Its composition is an admixture of Raga rendition of Gurbani, hymn-singing and at-times folk styles and poetic. He is equipped with the knowledge of all these styles and can distinguish kirtan style from them. that is why he keeps reading and listening to the style adopted by the old kirtanist.
- (2) An ideal kirtanist should perform kirtan based on Raga. In other words if a shabad is superscribed with a particular Raga and it is according to the time also, he kirtans in that Raga but if he has to render some Raga other than those maintained in Guru Granth Sahib, then he chooses a shabad on which no particular Raga is mentioned.
- (3) An ideal kirtanist also performs by choosing Ragas according to season e.g. he sings in Basant Raga during spring (Basant) season and as per need he sings from Basant Di var Paudi also. Similarly, he performs in Ragas like Malhar and Sarang during rainy season.
- (4) If a Shabad has 'Rahau' indication in it, the ideal kirtanist makes it sthai while singing shabad 'reet'. He sings Antras also in the way these are indicated in the shabad e.g. 'Rahau' is sthai in the following shabad –

Mere sahiba kaun jane gun tere,

Kahe na jani Augun mere.

There is a difference of two rhymes in the following shabad :

Kati ki Mai Baap Kati Kera,

Kidu Thavahu Ham Aae.

Here he sings sthai after singing the rhymes of Antra. There is a difference of three rhymes in the following shabad :

Sabhe Thok Prapte Je Aavei Ik Hati.

Jaam Padarth Saphatu hai je sacha sabdu kathi

Gur te mahal prapte ji su likhya hove mthi

Here he sings sthai after singing Antra of these three rhymes:

Mere Mann Ekas Sao Chitu Lai.

Ekas Binu Sabh Dhandhu Hai.

Sabh Mithya Moh Mohu Mai.

The following shabad has four rhyme Antras :

Ja Kau Muskalu Ati Banei Dhai Koi deii.

Lagu Hoi Dusmana sak bhi Bhaji Khak.

Sabho Bhaje Aasra Chooke Sabh Asrau.

Chitu Aavei us Paar Brahm lagei na Tathi Vao.

After singing these four rhymes as Antra, he sings sthai.

Sahib Nitania Da Taan. Aai Na Jai thiru sada,

Gur sabdi sachi Jaan.

Thus, sthai and Antras are clearly indicated in almost every shabad. All this is according to the underlying passion. An ideal kirtanist creates the right type of atmosphere.

- (5) An ideal kirtanist has an impeccable pronunciation of Gurbani. Although vowel symbols in Gurbani, have been used in archaic style, yet its mode of pronunciation is well laid down and recognised. Whatever fault there is in its pronunciation is due to the dialectic differences only e.g. if a kirtanist pronounces 'Birkh' as 'Vikhar', 'Wahiguru' as 'Behuguru' and 'Jeeva' as 'Jia' then this is the mispronunciation of the words. This fault can be removed with practice only.
- (6) While reciting the lines from Gurbani, an ideal kirtanist gives pause at the right place because it has its bearing on the meanings. Therefore, he keeps studying the annotations of Gurbani. Performing kirtan after fully grasping the essence of Gurbani, has an impact and depth of its own. An ideal kirtanist prepares the tune of the shabad according to its essential meaning. He does not sing it on a film song tune.
- (7) He is also familiar with the poetic form of the shabad and performs according to the poetic forms like Pade, Var, Chhant, Ghorian, Alauhian etc.
- (8) He knows how to illustrate his point to emphasise the meanings of a particular rhyme of Gurbani to make it more clear. He does not give illustrations for show-off only.
- (9) He explains only to elucidate any particular idea not to exhibit his knowledge or to derive applause of a particular listener.
- (10) He performs kirtan with an equipoise and also seeks guidance from Gurbani in this respect –

Sahje Gavia Thai Pavei, Binu Sahjei kathni Badi.

(Pp. 68)

(c) **Qualities regarding Gurmat** – The ideology enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib is called Gurmat. An ideal Kirtanist adopts the qualities of Gurmat also.

1. Bhalo Bhalo Re kirtania.  
Ram Rma Rama Gun Gao.  
Chhodi Maya De Dhandh Suao.

According to the above lines, an ideal kirtanist does not perform under the temptation of Lucre. He never changes his pre-scheduled kirtan programme to please an affluent person.

- (2) As enjoined in the lines  
Iki Gavatt Rahe Manni Sadu Na Pai.



Haumei Vich Gavei Birtha jai

(Pp. 84)

He does not feel proud for being a kirtanist and performs with all humility. Again:

Aap Gawai Su Hari Gun Gao

(Pp. 270)

i.e. when he performs, he does it with a deep sense of gratitude or prayer or praise of the Almighty. No Ego is reflected from his being.

(3) He performs whole heartedly with love as he know that :

Koi Gavei Ragi Nadi Badi Bahu Bhati Kari

Nahi Hari Hari Bheejei ram Rajei

Jina Antar Kapat Vikar Hai, Tina Roi kya keejei.

Only the kirtan performed with devotion has its impact. If the art of music is matune and love is not, then this is no kirtan.

Jis no Parteeti Hovei Tis ka Gavia Thai Pavei.

So Paavei Dargah Maan.

(Pp. 734)

(4) His apparel is clean but simple Pompous makeup is prohibited in Gurmat.

5) An ideal kirtanist is very punctual. He starts and concludes his performance well in time.

These are some of the qualities of an ideal kirtanist. However, the qualities of a good kirtanists are not very different from those of a man of nobility. The ideal kirtanist is very popular in people. Therefore he must lead a life of righteousness so that action done or a word spoken by him hurts anybody.

## HERITAGE OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC

Heritage of Punjabi folk music is a special artistic current of Punjabi culture. It is a living source of knowledge about the basic instincts of folk-mind, aesthetic, consciousness and mental make-up. This uninterrupted flow of the noble heritage of Punjabi folk music has been satisfying the aesthetic appetite of Punjabis since centuries. Punjabi folk music is the musical expression of the conscious and sub-conscious of the Punjabi folk mind. Folk-songs right from the birth of man in the form of lullabies to the elegies sung at the time death express the multi-dimensional sentiments of Punjabis through different forms of folk music. Punjabi folk music has carved a niche for itself in the sphere of world music through its original melodic notes. Tall Lehris, Nibadh and Anibadh forms of singing, tunes and musical instruments. In 'Hindustani Music' **Punjab Ang** has developed from the originality of folk music in rudimentary form beside different forms vocal and instrumental music in Punjabi music tradition. Besides, Punjabi folk music heritage has also played a vital role in promoting Punjabi Folk traditions like Sikh and Sufi traditions of music. But despite all its uniqueness and contribution, Punjabi Folk music could not attract the attention of the musicologists and culture scientists for making it a subject of independent study.

### DEVELOPMENT OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC

Many generations of the Punjabis have accepted and revered the heritage of Punjabi folk music in their day-to-day life. While doing routine activities, the tunes and notes of many a song and music composition escape from the tips of Punjabis. Their repeated rendition at the level of performance has been enriching them with a specificity of style. Notes, rhythm-patterns and several mood resultant of the routine activities of Punjabi farmers e.g. ploughing, sowing, weeding etc. attain life in the tunes of Punjabi men's song. They are musical contours emerged on the canvas of Punjabi folk mind. Special performances of folk music in the fairs, wrestling sites and other such festive occasions have been creating an identify of their own. Like Punjabi woman gives free vent to her feelings and sentiments while sitting in Trinjan (a get-together of village damsels where they spin cotton yarn together on the spinning wheel and make fun and frolic at the some time) or Teej festival by dancing and singing. Variegated music on occasions like births, marriages and deaths is also the monopoly of women who sing themselves out in such like situations. The songs of women are not only sweet but have an astonishing capacity of communication of their inner realm and a water like fluency.

Although different musical compositions in the heritage of Punjabi folk music exist anonymously, yet they travel down the generations orally and assume a specific shape through their identification with the folk mind. These unwritten compositions are etched eternally in the folk memory. The words of folk songs have a hypnotic capacity to cast a spell on the listener. Suravalis and Tall Lehris emanating from the throats and folk instruments of Punjabis have a capacity to establish their original identify in the conscious and subconscious of Punjabi folk mind. That is why sometimes the tunes of Punjabi songs – just tunes sans any words – fascinate, rater captivate the listener. This

characteristic of Punjabi folk music heritage can be identified in the context of the practical aspect of the tone and tenor of Punjabi folk songs and folk music.

### **THE STUDY OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC HERITAGE – AN ANALYSIS**

The researchers of Punjabi culture during their study, have tried to preserve only the poetic aspect of the words (Bols) in the process of compiling folk songs with the result that their vast musical treasure is rendered secondary. The mention of these songs lying frigid on the pages of books, is not devoid of recognition of the importance of musical content of course, but their synchronicity and integrity have been left outside the range of their studies. It may be because of their purely literary and cultural perspective due to absence of their grip on the subtle understanding of musical elements. And it has resulted in setting aside the original character of Punjabi Folk music heritage. Thus Punjabi folk music has not been made a subject of study and analysis by recognising it in totality which encompasses dance and music-both instrumental and vocal alongwith the songs, tunes, Taals and instruments. The individual and collective performances of this folk art got it public recognition from time to time. due to the availability of the chances of performance and applause received by the performers, many 'professional artists' were also recognised in Punjabi culture. As a result, many music traditions of the performers of Punjabi folk music tradition have reached us today through a journey of centuries in the corridors of folk culture. Many generations and Gharanas of these folk musicians are indefatigably active in carrying this musical treasure to the coming generations.

### **DIFFERENT CURRENTS OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC**

To understand the vast expansion of Punjabi folk music tradition, it can be classified in to Gayan (vocal music), Vadan (instrumental music) and Nrit (Dance). In India music, Gayan, Vadan and Nrit – all three form part of music. Although each of these has developed as an independent tradition but as regards Punjabi Folk music heritage, their inter-relationship is still discernible. For the convenience of study and analysis, it would be proper to discuss each of these independently.

### **THE TRADITION OF VOCAL MUSIC IN PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC**

Punjabi Folk music heritage is dominated by folk singing. Playing upon folk instruments acts only as auxiliary to folk singing and also adorns it with its musicality. The moods of folk dances are also primarily based on folk songs and folk tales. Thus the current of Punjabi Folk music tradition is based on its singing material only. This material is built up for the performance of Punjabi folk songs pertaining to Punjabi folk life. And the special style of their performance is recognised as folk singing by us. These Punjabi folk songs ventilate the feelings of Punjabi folks, hearts on all important occasions of Punjabi life including the songs on the birth of a child, lullabies, Trinjan songs, Teej songs, Ghorian, Suhag, Chhand, Sohltas, Sitthnis, Elegies, Pahrās, Satvara, Sadd, Bolis, Dhola, Mahia Tappas etc. The songs mentioned above are sung by Punjabi men and women very commonly in normal routine life. Besides, the Punjabi sing folk songs, folk tales, ballads etc. to glorify their heroes in the fairs and other public-gatherings called Akharas.

Kavishri : The ballads, Dharud, Draupadi, Kaulan, Ammirudh, Ukhan, Janichor, Raga Nal Damyant, Mahabhart Chandravati, Sehra, Prahlad, Raja Harish Chander, Pirthi Singh Rathour, Udai Singh Rathour, the valour of patriots, Sikh History etc. are the main subjects of Kavishri.

Dhadis : The Dhadis sing the folk tales of Heer, Ranjha, Mirza, Dulla, Puran, Keema Malki and Sassi Pannu etc. in Dhadi Raga. The Sikh Dhadis sing the Vars relating to the life of Guru Sikh and Sikh warriors.

Toomba Tara Singers : They sing Heer, Mirza-Sahiban, Kaulan, Sohni, Puran, Tara Rani etc.

King/Toombi Singers : They are a great asset of Punjabi folk music heritage. The subjects of their singing includes the folk tales of Heer, Sohni, Sassi, Mirza, Jaimal Fatta, Dhol Sammi, Khalaksher, Gaunspak Pir, Raja Gopi Chand, King Darud, Jugni, Jindua, Roda Jalali, Mahia, Tappas, Bolis, Raja Rasalu, Pir, Muradra, Harni etc.

These different subjects of singing have been popular as a part of the singing material of Punjabi folk music since centuries. They have reached us just on the wings of oral tradition. Although these songs have their verbal and poetic beauty also but still their life lies in singing style and the folk singer really breathes life into this style through his originality of rendition and music. After the centuries have elapsed, the singing patterns of these songs are still intact. Folk songs popular and accepted in public-life, emerge as special genres of folk singing in their natural classified forms. When their nature and form adorns the art and talent of some particular folk singers, then this group of artists adopt this genre of folk singing by way of profession also. These artists who carry different folk singing genres to the coming generations develop as a special class of folk singers. Punjabi folk music heritage has been traveling safely in public memory. Under the changed conditions of modern times, this treasure of folk songs is vanishing from the consciousness of the new generation of Punjabis but still some generations of folk music performer do possess abundant collection of punjabi folk singing. We can recognise these heirs of Punjabi folk singing as Kavishars, Dhadis, Gugga singers, Puadhi singers, Toomba Tara singers and Toombi/King singers etc.

### **INSTRUMENTAL TRADITION OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC**

The Punjabi folk instrumental music tradition is based on the instrumental music accompanying Punjabi folk singing, independent playing of folk tunes and tonal and rhythmic instrumental system of Punjabi folk dances. So far no independent study into this heritage of folk music has been possible worth the name. Under different singing systems of Punjabi folk singing, there has been a strong tradition of playing different instruments. So much so their singing systems are named after the instruments the play upon e.g. Dhadis (who play Dhadd and Sarangi), Toomba Tara singers etc. These singers use different Taal instruments to imitate tune and produce the desired rhythm. Sura-producing instruments include Toomba, Toombi, King, Sarangi, Algozas etc. and Taal

i.e. beat instruments include Dhadd, Dholak, Dauru, Duff/Tamki etc. in Punjabi folk music tradition, singing and music are complementary to each other. Almost every folk singer plays one or the other instrument, be it Sura instrument or Taal instrument-during his performance as the Dhadis play on Dhadd and Sarangi and Toombi / Toomba / King singers themselves play these instruments as they sing. Some blow instruments are also played during singing but they are played independently as well. The instrument playing with the Punjabi folk singing is reflected in different forms. The Taal instruments produce a rhythm while the Sura-instruments add suitable tune to the singing style. Original instrumentation of the tunes of different folk songs provides a special musical basis to the folk songs concerned. The nature of this instrumentation conforms to the basic tune character of the concerned instrument. In other words instrumental music on Sarangi, Toombi, Algozas and Vanjhali is basically different during the performance of different folk songs. From this material music, special Suravalis of Punjabi folk music heritage can be identified. This treasure of instrumental music in Punjabi folk music tradition should be recognised as the basis of an independent study and analysis which can result in new and original achievements concerning Punjabi folk music.

For the playing of Punjabi folk tunes and folk Suravalis/Lehras etc. accepted and established in Punjabi folk music heritage, the Instruments like Vanjhali, Algozas, Been, Iktara, Toombi etc. are quite popular. An independent playing on these instruments keeps the folk tunes and their essence alive in the folk memory. These folk tunes include Mirza, Heer, Mahia, Bolis, Jugni etc.

There exists a vast tradition of playing sura and Taal instruments with Punjabi folk dances. Folk dances are danced with the folk songs according to the folk tunes. Lehras and the rhythm of Taal instruments. There is a unique tradition of playing folk tunes and Lehras by the Algoza and Been – Vaja folk sings in Sammi, Jhumar, Bhangra and Been vaja dance. This tradition of instrumental music also has abundant possibilities of independent study. Many Taal instruments like Dholaki, Dhol, Ghara, Dhadd, Khanjri, Dauru, Tamki/Duff, Tamboor, Garva, Bugdu etc. exist in the instrumental tradition of Punjab folk music heritage. During the performance of different genres of folk singing on these instruments, only basic beats are given, but special Tall-material played on these, their playing style, training and the originality or peculiarity of learning are the special assets of Punjabi folk music heritage. The contours of Punjab Gharana of Pakhawaj and Tabla vadan and Punjab Baaz can be traced on it. Among the beat instruments, there a great tradition of Dhol and Dhadd vadan. Apart from different folk singing and folk dance genres, the Dhol playing on occasions like fairs, mausoleums and other such places is an invaluable asset of Taal material. The Dhol bears blos on its body to shriek aloud to the researchers for study and preservation of this inexhaustible treasure.

### **MUSIC TRADITION OF THE PUNJABI FOLK DANCE**

Third big current of Punjabi folk music heritage is the folk dances of Punjab. Different dance forms have reached us through the generations alongwith folk singing and folk music. These folk dances give expressions to the sentiments expressed in different folk songs and also reflect the rhythm and moods of Punjabi life. Tradition love

stories are danced by basing them on the concerned folk songs. Punjabi dances like Sammi, Jhumar, Bhangra, Giddha, Male Giddha (Malwai Giddha) etc. bear all these qualities. There are special folk singing varieties like Dhola, Mahia, Bolis, to express the sentiments of Punjabi hearts through dance. Punjabi folk dances seem to be flying high in the skies of Punjabi culture on the wings of vocal and instrumental music. Therefore, the singing material used in these dances has a special significance for us. Similarly folk songs touching different subjects are sung with Bhangra, Giddha, Male Giddha etc.

Different beat instruments are used to provide rhythm to these folk dances e.g. Dhol, Dholak, Bugdu, Ghara, Garva, Sapp, Kato, Kirla, Chimta etc. These instruments produce rhythm according to the concerned folk tune, but their established forms have gained acceptance in other forms of music also through the periodic expansion. Every beat instruments has its own nature, form and playing method which helps in the maintenance of its originality. Thus there is a great expansion of the musical rendition of Punjabi folk dances in Punjabi folk music heritage which must be analysed in the context of Punjabi folk dances for the identification of its traditional past.

### **MAIN CONTRIBUTION OF PUNJABI FOLK MUSIC HERITAGE**

Since centuries Punjabi folk music tradition has influenced its contemporary currents of music and many forms developed out of this tradition have become permanent parts of the concerned waves of music. Like Punjabi folk music tradition other powerful traditions of Hindustani music (North Indian music) are classical music, Gurmat Sikh music tradition, Sufi music. All these four traditions are getting for the total Punjabi music tradition, its original and unique character. Of these the ancient most and vast is the Punjabi folk music tradition which has enriched these varied traditions by its valuable contribution.

### **CONTRIBUTION IN CLASSICAL MUSIC**

In the field of classical music, Punjabi tradition has had a great contribution. 'Punjab Ang' is unique in the development of classical vocal music. It is based on the Sur-Lagavs of sweet, free, fluent voice, differen Suravalis, Aalap and Taan patters, special singing style of Punjabis and other musical elements developed out of the Punjabi folk music heritage. This 'Punjab Ang' is reflected especially 'Khyal' and 'Thumri'. It is the Punjabi tinge in the Khyal Gayan of Patiala and Sham Churasi Gharanas which distinguishes it from all the Khyala Gharanas of india due to this very 'Punjab Ang'. The established identity of Punjab Ang in Thumri is the basic contribution of Punjabi folk music heritage. Besides, the distinction of the mellifluous singing of Punjabis can be compared on these very bases as the Punjab Ang in Thumri is the basic contribution of Punjabi folk music heritage. Besides, the distinction of the mellifluous singing of Punjabis can be compared on these very basis as the Punjab Ang of Dhrupad Gayan. Among all these hues of singing, Punjabi folk music heritage emerges as an original basis. It is on the basis of the influence imbibed by the Punjabi artists, that they have succeeded in leaving an imprint on the Indian music as a whole. Tappa Gayan is still a

special style of vocal music in Punjab folk music tradition. All classical musicians having been singing in Tappa style since centuries. It was made acceptable in classical music due to the efforts of Ghulam Nabi Shori Mian. Similarly, the Ragas developed from Punjabi folk music (Asa, Maajh, Gauri, Peelu, Bhairavi, Dhanasari, Bageshri, Bihagra, Sorath, Sarang, Tilang, Wadhans etc.) and Taal (Punjabi Theka, Tilwara, Aara Chaar Taal Pauri, Keharwa, Dadra, Deep Chandi etc.) form a special part of the classical music tradition. Punjab Baaz is world famous in the field of Pakhawaj and Tabla Vadan. The Vadan style developed from the Taal material of the Dhol, a fold beat instrument in the Baaz of this Gharana and Dholak Vadan in Puadhi Akhara demand the attention of research and analysis. Thus in the field of classical vocal and instrumental music, Punjabi folk music heritage has played a vital role in highlighting the original touch of Punjabis by its contribution as the basic material.

### **CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS GURMAT SANGEET**

The Gurmat Sangeet tradition of Sikhism reflected from Shri Guru Granth Sahib, employs different forms of folk singing in its pattern of music composition. Ghoris, Lawan, Alauhnis, Pehras, Mandwani etc. deserve a special mention. Var singing has been accorded special importance in Gurmat Sangeet and there are directions also regarding Gayan according to the concerned Ragas and folk tunes : Var Maajh Ki Tatha Saloka Mahla 1 Malak Murid Tatha Chandrahada, Sohia Ki Dhuni Gawni (G.G.S. pp. 137), Gauri Ki Var Mahla 5 Raikamal Di Moj Di Ki Dhuni Gawni (G.G.S. pp. 318) etc. The Ragas developed from Punjabi folk music also occupy a special mention. In Gurmat Sangeet, the music material of Punjabi folk music heritage has been used in a special and original way which has made these forms of Punjabi folk music heritage eternal and authentic. The impact of the folk tunes of folk vars on var singing in particular and determination of concerned Ragas related to tune reflect the inter-link between Punjabi folk music and classical music in the context of Gurmat Sangeet.

### **CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SUFI MUSIC**

By the 21<sup>st</sup> century many changes occurred in the practical use of Punjabi folk music tradition under Punjabi culture are basically because of the social, economic and cultural changes in the Punjabi society. As a result, practical use of Punjabi folk music heritage is disappearing from the Punjabi fraternity. Folk music used on the occasions of social rituals is becoming a phenomenon of bygone times. The forms of folk singing like Loris (lullabies), Chhand, Suhag, Sitthnis, Ghoris etc. are rarely heard even in the countryside. Even in the fairs, festivals and Akharas, the performance of folk music are vanishing gradually.

With the advent of modern technology in the form of Audio Visual recording today, the virgin forms of the folk music tradition still owned by the heirs of folk music heritage, are getting bedimmed in Punjabi psyche. As a result the folk artists are facing very hard times these days and bidding good-bye to their folk music pursuits. Contrary to their saintly and artistic temperament they are forced to do very menial jobs. However, they are preserving their heritage in one way or the other. Despite all their hardships they lose no opportunity to give a performance of their art. They may earn very little out of

their performance but their inner satisfaction makes them feel compensated. One is really impelled to bow one's head before the perseverance of these artists.

Vis-a-vis the above mentioned circumstance at the very outset of 21<sup>st</sup> century, many culture-scientist rue the erosion of heritage but we could do little to identify the sources of culture, their protection and preservation at any individual, collective or institutional level. It is due to their lethargic approach that the culture scientists want to shed their responsibility by just shedding crocodile tears over the loss of culture heritage while, in fact, all is not lost as yet.



## RAAG PARBANDH OF SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

Gurnam Singh (Dr.)\*

The Sikh Gurus have blessed mankind with the divine message in the form of Gurubani. They used Shabad Kirtan as a communicational device for expressing the divine message as Khasm Ki Bani. It reflects all-pervasiveness of music, naad brahm form of music in the Indian tradition and inseparable relationship of poetry and music. This way gets the multi-dimensional aspect of bani manifested in a harmonious way of Shabad and Kirtan. The gurus used music in its original and unique form. Different musicological elements and devices have been applied for Shabad Kirtan in an exclusive and definitive manner for "Sangeet Prabandh" of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is known as Gurmat Sangeet".

Musicological classification dominates the compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 31 main Raagas and different Raaga forms as various poetic forms of bani in their folk and classical variations. From this century-old tradition of Sikh Shabad Kirtan, has emanated different Raaga-based Kirtan chaukis, string instruments, and taksal prampra as different learning schools of Gurmat Sangeet. The old and the present tradition of Raagis and Rabaabis constitute a precious heritage of great musical tradition.

Recitation of Gurubani under prescribed Raagas, peculiar singing styles and definitive musical signs is must for any Kirtankaar as it is for the scholars of Gurubani to understand the exact perspective of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. These musical elements and devices have been used as a key for the compilation of this holy scripture which have their own structural and functional significance. All these elements can be described in the following manner:

The central idea of any composition of Bani lies in the couplets indicated as "rahau" id "Rahau" is taken as sathai in Shabad Kirtan and the tradition necessitates to sing it repeatedly after every antra which is indicated by different digits/anks. The lines containing digits viz. 1,2,3,4 as ank portray different illustrations, reasonings, examples facilitating a deep understanding of Gurubani. And these lines have to be sung as antras after rahau one by one. The names of different singing styles as the title of bani's compositions, different tunes of vaars, ghar, hati, and other symbols like sudhang have their own musicological meaning and relevance.

In Gurubani, the quality of Raagas enjoying everlasting and immortal power, unique fragrance have indelible impact on the human mind getting new dimensions in Gurubani. The gurus say:

Sabhna Ragan vich so bhala Bhaee

Jit wasia man aee

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1. Khalak Kau Ades Dhadhi Gavna

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, P. 148).

- Hau Aaphu bol na janda, Main kahiya sabh hukmaau jio,

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 763)

- Jaasi Main aave Khansam Kee Bani, Tesrha Kari Giyan Ve Lalo

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 722)

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, P. 1421)

Dhan su Raag Surangrhe Alapit

Sabh tikh jaa

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, P. 958)

Ragan Vich Sri Rag Hai

Je Sach Dhare Piyare

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 83)

Sabhna Ragan Vich So Bhala Bhaee

Jit Vasia man aee

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.142)

Gaurhee Rag Sulakhni Jai

Khasme Chit Kare

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.311)

Sorath Sada Suhavani

Je Sacha mann Hoe

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.612)

While defining the purpose of reciting these Raagas according to the spiritual motive of Gurubani, Sikh gurus have given new meanings and significance to these Raags. Guru says:

The poetic illustration of these Raags in bani has also given new spiritual dimension as compared to the corporal manifestation of the Indian Raag dhyani tradition of Raaga prabandh. For example, we can analyse and compare the Raag dhyani tradition of Hindustani music as embedded in different musical sources and Raag dhyani recited in bani.<sup>2</sup>

Both folk and classical variations of Raags have been applied in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The indication of different tunes of ballads, derived from traditional folk music, have their own significance in the context of different spiritual ballad compositions compiled in Sri Guru Granth Sahib because all these musical ballads have their own musicology and recital styles as prescribed in different Raags.

The tunes of these folk ballads are also the basic source of some Raags derived from folk tradition. Asa di war and tuned asraje di dhuni can be quoted as the best example amongst 22 vaars of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The Raag Prabandh of Sri Guru Granth Sahib enjoys a unique position in the development of treasure of Raags in the context of Hindustani, Dakhni/karnatki and Gurmat tradition of music. Gurubani has been classified and indexed under 31 main Raagas, were engrossed in fRaag-Ragni system of classification of Raags, having their own conventional schools like Raagranav mat, Shivmat, Hanumat, Kalimat etc. as their

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2. Gurnam Singh (Dr.), Gurmat Sangeet : Parbandh Te Pasar, p.80.

3. Sri Guru Granth Sahib p. 83, 311, 516, 585, 642, 849, 791, 1168, 1185, 1285, 1425 etc.

poetical illustrations, known as Raagmalas. Under these Raagmalas, Raagas were categorized according to different familiar relationships.<sup>3</sup>

The Raag mala at the end of Sri Guru Granth Sahib too is a form of such classification. But this medieval style of classification has no broad based acceptance.

Guru Arjun Dev, while compiling Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 31 Raagas, rejected this Raag-Ragni classification and acknowledged only Raag mat, containing one main Raag and sub-Raagas. The 19th century musicologists then followed this pattern, consciously or unconsciously. This classification has had its own functional value much before the evolution of the present Bhatkhande Raag That Padhti. The 31 main Raags and 31 sub Raagas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib have been classified in the following manner:

1. **Siree**
2. **Maajh**
3. **Gaorhee** (i) Gaorhee Guaareree, (ii) Gaorhee Dakhnhee, (iii) Gaorhee Chetee, (iv) Gaorhee BaiRaaganh, (v) Gaorhee Poorbee Deepkee, (vi) Gaorhee Poorbee, (vii) Gaorhee Deepkee, (viii) Gaorhee Maalwa, (ix) Gaorhee Maala, (x) Gaorhee Maajh, (xi) Gaorhee Sorathh
4. **Aasaa** (i) Aasaawaree, (ii) Aasaawaree Sudhang, (iii) Aasaa Kaafee
5. **Goojree**
6. **Devchandhaaree** (i) Devchandhaar
7. **Bihaagrhaa**
8. **Wadhans** (i) Wadhans Dakhnhee
9. **Sorath**
10. **Dhanaaseree**
11. **Jaitsree**
12. **Todee**
13. **Bairarhee**
14. **Tilang** (i) Tilang Kaafee
15. **Soohee**, (i) Soohee Kaafee, (ii) Soohee Lalit
16. **Billawal** (i) Bilaawal Dakhnhee, (ii) Billaawal Mangal
17. **Gond** (i) Billawal Gond
18. **Raamkalee** (i) Raamkalee Dakhnhee

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4.
    - i. Vaar maajh kee tathaa salok majalla 1 malik mureed tathaa chandarharhaa sohee-e-kee dhunee gaavnhee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 137)
    - ii. Gaouri kee vaar mahalla 9 raa-e kamaaldee mojee kee vaar dhun upar gavnhee (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 318)
    - iii. Aasaa mahalla 1 vaar salokaa naal salok bhee mahale pahile ke likhe tuned us raajai kee dhunee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 462)
    - iv. Goojree kee vaar mahalla 3 Sikandar biraahim kee vaar kee dhunee gaavanhi. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 508)
    - v. Wadhans kee vaar mahalla 4 Lalla behleemaa kee dhunee gaavnhee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 585)
    - vi. Raamkalee kee vaar mahalla 3 jodhe weerei poorbaanee kee dhunee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 947)
    - vii. Saarang kee vaar mahalla 4 raae mahime hasne kee dhunee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1237)
    - viii. Var malhaar kee mahalla 1 Raanhe cailaas tathaa maaide kee dhunee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1278)
    - ix. Kaanrhe kee vaar mahalla 4 Moose kee vaar kee dhunee. (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1312)

19. **Nat Naaraain** (i) Nat
20. **Maaleegaorhaa**
21. **Maaroo** (i) Maaroo Kaafee, (ii) Maaroo Kakhnhee
22. **Tookhaaree**
23. **Kedaaraa**
24. **Bhairaa**
25. **Basant** (i) (Basant Hindol)
26. **Saarang**
27. **Malaar**
28. **Kaanrhaa**
29. **Kaliaan** (i) Kaliaan Bhopaalee
30. **Prabhaatee** (i) Prabhaatee Bibhaas, (ii) Bibhaas Prabhaatee,  
(iii) Prabhaatee Dakhnee
31. **Jaijaawantee**

In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Raagas have been prescribed only as titles but the musicological form of these Raags lies in the century-old sikh tradition of kirtan, different sikh scriptures dirtan compositions and in some collection of Kirtan notations. These Raag sources are a great treasure of diversified knowledge of Gurmat Sangeet. We have follwing sources of Raagas which have not been so far properly used by the sikh scholars and musicologists.

1. Gur Girarath Kosh (Pt. Tara Singh Narotam).
2. Gur Shabad Ratnakar Mahan Kosh (Bhai Kahan Aingh Nabha)
3. Gurmat Sangeet Par Hun Mili Khoj (Dr. Bhai Charan Singh).
4. Gurbani Sangeet (part first & second) (Giyen Singh Abtabad Singh).
5. Gurmat Ratan Sangeet Bhandar (Bhai Prem Singh)
6. Gurmat Sangeet (Master Sunder Singh).
7. Gurmat Sangeet Mala (Master Mohan Singh).
8. Gurbani Sangeet Pracheen Reet Ratnavli (Dr. Bhai Avtar Singh,  
Gurcharan Singh).
9. Shri Guru Granth Sahib Rag Ratnavli (Prof. Tara Singh).
10. Adi Granth Raag Kosh (Dr. Gurnam Singh).
11. Sur Simran Sangeet (part first & second) (Sant Sarwan Singh Gandharb).
12. Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth (Rag Nirnaik Committee).
13. Gurmat Sangeet Vishesh Ank Vismad Nad (Jawadi Kalan Taxsal).
14. Vadan Sagar (Kanwan Mirgender Singh).
15. Kramik Pustak Malina Edition First and six (Pt. Vishnu Narayan Sharma).
16. Rag Kosh (Vasant)
17. Marfin Nagmat (Raja Nawab Ali).
18. Sawar Mela Klanidhi (Ramamatye).
19. Sangeet Darpan (Pt. Damodar).
20. Sangeet Parijat (Pt. Abobhal).

We have collected the following 146 different variations of 31 main Raagas and 31 sub-Raagas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib from the above mentioned sources.

1. Siree-two, 2. Maajh-five, 3.Gaoree-six, 4 .Gaoree Guaaoree-three, 5.Gaoree Dakhani-one
- 6.Gaoree Chetee-three, 7.Gaoree Bairaagan-four, 8.Gaoree deepkee-three,
- 9.Gaoree Poorbee Deepkee-one, 10. Gaoree Poorbee-one, 11. Gaoree Majh-five,
- 12.Gaoree Malwa-four
13. Gaoree Malla-five, 14. Gaoree Sorath-three,15. Aassa-one,16. Aasaawaree-one
- 17.Aasaavaree Sudhang-one,18. Aasaa Kaafee-two,19. Goojree-one , 20.Devgandhaaree-four, 21.Devgandhar-four, 22.Bihaagrhaa-two, 23.Wadhans-four, 24.Wadhans Dakhanee-one, 25.Sorath-one 26. Dhanaasree-two, 27.Jaitsaree-one, 28.Todee-one, 29.Bairaree-one, 30.Tilang-one
- 31.Tilang Kaafee-two, 32. Soohee-two, 33.Soohee Kaafee-two, 34. Soohee Lalit-two, 35. Bilaawal -one 36. Bilaawal Kakhanee-one, 37.Bilaawal Mangal-one, 38.Gond -one, 39.Bilaawal Gond-three, 40.Raamkalee-two, 41.Raamkalee Dakhanee-two, 42.Nat Naaraain-five, 43. Nat-four
44. Maalee Gaoraa-one, 45. Maaroo-five, 46. Maaroo kaafee-one, 47. Maaroo Kkhnhee-one
48. Tukharee-two, 49.Kedaaraa-two, 50. Bhairao-one, 51. Basant-five, 52.Basant Hindol-four
53. Saarang-four, 54. Malaar-four, 55. Kaanrhaa-four, 56. Kaliaan-one, 57. Kaliaan Bhopaalee-one,
58. Prabhaatee-three, 59.Prabhaatee Dakni-one, 60. Prabhaatee Bibhaas-two,
- 61.Bibhaas Prabhaatee-two, 62.Jaijaavantee-one

In these Raagas, Raag Majh, Gauri, Bairarai, Soohi, Tukhari, etc are not prevalent in the Indian traditional of Raagas. In addition to this, different forms of Raag Gauri, Asa, Sooghi, Maru, Parbhati and different forms of Dakhni Raagas like Gaurti Dakhni, Bilawal Dakhni, Ramkali Dakhni etc are also not prevalent in Hindustani music.

For example, we have two variations of Raag Sri in Gurmat Sangeet, one is derived from Thata kafi, and another is from Thata Purvi. This Raaga is recited as:

There are two variations of <sup>4</sup>:-

That : Kafi, Jati : Odav-Sampuran, Vadi Rishab, Samvadi-Pancham, Time: Evening (Dawn)

Aroh : S,R, M, P, N, S

Avroh : S, n, D, P, M, g, R R, S

Mukh Ang : S R R, S, R P, M g R S5

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5. Avtar Singh Gurcharan Singh (Bhai), Gurbani Sangeet Pracheen Reet Ratnavali, (Part-1), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1979,p.19

6. Gurnam Singh, Sikh Musicology, Knishka Publishers, New Delhi,2001, p.72.

Likewise, forms of Gauri, Raaga Gauri Mala, and Gauri Majh are rare examples of this. Exclusive form of Raag Gauri Mala is different from other Raagas falling in its proximity, such as Raag Bilaskhani Todi and Bhairavi. This ragas can be recited as:

Vaadee : Dhaivat, Samvaadee : Rishabh Time : First Quarter of night Jaatee : Sampooran

Aroh : S r g, M P d, N S

Avroh : S N d , M g r S

Mukh Ang : r g r, S, N S, d, P M g r, S6

In Sri Guru Granth Sahib there are eleven sub-Raagas of Raag Gauri like : Gaorhee Guaareere, Gaorhee Purbi, Gaorhee Deepki, Gaorhee Mala, Gaorhee Magh etc.

Gauri majh is a rare Raag as it contains all the 12 notes. In the Indian tradition we do not have any raga of this nature. In the Sikh Kirtan tradition, we have some recordings of this Raaga which can be sung like this

Vaadee-Samvaadee : Pancham-Sharhaj Jaatee : Sampooran

Aroh : S r G r, m P D P, N S.

Avroh : S n D P, D M G M, R P g, R g S R N S

Mukh Ang : r G m P, d P m G, n D P M G M, R P g R, S R N S7

This is the season of Raag Basant during which we recite bani prescribed in Raag Basant known as basant di chowki. In this season from the first day of the month Magh till Hola Mohalla every sikh kirtankaar has to sing Raag Basant. In Hindustani music, Raag Basant is recited based on the notes of Purvi thata which is rendered as

That : Poorvi, Jati : Odev - Vakar Sampooran, Vadi, Shadaj (Taal),

Samvadi - Pancham,

Aaroh : SG, md, r S.

Avroh : rnd, PmG, mG, m d, mG, rS

Mukh Ang : m d r S r S r N d P, mG, mG8

But in Gurmat Sangeet, we have different forms of raaga Basant which are based on shudh notes of Bilawala That. In this tradition, this is a rare and real form of Raag Basant containing melodious notes sung as :-

Aroh : S G M, D N S

Avroh : S N D P M, G R S

Mukh Ang : G M D N S, S N D P M, G, R S9

It is evident that there exists a vast range of original and complex variations of Raag Parbandh in Sri Guru Granth Sahib<sup>5</sup>

7. Gurnam Singh, Sikh Musicology, Knkiska Publishers, New Delhi, 2001, p.76

8. Tara Singh (Prof.), Sri Guru Granth Sahib Rag Ratnavali, Punjabi University, 1991, p.265.

9. Gurnam Singh (Dr.), Gurmat Sangeet : Parband Te Pasar, Punjabi University Patiala, 2000, p.119

## **The Sikhs**

The times were very critical. The Muslim rulers were persecuting the Hindus. They were considered second rate citizens in their own country. The Hindus were divided into many castes. Even the worst repression at the hands of the cruel Muslim rulers failed to unite them against their oppressors. They had to pay Jaziya (a tax which Hindus were forced to pay). They were not allowed to construct new temples. They were also not allowed to keep any weapon for their defence like sword or lancers.

Such were the times when Guru Nanak was born. He raised his voice against the caste-system of the Hindus. He scolded the wicked Muslim rulers and exhorted them to treat Hindus and Muslims alike, as there was no difference between them, as they were all alike in the eyes of God, as they all were children of same God. Those who followed his teachings and became his disciples, came to be known as Sikhs. In this way, the foundation of Sikh religion was laid.

Guru Nanak devoted his life to preach Sikhism. He visited all the important sacred places of the Hindus and also paid a visit to Mecca a place sacred to the Muslims. He met Yogis and Sidhas as well. He gave a message of universal brotherhood and exhorted all human beings to give up the life full of rituals and superstitions. He advised them to devote themselves in the recitation of His praise. He instructed them to lead a life based on honest occupations for livelihood, partaking hard-earned food with others, living a life of righteousness and serving others. He denounced the then prevalent Hindu and Muslim rites and rituals and thus played a revolutionary part. He also raised his voice against the deplorable plight of women in the society.

His successor Guru Angad Dev carried on the torch lit by him. He began the teaching of Gurmukhi and started a school for this purpose at Khadoor Sahib. He also got written Janam Sakhi (biography) of Guru Nanak. Amar Dass, the third Guru carried on community kitchen on stronger footing. He also constructed a Bauali (a well) and thus established a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. He told his followers that the bathing in Bauali is more sacred than the bathing in the river Ganges. His successor, the Sodhi Patshah, Guru Ram Das founded the city of Amritsar. He also got dug a tank in Amritsar. The fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev, collected the sacred compositions (Baani) of first five Gurus, Bhaktas and Saints and compiled The Adi Granth. To propagate Sikhism vigorously he also founded two cities of Tarn Taran and Kartarpur. The Mughal Government did not tolerate the propagation of his faith and for that he had to lay down his life.

The Sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind adopted the new policy of arming the Sikhs. This was the first step for destruction of Mughal rule.

Seventh Guru Har Rai preached his faith by following a policy of fearlessness and amity. The eighth Guru, Hari Krishan taught the Sikhs to remain steadfast in their conviction and faith. Guru Tegh Bahadur challenged the tyrannical policy of Emperor Aurangzeb and as a result sacrificed his life.

The tenth and last pontiff of the Sikh faith created Khalsa to root out the tyrannical and feudal Mughal rule. He also began to arm the Sikhs. He deputed his messenger Banda Singh to strike at the Mughals. He gave a blow to the Mughal feudal system and tyrant rulers and broke a fresh ground for the creation of Khalsa Raj.

### **Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji**

Guru Nanak Dev was born on the day of Kartik Purnima (on the night of full moon) Bikrami Era 1526 (1469 A.D.) at Talwandi Rae Bhoi, now known as Nankana Sahib (Pakistan). His father was Mehta Kalyan Dass and his mother was Tripta Devi. He had an elder sister, named Bebe Nanaki. The midwife witnessed a strange light at the time of Guru's birth. Pandit Hardyal also told that the child was uncommon.

When he grew old he was asked to wear the sacred thread. But he refused to wear it. Then he was sent to school, the teachers felt that they could not teach him anything new and were non-plussed. When he was sent to bring merchandise, he spent the whole amount on the food of Sadhus as that was, according to him, the true business.

He took service at Sultanpur as incharge of grainshop and sold grain, remaining engrossed in the name of God. Some people complained that Nanak was carelessly weighing causing loss to the ruler. When Nawab Daulat Khan got the godown checked, he found that the grain in the godown was in order.

He was married to Bibi Sulakhani, two sons were born. The eldest of the two was Sri Chand and the youngest was Lakhmi Dass. He daily used to go to the Bein for taking bath. One day he went into the water and disappeared. A frantic search was made. He appeared on the third day coming out of the Bein, the first words which he uttered were, "There is no Hindu or Musalman, " After that he left Nawab's service. He went on a long journey alongwith his disciples Bhai Bala and Bhai Mardana for the welfare of humanity. He went on Udaasis for four times. His first journey started in 1544 Bikrami (1497 A.D.). Setting out from Sultanpur Lodhi he visited Lahore, Multan, Pakpattan, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Hardwar, Delhi, Mathura, Benaras, Patna, Budh-Gayya, Assam and Orrissa and then came back.



In his second Udaasi (journey) he went to South. During this journey he visited Bikaner and went onwards through Vindhya-chal and the forests of South, he reached Ramesawarm. From there he crossed ocean and entered Sinhala Diveep (Sri Lanka). He went to the North on his third sojourn. He went to Kashmir and then through Sumeru Mountain, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, reached Tibet. During his fourth journey he went towards the West. The most important place he visited during this journey was Mecca. From Mecca he went to Medina and afterwards he visited Baghdad. From Baghdad the Guru visited Tehran, Turkistan, Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bokhara and from there he reached Kabul, a city in Afghanistan. From Kabul he reached Peshawar and then via Naushera came to Hasan Abdal. At last he reached Kartarpur. Guru ji had founded Kartarpur in 1504 A.D. Guru Ji had composed his hymns in 19 Ragas. Japuji is not in any Raga.

He selected Bhai Lehna as his successor and named him Angad and Guruship was conferred upon him. He breathed his last at Kartarpur on September 22, 1539 A.D.

### **Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji**

Guru Gobind Singh was born to Mother Gujari in the house of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Patna (Bihar) on Poh Sudi Satvin Bikrami Samvat 1723 i.e. (22 December 1666 A.D.). Guru Tegh Bahadur had gone to Patna with an entourage of devout disciples on his missionary tours. Guru Gobind Singh spent his childhood in Patna. The Sikhs of Patna loved him very dearly and he always acted as a leader of the children of his age.

On coming to Anandpur he studied books as well as got the training in the use of weapons. He was very fond of horse riding and hunting.

He married thrice. His first marriage with Jeeto ji took place on June 21, 1677. Jeeto ji was the daughter of Bhai Harjas, a resident of Lahore. His second marriage was solemnized with Sundari, daughter of Ram Saran of Lahore, in Bikrami Samvat 1741 (1684 A.D.) at Anandpur. His third marriage took place with Sahib Devan, daughter of Ramu Bansi a resident of Rohtas in 1754 Bikrami Samvat (1697 A.D.) Guru had four sons. The eldest son Sahibzada Ajit Singh was born to Sundari on January 26, 1687 A.D. The other three sons namely, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh were born to Jeeto ji respectively on March 14, 1691 November 17, 1696 and February 25, 1699 at Anandpur.

Guru ji went to Paonta at request of Raja Medni Parkash. The hill chiefs fought against him there at Bhangani where they suffered defeat. Later on Guru ji returned to Anandpur. He built many forts at Anandpur and strengthened his forces. Here he also created the Khalsa in 1699 A.D. He administered "Khande Ka Amrit" to the people of all

castes and gave them the title of Singhs. He was also administered the Amrit from the five beloveds in the same way and he became Guru Gobind Singh from Guru Gobind Rai.

Along his love and longing for battles he, equally was fond of literature. There were 52 poets in his court and poetic assemblies took place daily. He penned down a huge amount of Baani out of which 16 compositions and 17100 Chhands are included in the Dasam Granth. The well-known Baanis are Jaap Sahib, Akal Ustat, Bachittar Natak, Chandi Charitar, Chandi Charitar-II, Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki, Gian Parbodh, Chaubis Avtar, Sastar Nam Mala Puran, Charitro Pakhian, Khalsa Mehma, Shabad Hajare, 33 Sawayyas and Zafarnama (Epistle of Victory).

The hill chiefs grew jealous of him. They wanted him to leave Anandpur. They succeeded in their purpose with the help of Imperial army. But even after he left Anandpur fort, the deceitful hill chiefs surrounded him at Chamkaur. Two eldest sons of the Guru met their end in the battle here alongwith many other Sikhs. The Guru escaped along with Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Mann Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh. His younger sons fell into the hands of Nawab of Sirhind. The Nawab of Sirhind put them to death in a cruel way. The Guru left for Malwa tract of the Panjab in disguise. He wrote Zafarnama at Dina Kangar and sent it to Aurangzeb through Bhai Daya Singh and Dharam Singh. Then he reached Khidrana (present Mukatsar) and after that he went to Talwandi Sabo. At Talwandi Sabo Ki he prepared the present recension of the Guru Granth Sahib and included Baani of Guru Tegh Bahadur in it. He left for Nanded in the South alongwith the copy written by Bhai Mani Singh. At Nanded he met Banda Singh Bahadur and after administering him Amrit, sent him to the Panjab. He left for his heavenly abode on October 7, 1708 A.D at Nanded and bestowed Gurgaddi on the Guru Granth Sahib.

### **Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji**

The compilation of Guru Granth Sahib was completed on August 15, 1604 A.D. by Guru Arjan Dev. Then, Bhai Banno, took it to Lahore to get it bound. After getting the Granth bound, it was brought to Harimandir on 30 August, 1604 from Ramsar after a grand ceremonial procession through the city. On that day its first reading was started and Baba Budha was appointed its first Granthi and he was the first proud person to get the first Hukamnama from the holy Granth. The Granth contained 975 pages. Afterwards, many recensions were prepared from this. The original recension is at Kartarpur (Jalandhar) now-a-days. On its page 541 Guru Hargobind put his signatures.

The final shape to Guru Granth Sahib was given at Guru Ki Kanshi (Damdama) in 1705-1706 A.D. by Guru Gobind Singh. He added Baani of Guru Tegh Bahadur to it. This recension contains 1430 pages and 5867 hymns. Guru Gobind Singh before his heavenly abode on October 7, 1708 directed the Sikhs to look upon Word as enshrined in the Granth Sahib as the visible embodiment of the Guru. According to the prevalent

custom Guru bestowed Guruship to the Granth and bowed his head before it and asked the Sikh congregation to pay obeisance.

The entire scripture (Baani) is written in 31 musical measures (Ragas). Guru Ram Dass and Guru Arjan Dev composed their hymns in 30 musical measures. Rag Jaijawanti was used only by Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Many Indian Languages have been used in the composition of the Baani of the Guru Granth. Though this language is called Sant Bhasa or Sadh Bhakha (language of the Saints), but we find many hymns written in Panjabi, Hindi, Marathi, Arabic and Persian as well. Even Sanskrit has also been used. Many metres have been used for writing hymns and they are called Pauri, Saloka, Sawayyas etc. Many poetical forms such as Vaars, Barah Mahas, Patti, Baavan Akhari, Sadd, Anand, Sukhmani, Sohila, Aarti, Alauhian, Ghorian, Din Raain, Vanjara, Birharre, Karhale, Suchajji, Kuchajji, and Gunwanti are found there. The word 'Mahalla' is used for the Gurus such as Mohalla Pehla for Guru Nanak Dev and so on. The Baani of Guru Granth Sahib declares that the world is procreation of one Supreme Father and, therefore, all are brothers. The duty of man is to keep away himself aloof from the muddy tentacles of Maya like lust, anger, avarice, attachment and pride just as lotus floats above the muddy water. But this can be attained only by dedication to God through meditation.

### **Kirtan Maryada**

Kirtan is a commonly accepted mode of rendering devotion to God by singing His praises. It is an essential part of Sikh worship. Music plays significant role in many religious traditions of the world. In Sikhism it is valued as the highest form of adoration and counts as the most effective means of linking the soul to the divine. In Indian tradition Keertan goes back to Vedic chants about four thousand years back. The impulse behind Kirtan is the realization of the effect on the individual of joining the sound of music to the religious text. Kirtan is employed to bring out the true and full meaning of the verses. Sufi saints usually sang their own compositions which not only produced in them a feeling of spiritual bliss but also led their followers into a mood of fervour. Shaikh Farid (1173-1265) composed and sang songs to express his longing for the Divine being. Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh faith, and the succeeding Guru's promulgated, besides repetition and contemplation of the Divine frame, Kirtan as a form of worship. In Guru Nanak's words music is a jewel born of the fairy family, from it rises the essence of nectar ( GGS 351) but he also warned men against the voluptuous indulgence in music. They who follow the Guru's instructions are saved. In Sikh Kirtan, music, though an essential element, is subordinate to the holy word.

In the words of Prof Harbans Singh, " Contents of the Guru Granth Sahib, the Holy Book of the Sikhs, can alone be sung in Sikh Kirtan, more accurately sabda-kirtan. The only other approved canon for this purpose is the compositions of Guru Gobind Singh which do not form part of the Guru Granth Sahib but are anthologized in a separate book, the Dasam Granth, and of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal. The text comprising the

Guru Granth Sahib is organized according to ragas or musical measures, 31 in number, with further variants in many of them, to which the hymns were composed. The Gurus themselves were well versed in music. At places in their hymns they have described themselves as "bards of the Lord." Guru Nanak kept with him as a constant companion a Muslim musician, Mardana, who played the rabab as the Guru rendered the hymns composed by himself. Guru Arjan, who compiled the Guru Granth Sahib, was an accomplished musicologist, who is said to have designed a new string instrument, saranda, for use by ragis or performers of kirtan. The Gurus employed professional rababis and ragis to perform kirtan in their presence. Dhadis, using small hand-drums called dhads and a stringed instrument sang vars or ballads. Guru Arjan encouraged lay Sikhs to train as kirtan-singers. Rababis as a class of hereditary musicians were almost exclusively Muslims and groups of them continued to recite the sacred hymns inside Harimandar, the Golden Temple, until the partition of 1947 when they migrated to Pakistan. Dhadi-singers specialize in heroic balladry rather than in sabda-kirtan.

It is the ragi ensemble which now performs kirtan in gurdwaras and at congregations held on religious and festival occasions. Gurdwara music begins in the early hours of the morning. In the Harimandar at Amritsar, kirtan starts around 2 in the morning in summer months and around 3 in winter and is continued by a relay of ragi jathas till late in the evening. At other places, it may be intermittent or limited to morning and evening hours. Traditionally, there are four chaukis or services of kirtan. They are: (1) Asa ki Var at early morning; (2) Charan Kamal or Bilaval chauki in the forenoon (for 4 hours after sunrise); (3) Sodar chauki at sunset; and (4) Kalyan chauki in the evening about an hour and a half after sunset. A ragi jatha commonly comprises three members, a lead singer nowadays usually playing the harmonium, a companion also at harmonium, and a tabla player. The more elaborate ensembles may have one or more additional singers playing traditional string instruments such as taus, tanpura or saranda. The ragis sit on the ground or on a platform but always lower than, and usually to the left of where the Holy Book is seated. Smaller localities depend on local talent and simpler instruments such as a dholaki, a harmonium, cymbals and chimta. The performance follows the basic design of the classical tradition. Only permissible texts are rendered, with no extra words or syllables added. Every hymn is sung, as far as possible, in its correct raga and performed in appropriate lai (tempo), sur (melody), tan (tune) and tal (rhythm). The kirtan commences with an alap (long-drawn vocal tune) setting the pattern and tone of the music. The tempo is slow and words are pronounced in a mood of reverence and devotion. The refrain is presented in the first place by the lead singer and is repeated in chorus by the other ragis. Then the harmoniums repeat the tune to be followed by a vocal recitation. Raga phrases may be presented in their entirety or divided to suit the text and the tune. In either-case, the phrase will end with a chorus. Interludes in the development section, i.e. melodic material from both sthai (refrain) and antara (crescendo), may occasionally be done by tabla alone or sung with a vowel sound to the same melody instead of a repetition by a reed or string instrument. If a full classical development of a

raga is not attempted, a lighter classical style may be employed, especially for slokas and pauris of a var. Explanatory or amplificatory passages, again out of permissible texts alone, may be inserted in the main composition and presented in a related raga or in a recitative musical style. The lead singer generally introduces all new texts and musical material but the others may join in during the latter part of the phrase.

Sabda-kirtan has some limitations placed upon it traditionally in order that the religious structure of the performance is not compromised. In no case must the holy text be garbled, not even for musical effect. Every single word must be accurately pronounced. The message must reach the listener through clearly enunciated words. Hymns should be sung with affirmation in a full voice. Gamaks or musical ornaments should be limited to those essential to the correct performance of a raga such as glides between notes to maintain a connected melodic line. However, creative faculties of the performers should not be inhibited. Hand gestures, clapping and dancing are prohibited. No appreciation may be shown to the ragis during the performance.

The Sikh Rahit Maryada or code of conduct published under the authority of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, defines kirtan as rendition of gurbani or Scriptural texts in (appropriate) ragas. For illustration, verses from Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal could be used. Even when singing the hymns in open religious tunes, i.e. when they are not being rendered by the ragi ensemble in prescribed ragas, with the entire congregation participating or forming an alternate chorus, the purity of line and phrase has to be maintained, eschewing additional words or syllables. Only a line from the hymn in question may be used as the refrain.

Combining discourse with kirtan is sometimes resorted to generally by the lead ragi, but it is not favoured by connoisseurs of music, or by lovers of gurbani who prefer nirol, i.e. unadulterated sabda kirtan. Lately, kirtan darbars, continuous sessions in which several choir groups take turns at singing Sikh hymns, akhand (uninterrupted) kirtan or rain sabai (night-long) kirtan have come into vogue. They not only cater to the aesthetic and spiritual needs of the devotees, but also help widen the scope and the effect of the recitation.

### **Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji**

(Guru) Arjan Dev was born at Goindwal in the month of Vaisakh Bikrami Samvat 1620 i.e. 1563 A.D. to Bibi Bhani in the house of Guru Ram Dass. He got his early education from his maternal grand-father, Guru Amar Dass. He received his initiation into music and arithmetic in very young age.

His marriage took place in Samvat Bikrami 1636 i.e. 1579 A.D with Ganga, daughter of Kishan Chand. He held his father Guru Ram Dass in high esteem. He always accompanied his father during congregations and never disobeyed him. When his elder brothers Prithi Chand and Maha Dev refused to go to Lahore he obeyed his father and did not come till Baba Budha ji went to bring him back. At Lahore he met many saints and faqirs. He addressed the sangat (congregation) daily and told the Sikhs to remember God. The famous Sufi Saint Mian Mir developed an extreme liking for him.

When the Guru did not call him back from Lahore, (Guru) Arjan Dev wrote three epistles in verse. These letters or epistles are known as Sabad Hazare.

Guru Ram Dass loved (Guru) Arjan Dev dearly. Due to his single minded devotion he nominated him his successor in 1581 A.D. On assuming Guruship he got laid the foundation of Sri Harimandir Sahib and completed its construction. The foundation of Sri Harimandir Sahib was laid by Sufi Saint Mian Mir and its construction was completed in 1601 A.D.

Guru Arjan Dev also founded the cities of Tarn Taran in Amritsar District and Kartarpur (near Jalandhar). He also got constructed a deep well (Bauali) in Dabbi Bazar at Lahore. Guru Ji's eldest brother felt very jealous of him, therefore he left Amritsar for sometime and settled at Wadali. (Guru) Hargobind took birth at that place. On this happy occasion, Guru Ji got dug a big well which was worked by six Persian wheels. This well is called "Chheharta." The village which grew around it came to be called "Chheharta." Now-a-days it has grown into a city. It is said that the well at Chheharta is blessed with a boon that those women who are desirous of offspring will get their desire fulfilled.

His most epoch making achievement was the compilation of the Adi Granth. He compiled the hymns and psalms of the Gurus, Bhagtas, Saints etc. systematically under different Ragas. He started this project in 1601 and completed it in 1604. Bhai Gurdas was entrusted with the task of the scribe of the Granth. He included the Baani (Hymns and Psalms) of 5 Gurus, 15 Bhagtas, 11 Bhagtas (bards) and four devotees of the Gurus. This Granth is, now-a-days, at Kartarpur. It contains 975 pages. Guru Arjan's verses exceed all others. These are included in the Guru Granth in 30 Ragas (musical measures) in 2218 verses. Guru Arjan's most well known Baanis are Sukhmani, Bara Maha and Sabad Hazare. Sukhmani means Jewel of Peace and it gives solace to the heart.

After the completion of the Granth, Guru's fame spread far and wide in the country. Out of fanatic frenzy the Mughal Emperor tortured him to death at Lahore on May 30, 1606. He nominated (Guru) Hargobind as his successor.

## **MUSICAL MEASURES (RAGAS) USED IN THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

Music is the language of the Divine which everybody can comprehend easily. It is competent to control the mind, enthrall and provide solace to it. The Sikh Gurus set the revealed word to different musical measures (ragas), thereby making it unique and all the more joyous. Almost entire corpus (barring some bani) is divided in thirty one measures, and more than that, only those measures have been chosen which do not take a person to the extremes, rather these enable him to retain his poise. The importance of music and measures in Gurbani could also easily be gauged from the fact that Bani was usually sung in measures uninterruptedly in the Harimandir (Golden Temple). More so, the Chaukis, i.e. the time divisions of the musicians who perform Kirtan there throughout the day, are also named after certain ragas (measures) eg. Cahuki of Bilawal, Chauki of Sarang, Chauki of Jaitsari, Chauki of Kalian, etc.

Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev have composed hymns in 30 different measures which is the maximum number. Jaijawanti measure, which is the 31st raga, has been used by Guru Tegh Bahadur alone. Bani under Jaijawanti measure is placed at the end of all other measures. There is a wonderful thought-current working behind this. The first thirty measures deal with different aspects, ups and downs of life. That is why hymns relevant to them have appeared at different places. However, when man realizes the essence of the Guru Granth Sahib, he reaches a stage of ecstatic bliss and his life becomes a total success. His success is marked by the shouts of victory. As a symbol of this feeling, jaijawanti measure has come last of all. In other words, this musical measure is indicative of the mood of joy for his arrival on the destination of life.

The opening eight pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib carry Guru Nanak Dev's Bani Japuji which is free from any musical measure and of Rahao or pause. Following is the detail of the pages of the Scripture devoted to a particular measure :

### **1. Sri Raga (PP. 14-93)**

Sri raga is the first musical measure used in the Guru Granth Sahib and it covers pages 14 to 93 comprising 142 Shabads. It is a very old but complex raga of the traditional Indian measures. Only competent and proficient musicians can sing this raga. It is generally sung in the evening. It is considered one of the most famous from among the North Indian classical systems. Only 4 Gurus (1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th) and two Bhagats (Kabir and Beni) used this raga.

### **2. RAGA MAJH (PP 94-150)**

This raga is said to have been born from the folk tunes of music popular in the Malwa (A region of Panjab). It is thus a pure Panjabi raga invented and attributed to Guru Nanak Dev. When the hymns composed by the Gurus in chaste Panjabi are sung in

a pure Panjabi measure, the ecstasy thus produced in the hearts of the listeners is beyond words. Every Panjabi is familiar with this measure in one form or the other. Guru Arjan Dev, in one of his hymns, has depicted the mental state of man during all the twelve months of the year: this hymn is also directed to be sung in this measure. This raga does not find mention in the 'Ragmala' which appeared at the end of the Scripture. Possibly it has been reserved exclusively for Gurbani hymns.

3. **RAGA GAURI (PP. 12-13 AND 151-346)**

Maximum number of hymns have been composed in this measure. The reason for this is perhaps the serious nature of the raga. Thus, all serious and somber themes have been dealt with under this measure. The Bani included in the Guru Granth Sahib takes human mind out of evil and endeavours to restore pristine glory to individual self. The accomplishment of this aim is rather difficult. Endeavour has to be made seriously and sincerely. Hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib have been set to twelve different forms of Gauri measure, such as Gauri Guareri, Gauri Cheti, Gauri Bairagan, Gauri Purabi, Gauri Dipaki, Gauri Majh, Gauri Sukhmani, etc. It is an evening raga assigned to autumn but can be sung in the morning also. Its mood is contemplative.

4. **RAGA ASA (PP. 8-12 AND 347-488)**

This is a measure which fulfils desires and which is sung early in the morning in cold season when the entire nature enjoys the ecstasy of ambrosial hours. It is also sung around dusk to satiate one's soul. It is known as a twilight melody too with a calm mystical mood. Its pleasing and charming sound attracts every one. Among the contributors who have composed their hymns in this musical measure include Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Anagad Dev, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur besides Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Namdev, Bhagat Ravidas, Bhagat Dhanna and Baba Sheikh Farid.

5. **RAGA GUJARI (PP. 489-526)**

Gujari is a Gujrati measure sung around noon. It is a very old and popular raga. It is more popular in the northern and central India. It produces a mood of thoughtfulness that reaches deep into the heart.

6. **RAGA DEV GANDHARI (PP. 527-536)**

Very little Bani in the Guru Granth Sahib is set to this little known ancient musical measure. The time to sing this raga is about 2-3 hours after the sun-rise. According to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha it is a complete ragini of Bilawal taal. There is also a hymn included under measure Dev Gandhar.

7. **RAGA BIHAGARA (PP. 537-556)**

This raga which is very similar to modern and popular raga bihag is sung in the calm and quiet environment of mid-night. It is very sweet and impressive measure which



makes us aware of separation and loneliness at mid-night and produces in us an inclination to seek unity with the Lord. It is a complete raga of Bilawal thaat.

8. **RAGA WAD-HANS (PP. 557-594)**

Wad- hans is the eighth in the series of ragas used in the Guru Granth Sahib. It can be sung at noon or at mid-night. '**Ghoris**' which reflect the singer's joy and '**Alahnian**' which reflect sorrow are prescribed to be sung in this measure. There is, along with wad-hans, another derivative of it called wad-hans Dakhni, available in the Guru Granth Sahib. Wad-hans has been a complete raga of Kamach thaat. It has been written as wad-hansika in old Sanskrit texts, and it has been accepted as a ragini instead of a raga. It is not mentioned in Ragmala. Fifty three shabads and many slokas are there in Sri Guru Granth Sahib representing this raga.

9. **RAGA SORATH (PP. 595-659)**

The hymns of Guru Arjan Dev included under this musical measure (pp. 610-630) are very simple and educative. Consequently, the devout Sikhs have memorized most of them. Even otherwise this measure is very simple and attractive. When this raga is sung in winter season, it creates a very pleasant atmosphere. It is usually sung in the complete quiet of midnight and creates cheerfulness. Its pleasing sound resembles Raga Desh.

10. **RAGA DHANASARI (PP. 660-695)**

Guru Nanak Dev's universally known hymn written in the style of aarti, of the Divine one is composed in this measure. The aarti hymns of other Bhaktas (saints) are also in this musical measure. 101 hymns are composed in this raga. It is a raga of gratefulness which has been used by pious souls to express their sense of gratitude to God, though for the kings and emperors it is a raga of joy and luxury which is tuned in the evening.

11. **RAGA JAITSARI (PP. 696-710)**

Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha in his Mahan Kosh, has referred to the names like Jaisai, Jaitsiri, Jayatsri, etc. used for this measure in the old Sanskrit texts. In the Guru Granth Sahib, it has been written as Jaitsari. This raga does not find place in Ragmala. From amongst the Gurus, only Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur have composed humns in this measure. From amongst other contributors of Sri Guru Granth Sahib only Bhagat Ravidas wrote a single shabad in this raga. It is a measure generally sung in the evening and it produces pleasant and peaceful effect. It provides immense joy to the listener. Among the Chaukis of Kirtan in practice in the Harimandir Sahib is named after this raga, i.e. Jaitsari Di Chauki.

12. **RAGA TODI (PP. 711-718)**

Todi has been a very popular measure, widely accepted in the royal courts. It is considered one of the most important of the north Indian ragas. The bards used to sing in

this measure, the eulogies of their patrons, kings and thereby received elicit material gifts and gains from them. In the Guru Granth Sahib, it has been used in 32 shabads to praise the supreme Lord. The devotees make use of it, enjoy the nectar of Name e.g. '**My mind cannot do without Hari (Lord)**' (p. 711), '**Gift of Thy Name I crave, O Lord**' (p. 713, and '**The Name of the revered Lord is my soul's support; the Name is the life soul and solace of this mind, and for me it is a thing of daily use**' (p. 713). It is sung in the second pahar or three hours after sunrise and before noon.

13. **RAGA BAIRARI (PP. 719-720)**

This measure is rather complex and is, thus not very popular. It has been used to the minimum in the Guru Granth Sahib. Out of 36 contributors of Sri Guru Granth Sahib only Guru Ram Das composed six hymns and Guru Arjan Dev composed just one hymn in this raga. After sun-set or the fall of dusk is the proper time for its singing.

14. **RAGA TILANG (PP. 721-727)**

Tilang is a very well known measure in India. The Bani sung in this measure by Gurus, advised human mind that it should give preference to the eulogy of God and concentrate on Name. Whatever happens in this manifest world is in His Will. Therefore, every one should remember Him who is benevolent and competent enough to save everybody. There are twenty hymns sung in this raga. The most appropriate time for its singing is the evening. Among the Bhagat-contributors, only Bhagat Kabir and Namdev have used it. First fourth, fifth and ninth Gurus also sang their hymns in this raga though their number is not much. This is a favourite raga of Muslims.

15. **RAGA SUHI (PP. 728-794)**

The Suhi measure is a raga of courage and inspiration, but it is not a very popular measure. Quite a good amount of Bani in the Guru Granth Sahib has been composed in this measure. Suhi is classified in the Ragnala as a ragni of Megha. It was a favourite with Muslims and was considered proper for the hot season.

It is generally sung after three hours of sun-rise and before noon. The literal meaning of the word suhi is 'bowing her head by a woman at the feet of some one her senior'. But in the Guru Granth Sahib, it has been used to express one's reverence for the Supreme Lord. 130 hymns, a Var and many slokas are sung in this raga. The very name of the measure reflects Panjabi flavour of Indian culture. The four lavan (circumambulations) which are recited at the time of Anand Karaj (wedding of a Sikh couple) are written to be sung in Suhi raga. As this raga is to be sung before noon, it is considered auspicious among Sikhs to perform the lavan before noon too, the stipulated time of this raga.

16. **RAGA BILAWAL (PP. 795-858)**

Bilawal is a measure of joy and this joy is attained when individual soul gets united with the universal Soul. Its ancient name is velavali. The Ragnala gives Bilawal

as a putra (son) of Bhairav but no relation between these two ragas is made today. Guru Amar Das has addressed a full hymn to Bilawal which is found on p. 849 of the Guru Granth Sahib.

In sum, this hymn means: ' O my dear friends! develop love only with one Lord and feel the joy. By doing so, you would be able to overcome the suffering of transmigration and you would immerse in the Divine Will, you would enjoy the Bilawal.'

Bilawal is sung in the beginning of the second pahar (three hours after sun-rise). It is invariably recommended for occasions of joy. It is a measure of complete jyoti (a raga) and all its tones are pure. Keeping in view the all-round significance of this measure, a Chauki of Kirtan at the Harimandir Sahib has been named Bilawal di Chauki, which begins at 10.20 A.M. and goes up to 1.20 P.M. About 170 hymns are sung in this raga. Except Guru Angad Dev, all the Gurus, whose Bani is incorporated in Guru Granth Sahib used this raga. Among Bhagats, Bhagat Kabir, Nam Dev, Ravidas and Sadhna sang their Bani in it.

#### 17. **RAGA GOND (PP. 859-875)**

Gond raga is usually sung at noon time and it belongs to sampuran jyoti. The musicologists consider it among the less popular measures. If it is sung in a mixture with Bilawal, it becomes all the more sweet and pleasant. Of the 15 Bhaktas and six Gurus who have contributed to the Guru Granth Sahib, only 4th and 5th Guru and Bhagat Kabir, Namdev and Ravidas used this measure. The texts beseech man to depend solely on the Lord for all benefits since it is He who has given him all His blessings.

#### 18. **RAGA RAMKALI (PP. 876-974)**

The singing of Ramkali measure behoves one only if music is in the singer's heart. This measure is aimed at charming the Lord, and it produces the effect of compassion. Guru Amar Das composed his Bani Anand in this measure: this composition begins with the verse implying--'My heart felt elated as I realized the True Guru.' By so doing the Guru has made Ramkali measure a part of Sikhs' daily life. All Gurus used this raga and more than 300 shabads are tuned in it. It is thus one of the most important ragas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. This raga belongs to Bhairav thaata. It is generally sung from sun-rise till about three hours thereafter.

#### 19. **RAGA NAT NARAIN (PP. 975-983)**

According to a belief in the system of someshwara music, Nat Narain is in six measures. It is produced from the amalgamation of Nat, Bilawal and Kalian measures. It comprises fourteen octaves, all the swaras (keys) in it are pure. In the Ragmala, Nat is given as putra of Megha but to day it appears under the Bilawal thaata and assigned to the evening hours.

According to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, the measure has also been called Nat Naik in the Dasam Granth. The temper of the measure is impetuous, joyful and altruistic. Of all the contributors to the Guru Granth Sahib, only Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev had

made use of this measure, and they used both the forms - Nat Narain as well as Nat of this measure.

**20. RAGA MALI GAURA (PP. 984-988)**

Mali Gaura is a complex and less popular measure. In Ragmala, Gaura is listed as the son of Dipak but not Mali Gaura. Listening to it produces in human heart the waves of joy. Fourth and fifth Gurus and only Namdev Bhakta composed 14 hymns in this measure. This raga is usually sung in the afternoon till evening. It belongs to Maru that measure and comprises 14 octaves.

**21. RAGA MARU (PP. 989-1106)**

According to the Ragmala (last chapter of Guru Granth Sahib concerning Ragas), Maru measure is the son of Mal Kauns measure. It can be sung both in the inspiring mood or in the sadness or separation. It is sung in the battlefield to inspire the soldiers. It enthuses in them the will to do or die in the field. In the Gurbani, it aims at inspiring mankind to do good, noble deeds and to annihilate evils like lust, wrath, greed, attachment and ego. It is sung in the afternoon.

**22. RAGA TUKHARI (PP. 1107-1117)**

This measure is also sung in the afternoon or in the morning hours in winter. It is not a popular measure, it is generally believed that this measure is not very old and that Guru Nanak Dev himself invented it. None of the Bhaktas has composed any hymn in this measure. Only Guru Nanak Dev and following him Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev used this raga so as to dedicate one's silence to the worship of the Divine.

**23. RAGA KEDARA (PP. 1118-1124)**

Guru Amar Das has acknowledged Kedara as the best among other measures, provided it helps the seeker increase his love for God, and remain united with the congregation of the holy. It is clear from the above that Kedara has a special place in Sikh music. It is supposed to possess magical qualities. If performed correctly, it can recover the sick to normal position. As compared with other measures, Kedara is simple and easy to sing. It comprises 14 octaves and belongs to the Kalian musical composition. It is generally sung during the first half of night and is particularly auspicious when the moon is visible in the sky. The mood is one of contemplation associated with a sort of ascetic idealism.

**24. RAGA BHAIRAV (PP. 1125-1167)**

Bhairav is counted among the six measures and it has 14 octaves. It is generally sung in the morning. It creates a pleasant and charming atmosphere and provides ecstasy to human heart, it is awe-inspiring and fulfils the desire especially of worship. 99 hymns are sung by four Gurus in this raga. Bhagat Kabir's, Namdev's and Ravidas' hymns are extra.

**25. RAGA BASANT (PP. 1168-1196)**

Spring (Basant) season is the best of all seasons because during this period, one can perceive novelty, colourfulness and joy in every part of the earth. Joyfulness in Nature provides pleasure even to a dejected soul. Basant measure also imbibes this kind of bliss in human heart. And if praises of the Divine and song of union with the beloved Lord are sung in this measure, human heart gets ready for Divine love to sprout therein. Because of these characteristics, Rag Basant occupies very prominent place in Gurbani singing in Harimandir Sahib. On the Maghi day, a special Ardas is held there after the completion of Asa Di Var and blessings from Almighty Lord are sought to start singing this Raga. Then every Ragi Jatha when it performs kirtan in Harimandir Sahib, one Shabad concerning Basant and in Basant Raga is invariably sung by it upto Holla Mohala festival (approx for 2 1/2 months). On Holla Mohala day, again in the morning a special thanks-giving ardas is held in Harimandir Sahib and permission is sought from the Supreme Being to allow to stop singing Basant Raga in special status being sung since Maghi.

Basant measure can be sung at any hour during the spring season, but preferably it is sung either at night or three hours after sun-rise. It belongs to the Poorbi (Eastern) musical composition and has 14 octaves. Ragnama shows Basant as a putra of Hindol. It is a very popular measure throughout India. It has relevance and proximity with Indian culture since olden times.

**26. RAGA SARAG/SARANG (PP. 1197-1253)**

Sarang is a very simple but equally pleasant measure. It has been sung since long past. It consists of a group of seven, each of which is combined with some other raga. In Ragnama, sarang is listed as the putra (son) of Sri raga. It is said that it is cool by nature which provides coolth and solace to human mind and puts an end to its wanderings. It is generally sung during the third pahar of the day, i.e. in the afternoon. In the Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar, Sarang di Chauki of Kirtan follows Bilawal di Chauki. This is also said that the hymns sung in this measure cause cessation to all thirst and hunger of (mana) mind and leads it to equipoise.

**27. RAGA MALAR (PP. 1254-1293)**

It is common saying that if the month of Sawana (July-August) is taken out of the calendar, nothing remains behind. It makes clear that the said month is immensely valuable to human life from all aspects. And, when Malar measure is sung during the days of monsoons, it adds further to its splendour. Malar measure reflects the aspirations of human mind. It produces new desires, new aspirations and joys. Guru Amar Das states in quite unequivocal terms that this measure is of cool temper. Therefore, if we remember the Lord by reciting this raga, mana (mind) gets peace and equipoise. This raga is favourite with Hindu musicians. Today the Malar raga is assigned to the Kafi thaat.

Some forms of this measure have 14 octaves, but pure Malar is an Aurav measure of the Kamach category. It can be sung at any time during the rainy season, but otherwise it is sung in the afternoon (third pahar i.e. portion of the day).

28. **RAGA KANRA (PP. 1294-1318)**

Although it is a bit complex yet very popular and pleasant measure. It is generally sung in the sittings of musicologists. It has remained quite popular in royal courts. The musicians have found its 18 varieties. It is sung generally during the hours preceding mid-night. According to Ragmala, Kanra raga is the putra of Dipak.

29. **RAGA KALIAN (PP. 1319-1326)**

Sanskrit name of this raga is kalian and Persian name is yuman. In the Ragmala it is the son of Dipak while today it is the head of the Kalian thaat. Kalian measure produces joy in the heart and is generally sung during the hours following dusk. Only Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan Dev have composed hymns in this measure. There are several variations of this raga. From the time when Guru Arjan Dev gave names to the different Chaukis of Kirtan at the Harmandir Sahib, the last Chauki of Kirtan has been known as Kalian di Chauki.

30. **RAGA PRABHATI (PP. 1327-1351)**

This measure is generally sung during the ambrosial hours, and singing of this gives joy and poise to mind if performed in a slow and dignified manner. According to Bhai Kahn Singh author of Mahan Kosh, it is a ragini, has 14 octaves and belongs to Bahirav musical composition.

31. **RAGA JAIJAWANTI (PP. 1352-53)**

This measure contains hymns, four in all, of Guru Tegh Bahadur alone. It is indicative of victory. Overcoming one's mind is like overpowering the world. Oneness with the Lord is the aim of human life. Drums of joy are beaten over this victory. Guru Tegh Bahadur has provided perfection to the varieties of musical measures by linking this measure with Gurbani. This majestic and highly captivating raga is generally sung during the hours preceding mid-night.

Guru Arjan Dev gave new life and piety to these ragas which are used in singing Gurbani hymns. These ragas became known as Gurmat Sangeet or Sikh Sangeet. Guru Arjan Dev thus established Gurmet Sangeet and trained ragis and rababis to sing Gurbani in the prescribed ragas proficiently. The hymns were directed to be sung with affirmation in a full voice and this gives Sikh music its distinctive character. As hand gestures and clapping during Gurbani singing can distract the concentration and tranquility of the mood, they are totally prohibited during Gurbani Kirtan.

**The Guru Granth Sahib comprises some hymns outside these 31 measures also. These are in the forms of vars, slokas, gathas, swaiyyas and mundavani (pp. 1353-1430.)**

No doubt, singing of a measure (raga) during the prescribed hours has its own importance, but still Word (Gurbani) has been preferred to music and measure because Word is divine in nature. We give here an evidence to prove this.

Once Guru Nanak Dev, sitting some where in a forest, was singing his own composition. It so happened that the birds and animals came near him so as to listen to his recitation. Bhai Mardana and Bala (two associates of Guru Nanak) thought that the music created by their instruments has charmed even the birds and animals because they quietly listened to it with full concentration. Being animals they cannot understand the language in which Bani is being recited by Guru Nanak. This immediately produced a sense of ego in them. Just as this thought came to their mind, Guru Nanak Dev stopped singing the hymn for a while. Musical instruments continued to play but the absence of the Word made the birds and animals restless and they started making unpleasant noises. On seeing this, the musicians began to play on their instruments more aptly with extra vigour, but the animals and the birds became shriller by every passing moment. Both the musicians became helpless. Realizing their helplessness, the Guru again started reciting the hymn. The birds and animals were at peace again within a few minutes. Bhai Mardana and Bala realized that ecstasy lay primarily in the Word, and music is only an accompaniment to it.

**Tunes (Dhunis):**

Some historians and traditional theologians are of the view that it was Guru Hargobind who added nine 'tunes' to the Vars by different persons. However this contention is not correct. According to Bhai Kahn Singh author of Mahan Kosh, Guru Arjan Dev added these tunes thereto with a view of teaching the ragis or singers of holy hymn, the method of singing that particular hymn.

For more details see: Encyclopaedia of Sikhism by Prof. Harbans Singh published by Punjabi University Patiala; Ten Sikh Gurus by Dr. Ajit Singh Aulakh and Dr. Gurcharan Singh Zira, published by Bhai Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh, Amritsar; An Introduction to Sri Guru Granth Sahib by Dr. Sarup Singh Alag, published by Alag Shabad Yug Charitable Trust, Ludhiana.

# SIKH MUSICOLOGY

**\*Dr. Gurnam Singh**

Gurmat Sangeet is a unique musical tradition of the centuries old Sikh religion which was established and preached by all the Sikh Gurus, right from Guru Nanak Sahib, the Founder of Sikhism. Under Gurmat Sangeet, the divine message is communicated through Shabad Kirtan. In Sikhism Shabad Kirtan has been made an inseparable part of the Sikh way of life. Kirtan Chauki tradition is in vogue in the Gurudwaras for centuries and Kirtan tradition in practice on special occasions of Sikhs is an extended form of this tradition. This practical Kirtan tradition is in accordance with the Shabad Guru of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The Bani of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, written and indexed according to the prescribed Raagas, singing forms, music signs, headings and the other guidelines issued in the Bani, creates original and specific musicology. Scientific approach to music can help in recognising more explicitly the Music tradition according to Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

What came to be known as Gur Shabad Kirtan is a unique confluence of Shabad and Kirtan propounded by the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Sahib with the help of divine music emanating from Bhai Mardana's Rabab. This emerged as a unique system in the Indian and world music tradition. In Bani Gur Shabad Kirtan has been assigned a very prominent status as stated in the following couplet. (Kaljug meh Keertan Pardhaanaa. Gurmukh Japee-ai Laa-e Dhiaanaa, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 1075). Har Keerat Kaljug pad uttam har paaiai satgur maajhaa, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 697).

Sri Guru Granth Sahib contains Bani of the Gurus in addition to the Bani of contemporary and earlier Saints and Bhagats. The classification of Bani according to Raagas makes it clear that the Bani is written in accordance with a particular system as conceived by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Guru while compiling and editing Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Beside the Raagas, different classical and folk singing styles, Rahaa and other music signs are those elements of Gurmat music system which always remain active due to their original musical characteristics and for the presentation of Shabad Kirtan.

**The Raaga:** The whole Bani of the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib has been classified under 31 Raagas and 31 different Raaga forms (Parkaars) thus making a total of 62 (See Appendix-1). Raaga markings on Gurbani as heading is a clear indication for singing any piece of Gurbani according to the prescribed Raaga and that has been ordained in Sikh tradition as fundamental Importance of Raagas has been stated as follows: (Sabhnaan raagaan wich so bhalla bhaaee jit wasiaa man aae, (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 1423). Dhan su raag surangrhe aalaapat sabh tikh jae, (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 958). Guru govind gaavah sabh harijan raag ratan rasnaa aalaap, (Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 821).

Under Gurmat Sangeet tradition, Raagas are in propagation with their original melodic forms. Sikh musicians uninfluenced by the changes in Shudh Thaata notes as



Bilawal scales from Kafi Scale, kept the traditional purity of Gurmat Sangeet in practical form. As a sequel, a tradition which is more than 500 years old, is in existence as a Sikh Musical tradition. These original Raaga forms of Gurmat Sangeet are a unique contribution to Indian Music's Raaga tradition. These Raagas (31 Main and 31 Raaga forms) are Shudh (Siree, Maajh, Gaorhee, Aasaa, Dhanaasree, Soohee, Maaroo, Tookharee, Parbhatee etc.) Chhayalag (admixture of two Raagas or including the melodic reflection of any other Raaga) (Nine Raaga forms of Gaorhee and Aasaa Kaafee, Tilang Kafee, Soohee Lalit, Bilawal Mangal, Parbhatee Bibhaas etc.) and Sankeeran (combination of more than two Raagas). (Gaorhee Poorbee Deepkee). Originality of seasonal (Malhaar, Basant etc) and regional (Maajh, Aasaa, Tookharee etc). Raagas under Raag forms is another important feature of Gurmat Sangeet System. With a view to disseminate the divine message to the people, Guru Nanak Sahib toured different places. These travels of Guru Nanak are popularly known as Udasis. During these long travellings (udasis) Guru Nanak Sahib used Raagas belonging to local tradition to propagate his message, of which the Deccani Raaga (Gaorhee Dakhnee, Wadhans Dakhnee, Bilwal Dakhnee, Raamklee Dakhnee, Maaroo Dakhnee, Parbhatee Dakhnee) tradition deserves a special mention. Dakhani in word in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib indicates about the southeren Music system. In Gurbani, the Raaga Dhyana of some Raagas have been given with a view to express the nature of different Raagas in their spiritual context accroding to the Gurmat.

**Singing Styles:** Bani has different headings on it alongwith Raagas such as Ashtpadian, Chaupade, Ghorian, Alahunian, Vaar etc. in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Under the Bani arrangement these forms not only assume poetical forms but specific singing styles and music forms also which have a particular technique. The Gurus have not only used different classical and folk music forms in Bani but these have also been used in conformity with Gurmat musical System which is based on elements of music like Raaga, Rahaao, Ank and other musical signes. Under this system, classical musical forms have been liberated from the rigorous discipline of the art of music and given it a equipoise (Sehaj) by conforming it to the spirit of Sikh musical system. Similarly spontaneous freedom of folk musical forms has been given the specific discipline of Gurmat Sangeet.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib contains Ashtpadi and Partal of classical music and Vaar, Chhand, Ghorian and Alahunian of folk music. Vaar (ballad) singing style has a special place in the folk music. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib different vaars under different Raagas have been given a heading of traditional folk musical tunes.

**Ank (Digit):** In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the digits have been marked at different places viz. *f*,,,,...,† etc. as Ank. In addition to the signs like Rahaao, Bani has been divided through different digits. The line ending with digits (Ank) in a Shabad, provide serial to a Shabad Unit. While being helpful in its systematic presentation it also helps in understanding its meanings. In the presentation of Shabad Kirtan, Rahaao which contains the central idea of the shabad is to be sung as Sthaaee in the beginning and after every Antra to make the spirit of the Shabad more explicit. The lines containing different

similies, illustrations and reasoning etc. are also directed through different digits (Ank). These have to be sung in the form of Antras.

**Rahaao:** Under the Gur Shabad Kirtan tradition, Rahaao has a central and important place. In Rahaao the shabad has its central idea which is to get activated as a centripetal force in the presentation of the Shabad. Literally, Rahaao indicates pause, rest or be stable.<sup>2</sup> In the medieval period system, Prbandha and Dhrupad singing style has one element, that Dhruv which is known as Achal. Other name of Dhruv is Rahaao which has been used for singing of Bani. Medieval saints and bhagats poets have also used Dhruv or 'tek' for Rahaao' in their literary creations. In their works the first couplet is of Tek or Rahaao, which in Gurbani, Rahaao while follows the first line or couplet of the Shabad with the mark Rahaao. The particular digits are also found to indicate the number of Rahaao. In certain Shabads, 1 Rahaao (Ik Rahaao), 2 Rahaao (Do Rahaao)<sup>1</sup>, 3 Rahaao (Tin Rahaao)<sup>2</sup>, 4 Rahaao(Chaar Rahaao)<sup>3</sup> are also seen.

Under the Gurmat Sangeet Shabad Keertan, Rahaao is taken as Sthaaee and the tradition is to sing it repeatedly after every Antra because the Rahaao line has the central idea of the shabad and Antra line resolves the problem by giving arguments and evidence. When the problem is resolved and there is a change in thought the Rahaao line also undergoes a change. If a shabad has more than one Rahaao the second Rahaao line gets activated after the change in thought of the Shabad.

According to the prescribed recitation system, Rahaao in a Shabad through the repeated singing of its line is helpful in bringing forth the central idea and it confirms the idea and increases its intensity. Rahaao is the central force in a shabad which remains active in the inner texture of the Shabad.

**Ghar:** Under the Gurmat Sangeet system in addition to the above function of Rahaao it has other musical signs. In the Sri Guru Granth Sahib for the recitation of Gurmat Sangeet, the next musical sign is that of Ghar. It is written as Ghar ek, Ghar do, Ghar Tin. Total number of Ghars in Sri Guru Granth Sahib is seventeen. Scholars have different views about the concept of Ghar. According to Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha.<sup>1</sup> Ghar has two meanings : a Tala, a Tala or a kind of Tal, swar and kinds of murchanna..... According to Bahi Vir Singh, "There are three grams in musical instruments. Gram is constituted of Ghar. So Ghars are based on notes of these three Grams. Ghar indicates the prominent note of the Raaga being sung."<sup>2</sup> Majority of the music scholars take Ghar as Tala. This tradition of scholars seems to be influenced by Persian Tala system. In Persian Tala system, different Tala forms are addressed as Ek Gah, Do Gah, Sih Gah, and Chahar Gah<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is possible that the Gurus also used Ghar to indicate Tala. It is accepted under the Persian music tradition that Amir Khusro invented 17 taalas. These Talas are almost identical to Hindustani Talas and came to be used in India alongwith Persian names.<sup>4</sup> Majority of the scholars accept Ghar as Tala though Ghar is not more in vogue due to fixed scale and time difference. Even then under the Gurbani Musical system, Ghar is clearly indicated as a musical sign.

**Jati:** One heading Jati under Raaga Bilawal is indicated as Bilawal Mahala *f* Thiti Ghar *f*, Jati.<sup>5</sup> Under Indian musical system it is used as Jati. It means stages of rest in

continuous tempo. In this regard Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha writes, “Concept of Music is Jati.<sup>6</sup> Dr. Charan Singh wrote in Sri Guru Granth Bani Beura “Jat, Gat, Sath”. All the three are combined functions (Kartab) of Jorhi (Tabla), while the right hand acts as Gat. When both hands are free and voice also comes out freely, it is called Karkat, means sath.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Jati is related to playing Gat on Jorhi (Tabla).

Above views make it clear that in medieval times, the Band Bol of Tabla were in vogue. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha's view in this regard seems appropriate. Contemporary musicians define Jati as “when the right hand plays Khulla Bol on Jorhi and left hand plays on Band Bol, such a rhythmic process is called Jati. It is clear from the heading as mentioned in Sri Guru Granth Sahib that this hymn in Raaga Bilawal is to be sung in the modulation of Ghar 10, with the specific pauses in Jati style and the poetic form/singing style is Thiti.

**Dhune/Dhuni:** Out of 22 Vaaras included in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 9 have different Dhuni headings. These Dhuni signs indicate the special basis for singing tunes. The headings of Dhunies are as follows:

1. Vaar maajh kee tathaa salok mahalaa *f* malik mureed tathaa chandarharhaa sohee-  
e kee dhunee gaavnhee.1
2. Gaouri kee vaar mahalaa ‡ raa-e kamaaldee mojee kee vaar dhun upar gavnhee.2
3. Aasaa mahalaa *f* vaar salokaa naal salok bhee mahale pahile ke likhe tunde us  
raajai kee dhunee.3
4. Goojree kee vaar mahalaa ... Sikandar biraahim kee vaar kee dhunee gaavanhi.4
5. Wadhans kee vaar mahalaa † Lalla behleemaa kee dhunee gaavnhee.5
6. Raamkalee kee vaar mahalaa ... Jodhe weerei poorbaahee kee dhunee .6
7. Saarang kee vaar mahalaa † Raae mahime hasne kee dhunee.7
8. Vaar malhaar kee mahalaa *f* Raanhe kailaas tathaa maalde kee dhunee.8
9. Kaanrhe kee vaar mahalaa † Moose kee vaar kee dhunee.9

Above Dhuni headings are the special features of ballad singing style sung for the heroic deeds of the warriors of Northern India. In addition to their importance for Gurbani, it has great significance for the Hindustani Music. These headings also provide a new formulation for the division of Indian Music into Hindustani and Karnatic systems. In the landscape of Northern Indian Music tradition, Punjab tradition emerges as a central source.

The above mentioned musical signs, in combination with Raagas and music forms, create a special tradition for Shabad Kirtan tradition which is clearly based on the prescribed system of Bani in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

**Process of Shabad Kirtan:** The process of shabad kirtan's singing/presentation, in the light of the above musical elements and music tradition as enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, is as follows. Shabad has the basic importance in this Kirtan tradition. The basic purpose of Shabad Kirtan is to imbibe the light of the Shabad into the human mind.

Under Gurbani, truth is expressed as the central point. Rahaao lines are to be sung first as they form the central spiritual point of the Shabad. Under their specified musical

forms of classical and folk traditions, Rahaao lines are to be sung as Sthaaee & other lines are to be sung as Antras after dividing them in the light of the given signs.

Ek OnkAar SATGUR PARSAAD

Maajh mahalaa 5 chaopade ghar 1

Meraa man lochai gur darsan taaee. Bilap kare chatrik kee niaaee.

Trikhaa na utrai saant na aavai bin darsan sant piaare jeeo. 1.

Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee gurdarsan sant piaare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

Teraa mukh suhaavaa jeeo sah dhun baanhee. Chir hoaa dekhe saaringpaanhee.

Dhan su des jahaa toon vasiaa mere sajanh meet muraare jeeo. 2.

Hao gholee hao ghol ghumaaee gur sajan meet muraare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

Ik gharhee na milte taa kaljug hotaa.

Hun kad mileeai pria tudh bhagvanta.

Moh rainh na vihaavai need na aavai bin dekhe gurdarbaare jeeo. 3.

Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee tis sache gur darbaare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

Bhaag hoaa gur sant milaa-i-aa. Prabh abinaasee ghar mah paa-i-aa.

Sev karee pal chasaa na vichhrhaa jan Naanak dass tumare jeeo. 4.

Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee jan Nanak daas tumaare jeeo. Rahaao. 1.

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Page-96)

In the above Shabad, the Keertan process begins by making the first Rahaao as Sthaaee in which the Guru says as follows:

Rahaao.1. (First Sathaaee): Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee gurdarsan sant piaare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

(I am a sacrifice, and my soul, I sacrifice unto the sight of the Guru, the dear.1).

Ank (Digit)1.(First Antraa): Meraa man lochai gur darsan taaee. Bilap kare chatrik kee niaaee. Trikhaa na utrai saant na aavai bin darsan sant piaare jeeo. 1.

(My soul longs for a sight of the Guru. It befalls like Piedcuckoo my thirst is not quenched, nor peace I find, without the sight of the dear Guru sanit.1).

Rahaao.1. (First Sathaaee): Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee gurdarsan sant piaare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

(I am a sacrifice, and my soul, I sacrifice unto the sight of the Guru, and dear.1).

Ank.2.(Second Antraa): Teraa mukh suhaavaa jeeo sah dhun baanhee. Chir hoaa dekhe saaringpaanhee. Dhan su des jahaa toon vasiaa mere sajanh meet muraare jeeo. 2.

(Thy face is beautiful and the sound of Thine Words imparts Divine knowledge. It is long

since the sparrow hawk had a glimpse of water.  
Blessed is the land where Thou livest, O'  
venerable Divine Guru, my friend and  
intimate.2).

Rahaao.2.(Second Sathaaee): Hao gholee hao ghol ghumaaee gur sajan meet  
muraare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

(I am devoted, I am devoted unto the  
honourable, Godly Guru, my friend and  
intimate.1).

Ank.3.(Third Antra): Ik gharhee na milte taa kaljug hotaa. Hun kad  
mileeai pria tudh bhagvantaa. Moh rainh na  
vihaavai need na aavai bin dekhe gurdarbaare  
jeeo. 3.

(If I meet Thee not even for a moment then,  
the dark age is dawned for me, when shall I  
now meet Thee, O' my beloved auspicious  
lord? I can pass not to the night and sleep  
comes not me, without beholding the Guru's  
Court.3).

Rahaao.3.(Thrid Sathaaee): Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee tis sache gur  
darbaare jeeo. 1. Rahaao.

(I am a sacrifice, and I sacrifice my soul unto  
that True quart of the venerable Guru.1).

Ank.4.(Fourth Antraa): Bhaag hoaa gur sant milaa-i-aa. Prabh abinaasee  
ghar mah paa-i-aa. Sev karee pal chasaa na vichhrhaa  
jan Naanak dass tumare jeeo. 4.

(It is my good fortune to have met the saintly  
Guru. The immortal Lord, I have found in my  
own home. I will now serve Thee and even for  
a trice and a moment will not seprate from  
Thee Servant Nanak is a serf or Thine, O'  
reverned master!. 4).

Rahaao.4.(Fourth Sathaaee): Hao gholee jeeo ghol ghumaaee jan Nanak daas  
tumaare jeeo. Rahaao. 1.

(I am devoted and my soul is devoted unto  
thee, servant Nanak is a slave of Thine).

In the above Shabad Guru Arjan Dev is yearning for Darshan (sight) of saintly  
Guru and is expressing different psychological states in terms of separation. Four Rahaao  
lines with four different Rahaao 4 Ank/Digit (f, ,, , ..., †) signs are being changed with  
directions as indicated in the Shabad after every Antra lines that is why Shabad Kirtan  
process will be as follows:

|               |              |               |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| First Rahaao  | First Antra  | First Rahaao  |
| First Rahaao  | Second Antra | Second Rahaao |
| Second Rahaao | Third Antra  | Third Rahaao  |
| Third Rahaao  | Fourth Antra | Fourth Rahaao |

**Kirtaniaa / Kirtankaar:** In Sri Guru Granth Sahib not only musical elements and units are determined but there are many directions for the musician and presentation of Kirtan Guru says:

Bhalo Bhalo Re Keertanee  
 Raam Ramaa Raamaa Gun Gao  
 Chhod Maya Kai Dhand Suaao.<sup>1</sup>

According to the above couplet, the musician's ideal is Kirtan shorn of any greed and ego. The kirtaniaa is not to show off his ego but he is to render Kirtan with humility.

Ik gaavat rahe man saad naa paae.  
 Haome wich gaavah birthaa jaae.<sup>2</sup>

(Some go on of singing but their mind derives no solace. In pride, they sing and all goes in vain).

Singer's heart is full of gratefulness and he performs Kirtan by freeing himself from all ego and with a feeling of submission for the praise of God. Kirtan performed with above feeling only is in accordance with Gur Shabad Kirtan tradition. Only by following this technique of recitation, the truth of the Shabad can be experienced.

**Kirtan Chaukies:** Original kirtan chauki tradition of Gurmat Sangeet was started from the period of Guru Nanak Sahib, developed and propagated by all the Sikh Gurus. Sri Darbar Sahib Harimandir Sahib (The Golden Temple) has a unique Kirtan tradition in the form of different keertan chaukees, such as:

1. Tinpahee dee keertan chaukee
2. Aasaa dee var di chaukee
3. Bilawal dee chaukee
4. Anand dee chaukee
5. Charn Kamal dee chaukee
6. Sodar dee chauki
7. Aartee or Kaliaan
8. Kalyan's chaukee
9. Kaanrhaa or Keertan sohile dee chaukee.

Besides these chaukies, determined according to Raaga and time, there is a particular Kirtan tradition for different occasions, festivals and ceremonies of sikhs. Singing of Raagas according to different weathers and seasons create particular Kirtan Chaukies. Apart from these Sabad Kirtan Chaukis, Kirtan in folk style, Vaarian da Kirtan and Chauki Sahib's Kirtan also deserve special mention. Vaar Kirtan performed at Shri Darbar Sahib since the times of the 6th Guru and the singing of Vaars (Ballads) by the Dhadis, also forms a characteristic part of the Sikh Music.

**Kirtan Instruments:** The Gurus while creating the above Kirtan tradition not only started different Kirtan Chaukees in functional form but also chose special musical instruments. Playing on Rabab by Bhai Mardana during Guru Nanak's time, Siranda during the times of Guru Amar Dass and Guru Ram Dass, Siranda and Israj during the period of Guru Arjan Dev, Taus and Dhad-Sarangi for Vaar singing during the period of 6th Guru, Mirdang during ninth Guru's time, Tanpura during Guru Gobind Singh's time,

are peculiar which explicitly proves the use of special musical instruments. The use of special musical instruments in vogue is also done in an original way. The use of these 'Tanti (stringed) instruments are especially useful for purity of notes, of the Raaga and traditional excellence of Gur Shabad Kirtan.

**Kirtan Centres:** For the development of the great original tradition the Gurus starting with Guru Nanak Sahib along with Sangat (congregation) set up some Kirtan centres where musicians (Perormers of Kirtan) practically and functionally developed this tradition. Sikh history bears testimony to the fact that when after second Udasi. Guru Nanak Sahib set up Sikh Dharamsal (Gurudawara) as an institution where the tradition of Kirtan started by the Guru was specially reiterated. Historical references make it clear that Gurbani was sung twice a day in the morning and in the evening at Kartarpur.

Sodaru Aartee Gavveai Amrit Vele Japa Uchaaraa.1

At this place, by making Bhai Mardana stay put, Guru Nanak proceeded on his third udasi. Bhai Mardana continued to perform Guru Nanak Bani's Kirtan. After Bhai Mardana's passing away, his son Bhai Sajada (Sehjad) used to sing in Guru's abode. Hence Kartarpur emerged as the first centre of Gurmat Sangeet. In addition to Kartarpur, Guru Angad Dev founded Khadoor Sahib and continued with Kartarpuri standard tradition. Besides Bhai Sehjad, Bhai Saddu Baddu were the famous Rababis of Guru's abode. Guru Amardas founded Goindwal as a special centre for the propagation of Sikhism. 22 Manjies (Seats) were founded whereas Sikh traditions and Sikh ways of life were propagated in different areas by these 22 Manjies. Gurmat Sangeet also got popularised among the Sikh congregations. Bhai Deepa, Bhai Pandha, Bhai Bhula were the famous Kirtanias of Guru's period. After Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas laid the foundation of Chak Ram Das Pura, which later became famous as Amritsar. Satta and Balwand were the famous Kirtanias of Guru Ram Das's time. Here singing of Asa Di Vaar in the morning, Sodar in the evening and Arti at night, remained in practice. By the time of Guru Ram Das, Shabad Kirtan Tradition of Gurmat Sangeet was fully developed and established under which a unique singing style like Partal came to be practised, which is not found in any other Musical tradition.

Fifth Guru Arjan Dev Sahib owned the onerous responsibility of developing Gurmat Sangeet tradition on firm footing. By this time Harimandir was founded at Amritsar for the entire mankind where continuous singing of Shabad Kirtan Dhuni was being performed by different Chaukies. At this Centre of Guru Arjan Dev, where Rababi Kirtan Tradition emerged in a distinctive form, common Sikhs were also encouraged to perform Kirtan which is proved by Satta Balwand story of getting annoyed with the Guru. At this time besides professional Rababis, amateur Shabad Kirtan by sikh sangat tradition also came into vogue. After Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Hargobind started with vaar music by Dhadies along with Kirtan. Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishan Sahib further propagated Gurmat Sangeet tradition. Anandpur Sahib was founded by Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib and made the traditional Kirtan an inseparable part of practical tradition. Bhai Saddu and Maddu were the famous Kirtan performers of this great sikh centre.

Right from the Guru period, same technique of training and propagation of Gurmat Sangeet continued . According to one tradition, Rababi Kirtan performers continued to impart training on individual basis and with professional efficiency. As a result, different Rabab players and their progeny continued to perform Gurmat Sangeet, using the art of Music. This tradition was in no way inferior to the contemporary tradition of the Mughal Court. In the world of Music, these Rabab performers of the House of the Guru were recognised as Babe Ke. On the other hand, court musicians were known as Babur Ke. Babe Ke held a respectable place among the contemporary musicians because of their association with spiritual music tradition. This tradition of Rababi kirtankars continue till date. Their particular style of singing and their perfection of Gurbani recitation successfully helps in differentiating their style. Many Kirtan performers became famous as a result of amateur Kirtan tradition started since Guru Arjan's time. These Rabab performers who were recognised in comparison to the professionals, used to practise daily getting training from the best persons imparting their training to these musicians who were conforming to Guru's tradition and were practically associated with the principles and practices of Gurmat Sangeet. Out of these famous Kirtan performers of the Guru Period were Bhai Deepa, Bhulla, Narain Das, Pandha, Ugrsain, Nagori Mal, Bhai Ramu, Jhaju, Mukand are better known. Under the Gurmat Sangeet training tradition, where Rababis have family tradition, the amateur Kirtan performers have institutional tradition. Though historical sources of the contemporary taksals (institutions) are not available, but their functioning at different places bears testimony to the fact that the seeds of this tradition were there even in Guru Period. In the contemporary Gurmat Sangeet tradition some taksals and institutions are as follows:

1. Damdama Sahib, Taksal, 2. Budha Jor Taksal, 3. Mastuana Taksal,
4. Taran Taran Taksal, 5. Damdami Taksal, 6. Daudher Taksal, 7. Singhwala Taksal,
8. Hargana Taksal, 9. Sewa Panthi Taksal, 10. Dumali Taksal, 11. Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar (S.G.P.C.), 12. Sikh Missionary College, Damdama Sahib (S.G.P.C.),
13. Kleran Wala Taksal, 14. Gurmat Vidyalya Rakabganj Taksal, 15. Yateem Khana Amritsar, 16. Soorma Ashram, Amritsar, 17. Jawadhi Kalan Taksal Ludhiana, 18. Gurmat Sangeet Academy Anandpur Sahib, 19. Gurmat Sangeet Study Circle Punjab, 20. Gurmat Sangeet Academy Punjab, 21. Gurmat Sangeet Society Patiala, 22. Amrit Kirtan Trust, Chandigarh, 23. Gurmat Sangeet Society, Chandigarh, 24. Gurmat College Delhi Gurdwara Management Board, 25. Punjabi University Patiala, 26. Gurmat College, Patiala etc.

**Sikh Music Literature:** Ever since the beginning of the 18th century, many a scholar had started composing sahabd kirtan compositions in music notations. This is contemporary to the efforts made in the arena of Hindustani music. Beside this practical performance on record, many scholars have contributed to the establishment of theory of Gurmat Sangeet as well. (For reference see Bibliography)



In the contemporary world of sikh music Gur Shabad Kirtan tradition as founded by the Gurus and developed by the Sikh Panth has established itself as an independent and original identity. This tradition of Gurmat Sangeet prescribed in the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib can be termed as Sikh Musicology. In order to understand Gurmat Sangeet tradition as directed and determined by the Gurus, that Kirtan be performed in a particular Raaga, according to the established tradition. For this purpose, Shabad Kirtan compositions have been composed in kirtan form among 31 Raagas and 31 raaga forms by the authour. The musical notations of these 62 Raagas compositions are being included in this book. These compositions are not quite written tunes but by the Grace of the Guru, have been recorded in the form of 10 Audio cassetts (HVM SPHO 840541 to 840550) and 6 C.D.s by The Gramophone Company of India Pvt. Ltd. (RPG-HMV) under the title **Gur Shabad Kirtan** in the voice of the author. (See Appendix also)

Chief characteristic of this work is the use of stringed music instruments of sikh music in accordance with Raaga, Raaga forms, Classical singing styles, Folk singing styles, Rahaao, Ank and musical signs as established in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.