

# **THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN POLITICS -THE SIKH PERSPECTIVE-**

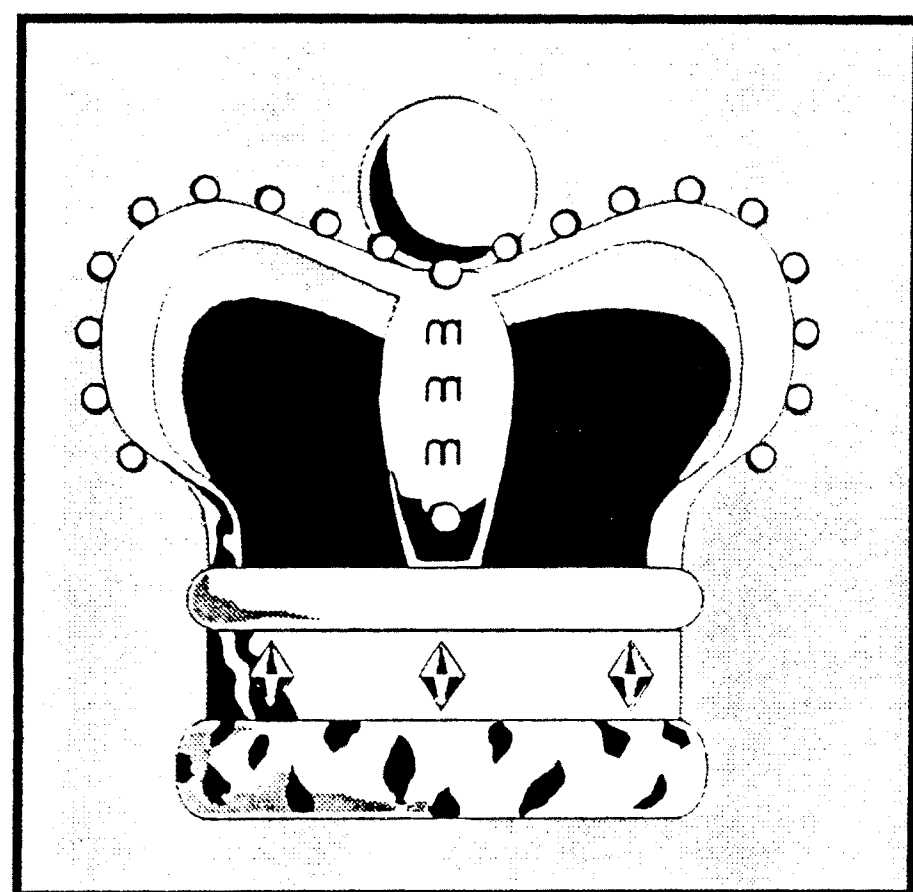
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THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE  
PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH  
FOR THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS  
1998



Submitted by  
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***THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN POLITICS  
...THE SIKH PERSPECTIVE...***



## PREFACE

This thesis attempts to understand one of the perennial relationships of mankind: relationship between religion and politics, more aptly and exactly the role played by the religion in the domain of politics. Religion as a general phenomenon and its mystique has been studied thoroughly, as also the major world religions both from Eastern and Semitic stock. Same way, keeping upwith the broad outlines of the project, politics (theory and practice) with its contours of state, different political systems, power and government has been dealt with intensively and extensively. How religion interacts with politics in the context of ideology, morality- ethics, and rituals and symbols is what could be termed as one of the major themes discussed in the present thesis.

The Sikh Perspective on the subject has been explored and discussed inclusively as well as exclusively in order to bring into the focus the unique contribution of Sikh religion to the the world civilization. Since man's journey through ages is accompanied by these two forces of religion and politics in close intimacy, history, therefore, could well be seen as an epic drama unfolding around the *man* as the central character. This aspect introduces, role of person and personality factor as an additional dimension to the study. In view of mammoth changes taking place all around, when the world is poised to enter new century and new millenium, globalization and the Sikhs from the point of view of religion vis-a-vis politics have been discussed in the conclusion and in the summing up.

This work has been pieced together by utilizing works of eminent scholars with up-to-date references, which have been given at due places. In terms of matter collection, extensive use has been made of books, media both print and visual , journals and magazines. Moreover, personal interviews with persons that matter, have enriched the views, findings and conclusions.

It has, indeed, been an honour and a matter of pride to conduct this study under the auspices of Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh and its worthy chairman, most respected Dr. Darshan Singh (Ji). I have no words to express my gratitude for the kind patronage, he was so gracious to offer me. A scholar, teacher, critic, and a guide all rolled in to one, he has been truly a *Vidya Guru* (traditional educator in Indian pschy) to me.

I also express my deep reverence for Dr Surinder Singh Narula, a man of classic stature whose association proved to me a divine blessing. I am also grateful to Dr. Parminder Singh, Gen. Sec. Punjabi Sahit Academy, Ludhiana and Dr. Gian Singh Mann whose encouraging pat was always and ever available to me.

I am deeply indebted to the authorities and staff of National Archives, New Delhi; State Archives Patiala; Central Library Patiala; Panjab University Library Chandigarh (extention Ludhiana); Punjabi University Library Patiala; Guru Nanak Dev Uni. Library, Amritsar; Chief Khalsa Diwan Library, Amritsar; S.G.P.C. Reference Library, Amritsar; Sikh Reference Library Khalsa College, Amritsar and Reference Library, Punjabi Sahit Academy, Ludhiana.

I also thank and acknowledge with courtesy, the writers and publishers whose books have been of great help for this study.

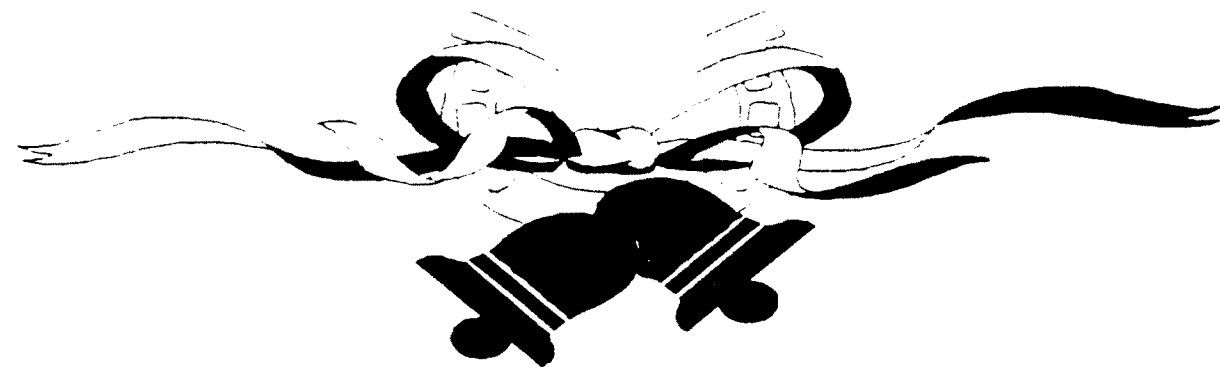
I will be failing in my duty if I forget to say a word of thanks to all my friends, organisations and family members whose support, warmth and good wishes have been a source of inspiration all along.

Finally and above all, it is, indeed, by virtue of Almighty's Grace and True Guru's kindness, that I have been able to complete this thesis.

With an overwhelming sense of thankfulness, I most humbly, present this thesis to the Faculty of Arts, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

MARCH 16, 1998.

*Mohinder Pal Singh*  
MOHINDER PAL SINGH



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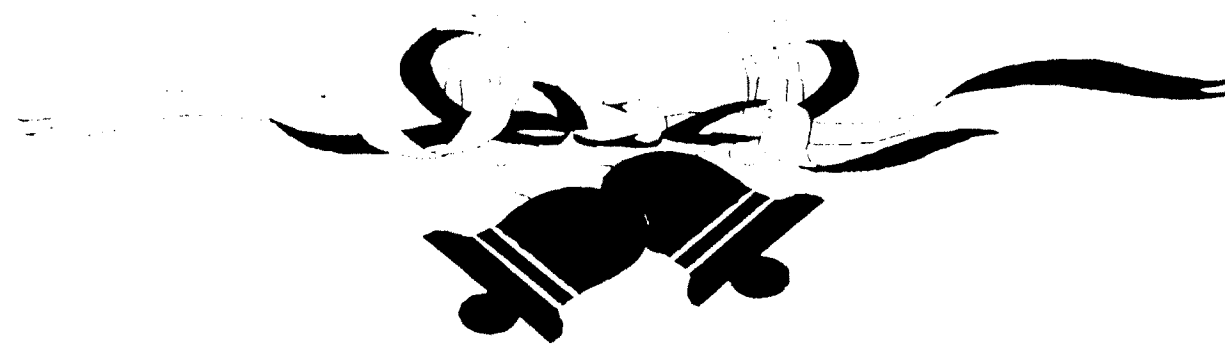
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## PROLOGUE

*Man* has been described variously. Some say he is just a handful of dust; while some others look upon him as the finest creation made by the God in His own image.\* Nevertheless, both science (Biology) and religion, agree that man is the supreme among the living creatures of the universe.\* Placed under given time and circumstances, how he manages to create and then influence events is a remarkable phenomenon.

How the forces of religious fervour as opposed to political ambitions; of absolute morality and national interest; of conceptual rigidity and operational flexibility; of clearcut objectives and tactical manoeuvring; pulls of zeal and expediency act and play off against each other is that what provides the stuff history and legend are made of. A classic example in this case, is the Thirty years' war of 17th century Europe in which clashes between personalities and policies and the forces of religious zeal and political necessities can be seen at full play.

As the concept of Universal Empire collapsed; A number of nation-states appeared on the continent. In Europe, medieval aspiration to universality, the world was conceived as mirroring the heaven; one God rules the heavens, in the same way one Emperor would rule over the world and so one Pope over the universal church. This was the origin of the Divine right of Kings and the Pope's claim to be apostle of the universal unity of God.

Under the impact of Reformation (a Religious and cultural movement), collapsing unity concept was its aftermath. Another novel idea of '*raison de tat*' which implied end justified the means and France, one of the first nation-state in Europe was also foremost in accepting and employing this concept in its national interests. This caused a death blow to holy Roman Empire, which in retaliation tried to reinvigorate itself with the help of Habsburg Roman Emperor. Ferdinand II of Austria spearheaded the Crusade to revive Catholic Universality and establish control over the Protestant princes of central Europe. This led to one of the most brutal and destructive wars in history; the Thirty Years' War of Europe.

Two major characters, both Catholics, of bloody drama of the war claim special attention of the historians. Cardinal de Richelieu, the first minister of France from 1624 A.D. to 1642 A.D. also happened to be a prince of the Catholic church, Armand Jean du Plessis. As a prince of the church, Richelieu ought to have supported Ferdinand's drive to restore Catholic authority. But Richelieu put the French national interest above any religious goal as he saw attempt of the Habsburg House to re-establish the Catholic religion as a political threat to France. He viewed the Austrian attempt as a political manoeuvre to achieve dominance in central Europe and not at all a religious act. Cardinal Richelieu, was however

\*.1. Then God Said," Let us make man in our image,after our likeness;....."; Holy Bible, The British and foreign Bible Society, Great Britain, 1952, PP-2.

\*2. Human life is invaluable, why to waste it away II.....Guru Granth Sahib, PP-219.

acting on '*raison de tat*' purely as a politician and a statesman for the sake of France.

Catholic Emperor Ferdinand, on the other hand, had never heard of '*raison de tat*'. He looked upon himself as 'Holy' Emperor commissioned by God to carry out His will and never would he have conceded that divine ends could be achieved by less than absolute morality. He would never have thought of joining hands with Protestant Swedes or the Muslim Turks to counteract the measures his adversary Cardinal pursued successfully.\*

Pitted against Cardinal's policy, the Emperor's commitment to absolute values made it impossible for him to manipulate its bargaining position. Since he was less concerned with the Empire's welfare than with his submission to God's Will, he acted to the detriment of his Empire and in modern language as a fanatic. \*\* Richelieu treated Ferdinand's faith in a masterful way. Though religious, he viewed his duties as a minister in entirely secular terms. As a religious person the Cardinal had salvation as personal motive, but to Richelieu the statesman, state was of paramount interest. "*Man is immortal, his salvation is hereafter,*" he would say, "*The state has no immortality, its salvation is now or never.*"\*\*\*

In 1618 A.D., the fuse was lit in Prague. Soon Danish and Swedish armies closed upon central Europe bleeding Germany white. Catholic and Protestant camps were cutting each other down. As the war progressed an opportunity presented itself. The Protestant princes were ready to surrender provided Habsburg emperor granted them freedom of religion and church lands. Had he done it, Ferdinand would have won a great victory and guarantee of his empire but he would not renounce his religious vocation for the sake of political needs. Instead he issued the Edict of Restitution demanding the sovereigns to restore all lands they had seized from the church. It was triumph of zeal on expediency in which faith over-rode political calculations of self-interest.

On the other hand Richelieu granted to the French Protestants freedom of worship in Grace of Alais of 1629 A.D., the same freedom the emperor was fighting to deny the German Princes and set out to exploit Ferdinand's religious fervor in the service of French national ends. He supported and subsidized the Protestant German princes against the Holy Roman Empire. It was an unlikely scenario that a Catholic French Prelate and a Catholic King Louis XIII were playing the role of defenders of Liberties of the Protestant princes against the centralizing goals of Catholic Emperor. Further more, a prince of the church was helping Protestant king of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, against Holy Roman Emperor.

Richelieu's objective was to save France from any hostile encirclement and for this he wanted to exhaust the Habsburg king and he achieved his goal by making alliance with first the Protestants later with Muslim Ottoman Empire. In order to exhaust the belligerents he prolonged the war by employing all arrows in his trickery.

Until 1635 A.D. France stood on the side-lines, while Germany was devastated, when sheer length

\* While still Arch Duke, Ferdinand declared, "I would rather die than grant any concessions to the sectarians when it comes to religion."

\*\* Dr. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, PP61

\*\*\* Ibid



of time made it possible to end the war. Richelieu, however, had no interest in peace until the French king had become stronger than the Holy Roman Emperor. He convinced his sovereign to enter the war

*"If it is a sign of singular prudence to have held down the forces opposed to your state for a period of ten years with the forces of your allies by putting your hand in your pockets and not on your sword, Then to engage in war-fare when your allies can no longer exist without you is a sign of courage and great wisdom."\**

Finally, when the Thirty years' war ended and the peace of Westphalia was signed in 1648 A.D. France emerged as a dominant country in Europe and had vast territory to rule over. As the king's first Minister, he subsumed both religion and morality to '*raison de tat*' as his guiding light.

**Above account conveys a message that in the sphere of religion vis-a-vis politics persons with balanced attitude carry the day.**

*The Cardinal acted more like a politician, whereas, King behaved more like a priest. The result is evident. The priest and the politician are illustrated in Richelieu, Cardinal Armand Jean der Plessis. Duc de (1585-1642), He made France great in spite of its corrupt Church and tainted monarchy. He had great military capability all his life but fate diverted him to a classical and political career. He held independent religious views and he angered Rome by his alliance with Protestant powers.*

#### **EASTERN STATE**

In the East, state, whether Indian, Chinese, or Middle Eastern etc., was monarchy through out. Religion was heavily involved with the state machinery and political structure. After having come into contact with the European colonial powers, These states began turning to Parliamentary democracies, the western concept of colonial masters. Whereas Nation States of the West became secular, eastern states, presently are sort of mixture of kingship, restricted democracy and dictatorship so is the case with religion in different political systems. In secular states such as western democracies, religion has gone behind the scene whereas in Eastern States like Saudi Arabia, it is very predominant. In India Hindu, fundamentalism is on the rise. Still in some other states like Egypt, it is indirect in its influence on the functioning of the governments.

\* H.B. Jovanoich, Richelieu and his age, Bernard Hoy, vol. IV, 1970, New York, PP6



# *Chapter 1*

**INTRODUCTION :**

**SCOPE AND TREATMENT  
OF THE SUBJECT**

# THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN POLITICS .....THE SIKH PERSPECTIVE.....

## INTRODUCTION:-

Religion is perhaps the most important, at the same time, most controversial word in the dictionary of mankind. Ever since Adam's race or thinking in terms of Darwinian Evolution, began to feel, think and wonder about Nature, religion in one form or other has been dominating the human mind. From the remotest past shrouded in the mist of time, a yearning for some kind of Supernatural Being and the allied paraphernalia has been a constant companion of human memory all along. But here, in the subject under discussion we will be confined to the segment in the long journey of human race, which is known as historic period preceded by prehistoric interval to some extent when mankind as a whole, became capable of setting up an order or semblance of order known to us as civilization. After having acquired civilized or settled kind of mode of living, different kinds of patterns began to emerge in human society. Briefly speaking though, every pattern of civilized or orderly society could be traced back to antiquity, in seed form. Throughout historic period, roughly beginning in eighth millennium B.C., religion, playing predominant role in human affairs, finds itself confronted with another equally forceful phenomenon: Wordly well-being, governing man's secular or material affairs in some orderly fashion i.e. science of politics. It does not mean that prior to the dawn of civilization, mankind's sole concern was just spiritual, supernatural or religious. As a matter of fact, good things of life have always been a temptation to human spirit along with the religious yearning. Relationship between religion as a general mystified concept on the one hand and politics or theory and practice of power and government on the other has always been the central theme of the wondrous drama of life.

The constant pull between dream and reality, a perpetual struggle of Utopian as opposed to the real world may be described as the interplay of the forces of religious fervour pitted against those of political dynamics. Comedies as well as tragedies of the human life are the outcome of these two forces so long as human affairs are concerned. A religion, often has gospel at its core which has "*a massianic yearning for a total and therefore, unattainable perfection.*"\*

Placed under pressure between religious and political; spiritual and material pulls and passions; human being is forced to play out all kind of characters at different times both hero and villain etc. All this then boils down to an amusing theatre with world as a stage and human beings as actors who interestingly happen to be both players as well as spectators. Sikh scriptures describe this cosmic play in beautiful terms.: Jagat Tamasha.\*\* (Worldly Play)

\* Abba Eban, The New Diplomacy, International Affairs in the Modern Age; Random House, New York 1983, PP-3.

\*\* Dekhan Aiyo Jagat Tamasha- Dasam Granth  
(I have come to watch this Worldly Play) (Selected Writings, PP-52)

Essence of government :- " *The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of Life.....the children, those who are in the twilight of life.....the aged; and those who are in the shadows of life.....the sick, the needy and the handicapped.*"\*

The study of man from the primitive times to the present day discloses no people without some belief in a power or power ruling the Universe, some form of worship, and some code of conduct or morals. This universal nature of religion is an outstanding fact in the history of mankind. There have been many religions, many beliefs about the gods and many ways of worshipping them. A number of great historical religions have flourished for a time and then died out. Among them, the religions of ancient Egypt, Babylonia, the Hitites, the cult of the sea god called Mithraism and Manicraeism, which saw life as a conflict of light and darkness, the beliefs of the ancient Greeks, the Romans, the Celts, the Scandinavians and the Tentons and in the Americas, the religions of the Incas, Mayas and the Aztecs.

Religion and politics are strange bed fellows. Sometimes they work with close affinity as friends or foes at others but none can afford to be indifferent to either. Perennial partnership looks strange because apparently they have altogether different spheres in which to operate. Religion based on spiritualism tends to be transcendental in nature far and above the mundane, whereas politics, contrary to it, invariably draws man towards the realm of flesh and blood, the realm of lust, power and glamour, and therefore gives rise to occasional anti-religions movements.

In ancient India, the doctrine of Charvakis and one Shastra ( Treaties of Atomic Structure of the Universe) are devoid of any reference to spiritual or metaphysical entity and so are Buddhism and Jainism to some extent. They become the corner-stone of non-spiritual outlook towards the man and the universe on the whole. In modern times Communism (more aptly dialectical materialism seeks its inspiration from "*Karl Marx*" who is paradoxically enough, treated as nothing short of a prophet by his followers. Karl marx is known for the saying : Religion is the opiate for the oppressed and his "*Das Capital*, the Bible of Communists. But these outbursts of damn the religion slogans sound hollow on deep study and social behaviour of the votaries who followed them. The Charvakis of India and Communists of modern Marxist States have never been, able to get rid of such practices as a religious order enjoins upon its followers; faith in prophet (Marx, Lenin and Mao), Holy Book (*Das Capital* and *Red Book*) and total loyalty. That is why communism is also known as semi-religion. It is quite amusing to note as lately as 1990, that Soviet leader M. Gorbachov while talking to Press reporters in Moscow had this to say : "Only Jesus knows the answers to man's problems.\*\* This is like proverbial..... '*Quran's verses in Satan's mouth*'. Mention of Jesus Christ instead of Marx or Lenin by the chief custodian of non-religious, Communist Russian Empire is kind of stunning confession on behalf of those who consider religion and religious redeemers as an outdated phenomenon that this is a mere folly.

\* An autobiography, O' Neil, Tip,..... Speech by Hubert Humphery, Washington D.C., Little Brown, Chicago, November, 1977, PP. 151.

\*\* M. Gorbachov in an interview with the American Reporters. '*Time*' Magazine, Oct.,1990, New York, U.S.A.

Christianity is emphatic though, about the separation of church and state when it sings praises of God's kingdom, a world ruled by the Holy Father, His Son the King, it recognises by itself a kind of political system governed by 'Divine Law'. The same is with Islam's 'Nizam-i-Mustafa, political order set up by none other than Prophet Muhammad' himself. This is the destiny of the Muslim world. In Hindu polity, "Ram Rajya" is an ideal state..... Great kings of India..... Ashoka, Kanishka and others were ardent followers of Buddhism. The founding of Israel, ancient as well modern can be traced back to the 'Old Testament', Torah and Talmud. Sikhism profusely talks of the 'Halemi Raj'. Zoroaster's concept of 'Ahura-Mazda' versus 'Aharmana' depicting the on-going struggle between the forces of light and darkness has influenced whole range of religious as well as political thought. Cyrus and Darius the Great, of ancient Persian Empire, were 'fire-worshippers'. Pantheons of gods ruled supreme during Greek and Roman Empires. In the ancient civilization from Nile Valley to Yangtse River all through the fertile crescent and Indus Valley; religion however crude or sophisticated remained at the centre of currents of history. In recent times, parliamentary system of Europe and American democracy have none other than New Testament and Judae-Christian traditions as the source of power and inspiration. The richest and the strongest power on earth, these days, United States of America, the only 'Super Power' in the last years of the outgoing century is proud to call itself, "One Nation under God." So whatever from of government : kingship, absolute to constitutional monarchy, dictatorship, democracy, army rule or Communism; religion is always there in theory or practice. This universal truth finds echo in "Dasam Granth" (Guru Gobind Singh)II

"Raj Bina Neh Dharam Chale Hein II

Dharam Bina Sab Dale Male Hein II."\*

This age-old relationship between religion and politics has been termed in Sikh philosophy as the concept of "Miri Piri" i.e. temporal authority and spiritual power. As a matter of fact sixth Guru, Hargobind, son of Guru Arjun Dev..... the compiler of Sikh Scripture, "Guru Granth Sahib" and builder of the Holiest of Sikh Shrines Darbar Sahib, Amritsar; who also goes down in history as the first Indian Martyr and the King of the Martyrs, has the august title "Master of Miri and Piri" and is addressed thus, by the faithful The sixth Guru, in addition to his attributes of being a great fighter, commander and liberator of the captives is also credited with being the 'Master Architect' of 'Akal Takhat', the Throne of the Immortal Being as also the seat of the highest authority so far as the Sikh affairs are concerned. Roughly Akal Takhat is situated just opposite the Golden Temple in the same compound, and this fact, undoubtedly, forms the basis of Sikh Polity. This fusion of religious essentials with those of political fundamentals gives rise to the unique doctrine of 'Miri & Piri'. The same is mentioned in 'Sikh Prayer' as well in different manner through, 'Degh, Tegh, Fateh' meaning the material prosperity and political stability go side by side. They both flourish under religious umbrella.

\* " Without Political power, *dharm*a (rule of law) can not be established; and without *dharm*a the society becomes an admixture scum ".....Guru Gobind Singh, Krishna Avtar, Dasam Granth). Sangat Singh, The Sikhs in History, PP-83.

### **ONE SIDE OF THE PICTURE**

Current atmosphere in India is charged with an exciting debate going on between politicians of all shades on one hand and intellectual and religious figures on the other. It is indeed interesting that all parties are set to discuss the issue of separating, religion from politics in Indian democracy. This all is happening in the face of Indian Constitution, deemed as sacred text which is riveted around secularism, the principle, ir-religious in nature, of equal respects to all religions. In this heated discussion, however, an important point is being lost sight of i.e. the gray area between religion and politics.

Prophet Mohammad has virtually been installed and revered as the regent of Almighty 'Allah' on earth and all power and majesty issue out of Him. Muslim states have all through been called as 'Sultanate-e-Khudadad', Kingdoms granted by the Almighty. Lord Buddha, not so directly, however, has been the source of inspiration for all Buddhist kings, from Ashoka down to Kanishka and his successors in India. Buddhist ethics have in fact embraced whole of South-East Asia.

Sikh Gurus, who are addressed by the believers as Sacha Patishah (True Kings) are among the front rankers who consciously worked hard to put in place a kind of political system in which fairness and justice would be common to one and all without discrimination, even though they were primarily concerned with spiritual upliftment of masses.

Post Guru history shows that Sikhs followed Guru's commandments as to the fundamental guidelines of Government in letter and spirit. Religion-inspired state, and a type of government is essentially based on a particular religion which incorporates philosophy, social, ethical and political tenets of that religion. Israel is an example in this case as well.

### **THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE**

And now the obverse side of the same coin. We know religion in its entirety has been a power house behind the whole range of human dynamics. It is obvious thus, that religion also acts as a double-edged sword, both positive and negative. This seems quite paradoxical to the casual eye. History nevertheless, written and by tradition, is full of golden as well as bloody pages. Otherwise how can one account for the horrors and atrocities committed in the name of religion by the rulers, military generals and conquerors at the head of marching armies all over the globe. \*

Crusades of European Kings under the Cross arrayed against Muslims, Catholic-Protestant conflicts, down to our own times in northern Ireland; Christian monarchies of Europe pitted against one another; Muslims Sultans after each other's blood; Palestinian-Israel animosities, Muslim Emperors particularly Aurangzeb's tortures of Hindus and Sikhs and Buddhist annihilation by Hindu Gupta rulers in the Indian sub-continent; to name a few among numerous bloody episodes; all present the reader with gory tales of horror :

\* Toyanbee A., A study of history : Tambur Lane by Marlowe.  
(H.M. Balyuzi, Mohammad and The Course of Islam, PP-91.)

## THE EXTENDING REALITY

'Pap Ki Janj Le Kablon Dhaia; Khoon Ke Sohile Gaveeye Nanak' \*

(Babur dashed down with a marriage party of sin: The songs of blood are sung, says Nanak)

Revolution, struggles for freedom or people's revolts whatever may be the case, religion is found everywhere behind the scenes. From French Revolution to the Russian followed by Chinese down to Shia Shah of Iran and its aftermath and terrorism of modern age; religion seems to be playing as Devil's advocate. Perhaps this is going too far, as Religion or Faith (Dharma in Indian Philosophy) in totality is the only source of 'Solace'. \*\* to troubled mankind. The natural question would be : Who is out there that makes religion turn from fresh spring breeze to the fire of inferno ? In whose hands religion becomes a weapon of massacres, genocides, mass destruction and bloodshed which bring in its wake pain, misery and lamentation instead of love, peace and harmony.

The clear-cut answer would be 'Man'. No one else but man himself is responsible for all this. It is the man at the centre of existence \*\*\* who is addressing the 'Unknown' in religious tone and being addressed in return in mysterious voice within himself. But powers that matter, paramount among which is the power of authority i.e. political power, are too overwhelming for him, the meek creature that he is, to go past by

'Liv Chhurki Laggi Trishna Maya Amar Vartaya II"

(lured by the temptation of worldly glamour man let go the spiritual chord).\*\*\*\*

"Rukh-e-Roshan Ke Aage Shama Rukh Kar Woh Yeh Kehten Hain,

Udhar Jata Hai Dekhen, Ya Idhar Girta Hai Parvana".

(Placing the beautiful flame of candle before luminous face, let us see, they say, which way the moth falls).

The Sikhs believe that religion and politics are inseparable, because according to Sikhism, the individual cannot live in isolation from society and the ethos which prevails in society determines the individual's conduct. The Sikhs have avoided the iron clasps of the priestly class, because the decisions are to be taken by the Gurmatta ordained by Sangat, and through indirect inference of **Vaak** (the Divine Word occurring at random) reading when the Holy Granth is consulted to arrive at a conclusion and act in accordance with the Divine Commandment.

\* Guru Nanak, G.G.S., PP-722.

\*\* Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, White House Years. P-342.

\*\*\* Dr. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, India., PP. -10.

\*\*\*\* Guru Amardas, G.G.S. PP-920.

## SCOPE AND OUT LINE

How does religion influence political thought and is, in turn, influenced by it, makes an interesting study enlightening as well as mysterious ? How does human mind placed in a specific context under a set kind of geographic and cultural conditions react to a particular religion and having thus leavened by it works out a distinct political system.

In present times, especially when the world is fast becoming a global village; democracy, western-parliamentary in this regard, is all set to reign supreme, it is utmost vital to know and find out the exact place religion is expected to occupy in new world order; hence the subject as to what role religion is going to play in international political affairs assumes supreme importance. Therefore proposed work would have to be an academic study of particular nature both intensive and extensive. Offset against mammoth historic and cultural back drop of religion versus political setup based on Sikh doctrines, what does Sikhism have to put forward ? Study in hand is not aimed at merely pleading for need of religion's relevance in political affairs but, instead, it is pointed towards demarcating specific realms, the fine line dividing them and above all the gray area between the two 'Salvation of man lies in politics' says '*Mahabhart*'\*, an epic text of ancient India. And so does the Sikh Scriptures.

*"Raje Chuli Niav Ki"*\*\* -- (Kings have to take oath of justice).. *"Raj Bina Neh Dharam Chale Hai, II Dharam Bina Sub Dale Male Hein II,"*(political power cannot survive<sup>wife</sup> out religion and without religion every thing become scum.) shall serve, for this study, as guiding lights.

Sikh religion is one of the youngest religions of the world and. The Sikh Gurus worked during a period of history when myths ruled the minds of the Hindus and when the Mohammadans ostracised all those who did not believe in Allah and his prophet but most of the Muslims who inhabiting the undivided Punjab had become Mohammadans under the proselytising influence of the Foreign conquerors but Sikhism was manure to the soil and Guru Nanak founded a religion which was entirely new and it resulted in a complete reform in the principles and practices of religious faith.

## TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT MATTER

Keeping in view the vast canvas, subject under study is supposed to be spread over, abridging and distillation of the essentials had to be done in such a way as to make it elaborating yet concise, enlightening but thoughtful and interesting as well as academic. It has been divided into chapters in the traditional classical way, covering chapters and subtitles. Overall outlay runs along Religion , Politics (theory and practice), various kinds of political systems and modes of government.

\* Indian texts have a story to tell as to the origin of the office of a king (Raja). Once, gods, after having been defeated by the devils, approached lord Vishnu and pleaded with him to give them a "king" so that they can manage their affairs properly. Raja, Since that time, in Hindu belief, is considered to be an incarnation of Vishno. .... Jayaswal, K.P., Hindu polity, Banglore, 1967, PP-184

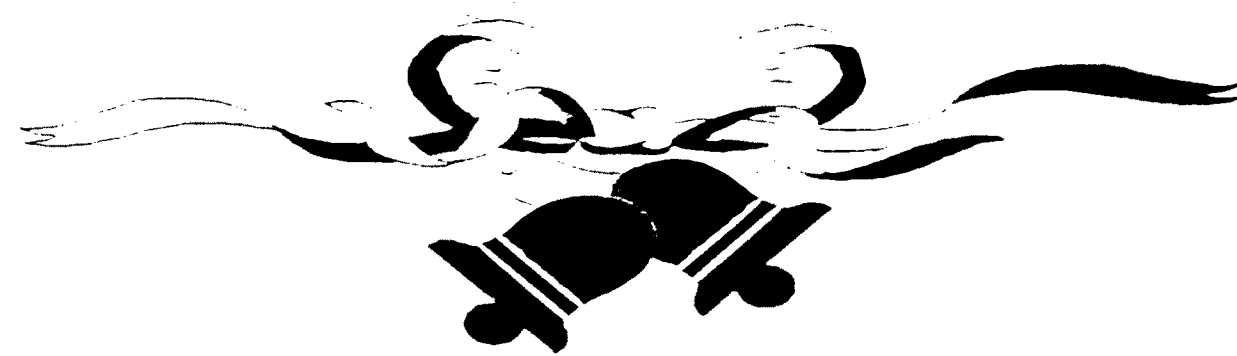
\*\* Guru Nanak, G.G.S. PP-1240



The discussion of 'The Role of Religion in the whole range of Political Development' is followed by the place, symbols and ritualism occupy in the religio-political complex. Next follows 'Morality' and 'Ethics', a powerful factor influencing the course of history. Chapter 7 is exclusively devoted to 'Sikhism' and its unique contribution in this regard--the Sikh Perspective.

Final chapter concludes with periscope on the current. 'International Scene', in which 'Man' flanked by 'Religion' and 'Politics' is seen at the centre of every act.

Sikhism, right from the beginning is very clear about the relationship between religion and politics. When both east and the west were engaged in hot debate of religion versus politics, Guru Nanak pronounced in clear cut terms that religion can not be separated from politics. Success or failure depends upon how a person perceives the situations and whether he is capable of striking proportionate balance between his call of religion and the call of political necessity to obtain his objectives. In other words diplomacy, a secretive but very effective arm of the art of politics, plays a decisive role.



## *Chapter 2*

**RELIGION :**

**THEORY AND PRACTICE**

# RELIGION: THEORY AND PRACTICE

## ORIGIN OF RELIGION

The world religion is of uncertain origin and there are scores of definitions of the word. Prof. E.C. Moore in his *Nature of Religion* counts forty-Lenha in his *Psychology of Religion* gives fifty and Havclock Ellis has given more but these definitions are projections of individual minds regarding Existence Being and Becoming. The popular opinion centres around the view what is the best that is human and humane. It is transferring the best that one wishes for to be an ideal being.

Religion began with simple animism and belief in spiritual beings and proceeded finally to Monotheism. Pondering the circumstances that might have given birth to the idea of Monotheism, one has to remember that animism itself was a cognitive attempt on the part of the prehistoric man to explain the difference between life and death, sleep and wakefulness and the states of unconsciousness and normality: the very grounds of advanced religious experiences. The only difference being that animism considered souls or spirits separate from the body, whereas in advanced religions, it is believed that the spirit inhabits the body. It is very likely that primitive religion started with the dreams or the unconscious of the primitive tribes. Once the primitive man had formulated the idea of the spirit, he extended it to the phenomenon of both animate and inanimate worlds as explanation of their properties and behaviour. Animism was a crude philosophy but it was in its essentials an intellectual exercise. It explained the unknown. therefore, it had adjustive value. Acts such as prayers, worship and the making of offerings, were only techniques to achieve well being and success. For this reason Sir James Frazer regarded both religion and magic as tools of man. When man finally observed that the mechanical acts of magic failed to achieve the desired goals, he formulated a new interpretation of nature of the universe and thus developed the different religions of the world as an exercise in subtle philosophy of Existence and Being.

Each religion has at least six dimensions. These dimensions can primarily be distinguished on the grounds as to what people believe in or what they do. A religious person is primarily one who practises religion. Doctrine is a total explanation of reality in terms of the myths of a religious group. The myths are the stories about God and the gods, creation and salvation and events of historical importance. (Myth is not fiction). The ethical aspect of religion consists in its values and codes of behaviour. Worship festivals, and customs are in the rituals of a religion. Individual's commitment to some thing greater than his own self may be described as the experience. The institutional organization of religions is its social aspect. Religion can best be described as a belief in God and in the revealed book of the religion to which one belongs as to maintain a living influence on the heart and life. It is not a pursuit but an attitude or a temperament leading to the acquiring of all that is high and holy. Its foundation is faith, its temper holiness, its aim obedience to God, improvement of self and benevolence to all men. Sikhism with its ideal of service above self and its belief that godly people are relentlessly progressing (Nanak Bhagtan Sada Vikas), is as good as any other religion of the world. The Sikh believes in one God who is indivisible and who can be known through Guru's grace. It is this belief which makes a Sikh an incorruptible optimist believing that God dwells with him and He will reveal Truth to the chosen ones of his choice. It

is probably for this reason that the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh discontinued the tradition of mundance guidance by a living person and declared that hence forth the Holy Granth will guide the Sikhs, who will in their turn bow to the Gurmatta. The decision of the holy men (the five chosen ones- Punj Pyaras) in the inference drawn from the Holy Granth, is binding on all. Sikhism is the true man's test. The life of a devout Sikh is an illustration to this effect. The Sikh is enjoined upon to have the falsity of the next world and at the same time has such a holy life in this world as to have the highest happiness here. Thus the Sikhs have the assistance of an exalted hope through life without subsequent disappointment. According to the teachings of the Holy Granth, the sum and substance of preparation needed for deliverance from the cycle of birth is that you not only believe in the Guru's word but act upon it also.

A man who lets his mind guide him acts to no purpose. A Manmukh is doomed person. He lives without any aim or purpose, without achieving any thing worth the name. The Gurus have stated in unmistakable terms, that religion does not hold this world in contempt and its enjoyment or pleasures. Those who think so are working under a falacy and commit a mistake . Guru Nanak believed that life is the gift of Heaven, it is a religion of joy. Only such a person can be happy who contributes to the happiness of others. Sewa and Simrin (Service and the remembrance of God) go together.

There are several great as well as smaller religion today. Out of these Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Hinduism and Sikhism are maintaining their growth. Judasim, Buddhism, and Taoism show neither gain nor loss over a long period of time. Zoroastrianism, Jainism and Shintoism are definitely on the decline.

Sikhism can resume understandable progress, if properly placed.

*The Temple and the Mosque*

*These are the same*

*The Hindu way of worship; Puja*

*The Muslim way of worship; Namaz*

*These are the same*

*The gods and the devils, worshipped and feared by the Turks and Hindus*

*These are the same but appear different due to the impact of*

*The different practices of the different peoples of the world.*

(Dasam Granth : Guru Gobind Singh : Shri Gurmat Press, Amritsar, 1934.)

(Selected Writings, PP-92)

**Dehura Masit Soi Pooja Au Niwaj Oai Manas Sabai Ek Pai Anek Ko Parbhao Hai     II**  
**Devta Adev Jachh Gandharb Turk Hindu Niare Niare Desan Ke Bhes Ko Parbhao Hai   II**  
**Ekai Nain Ekai Kan Ekai Deh Ekai Ban Khak Baad Aatish Au Aab Ko Ralao Hai   II**  
**Allah Abhekh Soi Puran Au Quran Oie Ek Hi Saroop Sabai Ek hi Banao Hai     II**



## *Chapter 3*

**POLITICS :**

**THEORY AND PRACTICE IN HISTORY  
STATE AND SYSTEMS**

## POLITICS: THEORY AND PRACTICE (IN HISTORY)

Men and women in each generation find themselves confronted with the same questions. How is society to be organized, and what are the right policy decisions? The stakes are enormous-wrong answers can lead to poverty, misery, and even the collapse of civilizations. Right answers can lead to freedom, plenty, and peace.

There are no obvious rules for success in social endeavours as there are no obvious rules for individuals as they begin to leave home and take responsibility for their chores in daily lives. Traditions can help; religious values can guide; education can help by reducing the odds against success. In the end however, society, like the individual, has to make a choice and face the situation.

The term politics is generally used to refer to those activities which revolve around the decision making organs of the state. Social choice is the *sin qua non* of politics, and political science is the study as to why and how these choices are made. It is also the study of organization, or the fusing of individuals into social structures which enable individuals to social choices. It is the study of the process, or the methods, by which the choices are made. Finally, It is the study of the choices themselves and the results there of, whether these lead to a Golden Age or a holocaust.

Herbert Spencer has expressed the primacy of politics in definite terms. The basic processes of politics as the quintessential human activities were the same in Plato's times as these are in ours, and will remain the same until men exterminate themselves through a holocaust of existence. Political theory has been called The Great Conversation, and it is greatest, most important and longest-lasting conversation ever held on earth.

Western political tradition begins with Greek civilization. The foundations of political thought and analysis were first explored by Socrates (469-399 B.C.) Plato, (428-347 B.C.) and Aristotle. Subsequent writers expanded upon these foundations in their own ways and in response to the needs and problems of their particular societies. One of Rome's prominent states men, Cicero (106-43 B.C.), was also its foremost commentator. Religious thinkers such as St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) and St. Thomas Aquinas. are not basically inclined toward politics, nevertheless they too found it necessary to deal with the subject. Niccolò Machiavelli (The Prince), a product of the Italian Renaissance, addressed himself to political problems of the times. The various stages of the evolution of the English political structure were the setting for the works of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704) in the 17th century and Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill (1806-73) in the European continent, some prominent examples being Rousseau (1752-78), Hegel (1770-1831), and Marx (1818-83).

Non-Western civilizations have also added to the discussion. Indian political tradition was enriched by the spiritualism of Gautama Buddha (about 560-480 B.C.) and political realism of Kautilya (Arth Shastra). Chinese political ideas were influenced by Confucius and Mencius; while the Arabs, whose contribution to the growth of Western civilization cannot be minimized, can rightly boast

of such names as Ibn-Sina (Avicenna) (980-1037), Ibn-Rushd (1126-98) (Averroes), and Ibn-Khaldun.

While they developed independently of each other, there is remarkable similarity of ideas between western and non-western political thinkers. The "Philosopher-King" of Plato (428-347 B.C.) and the Middle Kingdom" of Confucius operate on similar planes of justice, fair-play and morality. Political realists like Machiavelli and Kautilya recommend to leaders similar patterns of ruthlessness, egoism and disdain for ordinary standards of morality in politics. The Sikhs have the concept of Darvish King.

The essential nature of the problems examined by political scholars of the past is not significantly different from that which pre-occupies modern political scientist. For instance, the nature of the relationship between economic classes, wealth and political stability, which occupies the attention of contemporary political scientists, was discussed by Plato and Aristotle.

Political scientists do not agree on a common view of the nature of their discipline. Instead, there exists a number of competing schools and sub-schools of thought concerning the nature of political science. Some have argued that a rigid definition of the discipline would restrict its natural growth, and the political science should include whatever the political scientist desires to bring within its scope.

Existing definitions of Political Science may be divided into two major types. The first type focusses on the structures of government and thus refers to forces that constitute and shape the government's policies and actions. The second type refers to the nature of these forces and concentrates on the concepts of power and influence. Government may be defined as the totality of those structures which act in the name of society to promote and safeguard its interests. Power, on the other hand, may be defined as the ability to influence the behaviour of others, whether through force or persuasion.

Neither of the definitions of political science comprehensively reflects the nature of the discipline. To confine political science merely to the study of government would be as erroneous as to emphasize power as the focus of political enquiry. Power is the central organizing factor in politics, while government is its basic operational structure. Political science, thus is the study of both "power" and "government".

Some political scientists also extend politics to cover any activity at all levels of human relationships which involves power and authority. Conflict, they argue, is an indispensable characteristic of any human relationship, and when conflicts are resolved and the solutions imposed through the use of power and authority, the activity becomes political. Thus, politics exists within trade union, families corporations, religious places and wherever human beings indulge in group activity.

There are many instances in history where a student of politics has served as an advisor to a politician or has become one. Both Plato and Aristotle performed this role; Plato is said to have served the ruler of Syracuse, in Sicily, in 367 B.C., and Aristotle served as advisor to Alexander the Great. Machiavelli was the secretary of the Republic of Florence for fourteen years. Kautilya, the Indian Machiavelli enjoyed the same privilege with Chandar Gupta Maurya. These are, however, typical examples, indicating only that a political thinker may become a practitioner of politics. As a rule, en-

gaging in politics is not the same as studying politics. It requires different skills and orientations.

Thus history's close relationship with political science should be obvious. History is an accounting and interpreting of the events in society. This accounting, usually presented in a chronological fashion, serves to illuminate the origin and consequences of events.

Psychology has been called the science of human behaviour. It deals with the complexities of human nature and personality. If political science is the study of political behaviour, then psychology must be of importance for the study of politics. For example, Psychological enquiry helps political scientists understand why individuals vote in certain ways and how the personality of a leader affects the manner of that leader's exercise of power.

Two of the most fundamental desires in human beings are those of self-preservation and self-expansion. The desire for self-preservation may impel a human being to resort to any and all action that is necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose, including the surrender of individuality to an organized group. A direct manifestation of this desire is the conceptualization of the 'state of nature' in which life was nasty, selfish, brutish, and short and its transition into organized society governed by laws. The manner in which members of a modern society react towards civil rights, individual freedoms, police powers, capital punishment and electronic eavesdropping, is, in one way or another, motivated by the psychological desire for self-preservation. These reactions are reflected in the laws and institutions of government in society. Similarly, the psychological desire for self-expansion also motivates the individual to attempt to influence colleagues and associates.

Social Anthropology suggests that a basic impulse in primitive societies is to organize. Whatever might be method of this organization, the motivation was the desire to devise means (through collective actions) which would preserve society as well as the individuals within it. Once people have organized into communities the question of leadership arises. People seek power as a means to an end. They also seek power as an end in itself-to display superiority over others, to command their esteem, or to satisfy their own egos.

Sociology is the branch of social sciences concerned with the study of human behaviour in groups. It explores such questions as to why groups form, how they form, and what kinds of relationship exists within and between groups. Sociology is also interested in the dynamics of change in society. As political behaviour is usually also group behaviour, it is quite obvious why political scientists are interested in what sociologists are doing.

Economics and Political science are also closely related. Many of the most crucial political decisions made are questions of economic policy.

Other disciplines also interrelate with political science. For instance, the relationship between 'geography and politics is explicit in the study of geo-politics and urban planning. Administrative studies have enriched our knowledge of the workings of public organization and of the relationship between business and government. It goes almost without saying that the study of law is vitally tied to politics.

The ways in which one may go about gaining and understanding of political phenomena are var-



ied. Throughout most of human history, knowledge about any phenomena, physical or human, has relied primarily upon individual experience, intuition, and insights passed on from earlier generations. For millennia, people accepted their physical environment and assumed that it was simply nature operating upon the basis of some unknown general laws, or more commonly, a manifestation of the Will of God or the gods.

Knowledge that based upon other methods of knowing was often resented as a threat to the natural order of things or an affront to religion. The acquisition of knowledge about politics as well as other phenomena is now seen as a social process. Individual ideas have been subjected to the opinions and analysis of others through arguments that are regulated by types of rules. The newest and most popular set of rules for expounding such arguments or debates today, we call the scientific method.

At the same time, it would be folly to forget that other non-scientific methods of gaining knowledge about politics exist and are used. Many deal with the norms, ends and purposes of political systems rather than the laws of their operation. These are of particular significance and as a whole constitute the major alternative to the scientific study of politics.

#### **STATE AND SYSTEM:**

For example, the study of politics must begin with an understanding of the concept of the state. This is not an easy task to accomplish. Concisely, but not too clearly, a 'state' may be defined as the symbol of social and political unity accepted by a large group of people. A state does not do anything -it is or it isn't-but without this symbol, people cannot make social choices in our world today. For instance, The Queen represents the state of Canada. She is not the government, though every formal political choice is, in the final analysis, made in the name of the Crown. Ambassadors are accredited representatives of one state to another. When a government in one state changes, the fact that other states have recognized that state does not normally change. The state is not the government. It is something basic and permanent. The notion of the state implies more than just social and political unity.

What kind of clothes one wears is generally conceded to be a private decision (except possibly in military). Except beaches in some countries, there are laws against 'indecent exposure'. A law is a public, social choice. What is of interest is the scope of what might be regarded as public choice. People who want to extend the scope of public choice to all aspects of life are called totalitarians and people who advocate a drastic limitation or even elimination of public choice are labelled as anarchists.

The existence of the state also implies the acceptance of its authority, or right to make social choices. Residents or the citizens of the state of Canada overwhelmingly obey the laws passed by Canadian government. They do not obey, or even give any thought to obeying, the laws of Argentinian or Indian state; the Chinese or the Indonesian state. They do not accept the authority of these states except when they are guests within their boundaries.

We live in a world of states. The number of people who can truly be called "stateless" today is a

miniscule proportion of the world's population.

### **SIKH CONCEPT OF STATE:**

Sikhism has got its own kind of concept regarding the state and authority. It is, in fact, a stateless state. Accused, by the rulers of the day, of kingly way of life, fifth Guru Arjun and ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur were subjected to very harsh and inhuman treatment. A look at contours of state would be sufficient to make out an idea of a state in Sikh point of view. State has a few fundamental ingredients: territory, borders, authority, law and order, tax system and officialdom etc. Gurus had none of these but authority which was spiritual in essence and also worldly in practice.

Gurus were very much aware of political structure of their time. Sikhism looks upon God as the only Sacha Patishah and entire universe His kingdom. Sikh state is, in perspective, a *transborder* state. Guru, being one with Almighty is accorded the same status i.e. Sacha Patshah (true king). That's why Sikh rulers, especially, Maharaja Ranjit Singh would not deem themselves fit to take on signs of royalty: formal crown, throne, etc. From ideology when we step down to reality and practical purpose we find Sikh leaders trying to possess as much land as they could but they looked upon themselves, at the best, mere rulers i.e. governors or managers of the state affairs\*. It is quite interesting to note that without the marks of state, Gurus were able to run community affairs by virtue of spiritual authority. Of course, they had dharmshals, congregations, manjis, preachers, masands and donations in order to make smooth run of their spiritual kingdom i.e. Sikh Sangat. Guru's spiritual authority was more effective than the emperors of the day as it was obeyed with love and devotion by the faithful.

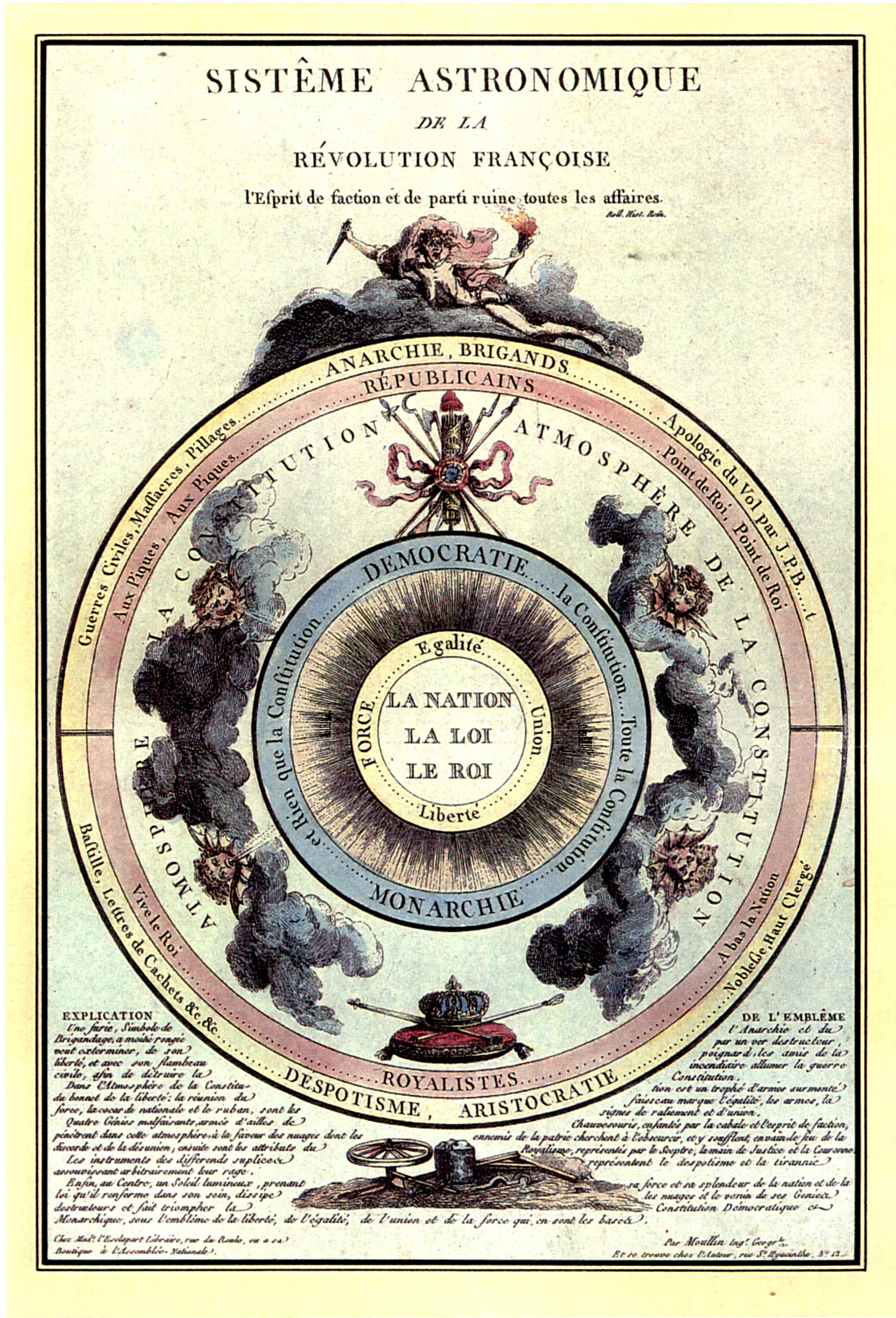
### **THE ORIGIN OF THE STATE**

Historical and anthropological evidence indicates that states emerged from a variety of circumstances in different physical settings. The precise origins of the nation of the state are shrouded in prehistory. Various theories about the origin of the state have been developed over the years by social scientists, theologians, and political philosophers.

Under the influence of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas, the early Greeks believed that the state was a natural, inevitable, and dynamic institution. Plato asserted that people could find fulfilment only as members of a state. Aristotle posited that the state is natural and prior to the individual, who has no existence outside of a state. Although this theory was later replaced by others, this Greek influence was still reflected in the thinking of some 19th-century scholars.

In Medieval Europe the belief prevailed that the state was a divine creation. This idea was, in part responsible for the papal claims to substantial authority and power over temporal matters.

\* Amazingly, American Govt. is termed as the administration like Reagan or Clinton administration which sounds akin to the Sikh rulers.



**SIKH PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND FRATERNITY ARE REFLECTED IN THIS EMBLEM OF FRENCH REVOLUTION.**

All development is struggle. Only force rules.....Only through force have states and the world become great. If one should ask whether this struggle is gruesome, then the only answer could be : For the weak, yes, for humanity as a whole, no. \*

Karl Marx suggested a more rational basis for the concept of a state based on force. He felt that the state at any time reflects the values of its dominant classes and that the government of a given state, therefore, only acts to perpetuate the interests of these classes.

Historical and anthropological evidence indicates that states emerged from a variety of circumstances in different physical settings. The precise origins of the notion of the state are shrouded in prehistory. Various theories about the origin of the state have been developed over the years by social scientists, theologians, and political philosophers. Under the influence of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas, the early Greeks believed that the state was a natural, inevitable, and dynamic institution. Plato asserted that people could find fulfilment only as members of a state. Although this theory was later replaced by others, this Greek influence was still reflected in the thinking of some 19th-century scholars.

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#### **CHANGE AND REVOLUTION:**

It is axiomatic that the only constant in human affairs is change itself. In implicit or explicit recognition of this, modern political systems endeavour to cope with the phenomena of change. A dilemma is thus created, a system which overly restricts change can provoke its own dissolution at the hands of a frustrated citizenry, while a system that cannot control the rate of change may disintegrate as the result of a collapse of support generated by an increasing feeling of insecurity and uncertainty to the part of its inhabitants. It would appear that the ideal political system is one which provides for an acceptable balance between stability and change.

Between evolutionary change and utter chaos lies a wide range of violent solutions to the problem of political change. These may be divided into four categories: turmoil, conspiracy, rebellion, and revolution. All of these solutions include some type of violence and all address themselves to the need to increase the capability of the system to respond, positively or negatively, to an increased load.

#### **CLASSICAL AND MODERN REVOLUTIONS**

The classical revolution was, from the start, one where the governing powers of the country were seized by the revolutionaries, either by a decision in a national congress (U.S.), through a crisis brought on by riots (France), or through a series of coups (Russia). The revolution in classical cases was, in a sense, conducted from the top down.

\* From a speech by Hitler, November 22 in Essen, Germany: quoted in Carl Cohen, Ed., 'Communism, Fascism and Democracy' (New York: Random House, 1969), pp. 406-7.

Sikh revolution, on the contrary, started from bottom to top in this aspect it is rather unique and foremost. In other revolutions of the world, either a king replaced other king or army, some noble revolted or conspired to overthrow the incumbent. American or French revolutions were virtually army revolutions. In Sikh revolution, brought about by the sheer force of religion, it were common people, rather lowest of the low, who participated in purely religious zeal and committed to noble aims of betterment of all people.

Modern revolution operates from somewhat different principle, though eventually the same process works itself out. The difference between the two types appears to be that the seizure of the governing power is a more protracted effort requiring a greater degree of sacrifice and effort than in the classical model. While the seizure of power is relatively quick in the classical model (the collapse of the old order), in the modern model, the political system must be methodically reduced and destroyed.

Modern revolution must begin as a subversive process. The general outlines of this subversive method were developed first in China by Mao Tse-Dong and the Communist revolutionary army. Variations were later employed in the two Vietnamese wars (1946-54), (1963-75), in the Algerian war (1952-62) and in Cuba (1957-59). This method of gaining power is called revolutionary war. It opens with the organizing of a disciplined reliable group into a revolutionary or subversive party. The party widens its support among the people, especially peasants. It gradually comes into guerrilla warfare and selective terrorism. Finally the government's army is defeated by the revolutionary army and the party takes complete power.

A revolutionary war does not have the same objective as conventional warfare....the acquisition of territory or position in order to force an opponent to surrender. It is instead a political one, to weaken the will of the government so as to precipitate its complete collapse. Mass support is the primary need of any guerrilla movement.

No revolutionary war can be won without popular support, and this support must be earned. Terror may neutralize opposing forces, but it cannot generate the consistent popular backing which is necessary for a revolutionary war to succeed. The failure of the movement for the assertion of 'Sikh' movement for identity, can be a lesson.

Individual and social liberation should be based upon an ethical foundation as practised by the Sikh Gurus in the hour of need. It has to be non-violent (as was the case with Guru Arjan dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur) or violent as under a compulsive necessity as is enjoined upon by Guru Gobind Singh in Zafarnama and practised by Banda Bahadur.

Sikh history is full of the episodes in which sacrifices made by Gurus and their followers pin point certain basic elements. The concept of martyrdom was introduced, first time, in Indian History. All the sacrifices which contributed to bring about the Sikh revolution, involved fundamental ethical values of truth and truthful living. There would be no excuse to save life and there would be no com-

promise. Later on sword was added to weapon of the change\* in grave situations. The pattern of suffering peace fully but cheerfully continues to be repeated through out the history i.e. Guru period, persecution years, British rule, Akali morchas related to Gurdwara reforms, Punjabi suba, emergency, Dharam yudh and so on.

### NATION STATE

From the thirteenth to the seventeenth century a new and unique form of political organisation emerged in the West; national state, which harnessed the power of its nobility and the material resources. Neither capitalism nor technology could have enabled the West to dominate other lands and people had it not been for the power of the two traditions of the Western world, the Judae-Christian and the Greco-Roman.

Religion was the central force in the formation of these states and as a matter of fact the same can be said of the Eastern states and Empires during the same period-Religion provided explanations for the operations of nature, justified traditional laws of morality and helped people to deal with the problem of death. The law of the state was considered sacred, a commandment of the gods. Religion united people in the common enterprises needed for survival and the power of the things was derived from religion and the ruler was considered either a god or a descendent of gods. This is true of the ancient state of Egypt, China or India as it is of Greco-Roman states or the medieval nation state of Europe.

In some medieval lands, the kings had started to forge national states in the Middle ages; which are different from those of the modern age. During the Middle age, feudal lords paid homage to the king but continued to rule over their territories and resisted the centralizing effort of the kings. Similarly the clergy had their local congregation, and owed allegiance to the king or the Pope as the circumstances compelled them. The king, however, remained the pivotal force of the states, and he came to exercise power over the State and the Church simultaneously. It is out of the struggle between the king and the locally organized system that the concept of the democratic institution emerged. In short the European countries have always defined the extent of their democratic powers in relation to the king and the nobles.

Increasingly, prosperous town dwellers, the bourgeoisie realised that their prosperity hinged in part on a governmental sponsored foreign and domestic policy. Thus political power was distributed between the rulers and the ruled. The effects of state building were visible in Europe and the world by the late seventeenth century. Commercial rivalry between states and colonial expansion,

\* Chun Kare Az Hma Hilde Darguzasht II  
Halal Ast Burdan Ba Shamshir-e-Dast II

(When all the peaceful means to arrive at a solution have failed, it is act of righteousness to get hold of the sword.) ... (Guru Gobind Singh, Zafar Nameh., Selected Writings PP-482.)

which resulted in the emergence of an elite class to protect their interest in the church and the state. This is evident from the rise and fall of Hapsburg Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella. This leads to two observations on the history of the State in Europe. First the state could not survive without the active participation of the people and without a prosperous domestic economic base and secondly the rising bourgeoisie in all European states was bound to defeat the feudal nobility and thereby introduce the modern state. This is evident from the early modern histories of France and England. In France, where the king ignored the rising bourgeoisie, the French Revolution occurred, and in England the tension between the clergy and the king ultimately led to the emergence of an elite with a commercial base, a result of the Industrial Revolution. The ferment of ideas produced Conservatism, Liberalism, Radicalism, Early Socialism (with religious undertones) and ultimately nationalism. In the mid-nineteenth century, an age of contradictions: progress vying with breakdowns is ushered in. There is the surge of nationalism. From Liberalism to expansion of Colonialism (British & French), the reaction sets in resulting in World War I. The collapse of the Central powers. The mess that the Peace Conference (after the first World War) created was responsible for the emergence of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Leninist approach defeated by Stalin who became the symbol of an omnipotent State.

The rise of Hitler and Mussolini gave rise to Hitlerism and Fascism and the spread of Authoritarianism even in democratic regimes: Under these circumstances religion staged a comeback and on the political plane the cold war, the Arms Race, the Vietnamese War, the American humiliation and the death of Mao, and the God that failed in Russia, all has led man to search for means to strike a balance between objective reality and its subjective appraisal. This has created a situation which has come to be known as New Globalism, born out of the vanishing of the communist hegemony in Russia, its partial disappearance in China and a new process of privatization and world wide westernisation. It is in this context that the work of mundane and divine organisations the U.N. Christian missions of various hues, Zen Buddhism and the spread of the message of liberal Hinduism, besides the role of Sikhism, the most liberal and humanistic religion will have to be viewed.

### **THE SIKHS' ROLE IN MODERN WORLD**

Sikhs are going to play an important role in the world to come in the next century which is going to be a rare phenomenon that occurs after a millennium i.e. 1000 years. We are living in the age of media in which necessity of conversation, dialogue and publicity are the very basic and powerful vehicles of human activity. Sikhism is virtually the dialogue between Guru and the Sikh, teacher and the disciple, Gurus were, by all standards, the excellent communicators of their times particularly first Guru Nanak, founder of the faith. He roamed across the international borders, held goshatis (dialogues) with people from all walks of life. The subject matter of all discussions would be spiritualism, morality and political condition.

As the present world is evolving into global village, multi-culturalism is certainly going to be only viable system to live in. Religion is the manifestation of the spirit. Different religions are called upon to

usher in new world order characterised by religious understanding and accommodation through open and honest dialogue. Sikhism, with its motto of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man ought to be an active player in this sphere.

Having powerful institutions such as congregation, free kitchen and five beloved ones, Sikhism is going to strengthen the democratic political system all over the globe. Since spiritual salvation of the man kind is the summum bonum of the Sikhism, it has more responsibility to inculcate spiritual and aesthetic values , through divine word and holy music into the society.

### **THE MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLE : DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGSHIP**

The idea that general welfare may be best served through decision made by a single individual is an old social organization. Historically, it has been the most common method of government. Originally, the authority of the ruler was based on a belief that he or she possessed a special connection with the forces which affected society; either that he or she enjoyed some form the control over them or he or she had a unique contact with whatever beings or spirits did exist. In some societies the ruler was revered as a god incarnated on earth; in others he or she was considered as the representative of the higher powers.

The traditional concept was explicitly revived towards the end of the Middle Ages by the European kings. Monarchy was allied with Christianity in such a way that believers were required to accept that the political authority of the king was of divine origin. The Reformation, stressing the role of the individual in spiritual matters under religious aegis as Christianity dissolved into warring sects which allied themselves with different monarchs.

The development led to the growth of the divine right theory, which posited that right of a king to rule was a direct result of his birth and that it was a divinely sanctioned right. His only obligation were to God, and his authority could not be challenged by anyone out the Divine Power itself. The king could not be challenged by anyone but Divine Power itself. The king cold not be subjected to a judgement. Law was supposed to reside in the person of the king. Thus the king, being above ordinary people, was wholly irresponsible and could do as he pleased. The logical and the natural extension of the divine right theory was establishment of such despotic and authoritarian monarchies as those of Louis XIV of France and James I of England.

The thoery of divine right collapsed under the impact of the Sikh, English, American, French, and Russian revolutions etc. but its fundamental tenet, that the enlightened mind of one person can best serve the general welfare, has been resurrected in another form from time to time. The inter play of nations of calsses served as the substitute for the Will of God. The 20th century has seen the rise of leaders who have based their authority upon special vision of this interplay whichj they alone possessed. Mussolini and Hitler saw vision of national struggle, other computed the movements of class struggles; Lenin, Stalin, and Mao all claimed a superior connection with the flow of history and ruled in accordance with this mission. This constitutionality of the monarch's rule differes greatly from where the collective will is supposed to function. The difference lies in the nature of the authority of right to



rule found in each type of government.

### **FROM KINGSHIP TO PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY**

People have long had an interest in the relationship between the political system and the society. Greeks, and Plato devoted considerable attention to such questions as the right form of government, the most desirable qualities of a ruler, and the appropriate methods of selecting and appointing rulers and officials of state. Plato was also concerned that the ruler should govern in the general interest of society.

In contrast to the principle of rule of the monarch is that of the rule of the society by its members. Such a principle assumes that no one person or group of people enjoys a special contact with the nation, history, or God.

Popular sovereignty, the vesting of the political authority in the people, was known in Rome. Cicero, the most outstanding of the Roman intellectuals and political observers, maintained in his *On the Commonwealth* that Rome would eventually degenerate into a tyranny unless it revived the earlier practices of the republic when the people enjoyed the right of political participation. As Charles McIlwain has observed, in Rome, the state as a bearer of rights is the whole of citizens, the civitas: it is not an abstraction apart from the people, and therefore rights inhere in the people themselves and, what is more, in each of them individually.

As though in a Providential design, the quest for modern democracy and parliamentary set up began in British isles. A force had entered English politics with the Reformation in the shape of Calvinism. And it was the Puritan, Presbyterian, and Congregational groups of Calvinist Protestants who provided the driving power behind the revolt of Parliament and the leadership of the Parliamentary forces. Calvin, like Luther, had broken with the medieval Church in disgust at the luxury of Bishops and Popes. The outcome of a century of struggle between the kings and Parliament was to leave Parliament supreme after the settlement of 1688 and to establish beyond the reach of royal (or indeed Parliamentary) interference a number of basic liberties of the citizens which, first worked out and protected by law in the Middle Ages, were now enshrined in a Bill of Rights and safeguarded by an independent Judiciary.

### **RISE OF THE HERO IN POLITICS**

The glorification of the state and the enhancement of collective action were not the only possible instruments for overcoming the almost despairingly corrupt modern world. To some, the concept of the hero, the great and authoritarian leader, appeared to be attractive. The hero would, at once, represent the highest inspirational and moral qualities of people and demonstrate the complete falsehood of the liberal tenets of individual rationality and equality.

### **BANDA SINGH BAHADUR**

Hero of the Sikh revolution, in the beginning years of 18th century, is undoubtedly Banda Singh Bahadur. Born at Rajauri (Kashmir) in 1670 A.D., so the story goes, he felt remorse at killing a pregnant deer that led him to renounce the world, and he became an accomplished yogi. At Nander, he met

Guru Gobind Singh, Who accepted him a Sikh. Before his departure from this world, Tenth Guru handed him down a commandment to go to Punjab and lead peoples' revolution against the cruel Mugals and their minions. Banda motivated by religious zeal raised the flag of public uprising at the head of Khalsa army. Before long he was able to establish his rule over the country between Delhi and Lahore especially in Sirhind, and Southern Punjab and a few Shivalik hill states. Ordinary people from very ordinary strata of society were entrusted with the governorships of the conquered areas\*

He remained leader of the revolution till the end of his life which was, indeed, heroic. As leader of the masses Banda surpasses all others, so far as his personal qualities are concerned. Stately, tall and well built, he was gifted with charisma and magnetism. His appearance gave him peculiar look of a hero of the fables. His mind shaped and sharpened by years of deep meditation had given him a countenance which even his arch enemy the Mughal Prime Minister could not help admire. • His political and economic reforms, his military exploits and his personal gratefulness to Guru Gobind Singh, his true mentor, are some of the aspects which make him one of the best of the creed and role model for any revolution and its leaders.

He made tillers into owners of the lands, gave religious freedom to all irrespective of cast and colour and creed. Coins and Seals struck by him provided the foundation for the coins of the future Sikh Empire. \*\*\* He broke the myth of Mughal invincibility.

\* (i) Baj Singh, Ali Singh, Fateh Singh, Ram Singh and Binod Singh were appointed Governors of Sirhind, Samana, and Thanesar .

(ii) "Low scavenger or leather dresser, the lowest of the low in Indian estimate ....." William Irwin, Later Mughals (Calcutta 1922), Vol 1, PP 98-99.

\*\*\* Coins : Obverse, *Sikka zad har do alam tegh-i-Nanak wahib ast*

*fateh Gobind Singh Shah-i-shahan fazl-i-sacha sahib ast*

(Coinstruck for the two worlds with the sword of Nanak, and victory granted by the grace of Gobind Singh, King of Kings, and the true Emperor.)

Reverse : *zarb ba aman-ul-dahar masavarat sahar, zinat-ul-Takhat-i-Mubarak bakht*

( Struck in the heaven of refuge, the beautiful city, the ornament of the blessed throne.)

Seal :

*degh o tegh of fateh o nusrat-i-bedrang*

*yaft az Nanak guru Gobind Singh.*

(Through hospitality and the sword to unending victory granted by Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.)

• Mohammad Amin Khan, H.R. Gupta, History of the Sikhs, Vol. 2, PP-35.

Thomas Carlyle helped to popularize the heroic myth of the romantic conservatives in England. To Carlyle, the individualist liberty advocated by the liberals results in which only the fittest survives. True liberty consists of the people finding the path to lesser misfortune through the strong and autocratic guidance of heroes. These superior and wiser people should have complete liberty to rule as long as they obey God, Providence, destiny and the law of nature. Individual will find liberty only through accepting their guidance; military discipline should be imposed in all walks of life. Carlyle is considered a popularizer of British imperialism.

Friedrich Nietzsche, known for his "God is dead" utterance, has other aspects of his philosophy which have exercised far-reaching political and social influence. As one writer says:

"His rhetorical and melodramatic stress on cruelty, his contempt for ordinary human life and disregard for law, his glorification of struggle and ruthlessness, and his conviction that the society in which he lived was decadent, were to spread like a blight over the early 20th century."\*

The statement, "God is dead" was a scathing condemnation of Christian society as Nietzsche saw it. The Christian world pays only lip service to Christian Morality.

### **THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE**

In contrast to the principle of the rule of the monarch is that of the rule of the society by its members. Such a principle assumes that no one person or group of people enjoys a special contact with the nation, history, or God. The justification for democratic constitutions has its roots in diverse theories and practices. Popular sovereignty, the vesting of political authority in the people, was known in Rome, Cicero, the most outstanding of the Roman intellectuals and political observers, maintained in his, 'On the Commonwealth' that Rome would eventually degenerate into a tyranny unless it revived the earlier practices of the republic when the people enjoyed the right of political participation. The basis of early Roman constitutionalism was the concept of 'lex' or legislation by the people. As Charles McIlwain has observed, in Rome, "the state as a bearer of rights is the whole of the citizens, the civitas; it is not abstraction apart from the people, and therefore resides inhere in the people themselves and, what is more, in each of them individually.\*\*"

The main characteristic of feudalism was the existence of a contractual relationship of reciprocal obligation between the individuals of different social class bases upon a system of land tenure. As the middle ages came to a close, the contractual nature of feudalism was increasingly subordinated to the concept that political authority emanated from God and that political rulers were responsible to the Deity alone.

\* John Bowle, *Politics and Opinion in the 19th century* (London : Jonathan Cape, 1966), P.372.

\*\* Charles McIlwain, *Constitutions : Ancient and Modern*. (Ithaca, New York; Great Seal Books 1958), PP. 46-47

The continuing attempts of British monarchs to effectuate their claims to divine right produced a strong reaction which ultimately resulted in the growth of the concept of popular sovereignty. The conflict began during the Middle Ages and continued for a period of 500 years. The Magna Charta (1215) was an enumeration of certain demands made by the document, made it a landmark in the progressive development of British constitutionalism. The nobles were also given the right to petition the king and to be consulted in matters of taxation. A further provision established a committee of 25 barons, *who, together with the community of entire country, shall distress and injure Us (the King) in all ways possible .....until they secure redress.*

### **SIKH ATTITUDE :**

Sikhism, verily is democratic in its nature and functioning of its institutions both religious and political. In medieval centuries, when both east and west were failing in practice of democracy i.e. all political power from the people back to the people: Gurus made it cardinal point to organise new faith on democratic principles. They would move about in company of often five and seek advice from close, noble souls in taking decision on crucial moments. Even successor Gurus' selection involved democracy in real sense, Sikh view is centred around the idea of the best rather than the mightiest. Best person would take over as the next pontificate with common consent and popular support. It also basically differed in that it favoured selection over election. Majority gave way to quality and equality in Sikh precept.

Tenth Guru, who transferred his own soul into Guru Granth, the Divine Word and His physical body consequently into Khalsa Panth, the collective entity of Sikh people. Khalsa being the Baptised and the Model Sikh, gave the finishing touches to this tradition by choosing five Sikhs and then initiating them into the order of the Khalsa with lofty title of beloved ones. Guru provided the future movement of community with the foundation of collective spirit as a rock to build on.

Second phase of Sikh history, the post Guru period began with Tenth Guru's conferring emblems of royalty to his chosen commander of the Khalsa, Banda Bahadur with a council of five advisers. Banda was directed to go by their counsel and defer to them in all affairs religious as well as political.

Tradition was carried over into the Misal period. Sikh assembly of Sarbat Khalsa, irregular armies under the fabulous name Dal Khalsa and Gurmattas all contributed in major way to strengthen and regulate democratic traditions among the Sikh.

With the British entry into the Punjab, new trends in all walks of Indian life, bound to create chain of actions and reactions among the Sikhs as well. Western Democracy took over gradually and the Sikhs too became part of new milieu.\*

\* Bryce sounds prophetic, "Democracy has obtained the universal acceptance as the normal form of government" .....Modern Democracy, Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, PP-332.



## *Chapter 4*

**DHARMA-EASTERN RELIGIONS :**  
**HINDUISM, JAINISM, BUDDHISM, SIKHISM**  
**ZOROASTERLANISM, CHINESE**

# DHARMA - EASTERN RELIGIONS

## HINDUISM

### HISTORIC SURVEY

'Hindu' is said by philologists to be a Persian word adopted by the natives of India from the foreign conquerors. The word Hinduism really covers the social and other institutions as well as religion, but is commonly used for the religion or collection of very varied religions which are followed by the majority of the Indians. It has now been established that civilization is as old in Western India as in Mesopotamia, and the Aryans brought their nature religion (described in Vedas) into India with an organised religion already 2000, years old. It was by the end of the 7th century B.C. that Hindus had a highly abstract Monotheism (Brahmanism) with Atheistic reactions in the Sankhya School, In Buddhism & in Jainism, while the common man clung to their superstitions. plural cults.

Hinduism is the oldest living classified religion in the world dating from a time between 2000 and 1500 B.C. From its beginning to the present it has been changing and growing so that few of the beliefs and doctrines of the earliest are accepted in their original form by present day adherents of the religion.

Although confined almost wholly to India. Hinduism has been adding steadily to its numbers through a natural increase of population. The present membership is slightly more than 80 crores.

Fundamental to Hinduism, and the one factor which is to be found throughout the history of this religion from its earliest beginning to the present, is its strict adherence to a caste system, even though under the stress of modern globalization, it is only a matter of formalities.

Hinduism owns no single prophet or founder. This religion is sometimes called eternal doctrine (sanatana-dharma). Its beginnings are shrouded in prehistoric past. the term 'sanatana-dharma' also means the religion as taught in the 'shruti' and 'smriti'. The word 'shruti' means what has been heard and the word 'smirti' means what has been memorized or remembered. What the seers (rishis) heard direct from the gods or what was revealed to them as recorded in books which are described as shruti. The Vedas and their further elaboration and commentaries called Brahmanas. Aranyakas and Upanishads are included in this category. For a long time, these texts were not written. They were heard by pupils from their teachers. Thus they were transmitted from one generation to another.

### SALIENT FEATURES

The Hindu religion is the product of a long evolution, the beginning of which lie in the dim past. Another quality of Hindu religion is that embraces many different forms of beliefs and practices. It is not a simple system of faith and customs. It is rather a large and hospitable family of diverse doctrines and practices. Yet it is a distinct way of life. Because of its antiquity and continues growth it has absorbed many primitive and alien elementss.

In the history of Hinduism one can discern tendencies both towards polytheism (belief in gods)

and monism (the doctrine that ultimate reality is one and indivisible). Modern leaders and thinkers such as Sri Rama Krishna., Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi and Radha Krishnan, have emphasised the Universal and unitary character of Hinduism. For a long time, a true Hindu was one who accepted the authority of the Vedas, revered the Brahmin and the cow, performed his caste duties. But the Hindu reformers of Modern times will not fit in with this definition.

The Hindu tradition has produced religious sects and philosophical systems which vitally differ from one another. Some of the important and living sects are Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism, Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj. One common link is the acceptance of the authority of the Vedas. This keeps them securely within the Hindu fold. Hinduism is thus the totality of all these sects and schools that have grown on Indian soil over a period of more than thirty centuries. The 'Rigveda' has a remarkable line; *ekam sat vipra bahudha vasanti*, i.e. truth is one; sages describe it in many ways.\*

Break-up of Hindu society into myriad of sects and denominations points out that this society was on a down hill course. This is due to some factors, namely, the missing of any central text as well as any central historical figure that is why Hinduism failed to develop the concept of unity of God. And polytheism became norm of the faith. May be, this diversity instead of unity happened because of political and social compulsions both external as well as internal : Aryan-Dravid clashes, foreign invasions, luxurious way of life and class structure. Since there was wide gap between preaching and practice i.e. texts say one thing, in practice it becomes different; there was no all pervading sense of unified mission. In other words, it was a case of decadent culture.

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\* An Introduction to Indian Religions, Harbans Singh & Lal Many Joshi, Punjabi University Patiala 1973, PP-1216

## **JAINISM**

Jainism appeared in India at the same time as Buddhism, the sixth century B.C. and sprang from the same root, the Atheistic Samkhya philosophy. There was at that time a widespread revolt against the religion of Brahmans. The priests had developed their speculations into so abstract a mass of verbiage that the warriors supported by the young nobles the kings and large number of others broke away. The Brahmans were tolerant and the caste doctrine was flouted and thus simple and human rules of life got into vogue but it was Mahavira (The Great Hero original name Nataputta) who recommended ascetic serenity and aloofness from the world. This restricted the number of followers.

### **JAIN SECTS**

The permanent division of Jain community into two factions perhaps took place in the first century of the Christian era. The point at the issue was the question of clothes or nakedness. There had always been two sections in the Jain 'sangha'. One was of stern ascetics or puritans and the other of liberal followers. The puritans who favoured nakedness were the forerunners of Digambara sect. Those who favoured clothes were the forerunners of Shvetambara sect. They differ on several points of ritual, custom and historical detail. Five main doctrinal differences may be mentioned here. The Digambaras maintain that:-

- (a) The Tirathankars should be represented as naked and without any ornaments;
- (b) Women cannot obtain 'moksha';
- (c) Mahavira never married;
- (d) a saint after having obtained 'kevala-jnana' does not need food and could sustain life without eating'
- (e) the ascetics must remain entirely naked. All these five point are contested by Shevtambaras.

### **JAIN SCRIPTURES**

The first sacred books of the Jains are in Prakrit or Ardhamagadhi language. They were given their written form in the 5th century at Vallabhai, in Gujarat. A learned Jain saint called Devarddhi accomplished this work. The Jain scriptures are the source books of Jain ethics, Yoga, religion, philosophy and mythology.

### **BASIC TEACHINGS OF JAINISM**

The Jain community ('sangha'), comprised four categories of persons, monks (shramana or sadhu), nuns ('sadhvi'), laymen ('upasaka or shravaka') and laywomen (upasika or shravika'). An essential summary of Jain teaching is presented by what are called the three gems (tri-ratna). They are (a) right faith (b) right knowledge, and (c) right conduct. These three constitute the path to liberation. Right faith (samyagdarshana) means firm conviction in the truths (tattvas) taught in Jainism. Right knowledge is the knowledge, either direct or indirect, of the nine truths. Right conduct is the conduct in accordance with the vows and precepts of Jainism.

The religious philosophy of Jainism teaches that there are nine truths or realities (nava-tattva). They are, 1. soul (jiva), 2. non-soul (non-jiva), 3. merit (Punya), 4. sin or demerit (papa), 5. influx of karam



(asrava), 6. stoppage of karmic matter (samvara), 7. bondage (bandha), 8. shedding the karmic matter (nirjara), and 9. liberation (moksha). The Digambara school enumerates seven truths and omits 'papa' and 'punya' which are included in 'asrava' and 'bandha'. The Tattavarthasutra also lists only seven truths.

Philosophically, an important contribution of Jainism is the doctrine of 'anekantavada'. This doctrine means that reality can be viewed from many (aneka) standpoints (anta). A thing can be described from at least seven standpoints (saptabhangi) and all can be equally true. This doctrine has contributed to the tolerance of contrary opinions among theologians and philosophers. In modern times, when exclusive claims of religions are under strain, this doctrine has a special relevance and meaning.

Two religious terms 'samvara' and 'nirjara' are in Jainism. In this system, the entire course of religious and moral training is based upon these two concepts. Stopping of the influx or inflow of Karmic matter is called 'samvara'. Destruction of accumulated Karmic matter is called 'nirjara'.

### **DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA**

The doctrine of nonviolence (ahimsa) is a cardinal principle of Jain religion. The theory and practice of ahimsa have been discussed in detail by many Jain teachers. Violence (himsa) is defined as injury to one's 'prana' or life out of heedlessness or negligence and is due to attachment, aversion and passions. Passion (kashaya) is fourfold: pride (mana); deceitfulness (maya); anger (krodha) and greed (lobha). Other passions are manifestations of these four. Violent deeds are rooted in these passions. Violence is of two types:- violence in thought or inner violence (bhavahimsa). All violence in action is preceded by violence in thought.

The implications of the precept of non-violence are deep and wide. Non-violence outlaws war among men. It outlaws cruelty towards animals and killing them for food. It outlaws exploitation of all kinds. Yet non-violence is not an entirely negative concept. Love and mercy are its positive aspects.

A sternly ethical note thus characterizes the Jain ethics is essentially ascetic in spirit. The final purpose of Jain teachings is to go beyond the influence of 'karma'. The process of purification from 'karma' requires a twofold method; 'samvara' or control and 'nirjara' or austerity. The observance of ethical and religious rules, including the practice of 'ahimsa', is more important in Jainism than the performance of rituals.

### **JAIN SYMBOLISM**

Since Jainism denies that its saints can help adherents the path, it offers no cult of relics. Many Jain laypersons do, however, make pilgrimage to the temples, for their temples are sacred places that express the distinctive orientation of the religion. The temples are adorned with the Jain symbol, a swastika surmounted by three dots and a half moon.\* The dots represent the three Jewels of Jainism

\* Neils C. Neilsen and others, Religions of the world, St. Martin's Press, N.J. 1993, PP. 250

JA: right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. The half moon symbolizes moksha. the arms of the swastika stand for four types or beings: those born in hell: those born as insects, plants or animals those born as humans; and those born as spirits of gods or demons.

### **JAINS AND POLITICS**

A few Jain saints and scholars have influenced political courses in Indian history in the form of their moral and ethical impact upon Indian rulers. As late as 1985-86, a prominent Jain religious figure Sushil Muni tried to mediate between the Sikhs and Government of India but failed.

## BUDDHISM

**B**uddhism as an Asian religion is an accretion of myths, superstitions and rites which grew round the teaching of Buddha as it spread over Asia. The Buddhist ethics no doubt was pure in the days of Ashoka even though Ashoka laid greater stress on transmigration of the Buddhism. The Buddhists are found all over Asia. In the end, explains Buddha, we are here to get better, not to spend our time worrying about ultimate questions.\*

Should anyone say that he does not wish to lead the holy life under the Blessed One, unless the Blessed One first tells him, whether the world is eternal or temporal, finite or infinite; whether the life principle is identical with the body, or something different; whether the Perfect one continues after death etc. Such as one would die, are the Perfect. One could tell him all this.

It is as if a man were pierced by a poisoned arrow and his friends, companions, or near relations called in a Surgeon, but the man should say, I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know, who the man is, that has wounded me: whether he is a noble, a prince, a citizen, or a servant; or: whether he is tall, or short, or of medium height. Verily, such a man would die, before he could adequately learn all this. Therefore, the man who seeks his own welfare, should pull out his arrow-this arrow of lamentation, pain and sorrow.\*\*

### NIRVANA

Ultimately, a Buddhist wants to attain Nirvana. It is a state where we see reality as it really is. We can only start to understand it in terms of negatives. It does not involve suffering, or change.

### HINAYANA-MAHAYANA

People disagree about almost everything. The scientific journals argue about scientific a quotations politicians disagree about the best way to run the country; the religious people disagree with those from other traditions; and even within a tradition, disagreement arises between adherents about the best way for that tradition to develop. Disagreement is often a sign of health and, In complex matters, inevitable. So it should not come as surprise that Buddhist found themselves disagreeing about the best way to interpret the Buddha.

The two main schools (from which many others later split) are the Hinayaan (literally, "the traditions of the elders"), which originated as an offshoot of the early Sthavira school, and Mahayana ("the large vehicle"). The initial disagreement was probably over the involvement of lay people (those who were not monks). The Hinayaan group thought that the monastic life was the primary expression of the Buddhist life; while the Mahayana group had a greater role for lay people. After the initial disagreement, more significant theological differences started to emerge.

\* Dwight Goddard, a Buddhist Bible , Boston, Beacon Press. 1938, PP. 230.

\*\* Ibid.

### **PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR**

According to Dhammapada, which is a collection of the Buddha's sayings-Buddhism is not a system of metaphysical beliefs within which there is an ethical expression, but a transforming way of life. It is primarily ethical. Buddhists are less worried about beliefs and more worried about behaviour.

### **INSTITUTIONS AND RITUALS**

The central institution is the Sangha (the community of Buddhists). Monastic communities form a Sangha which frees the individual monks from the practical concerns of the world, thereby enabling them to cultivate detachment and, perhaps ultimately, obtain enlightenment.

Central to this task is meditation, which requires solitude. Mila (CE 1040-1123) is a delightful Tibetan poet who discovered a contentment in the simplicity of nature and power of meditation. As one meditates so one sees the true reality of all things. As one discovers this truth, so one is freed to be happy. Next step is to control the senses. We need to perceive reality as it really is: we should not let our attitude to life get out of control.

### **ETHICAL EXPRESSION**

Having emerged from Indian tradition Buddhism shares certain Hindu assumptions. Central to Hindu and Buddhist ethical expression is karma. The law of karma (the moral law of cause and effect) will determine one's status if one is reborn. Although Buddhists do not believe in a self, they still believe that the grasping six senses decides how an individual will be reborn in a new form. However, unlike Hinduism, the Buddha refused to let the caste system confer an inferior status upon the "untouchables" or women.

The ethical demands of Buddhism are considerable. The eightfold path offers the middle way between asceticism (i.e., denying oneself) and sensuality (indulging oneself). By cultivating a certain outlook one can alleviate the impact of events and objects that cause suffering.

### **THE EIGHTFOLD NOBLE PATH :**

1. Right ideas, 2. Right resolution, 3. Right speech, 4. Right behaviour, 5. Right vocation, 6. Right effort. 7. Right mindfulness, 8. Right Dhyana.

According to one of the traditional accounts of Buddha's life, it was after discussion with his dead mother that he opted for the middle way between asceticism and sensuality. Nuns were ordained; and in China, Kuan Yin (Avalokiteshvara) changes from male to a female bodhisattva.

### **MODERN EXPRESSION**

Buddhism has proved to be very adaptable. It grew rapidly, developing significantly different forms of different cultures. In recent years many people in the West have found Buddhism attractive. For those bewildered by a complex metaphysical system, Buddhism offers a powerful analysis of life and a demanding ethics.

## SIKHISM

### FUNDAMENTALS

Sikhism is the youngest, newest, at the same time, most advanced religion of the world family of major religions. It began with Guru Nanak (1469-1539 A.D.) who travelled the civilized world of his time in all the four corners. Some of the fundamentals of the faith may be enumerated as under :

- (i) *There is only one God who is father of all creations; He is the prime source of creation, life and destruction i.e. Fatherhood of God.*
- (ii) *All men are equal. i.e. Brotherhood of man.*
- (iii) *Nature is Almighty's play i.e. Motherhood of nature.*
- (iv) *Human life is the most precious gift by the God and it has accountability.*
- (v) *The purpose of life is to seek and enjoy union of individual soul with the Supreme Soul. It is achieved through Guru's Grace and loving remembrance of God's name ( Nam Simran)*
- (vi) *No ritualism and no casteism.*
- (vii) *One must lead, preferably, household life, discharging duties honestly and truthfully. One must live exactly in a way given by God, i.e. natural way of life.*
- (viii) *Opposition to tyranny and injustice both by pacific resistance as well as armed struggle depending on circumstances.*
- (ix) *In Sikhism religion and politics go side by side.*

More over Sikhism stresses upon the dignity of labour and sharing the fruits with other fellow beings. The prime objective of Sikh philosophy is to make humanity lead a truthful life aesthetically, and be committed to the ideal of universal peace, prosperity and progress called Sarbat Da Bhala. ( Well being of all.)

Guru Gobind Singh, Tenth Guru (1666-1708 A.D.) gave the final touch to the Sikh religion by creating Khalsa through the ceremony of Amrit (Nectar).

More details would be provided later on.

Next follow Zoroastrianism and Chinese religion under Religions of the East.

## ZOROASTRIANISM

### THE BATTLE OF GOOD AND EVIL

*In the 6th century B.C., 'Zarathustra' (In Greek, 'Zoroaster'), the great prophet of Persia, brought the message of a supreme God, Ahura Mazda, who commanded all human beings to join the forces of good in the struggle against the forces of evil.*

Zarathustra's genius was in symbolizing clearly and powerfully the duality between truth and lie, good and evil, light and dark, investing it with new moral meaning. The world has witnessed many variations of the theme of dualism, among them the cosmic ying-yang, positive-negative dualism in China and the more ascetic matter-spirit dualism in India. Unlike these religions, Zarathustra's approach was primarily ethical. From his perception developed a paradigm that profoundly influenced a number of later religions.

He is commonly reported to have lived in the 6th century B.C., His career is known to us mainly from the 'gathas', hymns ascribed to Zarathustra himself that make up the oldest part of his followers' sacred book, the 'Avesta'. Zarathustra's message was one of protest against the abuse of authority and the dominate cult.

Zarathustra's God remained a mighty, somewhat abstract being :

He that in the beginning thus thought, "Let the blessed realms,  
be filled with light, "He it is that by his wisdom created Right  
.....I conceived of thee, O Mazdah, in my thought that thou,  
the first, art (also) the Last, that thou art father of Good  
Thought....and art the Lord to judge the actionsof life.\*

In organizing the new religion, Zarathustra forbade sacrifices in honour of Aura mainyu and his associates, who were identified as daevas and animal sacrifices combined with drinking the intoxicating 'haoma' because this practice often led to drunkenness and sexual excesses.

Avesta, is the main source of Zoroasterianism.

Zarathustra emphasised that human beings remain free to choose the rule of the Wise Lord or that of Aura Mainyu and the Lie. Through good deeds the righteous could earn an ever lasting reward of integrity and immortality, but those who chose the lie were condemned by their conscience and by the judgement of Wise Lord to a state of punishment similar to the Christian Hell. In Zarathustra's vision, there will come a day of judgement at the end of time, when the world will be destroyed by the fire and molten metal and then renewed, with the virtuous.

\* Neils C. Neilsen, Religion of the world, St. Martin's Press N.J. 1993, PP. 302.

Zoroastrianism became the religion of the Persian Empire, It developed into a state religion under the rulers of the Achaemenid dynasty. Alexander the Great (ruled 336-323 B.C.) invaded the Persian Empire, and in 331 B.C. the Greek army defeated the forces of Darius III (ruled 336-330 B.C.), the last of the Achaemenid rulers.

#### **ZOROASTRIANISM TODAY**

The old religion survives today only among some 10,000 Gaboris-their name means "infidel" to the dominant Muslims-in Iran. About 120,000 'Parsis' live in India and still revere the Avesta and other sacred writings. In 637 A.D., an army of Muslim invaders destroyed the Sassanid Empire. After the Empire was incorporated into the new world of Islam, most Persians adopted the religion of their conquerors through either persuasion or persecution, and Zoroastrianism declined in vitality. Today, successful in trade and industry, the Parsis are a close-knit community and live primarily in the Bombay area. Thanks to well supported schools, they are among the best-educated groups in India.

## CHINESE RELIGION

The Tao Teh King is the most important literary treasure of the Taoists, who represent Chinese religion. Most scholars agree that the material comes direct from Lao Tze and was possibly written by him in much the same way as has been handed down to posterity. The work consists in a series of wise sayings and generalization arranged with no idea of order. It was written some time during the first half of the sixth century B.C. Confucianism represent another aspect of Chinese religion, which for many centuries was considered the official religion of China. However Confucius, never considered himself as the founder of a new religion.

During the latter part of the sixth century B.C. the Chinese people were falling into decay and the moral life of the people was not good. It was at that time that the young Confucius became famous as a teacher. This success was followed by success in political office and then as an itinerant teacher and preacher. As a result of his work and life, the religion of China which had existed for centuries unnamed became known as Confucianism, even though Taoism, also holds its ground.

Confucius, lived between 551 and 478 B.C. in the province of Shantung, an area which has since been regarded as the Chinese Holy Land. The youngest of eleven children, Confucius had to work hard during his youth because of the death of his father. He married at 19 and one son and several daughters. Between 21 and 51 he was a successful teacher and generous helper of the poor so that locally he became a famous figure. This led to several official appointments, the highest of which was the chief justice of his state. After 55 he devoted himself largely to preaching and reform of the moral and religious life of his people. In later years he compiled "The Classics" writing little himself.

But his work and his great ability to win loyal disciples resulted in the founding of Confucianism although this was the last thing of which he dreamed.

Gradually the Chinese people developed a system of worship, a theology and a body of doctrines centred about the divinity of Confucius. Today popular Confucianism is a religion in every sense for the worshippers of Confucius are to be found in all parts of China and the Communist regime never interfered in the ritual worship of the devotees. The sacred scriptures of Confucianism are divided into two groups. The first group "The classic" was compiled by Confucius out of the sacred love of the ancient Chinese religion. There are six books in this groups as follows:

1. The Shir King or Book of History.
2. The Shih King or Book of Poetry.
3. The I king of Book of changes.
4. The Li Ki or Book of Rites.
5. The Ch'un Ch'un or Spring and Autumn Annals.
6. The Siao King or Book of filial piety.

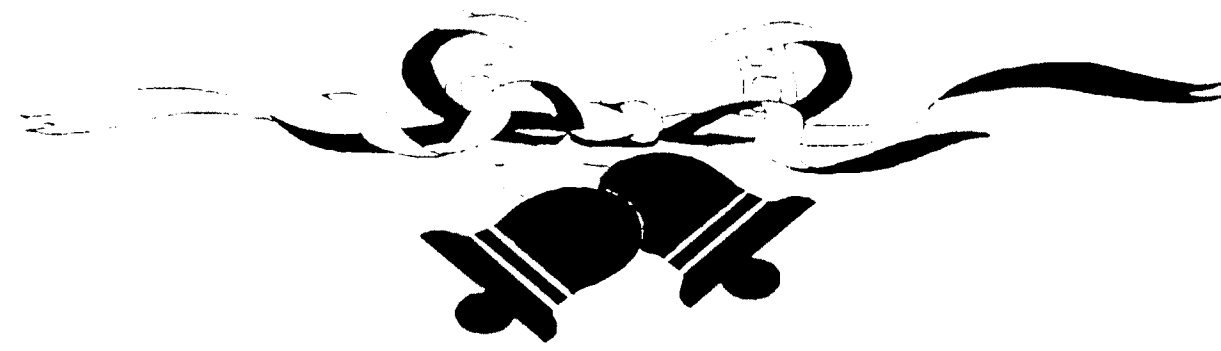
The second group of Confucius Scriptures consists of four books:

1. The Ta Hsio or Great Sear a book of teaching concerning virtue.
2. The Chung Yung of the Doctrine of the Mean.



3. The Lun Yu or The Analects.

4. The Meng-tze or Book of Menecius. Although their writings are not claimed to be inspired, they serve as the foundation for Chinese religion.



## *Chapter 5*

**RELIGION : WESTERN/SEMITIC**  
**JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM**

## RELIGION WESTERN/SEMITIC

### JUDAISM

Judaism is the name for the religion of the Hebrews. It began in 1200 B.C. And it has borrowed from other religions but has also contributed greatly to many other religious systems, particularly Christianity and Islam. Indeed Christianity grew out of Judaism and includes the sacred writings of its literature. The old Testament with its 39 books contains the sacred writings of the Hebrews. The Jews divide these books as follows:

(a) Torah of Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

(b) Nebum : The prophets : Joshua, Judges, Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, I Kings, II Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah Micah Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi.

(c) Kethubiam or Sacred Writings : Psalms, Proverbs, John, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah I chronicles II chronicles. All these books were originally composed in Hebrew except approximately half of Daniel, some parts of Ezra, and a verse of Jeremiah. These latter were written in Aramaic.

There are other documents read by Hebrews and held to have special religious value even though they are not included in the canon of scriptures. Chief among these is the Talmud which is divided into the Mishna or text and the Gemara or commentary. Several writings have been grouped together and are known as the Apocrypha. These books formed part of the sacred writings and have been grouped together and are known as the Apocrypha. These books formed part of the sacred writings of the Alexandrian Jews and are to be found as part of the Hebrew scriptures in early manuscripts. However most authorities reject them, but the Council of Trent, defining the doctrines of Catholicism declared them to be canonical and ordered them included in the Bible, but these books are omitted from the Protestant Bible.

One of the great ideas running through much of Hebrew sacred literature is a belief in a coming Messiah who would restore a traditional and often imaginary glory of the Jewish race. God is believed to be, in a peculiar way, the God of the Jews and to have a special place for them in the scheme of things. Thus the Jew looked for a Messiah who would carry out God's plan for them.

Jesus was acclaimed by many as the promised Messiah.

### THE COVENANT

Early Hebrew religion traced itself back to a covenant between God and Abraham:

This is my covenant with you; you shall be the ancestor of a company of nations ...I am establishing my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you throughout their generation as a perpetual covenant, to be God to you and your descendants. I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are now only an immigrant, the whole of the land of Canaan as a

possession for all time, and I will be their God. (Gen. 17: 4-8)

The word 'covenant' means " Contract" or "treaty". Applied to ancient Israeli religion, it reflects the fundamental belief that the God of the Israelite nation had entered into a contractual relationship with Abraham and its descendants.

### **MOSES**

According to the biblical account, the Egyptian Pharaoh invited Jacob (son of Abraham's son Issac) and his family to live in the people of Goshen, and there they prospered. A new Pharaoh incited his people against the Israelite, setting taskmasters over them and forcing them into slavery. He decreed the death by drowning of all newborn Israeli male (Exod. 1).

Moses received his divine commission; he beheld a burning bush that was not consumed by the flames and he heard a divine voice say;

"I have indeed seen the plight of my people who are in Egypt... and I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land, fine and large, to a land flowing with milk and honey. Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites. Hivvitee and Jebusites... So come now, let me send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt....

" I am who I am .... thus shall you say to the Israelites: 'I am' has sent to me to you."

(Exod. 3: 7-14)

Moses responded to the divine call, but only after a series of plagues broke the Pharaoh's resistance and the Israelites were permitted to leave. The Torah relates how the waters of the Red Sea parted so that the Israelites could cross, but when the Egyptians pursued them the sea closed over their chariots, and the Pharaoh's army drowned .

"Sing to the Lord, for he has completely triumphed;

The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea."

(Exod. 15:1)

The family covenant between Abraham and his God was now reconceived as a covenant between God and entire people: the people of Israel were to give their loyalty to Yahweh in return for the assurance that God would guide them to the land promised earlier to Abraham and preserve them in it for as long as they kept their pledges to God.

### **TEN COMMANDMENTS**

An abridged version of the Ten Commandments reads as follows (Exod. 20; Deut. 5) :

1. I, the Lord. am your God.who led you out of the land of Egypt,out of the house of bondage.
2. You shall have no other gods beside me.
3. You shall not invoke the name of the Lord your God with malice.
4. Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.
5. Honour your father and your mother.
- 6.You shall not murder.
- 7.You shall not commit adultery.

8. You shall not steal.

9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

10. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife or anything else that is your neighbour's.

The Ten Commandments reflect the memory of events that distinguished the people of Israel from other groups. Its prologue affirmed that Yahweh was entitled to Israel's loyalty because "I....brought

you out of the land of Egypt, out of a state of slavery; you must have no other gods beside me." God demanded exclusive loyalty.

Jews soon became political power. The splendour of the royal city reached its peak during Solomon's long and prosperous reign. Literacy activity flourished, and oral traditions were set down in written texts now contained in the scrolls of the Torah. However, Jewish history watched many ups and downs.

### **THE HOLOCAUST**

No event since the destruction of the second temple by the Romans has had an effect on Jewish existence and faith equal to that of the Nazi Holocaust. Led by Adolf Hitler, German Nazis established numerous death camps, at Auschwitz and elsewhere, which systematically and gruesomely murdered 6 million Jews, including 1 million children an astonishing one-third of all the Jews in the world! This attempt to annihilate the Jewish people (which the Nazis called the "final solution to the Jewish problem") led to the coining of a new word, genocide literally "murder of a race." Hitler's obsessive hatred of Jews bore some links to earlier manifestation of anti-Jewish prejudice. Like other demagogues before him, he sought to mobilize a dissatisfied people against a visible and vulnerable enemy. Hitler's racist view, however, offered no way of avoiding the stigma of being Jewish: all persons of Jewish blood, he intoned, were members of an inferior and expendable race.

Many survivors of the Nazi slaughter, experienced a major crisis of faith.

Jews are not permitted to hand Hitler a posthumous victory. Jews are commanded to survive as Jews lest their people perish. They are commanded to remember the victims of Auschwitz lest their memory perish. They are forbidden to despair of God lest Judaism perish... For a Jew to break this commandment would be to do the unthinkable ..... to respond to Hitler by doing his, work.\*

### **THE REBIRTH OF ISRAEL**

By the end of World War II, in the post-Holocaust world, it was obvious that Jews had to establish their own sovereign nation. In theological terms, Israel's rebirth served as a desperately needed sign of grace.

\* Emil Fackenheim, Quest for past and future (Bloomington : Indian Uni. Press, 1968), PP. 148.

The archtypal figure of Israel's rebirth was the nation's first prime minister, Devid Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), who combined Herzl's vision of a politically empowered Jewish community with Ahad Haam's vision of Israel as a new testing ground for the Hebraic spirit. Since the founding of the state after nearly 2000 years of political subjugation, the Jews in Israel once again confront the challenges of power and the unfamiliar privileges and burdens of government.

## CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is the world's largest religion, with more than a billion and a half adherents, located on every continent. It gets its name from the figure on whose life and death it is centred, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus was historical figure, and Christianity is a religion oriented around history: Christians believe that God is the sovereign of history, present and active in historical events, directing history to its culmination. Christianity is also a revealed religion, with a set scriptures believed to be divinely inspired (though understandings of that differ widely among Christians). Looking beyond Jesus's death to his resurrection, Christians see in Jesus not only a human man but also the revelation of God.

### CHRISTIANITY 'S ROOTS IN JUDAISM

Christianity began as a Jewish sect, sharing the Jewish worldview. The foremost, this included belief in a personalized monotheistic God who judges and rewards human actions. As opposed to Roman religion with many gods, Polytheism, Judaism proclaimed one and only one God with an exclusive claim to worship, and thus Roman society was seen as blasphemous and wicked.

Mathew and Luke begin with stories of Jesus's miraculous birth to virgin, Mary, and her husband Joseph, in a stable in Bethlehem and include genealogies to link Joseph to King David, from whom the Messiah was to come.

The Narratives of Jesus's public ministry begin with the Prophet, John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. John announced that he was the forerunner of the Messiah, sent to preach the coming of the kingdom of God and the need to repent (literally, "turn around") and be baptized (baptism is a ritual cleansing by water). John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, Proclaiming him to be the promised Messiah and initiating his ministry. At his movement, according to the accounts, Jesus experienced a divine vision of call:

And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1 : 10-11)\*

Jesus soon gathered followers, reportedly summoning fishermen such as Peter, James, and another John, who dropped their nets and joined Jesus in his wandering ministry. Though tradition speaks of 12 disciples, Jesus's close followers probably fluctuated in number and included women such as Magdalene and Joanna. Prominent also among the gospel stories were accounts of healing, exorcism, and other miracles.

The following reconstruction from Aramaic, the language used in the 1st century A.D., is believed to be the best approach to the actual words of Jesus:

\* Except where noted, all biblical quotations here are taken from the New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version (New York : Oxf. Uni. Press, 1991.)

Dear Father

Hallowed by thy name,

Thy kingdom come,

Our bread for tomorrow give us today

And forgive us our debts as we also herewith forgive our debtors,

And let us not fall into temptation.\*

Jesus's use of "Father" Suggests the warmth, intimacy, and trust that characterize a close parent-child relationship, and he invited his followers into such a relationship with God.

### **DEATH AND RESURRECTION**

The stories about Jesus and the accounts of his teachings gained much of their significance when seen through the prism of Jesus's passion.... his suffering, death, and miraculous resurrection.

The passion narrative begin with Jesus's last visit to Jerusalem. There his opponents tried to trap him into making a blasphemous or treasonous statement; parrying his enemies' challenges only angered them further. Though Jesus's blessings of the bread and wine accorded with Jewish tradition, his identification of himself with them was a startling departure from tradition and was interpreted by Christians as Jesus's identification of himself as the new Passive lamb who would die for the sins of the world. Again the gospels present Jesus as the fulfilment and culmination of Jewish law, which in turn was recast as a foreshadowing of what would yet happen. Moreover the last supper formed the model for the 'Eucharist' (from the Greek for "thanks giving"), the chief act of Christian worship, which recollects and represents Christ's giving of himself.

After the meal Jesus went outside to pray in the garden of Gethsemane, where he was arrested, brought before the Jewish authorities, tried by the high priest, and found guilty of blasphemy. Pontius Pilate ordered the execution on a hill outside of Jerusalem, where Jesus and two other criminals were crucified at the same time. Jesus's arrest terrified his friends---- Peter denied knowing him, and most of the other disciples fled. Only Jesus's mother, a few women disciples, and the apostle John waited at the foot of the cross where Jesus died that Friday (later called good Friday). Because the Sabbath would begin at sundown, they laid Jesus in a tomb borrowed from a wealthy admirer. On Sunday the women went to the tomb and, to their astonishment. Found it empty.

### **AUGUSTINE**

Whereas Christological issues dominated the theological debates of the east, the western part of the empire found itself more concerned with question about sin and grace. The doctrines of original sin and salvation through the grace of God in Jesus Christ were formulated clearly by Aughustine, bishop of Hoppo (354-430).

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\* Joachim Jeremais, *The Lord's Prayer*, trans. John Reuman (Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1964.), PP. 132



Drawing from the Greek philosophical concept that identifies goodness with being and evil as the absence of being and from the Christian understanding of good God who created all things good, Augustine argued against the Manichaeian identification of matter with evil

### THE NATURE OF SIN AND GRACE

Augustine's interest in the nature of evil naturally led to the issue of sin, though the question was first raised by a British monk, Pelagius. Horrified by Augustine's prayer...."Give what you command, and command what you will".....and basing his argument on ideas of God's fairness and justice, Pelagius taught that a loving God would not have commanded people to obey moral. It was as if they were unable to do so. The power to do good, Pelagius argued, was given to human beings in creation and remains within them still usually lying dormant but ready to be awakened and strengthened through instruction and moral effort.

### EMPEROR AND POPE : GREGORIAN REFORM

During the 10th and early 11th centuries papacy degenerated into a morass of political intrigue. Because high ecclesiastical offices...bishop-ries and diocees....carried land and tithes with them, they became prized assets for powerful and wealthy lords and valuable sources of revenue for the popes who disposed them. The practice of *simony*---the buying and selling of proliferated; excommunication..... cutting a person off from the sacraments of the church....became a weapon for political and personal gain; and the papal throne was occupied by a series of men who often obtained their positions through treachery and assassination, having little concern for the moral or spiritual life of the church. Led by monks a great call for reform arose. Pope Leo IX set out to reform the papacy by regulating papal elections.

The reform movement took its guidance from Pope Gregory VII, its leading proponent. Intent on reforming the morals of clergy, Gregory tried to end simony and to enforce monastic norms of life on all clergy. Gregory also aimed to change the feudal relationship that had gradually developed between church and state, claiming papal supremacy not only over the whole church but also over the emperor. Undergirding these astonishing assumptions of absolute authority was his assertion that "the Roman Church has never erred, nor even, by the witness of Scripture, shall err to all eternity."\* The famous story of the repenting Emperor Henry standing barefoot in the snow begging forgiveness from Pope Gregory in January 1077 was stamped into the European imagination. The controversy over lay investiture was eventually settled by the Concordant of Worms in 1122. Pope and emperor met to work out a compromise whereby there would be canonical elections of bishops and abbots, free from the evils of simony and violence. From the king the candidate would receive the regalia, the tokens of temporal office, signifying his duty as a secular lord, while from the Pope he received ring and staff, the symbols of spiritual office. This double investiture.....royal and ecclesiastical....indicated the dual nature of the bishop as the minister of the church and Lord in the secular realm, reflecting the realities of feudal power.

\* Ibid., P. 142.

## THE CRUSADES

Despite the tensions between Popes and emperors, the over arching ideal of Christendom directed that the church and feudal lords work together for what they believed to be the expansion and protection of the faith. This common vision and mission was especially evident in the Crusades, a succession of ventures to liberate the Holy Land from its Muslim conquerors. To the cry 'Deus vult!' ("God wills it"). Many knights from France, Germany, and Italy set out to rescue the shrines of the Holy Land from the Turks. Travelling via Constantinople, the warriors fought their way south throughout Asia Minor into Palestine, capturing Jerusalem after a bloody struggle in 1099.

As new military groups arrived almost yearly from Europe, the original religious idealism gave way to a lust for booty. The Crusades dragged on for almost 200 years, with armed bands drifting in and out of the Holy Land. The so-called children's Crusade was the most bizarre episode in the crusading annals. Children from all over Europe set off to take the Holy Land, believing that the power of innocence would succeed where armed might had not. Against his better judgement, the bishop of Brindisi, a Southern Italian seaport, allowed them to leave, but they never reached the Holy Land. A great storm sank their ships; many of the children got drowned, and the survivors were captured and sold into slavery.

The Crusades had several goals; to win back the Holy Land from the "infidels", to reunite the eastern and western portion of Christendom, and to bring personal salvation to the knights and their supporters by the time the Crusading spirit had passed, however the movement had lost its momentum and popular support. Ultimately, the Crusades could not stop the resurgence of Muslim military strength and resulted instead in increased enmity and distrust between Muslims and Christians.

The great cathedrals became the centres of town life. Cathedral clergy called canons lived together under the direction of bishops and deans. Cathedral schools, established initially to train clergy, began to educate lay children, thus contributing to a resurgence of literacy. Food and alms were distributed to the poor, and cachets were set up alongside the cathedral walls, becoming gathering places for the exchange of ideas and gossip.

Thomas Aquinas (C.1225-1274), considered the greatest of the Scholastic theologians, was born to a noble family near Naples, Intended for a prestigious ecclesiastical career, he joined the newly formed Dominican Order over his family's protests. Teaching theology at the universities of Paris and Naples, Thomas engaged in theological disputes with fellow scholars over the relationship with faith and reason and the correct use of philosophy.....that of Aristotle in theological inquiry. He wrote two huge compendiums of philosophical and theological thought, encyclopedic attempt to synthesize all knowledge.

One of Thomas's best known confessions explores the mystery of Christ's presence in bread and wine:

Now, my tongue, the mystery telling of the glorious body sing  
And the blood, all price excelling,

Which the Gentiles Lord and King.  
Once on earth among us dwelling,  
Shed for his world' s ransoming.  
Word-made-flesh,true bread he maketh  
By his word his Flesh to be.  
Wine his blood; when we partaketh,  
Though the senses fail to see,  
Faith alone when sight foresaketh.  
Shows true hearts the mystery.\*

Controversy swirled around Thomas's work for many years, but his influence gradually increased when he was canonized (declared a saint) by Pope John XXIII in 1323.

### RENAISSANCE

The papacy remained a dominant and sometimes creative force. Popes expended great wealth in lavish patronage of the arts, employing artists such as Michelangelo and Raphael, whose magnificent works embellished buildings and squares all over Italy. Literary arts also flourished.

Under the impact of renaissance vernacular languages came into their own. Also during this time, Europe began to expand, both literally and figuratively, after centuries of being closed in on itself. Following Coulombs's astonishing voyages of exploration, Spain and Portugal unleashed waves of conquests, ultimately claiming the entire Western Hemisphere as part of Christendom, backed by the pope, who divided South America into Spanish and Portuguese spheres. Dutch, French and the English went all the way to establish their colonial empires in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. Even now Presbyterian Church is quite influential in U.S.A.. In Europe Protestant is virtually a state religion, with queen as head of the Anglican Church. France, Germany are under Roman Catholic influence and Greek Orthodox is dominant in middle East.

Some religions support the status quo, while some others try to dominate rival dogmas but Sikh religion, in this context, is absolutely committed to the betterment of all mankind.

\* The Confessions of St. Augustine 10.29, trans. John K. Ryan (New York : Image Books, 1960), P. 255.

## ISLAM

### THE BEGINNING :

Islam is an Arabic word meaning surrender or obedience to God. Muslim, one who has surrendered comes from the same root. Surrender is believed to be humanity's response to God. These commands touch on nearly every aspect of life.....dress patterns, eating habits, behavioural codes, and so on. From very early times politics, behaviour, and theology have been profoundly intertwined. From the heights of the ruler's court down to the meanest labourer, all are understood as connected to the divine picture and simultaneously to the political drama. Thus the history of Islam is intertwined with the history of the Muslim Empire.

Founded by Muhammed in Arabia in the 7th century C.E., by the medieval times it extended from eastern India to Spain and from North Africa to the Caspian Sea. It is thought to be today's fastest-growing faith, with 1 billion adherents, or about 20% of the world's population.

He was born into the Hashim clan of the Quraysh tribe, which had recently become dominant and wealthy in Mecca. His father, 'Abd-Allah' died before Muhammed was born, and his mother 'Amina', died when he was 6. The Youngster became the ward of his grandfather, "Abd-al-Muttalib". When 'Abd-al-Muttalib died two years later, Muhammad became the responsibility of his uncle Abu-Talib, now head of Hashim.

At 25 married Khadija, a wealthy widow 15 years his senior. Although the marriage was undoubtedly to Muhammad's economic advantage, the relationship was far more than commercial convenience. It was rather spiritual union.

### EARLY REVELATIONS

Deeply troubled by different types of questions, Muhammad began going into the caves in the mountains near Mecca for solitary meditation. Wrapping himself with his shawl for warmth, he would sit for hours. On one of these retreats he heard what he knew to be a divine voice speak to him. Here is Arthur J. Arberry's translation of what may have been that first revelation:

Recite: In the Name of the Lord who created,  
created Man of a blood-clot.

Recite: And thy Lord is the Most Generous, had taken on a messenger through whom to speak.  
"It is (Allah) who has sent his messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth..... Muhammad is the messenger of God "(48:28).

### SOCIAL REFORM

From the first, serving Allah has meant striving to serve him in one's relationships with other people. The only reliable basis of personal and social value, teaches the Quran, is the will of God. One is the model oneself on God, who is, among other things, compassionate, protective of the weak, just, and implacably opposed to evil in all its forms. Consider this passage in which Muhammad is directed to treat the orphan and the poor with some of the same kindness with which 'Allah' had treated him:

Did He not find you and orphan and shelter you?

Did He not find you erring and guide you ?

Did He not find you poor and give you wealth ?

So as for the orphan, do not oppress him.

And as for the beggar, do not scold him.

As for the Lord's blessings, proclaim it ! (93: 6-12)

who taught by the Pen, taught man that he knew not.

No indeed ; surely Man waxes insolent,

for he thinks himself self-sufficient .

Surely unto thy Lord is the Returning.(96: 1-8)\*

After receiving this revelation on what would later be called the 'Night of Power', Muhammad rushed home in awe and excitement. Muhammad was probably 40 years old when he had the first of his revelations. They would continue periodically for more than 20 years. Ultimately, they came to be collected in the 'Qur' a-n' ("Recitation"), Islam's scripture.

One passage from the Quran clearly describes a vision, either of Allah himself or the some other superhuman being:

By the Star when it plunges,

Your comrade is not astray, neither errs,

nor speaks he out of caprice.

This is naught but a revelation revealed. (53: 1-12).\*\*

### **THE QURAN**

The Quran is about equal in length to the New Testament and is divided into 114 'suras' which are anywhere from a few lines to many pages long. When it was written down, only consonants were shown, as was customary in Semitic writing. The Quran's style, particularly its repetitiousness, must be understood in accordance with its function. Divine guidance to human beings is not to be passively and silently but should be proclaimed and heard. In the Islamic view, scripture is a record of the divine speech. It is to be read aloud, chanted, or heard as God's continuing message to humanity. The poetry, rhythms, wordplays, and repetition are intended to be spoken and heard as well as read. For the Muslim the marvel of the Quran is .....not only what is said but how it is said.....

### **THE FIVE PILLARS**

The tradition holds that there are five "pillars" of Islam that together form the first duties owed by humanity to God: they are essence of the life of 'Islam' (submission). i.e.

\* Arthur J. Arberry, 'The Quran Interpreted' (New York: Macmillan, 1955), Vol. 2, P. 344

\*\* Ibid., P. 244

### **THE PROFESSION OF FAITH : KALMA**

The first pillar is the profession of faith. In its simple form, it is to utter the 'shahada': " There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his apostle." Even more simply, it is to utter "Allahu Akbar" ("Greater is God," greater than all that could conceivably be compared to Him). Islam stresses public confession of faith.

### **RITUAL PRAYER: NIMAZ**

To enter the community of Islam is to enter a life of prayer, and so the second pillar of the religion is the ritual prayer (salat), which is performed at least five times a day.

The word *mosque* is derived from *masjid*, "place of prostration (before God)." It is considered preferable for Muslims to perform the *salat* in a mosque, in community with other believers. The words and actions of the assembled community in prayer are coordinated in the mosque by an *imam*, literally, the one who stands before the people and leads them in common worship.

At the appointed times of required prayers, a functionary called the *muadhdhin* (often transliterated as *muezzin*) summons the surrounding community to its devotions, often from a high minaret (tower) above the mosque.

### **THE RAMADAN FAST: ROZE**

The third of the Five Pillars of Islam (Shrah) is the fast (sawm), Daily throughout the month of Ramadan, the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Every Muslim whose health permits it, must refrain from food, drink, tobacco, and sexual activity between the time of the first light and the onset of full darkness.

The month of Ramadan, wherein the Quran was sent down to be a guidance to the people, and as clear signs of the Guidance and the Salvation...So let those

of you who are present at the month fast it. (2.185).

Ramadan is a time to restrict the flesh, yet it is also understood as a celebration of freedom from the worldly and a time for inner contemplation of God and the hereafter.

### **ALMS GIVING: (ZAKAT)**

The fourth pillar of Islam is almsgiving (*zakat*)

Whatsoever good you expend is for parents and kinsmen, orphans, the needy, and the traveller, and whatever good your may do, God has knowledge of it. (2 : 215)

### **PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA: (HAJJ)**

The last and by far the most elaborate of the Five Pillars of Islam is the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca and nearby sacred sites :

The pilgrimage is in months well known; who so undertakes the duty of Pilgrimage in them shall not go in to his womenfolk or indulge in ungodliness and disputing in the Pilgrimage. Whatever good you do, God knows it. And take provision; but the best provision is God-fearing , so fear you Me, Me possessed of minds ! (2: 185)

## SUFI BROTHERHOOD

In the 12th and 13th centuries the loosely organized monastic communities were succeeded by a system of more highly organized brotherhoods. The rise of religious brotherhoods testified to the success of the Sufi movement. But success brought danger to the out spoken Sufis. Mansur Al Hijaj was brutally done to death because he would say loudly, *An-Al-Haque, I am God*. Sufism developed Islamic mysticism to astonishing heights. Sufis proved very helpful to the spread of Islam both as religious and political power. Over time, they devised a ritual called "Dhikar" which became an important element of their spiritual discipline. For many, poetry has been the best medium for describing the intense experiences of mystical reality. Here is how Al-Rumi expressed his joyful nearness to God:

Happy the moment when we are seated in the  
Palace, thou and I,  
With two forms and with two figures but with one  
soul, thou and I.....

In the place where we shall laugh in such a fashion,  
thou and I.....\*

Al-Ghazzali posed the following test for the individual claiming to love God:

If his love is really strong, he will  
love all men,  
for he who loves anyone loves the works (God) composes  
and (God's) handwriting.\*\*

## ISLAM BECOMES POLITICAL POWER:

Guided by the ideal of a universal religion, Islam became a great empire under the Umayyads and the 'Abbasids'. Its leaders attempted to organize the entirety of its community's life and thought revolve around a unified religious worldview. Its theologians developed a subtle theology around those revelations, based on their claim of the absolute sovereignty of God. Its caliphs oriented their political structure around this framework as well. Finally, its mystical path and Sufi brotherhoods also saw their beginnings in Muhammad's experience and oriented themselves around the direct experience of Allah.

How did this affect the ordinary Muslim ? Just as the political authorities sought unity within their farflung empire, individual Muslim sought unity amid the diversity of life. As Sufi al-Ghazzali wrote, "By getting rid of the obstacles in the self and ..... stripping off its basic characteristics; .....the heart may attain to freedom from what is not God and to constant recollection of Him." \*\*\*

\* Reynold A. Nicholson, trans., *Rumi: Poet and Mystic* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), PP-35

\*\* Al-Ghazzali, *Tahafat Al-Falaift*, PP-134.

\*\*\* W. Montgomery Watt, *'The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazzali'* (London : Allen & Unwin, 1953), PP-54.

### **SEEDS OF DISUNITY**

Prophet left no instruction for the leaders after him, but the 'Caliphate' (succession) came to be based on his model. Caliph continued to oversee the community's political and religion affairs, combining the offices of chief executive, commander in chief, chief justice, and the leader of the public worship (imam). Centrifugal tendency, however, began to set in after two Caliphs namely, Abu-Bakr (632-634) and Umar (634-644). Third Caliph Utman was charged with nepotism and corruption and is rumoured to have been murdered. Ali, the forth Caliph was also killed when he was going to mosque at Kufah, thus clearing the way for the Umayyad dynasty. From Ali onwards disunity became permanent feature of Islam dividing the community between the Sunnis (Orthodox) branch given to complete obedience to Shria and Shias owing loyalty to Ali's house. Expanding Islamic power in the Arabian peninsula and northward into the Byzantine and Zoroastrian Persian empires. In its wake personality clashes, lust for power and luxury which set the future Islam on the road to factional warfare and political machinations.

### **ISLAM IN INDIA :**

Islam's entry\* into India is an important chapter in its history. Fired with Religious zeal, Muslims soon became rulers of the land from Spain to India. Mughal Empire was perhaps the largest empire of the time. Muslim governments' persecuting policies of religious bigotry, however, caused, along with other factors, the downfall of Islamic power. It was during the Mughal reign that Sikhism came into being. Sunni-Shia controversy and other rivalries from Arabia spilled over into India as well. During the British rule attempts were made to reconcile the differences but to no avail.

However, Sayyid Ahmad and Wali Allah Agreed on four important aims : a return to the Quran and the prophet's sunna, elimination from Islamic life of ideas and practices derived from alien influences, the need to create a unified Islamic community, and the creation of Islamic government in India.

But despite such attempts at unity, Islam was never a monolithic faith. Shiite Islam offered a sectarian alternative to the main Sunni tradition.

### **THE EXPANSION AND LONG DECLINE OF THE OTTOMAN TURKS**

Late in the 13th century, the Ottoman Turks began their rise to power among the Turkish tribes of Asia Minor. The term Ottoman or Osman come from Osman, who is believed to have founded the dynasty. Osman died in 1326. The Ottoman identified themselves as warriors fighting for the holy cause of Islam. In 1453 Constantinople fell to their armies. Within 100 years, the Turks controlled territory from Hungary to North Africa, They had absorbed the ancient heartland of early Islam and of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphates and were the guardians of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Ottoman had effectively replaced the Byzantine Empire. In building and ruling their great domain, the Ottomans showed remarkable military and administrative competence.

\* Shaikh Farid was one of very famous Sufis who lived in Punjab, during Balban's reign. His verses, full of love, pity, and lyrical beauty are found in Guru Granth Sahib.



## **OTTOMAN RELIGIOUS POLICIES**

The Ottomans wielded their power on behalf of Sunni Islam. Niyazi Berkes, perhaps the leading expert on the emergence of modern Turkey, explained it as follows :

The Ottoman policy.....succeeded in more than any other in maintaining Islam and its representatives, the 'ulama' within the framework of the state organization..... Through its judiciary, the state had adopted Sunni orthodoxy..... and thus limited the possibilities for theological controversies.

## **THE WAHHABI MOVEMENT**

In the hinterlands of the Arabian peninsula, Muhammad Ibn-al-Wahhab (1703-1792) founded a militant puritanical revival movement that eventually affected the religious climate of almost every part of the Muslim world.

Born in the remote Najd region, Wahhab travelled and studied in the Mejaz, Iraq and Syria. Wahhab sought to revive and spread what he regarded as the pure, original Islam of Muhammad and his companions. To him, pure Islam was to be realized through strict and exclusive adherence to the plain sense of the Quran and sunna. The Wahhabi movement campaigned against Sufi thought and practices. In theology the Wahhabis' literalism renewed the concept of individual involvement with God, as shown in the concrete language of the Quran. From the perspective of the entrenched Muslim establishment, the Wahhabis were dangerous innovators, attacking thought and practices hallowed by countless Muslim generations.

Political and military effectiveness of the Wahhabi movement became evident when Wahhab won the powerful Su' udi (Saudi) chiefs of the Najd to his cause. The Ottomans crushed their early rule in Arabia in 1818, but this merely drove the movement underground. By the end of the 19th century, the Su-udis, still intent on building a government based on early Islamic Principles, began the political expansion that eventually produced the modern state of Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism reached every area of the Muslim world and inspired, shaped, or reinforced many militant revivalist movements.

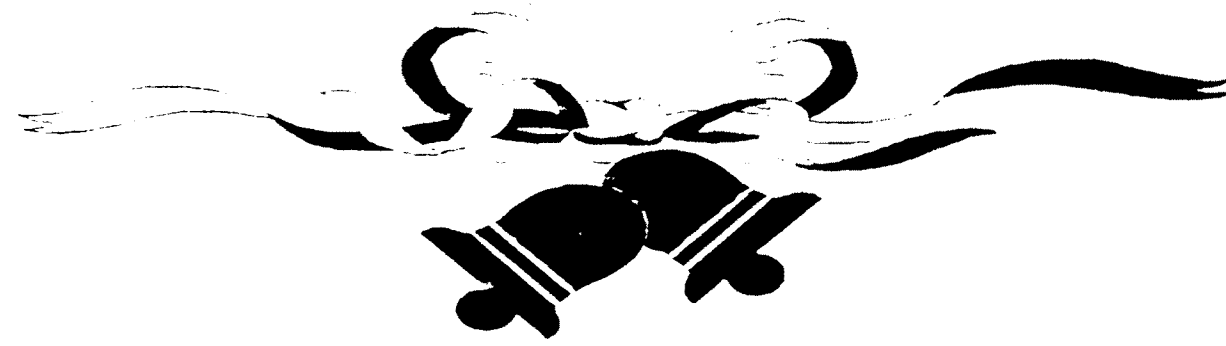
The Muslim peoples have been offered a multitude of options by the West and the now defunct Communist bloc. The leaders of the militant revival want Islam to fit imported ideas and institutions of dubious value and are convinced that exactly the reverse is needed. If Muslims are not to lose their souls, modernization must be shaped and controlled by the basic values and structures of their traditional faith.

### **IMPACT:**

Religions have had tremendous effect to bear upon the society in general, in political domain, in particular. Judaism's impact is quite obvious on the western way of life and political structure. Christianity has all along been the moving spirit behind Europe's rise to power. Even in the Jurisdiction of law and judgement, it came to acquire such a power, in the form of inquisition, as to punish those charged with blasphemy. Islam has been too deeply involved to distinguish it from political activity. Hinduism in the presence of doctrine of individual salvation failed to bring up any spirit and motiva-

tion for collective endeavour. Jainism and Buddhism were mainly ethical in their approach to political power of the day. Zoroaster's religion expounded the philosophy of perpetual struggle between Good and Evil which influenced Persian political system of the pre-Islamic past. In the same strain, Chinese emphasis on morality had direct influence on Chinese state.

In this context Sikhism comes forward with avowed commitment to bring about collective change. This is rather an obligation, a sacred mission.



## *Chapter 6*

### **RELIGION INTERACTS WITH POLITICS :**

**IDEOLOGY, MORALITY, ETHICS  
SYMBOLS AND RITUALS**

## **RELIGION INTERACTS WITH POLITICS : IDEOLOGY, MORALITY, ETHICS, SYMBOLS AND RITUALS**

### **POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION**

*Religion* runs the whole gamut of human life. Being personal, it is both private and social for man is a sociois with a private centre. Religion is both a response to man's total environment and an exploration into its frontiers. It is both conservative and liberal or even radical. It may defend the status quo or it may take the initiative against entrenched wrong. Religion may be fanatically zealous for customary law or tradition. It may be sacrificially compassionate, universally exclusive and humbly redemptive. It may be profoundly inward, reflective, mystical or it may be attached to externals. Religion participates in the polarities of life. It may be passionately ethical and seek the radical transformation of culture. It may seek a state of tranquillity, above all the ambiguities of good and evil.

Whatever its form religion, expresses an attitude towards what is ultimate. It is life in its ultimate dimension being the facts and issues of mortality meaning, frustration, good and evil, estrangement, reconciliation, reality. James B Pratt once defined religion as the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities towards the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interest and destinies. This definition will be very useful in considering religion from the view point of Politics and Economies. It will be particularly helpful to view this definition in a functional way. In sociology of religion a functional method is particularly fruitful in providing a descriptive background for religious critics of ethics, J. Milton Yinger for examples stresses the active aspect of functional approach when he stresses that religion can be defined as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with these ultimate problems of human life. It is the refusal to death, to give up in the face of frustration, to allow hostility to tear apart one's human association. Religion is human life in its ultimate context struggling for meaning and responding to its various levels of personal, social and natural environment.

In defining religion so broadly it may perhaps be confused with culture as a whole. Religion has two fold relationship to culture. In its visible institutional aspects religion may be viewed as one segment of culture alongside others such as the family, the economic order, political organisation, aesthetic expression, systems of communication and the like. On this level synagogues and churches,

Temples, mosques and Gurdwaras, exist along side local and state governments, schools and colleges, museums, stores, factories, air ports and the like. The institutions compete with and reinforce each other, depending upon situations and circumstances.

Religion has second and a more profound relationship with culture. It is a dimension of the major aspects of culture, particularly politics and economics. Governing the people, and providing them the means for a meaningful healthy personal and public life is as much the obligation of religion as it is of

political individuals and institutions, Which hardly do anything which is not directly or indirectly connected with religion or religious institution. This can be easily understood if we refer to the socio-economic or sociopolitical activities of the missionaries of various Religious institutions : Christianity, Arya Smaaj, Shiromini Gurdwara Prbandhanic Committee of the Sikhs or the Rama Krishna Mission. On surface their activities seem to be non-political and merely socio-educational but if studied in depth, their activities are always motivated by politically ambitious, which may be sectarian, communal or purely humanitarian. These activities do have political implications under all circumstances. This can best be illustrated by the work of Christian missionaries in the various areas of India, in the remote islands of South East Asia, in the underground world of the deep recesses of China or in the dark areas of undeveloped Africa, which grows with the size and mobility of the state. Political authority has to rely upon value based moral consideration. An other words, even a state with avowed secular objectives have to accept the moral values of religion.

For example, how is political authority to be made legitimate ? Behind economic and political institutions are the issues of the goals of society both individual and social and these are directly influenced by the way a state is structured and run. In other words so long as the religious bodies functions within state they have to function either in co-operation or in conflict with the governing state. We can conclude with the remark that the values of the norms of religion, economics and politics interpenetrate. In a rapidly changing world the frontiers of responsibility change accordingly. Rights and duties have to be redefined and this is usually done by the state. The safeguarding of the property of the individuals is the responsibility of the state. Property is perhaps the most comprehensive term which can be used to indicate and describe every possible interest that the individual can have. property is complex, control of man over things, the right to control, possess or use something, the permanence of a claim, the interrelationship or persons making the claims or having rights.

Property has to do with many things : personal property of the most private sort or real estate, land, natural resources and other material objects. It has to do with faith or with the value of time, privilege, reputation and many other intangible values which in the last analysis are ethical/religious. One has to distinguish between a theocratic state and an ethical state emphasising the highest common factors of all religions as Sikhism does. There is need to de-secularise the State and secularise religion i.e. provide a moral basis.

This leads us to the discussion of the problem of the Sikh concept of the state.

Before we proceed to the central theme of the work in hand, let us have an idea as to how religion, in different contexts interacts, with politics.

### CHURCH VERSUS STATE

Religion and politics have depended on and influenced each other since the origin of what we know as Man-kind. Their relation is both mutual and multifaceted; mutual because religion and politics have evolved together over the years, taking material and symbolic support from one another, and multifaceted because it embraces inter-institutional conflict accommodation (e.g., the church-state

relations which dominated earlier scholarship ) as well as more subtle and elusive exchanges whereby religious and political orders gave legitimacy and moral authority to one another. In this process, religious notions of hierarchy, authority, and obedience reflected and reinforced the pattern of existing social and political arrangements to such an extent that the two orders often seemed indistinguishable: the importance of keeping religion and politics in a dynamic and dialectical balance, giving full and equal weight to each in this analysis. Both religion and politics must be taken seriously as sources of motivation and guiding ideas.

Religion and politics are thus both analytically and empirically related....the two cannot and should not be separated. In the foregoing pages, we have seen how human race beginning in antiquity has reached the modern age. From isolated huts scattered around fires, mankind has flourished into an international global village. Which the world is today. In ancient human colonies all over the continents of mother-earth, one single person -family head, tribal chief or master of clan acted both as a ruler as well as a priest, at a time. There was no distinction between spiritual or secular domains. Marching forward, in leaps and bounds, prehistoric religions, if they can be so defined in academic disciplines, gave rise to major religions of modern day world, assimilating and incorporating, along the way, local cultural, geographical and social traits.

We have made an extensive survey of theory and practice of 'Politics'. Various modes of political organizations in different human groups point towards certain basic elements which are traceable everywhere no matter what the system may be. Man being at the centre of the nature, has innate tendency towards the 'Super-natural', which is at the core of religious thought. Political system has always been pivoted around one single person, irrespective of the mode of organization. Starting with head of the family, all through tribal or band chiefdom, Kingship, Absolutism, prime-ministership, social or military dictatorship and presidency like the one in modern day U.S.A., Carlyle's hero implying solo performance has always been the moving spirit permeating the whole range of events. Different political ideologies and vast variety of concepts in political realms owe much of their origin and development or decline, as the case may be, to a religious source. Religious influence could be very subtle or gross and obvious depending upon the circumstances.

### **DIVINE KINGSHIP**

Throughout history, the most established form of political systems has had been that of Kingship, Crown and Throne. As a matter of fact, the head of family was, just like a petty king of a petty state, his household. East or West and North or South, the person of king until 20th century, even well into its middle and final years, has remained as personification of all apparent, the particular person has often seen himself as either God, representative of God or gods. This metamorphosis of individual human being, by dint of worldly power of authority and material possessions into divinity is quite interesting and far-reaching in consequences. From the Egyptian Pharaohs to Attaullah Khomieni of modern Iran, from Greek Alexander's claim of being Zeus' Son to present Queen Elizabeth II's title as head of Anglican church in between the centuries of grand empires also sound like similar tunes.

Caesar was favourite of Roman gods, so were the Chinese emperors, enjoying the grandeur under 'Heaven's Mandate.

Indian kings, including Rama of Ramayna and Krishna of Maha-Bharata have the titles of Sons of gods-- Sun, Moon, and others.\* Muslim kings and emperors, were treated as 'Zil-i-Ilahi', Shadow of God on earth. Supernatural element, indeed, has been so much predominant in divine kingship theory that in addition to Rama and Krishna being incarnate of Vishnu, they have also been seen as hailing from Sun ,Moon and other heavenly bodies. This trend is very much evident in Indian psyche even today, that leaders like Jawahar Lal and Indira Gandhi, have been worshipped by the laity as -- Who to hamare Bhagwan Hain i.e. they are our gods.

Temptation for being and appearing all powerful, eternal and the best is so irresistible that European Christian monarchs, even though paying lip service to Pope's high office, could not help keeping themselves from looking into the same mirror. Divine right of Kingship, provides kind of sanctity and legitimacy, which otherwise, less worthy monarchs would draw upon in order to make their claim seem just and genuine. A more theological version of this theory was that of Bishop Bossuet, a contemporary of Louis XIV, \*\* Bossuet combined traditional scriptural, metaphorical concepts and Hobbesian arguments and treated the king as placed by God in a position to advance the public interest, as well as to protect humble subjects from local tyrants. Bossuet went on to claim for the king in the state the same position as that held by God in the universe. The monarchy, like God, is both constitutive and directive; it alone preserves the people from anarchy.

### **SIKH VISION**

In Sikh philosophy, God Almighty is the only true king with entire universe his kingdom. His rule endures from eternity to eternity. Of course, Sikhism lends its support to the entity of state and statecraft. But it differs basically from other ideas about states and rulers in that it views God as the soul owner of the universe. In terms of management and administration, the men in authority can only act as custodians. Sikh religion also believes in the power of ideology which should serve as the guiding spirit to the rulers while formulating their policies and implementation thereof. This will be discussed in detail in the coming pages.

### **IDEOLOGY**

An equal rather more powerful strain alongwith theory of 'Divine-Kingship' injected by 'Religion'

\* Interestingly-- Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib has this to say, on this phenomenon :  
"Juge Juge Ke Raje Kiye, Gaweh Kar Avtari....." (Guru Nanak ), PP 423.

\*\* Rowen, H.H. : Louis XIV and absolutism. In 'Louis XIV and the Craft of Rulership, ed. J.C. Rule, Columbus, Ohio : Ohio State University Press, 1969. PP. 231.

into political realm is the force of religions philosophy. At the origin of virtually all the new world religions stands a man or a group of men who by their wisdom and superior vision became the founders, leaders, prophets, and sages of the new way of life. Individual personality appears with the beginnings of the world religions. Sometimes these men are known chiefly by their writings, as are the authors of the Indian Upanishads. Sometimes their historical existence is a little blurred by myth, as in the case of Zoroaster the Persian Magi. But Confucius and Lao-tse in China are men whose lives and personalities are a matter of fact. Lord Buddha lived in historical times. The prophets of Jewry Live for us in overwhelming vitality. We know when most of the Greek philosophers were born and where they taught and died. Mahavir Jain, Jesus Christ, Prophet Muhammad, and Sikh Gurus are all historic figures not mere conjectures.

One may consider with this a comparable extract from the Greek writer Hesiod, in his ' Works and Days': *When men follow justice the whole city blooms, and earth bears rich harvest, and children and flocks increase but to the unjust all nature is hostile, the people waste away from famine and pestilence and a single man's sin may bring ruin upon a whole city.*

The central concept of a superhuman order of reality which, if man will know and follow it, brings harmony and peace, was interpreted with different emphasis in different societies. e.g. The main interest in Confucius thought lay with the way of the virtuous man on earth and in society. It is thought that concentration of thought upon the Source of all being reaches its highest pitch. Indian thought believed that at the base of each man's separate selfhood dwelt the universal Spirit. Atman was at once the soul of man and the absolute principle of the Universe "One thing only I preach", said Buddha, sorrow and the ending of sorrow. Later, however, under Greek influence, the concept of God and of Buddha as a redeemer came into Mahayana Buddhism and it was in this form that it travelled from India into China.

With the Greek and the Jews, civilization enters a new phase. From the moment the Greek world first begins to break in upon our imagination, in the poetry of Homer, we know that we are face to face with a people of intense genius whose intellectual force is matched only by their sense of beauty and whose passion in all things human is balanced by a noble and sombre vision of universal destiny and law. The opening of the 'Illiad' makes the reader instantly aware of a new power and a new perspective. \* Reason and virtue are one and knowledge leads not only to truth but to goodness. Socrates and Plato were firm in their belief that the external world is permeated with law, that law implies reason, and that the source of all reality is Reason itself. The unique development in Jewish thought was the fashion in which insights common to all the world religions-- of a moral order expressing the will of God for man --were caught up in a vast historical drama unfolding both in time

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\* Barbara Ward, ' Faith and Freedom', (Image Books, Garden City, New York, ed. 1958), P. 47.



and eternity, involving the entire human race and leading human history to a climax and a conclusion. The starting point is the false choice of the first Adam. Pride and self-love began the alienation of man from God; and matching the physical continuity of the human race.

Similarly, astounding, were the antecedents, the life, the mission, the labours, the achievements of Muhammad, the Apostle of God. He totally transformed the fortunes of a loosely--associated group of tribes and made of them a single, resolute nation. He banished idolatry from Arabia. From his time, Arabia and her people came into the full light of history. \*

Religion in general, tends to set Ideals, and a particular religion tries to give them concrete form in a particular community. Followers of a religion would seek out the attainment of those Ideals in their own context. Hindu Dharma viewing Maya the concept of illusion and transitoriness of the material world as one of its core values, negates the worldly concerns. In fact, all religions of orient, with the marked exception of Sikhism, \*\* adopt more or less, same attitude towards worldly existence the attitude of complete indifference on one hand and that of escape on the other.

Indian religions namely Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, were mainly metaphysical. It meant that every thing emanates from 'Supreme Reality' and goes back into it at the end. There was no clear-cut distinction between religious and political domain as much exact as in European inaction. History of India testifies to the fact that every time Indian rulers came in contact with foreign invaders, their resistance betrayed this mentality which was encoated in fatalistic, other worldly outlook to their own detriment.

Islam of the Prophet of Arabia was right from the beginning fired with the Ideal of 'Sarkar-i-Madina'. Classless structure of Islamic society, coupled with zealous ideology of replacing 'Dar-Ul-Harb'--land of the infidels with 'Dar-Ul-Imam'--land of the faithful was extremely powerful weapon in Islam's arsenal in its 'Jihad', for Supermacy. It's no wonder, then that before long Green Flag began to fly from Spain to India. Chinese Holy men-- Confucius, Lao Tze and others are primarily responsible for bringing whole of South-East Asia into their embrace.

With regard to political development, Europe's rise to prominence is undoubtedly because of Christianity. The growth of the rich harvest of political ideologies and a number of political systems speak volumes of the contribution, made by religion in this area.

### **HUMAN VALUES**

Since man is at the centre of the universe, religion has to address human problems. **Long before the dignity of human values became a gospel on the lips of revolutionaries, Sikh religion preceded all of them in this domain too. In 1675 A.D. ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur had his**

\* H.M. Balyuzi, 'Muhammad & the Course of Islam', (George Ronald, Oxford, The chaucer Press, ed. 1976), PP-160.

\*\* Since work at hand has a special dimension with respect to the Sikh-Perspective, Sikhism is discussed separately and specifically.

**head chopped off in Delhi by the order of Mughal emperor for Guru stood for religious freedom of Hindus, for that matter, all mankind.** Dignity of human life, freedom of worship and equal rights for all irrespective of caste and creed form the high marks of Sikh philosophy as well as history. Even the movement against Emergency (1975-77) was launched solely for the purpose of civil liberties of all Indians. The opening salvos in the form of declaration of aims in any revolution sound like hymns from scriptures.

On the eve of American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence (1776) begins with the words which have since formed the basis of guaranteeing human rights :

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness...

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

What better description of human values in religious terms ? In France the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens (1789) sought to achieve the same purpose. It asserted that :

Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.....the aim of every political association is the preservation of the national and imprescriptable rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression.

These development in Britain, the United States, and France have been subsequently used as models in the creation of many constitutions. Even much celebrated and drummed up Russian Revolution of October, 1917 A.D. Has its beginning, amazingly, in religious fervour. Opening round of events that culminated into Red Revolution throwing Czar out of Cremlin, began with a procession lead by a priest of Russian Orthodox Church, right in front of Czar's palace. The protester were expressing their dismay and anger at the way Imperial Officials treated the Russian people. It was dead winter and people shivered to their bones when suddenly, Imperial guards opened fire upon them-- turning white snow into purple with innocent blood.

Lenin, then in exile, a master tactician manipulated Red Winter in such a way as to capitalise on public rage at this brutality that he outmanoeuvred his political rivals, the Mensheviks who were in majority compared to his Bolsheviks and became instead, master of events that followed soon afterwards and ended up as Master of Russia. Communist Revolution of China brought to successful climax in 1949 by Mao-ze-Dong drew heavily upon Confucian legacy.

In Muslim countries such as Turkey, revolution took secular turn seeking guidance from Quran's universal progressive verses. On the other extreme, countries like Iran, suffered upheavals and atrocities in the name of fundamental Islam when A. Khomeini, revered as Imam by his followers pulled down Shah of Iran in Islamic Revolution--1979.

In the religious arena, a single person, a prophetic and charismatic figure occupies the central stage around which everything-- the dogmas, the creed, the tradition, the history, the rituals, as a matter of

fact, whole paraphernalia revolves. He is supposed to be the living symbol of all the forces of both spiritual and material world and is considered to be the possessor of Divine Truth. In Socialist and Communist system both in dogma and state, interplay of nations or classes serve as the substitute for the Will of God. — The 20th century has seen the rise of leaders who have based their authority upon the special vision of this interplay which they alone possessed. Mussolini and Hitler saw visions of notional struggle, one wished to revive the glorious Roman Empire and the other saw the barbarian German volk once more to move. Others computed the movements of class struggles; Lenin, Stalin, and Mao all claimed a superior connection with the flow of history and ruled in accordance with this mission. Marx, Lenin, Mao are all have been virtually treated by their followers as prophets of materialism, harbingers of the new age.

### **STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM**

As for the nationalist movement in so far as political freedom happens to be their goal, religion provides them with, enthusiasm, courage to fight and suffer, and utmost sentiment to sacrifice. In Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, rather in the world as well, religion injected life into nationalist struggles for liberation. In Arab nationalism whether with General Abdul Nasser of Egypt or Col. Muammar Qaddafi of Lybia at the helm, Islam in whatever form, played and continues to play a central role. History watched heart-moving spectacle in Indo-China, when, Buddhist monks, in Vietnam, died in self immolation in protest against American intervention.

In the words of C.H. Payne, Guru Nanak realised what others failed to realise that a religion, if it is to be a living force, must be a practical religion, one that teaches mankind not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met and overcome. In order to make religion practical and not just an article of imagination, Guru Nanak put into place the institutions of congregation, free food and selfless service to the mankind. He denounced the unjust, unfair and cruel rulers. He preached the perfect equality among the men. Since Guru Nanak's God is king as well as loving father, He takes care of His creation with love and affection, therefore, rulers of the world ought to be sincere, compassionate and just. In his compositions Guru Nanak is very clear about the rulers' transitoriness, hence their accountability before the masses.\* During the struggle for independence, Indian nationalists had M.K. Gandhi at its nerve-centre, whose title Mahatma, would suffice to convince the masses of his spiritual purity reminding them of ancient tradition of Rishis, Munis, and Mahatama Buddha. \*\*

\* "Raje Rayyat Siqdar Koi Na Rehsio" (No wordly king, subjects and chief shall remain.) GGS, 140  
 "So Patsahu Sahan Pat Sahib Nanak Rehan Rajai".(Only God is the true king of kings). GGS, PP-6  
 "Panch Parwan Panch Pardhan II..Panche Sohhai Dar Rajan II" (G.G.S., PP-3.)  
 (Peoples' representatives.. adore kings' courts).....

\*\* (i) His arch-rival, Quaed-i-Azam M.A. Jinnah however, had different openion....."Whenever Gandhi has come to see me, he has come to cheat me."

(ii) "He (Gandhi) is a very tough politician and not a saint." Lord Wavell, Viceroy of India in his'The Viceroy's Journal', London, 1973, P.-286.

On the other hand, M.A. Jinnah, Muslim League Leader of the Indian Muslims not-at all a practising Muslim was able to incite religious feelings so effectively that he had Pakistan, a separate Muslim country carved out of British India in 1947. \*

In Communist Soviet dominated Poland we see solidarity, the rising wave of Pope Paul's Catholic revolution seize power, first ever people's revolt in a communist state. It is not exaggeration that history is full of religious movements transforming communities into full fledged nations. Even Crusades of medieval centuries were waged for the declared purpose of liberating Jerusalem and Holy Land from the Muslim Arabs.

So far so good, just like the proverbial : some one riding the tiger, nationalism after having achieved the liberation for a group of people in a nation-state turns to weaken the religion resulting as often, in sad outcome for the latter. Anthony Smith has defined this regrettable fact in his Core nationalist doctrine. \*\*

"The source of all power in the nation, and that of loyalty to the nation-state over-rides other loyalties." The loyalty to religious beliefs and ideals is the first and foremost casualty in this encounter. All along in history, rulers of the same faith can be seen fighting each other. Christian-Europe went to devastating World Wars in current century (20th). Muslim kings as well as presidents and dictators have earned quite a reputation in annihilating their brother and family members, let alone political rivals, in their drive for power. In 1980s'--Iran and Iraq, both Muslim countries, went to war that kept on raging for almost a decade, the horrors of which make one's hair stand on ends. Pakistan, the land of pure Momins (Jinnah's dream land), let loose reign of terror in its Eastern wing, now independent Bangla Desh. The story does not end up here. National rivalaries by the co-religionists have been even carried over to the international arena. U.N.O. is the best theatre in this case.

\* Jinnah said, "We shall have India divided or India destroyed." Larry Collins & D. Lapierre ; Freedom at Midnight, Simon & Schuster, N.Y. 1975 (flap-cover).

\*\* Anthony Smith, 'Theories of Nationalism', (New York : Harper and Row, 1971), P. -21.

## JEWISH CONTEXT

".....*I* will multiply thee and I will make of thee a multitude of people. I will give this country to the y posterity and after thee in that they shall possess it forever."

(Old Testament)

It was the Jew Abraham who was first promised by God that his people would inherit the Holy Land. The country given by God to the Jews was clearly delineated in the Books of Genesis and Joshua as the land extending from the River of Egypt to Lebanon and the Euphrates. The state of Israel presently occupied only the narrow strip between Jordan and the Mediterranean. Just a small piece of what God had apparently promised. Could it be that Israel's drive for expansion was dictated by this ?

".....If you keep my covenant you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a Holy Nation."  
(O.T.)

The Book of Deuteronomy bore this out, for after the death of Christ it was declared to the Jews :

".....The Lord shall scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left in number among the Nations where the Lord drives you. You will be taken captive among all Nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

When the Jews returned to Zion, Christ was again to be born. And as Christ would be born, so would the Anti-Christ, both growing separately until their final confrontation.

"Behold the day of the Lord, a cruel day, a day of wrath  
and burning fury which will reduce the earth to solitude  
.....and In shall make men more tare than fine gold  
.....more than the gold of Ophir....."

[King James Bible; ("Book of Daniel")]

If there is any living example of faith or religion keeping a community alive through the long, dark night of virtual death, present state of Israel in the Middle-East is perhaps the best instance. No better place to look for the role, religion plays, in the struggle for life against all round death ! Judaeism's wanderings in the Middle-East, Promised Land, 'Chosen People', Moses's encounter with God (Yahweh) on Mount Sinai, Ten Commandments, Parting of Red Sea, Exiles, Persecution (Egyptian, Roman), and successive diaspora make the story of undaunted spirit of Jewish people one of the most fascinating readings in human history. The flame of Jewish religion remained ablaze throughout ups and downs of political life of this self-proclaimed race of "God's own children" up..... until the state of Israel occupied pivotal position in the international order by sheer force of Jewish community's mammoth contribution to mankind's progress. Religion and politics, of course, play predominant role in this story.

## GREEK CONTEXT

Western civilization which includes Christianity, politics and philosophy, can well trace its ancestry to Greece at the Southern tip of Europe. Most of all political thought and philosophy. Although ancient Greek people worshipped the pantheon of gods, Zeus being the Supreme one, Greek political philosophy has much less to owe to religious sources. Justice or Rule of Law, like the Hammurabi's code was the salient feature of Hellenistic Times and undoubtedly it came from Zeus but all discussions centred around human reason.

Plato and Aristotle in the next generation were the first systematic political theorists in the proper sense of the term, though immediately before them at least two men, the Sophist Protagoras and Socrates, had taken steps towards a science or philosophy of political behaviour, which became full-fledged with Plato. It appears that Greek political thought was coterminous with the small autonomous city-state and ended with its death. Zeno, the founder of the Stoic philosophical school, who was born 13 years before the death of Aristotle, also wrote a 'Republic', but its title apart, it had nothing in common with Plato's book. The Greeks after Alexander the Great, turned their moral and political concerns away from the 'polis' and politics to the inner psyche of the individual. What passed for political writing was soon concentrated on superficial analysis of the 'good king', symbolized by the four orations entitled 'On Kingship' of Dio Chrysostom (who died after AD 112).

Aristotle's 'politics' begins, with its basic premise [1253 a 2-31] that man is by nature a being designed to live in a 'polis'. The discussion of the good citizen becomes closely enmeshed with the account of the good man. The demise of the 'polis' after Alexander inevitably entailed the end of both aspects of the fundamental premise. The nature of justice was replaced by the nature of the good ruler. Much as the Sophists (and others) disagreed among themselves on matters as fundamental as nature of justice or the relative superiority of democracy or oligarchy, there was more or less universal agreement on the inequality of man and almost as much unanimity, in consequence, on the necessity for social and political hierarchy in a well-functioning community. Sophist Protagoras of Abdera an egalitarian, as Kerferd has pointed out, produced for the first time in history a theoretical basis for participatory democracy. \* Hence the need for educators, for Sophists like himself and, at least by implication, for a political leadership.

It was also universally believed, by Plato and Aristotle along with nearly everyone else, that the essential condition for a true polis, and therefore for good life, was 'rule by laws, not by men.' It is enough to quote one, again from Eufipides, "Suppliant Women" (lines 312-13) : 'The power that keeps cities and men together is noble preservation of the laws.' It meant in practice the stability of the city state, its freedom from civil strife. Without fixed, publicly known laws that were regularly enforced as the basis of all social behaviour, stability.

\* Kerferd, G.B. : "The Sophistic Movement" (Cambridge : Cambridge Uni. Press, 1981), P. -144.



## ROMAN CONTEXT

Whereas Greek influence in the form of philosophical discussions is quite apparent on the western civilization, neighbourly Rome lent to it the notion of legality and legitimacy. Roman Law and Roman administrative capability has been fundamentally instrumental in shaping Europe's rise to prominence in pre-Christian era. Roman history, before Christianity, is not much different from the Greek in terms of gods and worship associated with them.

Surviving ancient structures include the Forum (remains of temples. 5th B.C. 3rd A.D., triumphal arches and columns of the emperors), the Pantheon, and the Colosseum or amphitheatre (1st c.). Each age has employed, in its buildings, elements left by past ones. Monuments of Roman-Byzantine period (4th-9th cc.) include numerous churches and basilicas, many partially restored, e.g. St. Peter's and the Square of the Capital (designed by Michel-Angelo).

Polytheism or the worship of several gods, who were assigned different responsibilities was the dominant feature of Roman way of life. Equally striking was the Republican system of political organization of Roman Empire. Roman gods, in addition to pagan deities of far flung subjects were held as sources of all power and success. Julius Caesar, the Roman Hero \* on parallel to Alexander the Great, the Greek Conqueror, Roman Senate, acting on Republican instinct, grew hostile to the idea. All powerful Caesar was murdered right in the Senate hall in a conspiracy. \*\* Rituals, sacrifices, and invocations to gods formed integral part of Roman society. Post Christian Roman Empire, however, tells a different story in which Roman Crown and Papal authority are found in sort of struggle for 'Supremacy'. This struggle was often motivated by mundane consideration since the conduct of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire was to be regulated by the barbaric (pagan) or Christian beliefs of the people's rulers. This is evident from the pre-Constantine rulers of Rome or the pagan rule into which the Empire relapsed after Constantine.

\* Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BC), was a great Roman orator and statesman. His legal and political speeches are models of Latin diction.

\*\* (i) Cicero provides interesting commentaries on Caesar's period.

(ii) William A. Shakespeare captures the horrible moments in his play "Julius Caesar."

## CHRISTIAN CONTEXT

**'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are**

Caesar's and to God that are God's. (Matt. 22:21)

References to 'church and state' tend to denote the relationships that exist between the Christian religion and governments. The concept has a long history and unique importance in the political thought developed under Christianity in the western world. The distinction between church and state was not a pronounced feature of pre-Christian civilization. On the contrary, until the adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire in the 4th century, the secular rulers, including the Roman emperors, were accorded a supreme religious function. The ruler might be seen as the representative of the people to the gods, or he might himself be regarded as divine.

Judaism offers the first example of a society which, in the face of submission to a conqueror (Jerusalem fell in 586 BC), insists on retaining a religious identity separate from its rulers. Christianity, as an offshoot of Judaism and also subject to the Roman Empire, found no difficulty in conceiving similarly of its own religious fellowship. The words of the Gospel that were used to express this differentiated loyalty were (Matt. 22:21) : 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. The word "ecclesia" which the Greeks gave to their legislative meeting was used by Christians to describe their religious meetings. For the Christians "ecclesia" was a translation from the Hebrew "gahal", which had a specifically religious significance implying the spiritual fellowship of the : 'Chosen People'.

Within the Roman Empire, Christianity spread rapidly. Even after Constantine (306-37) had embraced the Christian faith, and after Christianity had been declared the legal religion (313) and then the official religion, the Fathers of the Church ..... such as AUGUSTINE (354-430) and Pope Gelasius I (492-497)..... continued to affirm the 'duality' of civil and religious authority. That these two powers should be balanced within the state remained a key principle of Christian thought.

With the rise of Christian church within a Christian empire began a unique era in political thought and organization. In spite of the decline of the Roman Empire, the institution of the Roman church was to last from the Council of Nicaea, presided over by Emperor Constantine in 325, until Luther unleashed the Protestant Reformation in 1518.....more than a thousand years later.

The Protestant Re-formation marks the period in which the doctrine of the 'Two Swords' was replaced by the doctrine of the Sovereign State. Faced in 1520 with Luther's provocative attack on conventional theology.....on grace, on free interpretation of 'Holy Writ', on clerical celibacy etc. Luther could command unexpected support, including the protection of his Prince. In other parts of Christendom, such as France, England, and the Low Countries, demands for theological reform spread rapidly.

A slow change in thinking seems to have come about between the Peace of Auguburg in 1555 and the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The compromise that was never expected to become a theory was contained in the formula "cuius regio eius religio" .....! 'each prince his own religion'. The



practical consequences entailed were, first, that religious doctrine and organization should, for the time being, accord with the religion of the secular ruler. Second, there should be no intervention by one sovereign state in the religious affairs of another.

## ISLAMIC CONTEXT

The three broad genres of political theorizing are there in Islam.....the religious principles of philosophical, as expressed in Mirrors-for-Princes.....have all drawn on the Quran.

The religious and juristic genre is available in two versions, corresponding to the major denominational division of Islam into Sunnite and Shitte; Sunnites hold that political and religious authority should be vested in the person of an imam-caliph belonging to the tribe of Quraish, to which Muhammad belonged, while Shiites limit legitimacy to the line of Muhammad's cousin Ali with differences regarding the narrower definition of the incumbent.

As Sunnism was the party of order and government, it relegated the issue of the perfect caliphate to the realm of Utopia : only the first four caliphs, the last of whom was Ali (died 661), conformed to the ideal in varying degrees. True caliphate had become sullied with kingship (mulk). From the days of the great traditionalist and unambiguous Sunni, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died 851), the Sunni conception of the caliphate became concrete legislation rather than speculative theory.

The most systematic exposition of the Sunni theory of the caliphate is that of Mawardi (died 1058) The caliphate, according to the tradition he represented and formalized as statues of public law, is incumbent upon the community and falls under "*mu'amalat*". Islamic law divides into those of God's (ibadat, devotions), and those of man (private and public law, "mu'amlat"). The caliphate is instituted as a vice regency of the Prophet Muhammad, and its incumbent is the guardian of religion as well as power of worldly affairs. This same idea of a temporal-spiritual cooperation implied the stripping of the Caliphate of its political and military functions.

The Caliphal, incumbent had to confirm to a number of conditions including moral probity as required by legal witnesses, Quraishite descent, and learning as required by a religious judge. The essential conception of state institutions such as the Vizirate, the Mint, military command, and legal and devotional hierarchies as extensions of the caliphal office was never revised.

The most pronounced development of the conception came with Ibn Rushad. For him, philosophy is a mode of apprehending this world and the heavenly world of which few persons are capable. Ibn Rushad actively worked on the refinement of "shari'a" in the context of the theory of "maqasid al-shari'a", of legal 'purpose', a conception akin to that of natural law.

### MIRRORS..FOR..PRINCES

The same practical purpose is clearly behind the Mirrors-for-Princes. Such books are conceived as instruments of rule, from the work of the state secretary Ibn al-Muqaffa' (died in 759) ,through that attributed to the theologian and literateur Jahiz ( died in 868) ,on to the book by the celebrated Vizier Nizam al-Mulk (died in 1092), a treatise by the jurist Turtushi (d. 1126), the book by Abbu Hammu (d. 1386), king of Tlemcen, and many others. Kingship is usually seen as falling into three categories : that based on religion, clearly the best and the most conducive to salvation, that based on reason and assuring the good order of the world, and that of passion and caprice, the sure road to perdition in this world and the next. The sovereign is the shadow of God on earth, and relates to

his subjects as God relates to His Creation, much as in Farabi city.

"Mirrors-For-Princes" thus consists of collections of topics germane of a hierarchical order in which religion is protected by state and acts, for some, as the foundation of its ethos, The ethical idea that is perhaps most privileged in justice. Abu Hammu expressed this well in his statement that there can be no power without an army, no army without money, no money without taxation, no taxation without prosperity, no prosperity without justice.

Ibn Khaldun was heir to all three Islamic traditions, which are fused in his work, but he had few followers, and he was understood by posterity as a particularly acute contributor to the tradition of Mirrors-for-Princes. Ottoman Khaldunism was of this variety.

More prominent today than accomplished Islamic modernism is radical Islam. Hence the generic appellation "salafiyya", the emulation of pious predecessors at the head of whom is Muhammad. Abdul-A'la

Mawdudi (d. 1979) has had dramatic adepts in radical Egyptian Islamic groups, who are also under the influence of Sayyid Qutb (d. 1965). The main features of this line of thought are emphasis on the concept of "hakimiyya", and the equally Wahhabi-inspired notion of 'hijra'. This last term, used to designate the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622, indicates for its modern adepts the necessity of stepping apart from corrupt society.

The idea of 'hakimiyya' as pertaining to God only has been used by Shiite political theory as well. Unlike Shiite constitutionalism and modernist trends, the theory identified with Ruhollah Khomeini (1902) grounds in the exclusive sovereignty of God. The viceregency on earth resides in Shiite ecclesiastics ("velayat-e-faqih"). Radical modern Shiite thought sought to grapple with the despotic consequences of this notion, and developed a theory of generalized imamate, whereby every individual is so formed by the Islamic state that he will be able to exercise the judgement and behaviour one expects from a pious ecclesiastic.

Whenever Islam was accepted by an individual he had to declare his faith in Allah and his prophet. Till the times of Caliphate, it reigned supreme in principle but when Islam spread to alien lands the concepts of Dar-ul-Iman and Dar-ul-Harab (the domain of the non Muslims) were in vogue. This concept conferred certain privileges on the Muslims so that their daily practices do not conflict with the creed and ritual of Islam.

Under western impact, still the new structure is being justified in the name of Shria and Quoranic injunctions. Fundamentalism is on the rise in Muslim countries. Christianity is pulling the strings from behind the curtain on global scale in the form of economic, charitable and missionary work assisted by the predominant western political powers which are Christian by faith. Israel, the modern democratic Jewish state, situated in the heart of volatile Islamic middle east, occupies a place of extreme strategic importance in the scheme of world politics.

## INDIAN CONTEXT

### HINDUISM, JAINISM, BUDDHISM, & SIKHISM

The universe is characterized by Rta, an inviolable cosmic order brought about by the operation of laws representing divine intelligence. They are thus not merely natural but also rational and moral in nature. Human society is an integral part of the universe. It reproduces the order and 'truth' of the universe when all men keep to their proper place and discharge their relevant dharma. Human beings have a capacity to think and will. They can fall victim to illusions and temptations.

Dharma and danda are the master concepts of Hindu political thought. Governing a territorially organized community ultimately consists in using danda to maintain dharma.

Hindu political writers acknowledged that some duties devolved on men as members of specific social groups (varna-dharma) and others as occupying specific stages in life ('ashrama-dharma'). It is articulated into specific castes, each with its appropriate economic functions and place in the social hierarchy. An individual's dharma is derived from the caste of his birth. His birth into a particular caste is not an accident but a result of his actions or "*karma*" in previous life. "*Karma*" means both action and fate.

When each individual does his dharma there is no disorder in society. Thanks to the decline of moral sense, or the emergence of greed, or the appearance of ahankar a Sanskrit term meaning at once a sense of individuality, self-love and pride, men became corrupt, and began to ignore their dharma. Finally, since custom played a powerful role in Indian life, the Hindu writers did not find it necessary to develop the idea of legislation and generally regarded political authority, a single legal system for the country and the government as an agent of social change, all of which have played a vital role in the development of the modern European state.

Ancient India (Arya Vraja) had a system of Ganrajyas, small or large principalities often ruled by Kshatriya kings. They were kingly republics. Hindu tradition of Raj Guru, King's advisor on all affairs from spiritual to mundane is akin to Greek concept King Philosopher. Raj Guru would literally serve king's mentor. In India, both ancient and medieval and the princely states during the British rule, Hindu political system was usually monarchical and dynastic. They did have councils and village societies (Panchayats), but Kingship was the only visible symbol of royal authority. In Ramayana, King Rama had 'Vishishat' as his Raj Guru. Puranic King Janak was both guided and served by Ashta Vaksas. Most of all Lord Krishna, the first ever diplomat prophet (Vishnu's incarnation), had Rishi Durbhasa to fill this august position. Raj Guru served many a purpose : He would be a priest , negotiator, emissary, diplomat, advisor and exercised tremendous influence so far as state affairs were concerned. During Gupta Empire known as Golden Era of Hindu Period, Brahmanical Hinduism was virtually state religion. Buddhism was uprooted by Brahmans with heavy support of Gupta Kings. Regular worship of Hindu gods, sacrificial rites, chanting of Ved-mantras ( Vedic-Hymns) at Temples and rich donations to the shrines used to be official duties of the princes. Religion, so to speak, was everywhere in Hindu political set up. Likewise Buddhist and Jain kings were deeply influenced by religious advisors (Dharamacharya).

## SIKH CONTEXT

Sikh religion has got to be studied in the context of times and conditions under which it transformed from the community of peaceful and God loving servants of mankind to the Brotherhood of Khalsa i.e. the army of saint-soldiers ready to take up arms in the name of God for the sake of righteousness. Guru Nanak, whereas denounced hypocrisy of the religious people, at the same time he forcefully exposed the corruption and malpractices of the ruling classes. The natural consequence led to the hostility between the rulers and the Gurus on the one hand and Gurus and the religious leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, on the other.

Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdoms paved the way for Khalsa's creation by tenth Guru Gobind Singh. Khalsa, in later years had to contend with Mughals, Persians, Afghans and others until the establishment of Sikh empire in 19th century. Under the British as well as in post partition India, Sikhs have had to live up to the high standards stipulated by the Gurus while keeping up the political struggles in the form of morchas.

This will be discussed later.

## ZOROASTRIAN CONTEXT

*"God of 'good' and 'evil' i.e. Ormazed and Ahriman are engaged in constant war-fare.....Ormazed shall be victorious in the final outcome."* [Zar-a-thus-tra]

Thus spake Zarathustra. Persian holy man Zoroaster is credited with infusing the contemporary prevalent religious tradition with stern moralistic spirit. It is believed his prophetic utterances about heavenly forces division into two antagonistic warring camps have given rise to the concepts of 'Satan' and 'Devil' \* Christianity and Islam are both heavily indebted to Prophet Zoroaster on this account. Coming from old Aryan stock. Persian Prophet's philosophy-- both religious and political, has certain traits common with Indian Aryans. Like 'Agni Devta' of the Vedic Aryans, Zoroaster also venerated power of 'fire'. 'Fire-worshippers', as the Zoroastrians came to be known, they had their prime time during the vast empires of Cyrus and the Darius the Great.

- \* (i) Zoroaster must be beaming with joy in heaven to find his ideology being narrated in 'poetic flair' by as celebrated a poet as "Firdowsi" in "Shahnameh."  
(ii) Tenth Guru Gobind Singh also pays tribute : "Cheh Shatabi bawad Kar-i-Aharmanana." in  
( To act in haste i.e. without giving a great deal of thought, is the work of devil.)

"Zafarnameh., Selected Writings, PP-506."

## CHINESE CONTEXT

Chinese political development presents richness and diversity. During the Shang and Chou dynasties (c. 1766 to 1122 BC, and from 1122 BC) which ruled the lower Yellow River basin, a distinctive political tradition developed. From the beginning of the Chou dynasty (after 770 BC) into a collection of warring states down to the unification of those areas which are still the core of ethnic China by the Ch'in dynasty (221 BC), a great efflorescence of theorizing on government occurred. This was the 'hundred schools' period still referred to by contemporary Chinese as a model of free and lively discourse (thus Mao's saying: 'let a hundred flowers bloom,\* let a hundred schools of thought contend'). After the short-lived Ch'in dynasty, China was ruled by a succession of dynasties (from 206 BC) along with Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism for a time captured the fashion at court.

The first texts in Chinese political thought were long associated with the Chou dynasty. These 'classic' are compositions of poems, historical and court records, and writings on divination, and it has been the traditional view that they incorporated the written remains of a golden age of civilization. Of particular significance are two political traditions identified by these commentators. The first concerns 'the mandate of heaven', being the nation that the ruling house is entrusted with the governance of the empire provided its rule is virtuous and beneficent, but forfeits the right to rule if the ruler becomes corrupt or disasters afflict the population. The second concerns the exemplary moral behaviour of certain of the early sage rulers, one of whom passed over his own son in order to select a commoner of surpassing virtue to be his successor.

The first serious political thinker (leaving aside the legalist K'unatzu, d. 645 BC, whose writings are notoriously corrupt) was Confucius (k'ung Fu-tzu, 551-479 BC). His views may be sought in the "Analects". He was a travelling scholar and teacher of very modest means who was never greatly successful in catching the ear of the powerful despite holding minor office for a period in his native state. His proposals for dealing with the disorder and evil of his times contain notable innovations. The Confucian ideal is rule by moral example rather than by military supremacy or according to hereditary succession. Confucius believes that those adept at the scholarly arts will take 'benevolence' (the chief Confucian virtue) as the standard for their conduct. Confucius makes no distinction between familial and political authority, regarding the society as an extension of the ruler's household and the well-ordered family as the foundation of the state.

Confucius accepted without question the need for social hierarchy and a division of labour (between peasantry and literati). He emphasized the many duties of the ruler to his subjects, and of the men of learning to service for the state, and their obligation to offer advice based upon their knowledge of the requirements of benevolence even if this advice was unwelcome. Apart from some reference to a (non-anthropomorphic) 'heaven' as the source of virtue and the arbiter of fate, the underpinnings of Confucius's theory are secular rather than spiritual, the correct observation of political rites and ceremonies being accorded something of a religious dimension.

\* Cultural revolution, People's Daily, 20 Nov. 1968, Peking, China.

## RELIGION VIS-A- VIS POLITICS

### MORALITY AND ETHICS

Religion, when brought to barest essentials alongwith faith in Super-natural Being, Creed, a set of principles, ritual and worship, comes down to Morality, the Code of Conduct. Ethics, the manual of Preaching and Practice, is perhaps the most visible and visual of all other elements, which constitute a religion.

The intellectual and emotional sides of religion affect behaviour. Religion has always been linked with morality, though more systems differ greatly from place to place. Whether morals can exist without religion or some supernatural belief has been debated, but at least all religions have important moral commandments. The famous laws of Hammurabi of Babylon which date from about the 18th century BC., gave royal, feudal, legal and social prescriptions, but were said to have been received from the god of justice.

The philosopher A.N. Whitehead defined religion as what the individual does with his own solitariness, but religion always has a social side and it is expressed in patterns of behaviour. Sometimes there is a strong organization, such as church. While at other times the model of religious life may be that of a lonely ascetic in a forest. But even the latter depends upon society for support : giving him food is regarded as an act of religious merit and in return he blesses those who offer charity. The rules of moral behaviour in most societies have a strong religious basis, and they are supported by the teachings of scriptures and actions of religious officials.

The study of religions depends upon many elements. Archaeology is particularly important for a knowledge of the pre-historic and historic periods of human life. Anthropology and sociology consider the role of religion in the lives of individuals and societies, especially among modern illiterate peoples. The psychology of comparative study of religions, traces their history and examines similarities and differences between religions, and patterns of behaviour. In addition to these folk-lore, mythology, philosophy and theology, linguistics, music, art and almost any human activity can be important for understanding religions.

Man is a social animal, says a Greek philosopher, hence he needs social organisation which further down the road requires rule of law, control and justice. In nutshell this is the domain of politics, power and government.

If all religions, have at least, one common ground that of morality, code of conduct, and exemplary behaviour of believers, then, the world of politics cannot be imagined to be immune to the religious demands of moral values. The fact of the matter is that both religions and politics have, more than anything else, morality, as the solid common bond between them.

If it is true that power corrupts a man and absolute power corrupts absolutely, then how to keep actors in a political drama on the right track, is a perennial question, which has to be answered by the people of conscience in every age.



As it is valid with respect to 'freedom' that it must be accompanied by responsibility so is the case with political power and its exercise. In kingship as also in modern day democracy, public perception of a ruler of a political person is what counts most in value judgement. Public welfare, justice without discrimination and commitment to ideals of decency and virtue are some of the standards, people would like to judge their rulers against.

In ancient India, founder of Rama-Rajya.....the ideal Hindu state. King Rama is said to have sent his devoted wife Sita into exile because the king, one night roaming in disguise, overheard some washerman make indecent remarks about the queen. Immaculate Rama could not stand blemish upon his name and kingship. In another incident, Rama ordered a low caste man to be done to death for he would recite God's name which he was not allowed to. Sense of public morality, on this account, had religious sanction as well. Maha Bharata golden period of Aryan civilization, narrates an epic in which central theme is wrapped around Duryodhana the usurper and Yudhishtira, the righteous king.

Buddhism's Eight fold Path depicts a strict moral code to be followed equally by the rulers, monks, and laymen. King Ashoka's edicts on pillars, all over central Asia are the monuments of ethics. Judae-Christian tradition stipulates high binding morality, beginning with Ten Commandments given by Yahweh.....the God of Israelis, to Moses on Mount Sinai. "Thou shall not kill.....thou shall....." (Old and New Testament). King Solomon of ancient Israel has become a legend and mythical figure in folklore because of his virtue and goodness.

In Islam, although Quran mentions several time God .....(Allah) as the only King of Kings, Muslim Caliphs, Kings and Sultans had Islamic Shria (Law) to look up to, which kept royal authority under check and balance. No doubt Sharia was used by ambitious and wily princes for their selfish, immoral motives, yet rulers like benevolent Harun-as-Rashid in the Middle East and Akbar the Great in India are shining stars in so far high standards of kingship and morality are concerned.

An ancient Persian King who was firm believer of Zoroaster had a high sounding epithat-- Nausherwan-i-Adil i.e. Nausherwan the Just. Prophet Muhammad was born during his reign. \*

Chinese Emperors had to be worthy and virtuous in order to enjoy 'Heaven's Mandate' which rested upon both individual and public morality of the rulers. \*\*

**Sikh ideal, in this context, is to be a person of truthful living. According to Guru Nanak Sachiar, whether a king or a lay man, is one who identifies himself with the Universal Order, cosmic/natural laws (Hukam), \*\*\* Truthful conduct in personal, public; religious or political affairs is what leads to Sikh concept of salvation i.e. the enjoyment of individual soul's union with That of the Supreme Soul.**

\* H.M. Balyuzi, ' Muhammad and the course of Islam'; (George Ronald, Oxford, 1979), P.10.

\*\* Confucius in 'Analects'. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 2, P. 580.

\*\*\* "How to be truthful and how to knock down the wall of falsehood..II

(Guru Nanak, G.G.S. PP-1)

## MODERN CONTEXT

Old customs, norms and traditions, about all religious instructions now have been replaced rather incorporated in the modern day 'constitutions'. Constitution is a written document, a statute book, treated sacredly, by which the political structure as well as government business are being managed, still the torch of public morality and ethical integrity is kept ablaze by religious precepts and injunctions. Religion, so to speak is serving as conscience-keeper in the realm of politics, power, and worldly glamour. \*

In all the constitutions made by different governments, their major principles are drawn from religious stock. For example, Sikhism placed maximum importance on equality, freedom, universal brotherhood and service to the hungry, suffering and the needy anywhere. These are the principles which have been incorporated into the constitutions of the U.N.O. and those of democratic countries. In this way religion is the source on which modern states are built.

\* As though to prove Caliph Ali's description of 'human' that in goodness he surpasses angels---and in wickedness even devil (Satan) is ashamed of him; how men flirt with law and morality especially those with power, and wealth, defy and reasoning. Yet morality has its own call to make.... In present age of promiscuity, increasing immoral trends and commercialized religion, ethical morality still rings the bell. In 1974, President Richard Nixon of America had to resign, under Water-gate Scandal. British monarchy is being held under strict public scrutiny. Dismantled Soviet Empire has brought into light, the flagrant misuse of power, money and privilege by the men of authority in Socialist countries...Chasescue of Romania was brought to death...Imelda Marcose of Phillipine made head-lines in world press for her taste for extravaganza.

India, the land of the Vedas and the Aryans, the noble men, has an un-ending list of dismal tales of large scale corruption, cheating, immoral and illegal actions by those who enjoy powerful status both in politics and religion. Islamic governments, monarchies as well as democracies, which proclaim to be following the 'Quran', are the victims of similar tendencies.

## **RITUALS & SYMBOLS**

*Every human society has its rituals to accompany the great events of life-of human life: birth, tribal initiation, betrothal and marriage, death and burial ; of nature:fertility, the coming of spring, mid-summer,the harvest and the winter .*

Many of the rituals take the form of elaborate rites performed sometimes by a representative of the society .sometimes by all the members acting together. Drama, dance and games all have their origin in mystical rituals, and many of the most exotic human customs are derived from fertility rites or rituals of magic.

Sikhism, as a principale, does not believe in ritualism. Guru Arjan describes the futility of whole range of rituals in different religions with a resounding note that these do not help in obtaining an illumined intellect\*. However, some modes and practices are allowed only if they bring practitioner the boon of enlightenment. Nevertheless, practices do play a significant role in society.

### **RITUALS**

Many different kinds of phenomena have been described as ritual. The term, has been applied ,for example, to the mating habits of birds and animals, such as the dance on the water of the crested globe; by psychoanalysts to the obsessive behaviour of neurotics as when a man persistently checks whether he has turned off a tap, only to check anew after each check; and by anthropologists and sociologists to the established forms of behaviour of devotees of cults and religions. But while it is important-to try to establish common explanations for the phenomena thus categorized, it is essential to grasp that there are fundamental differences between them and also between modes of interpreting them.

Freud himself argued that there were marked similarities between the obsessive 'rituals' of neurotics and psychotics, and the 'rituals' of what he called primitive society. Indeed, he postulated in Totem and tabu (1913) from his theory of the development of the Oedipus complex (a theory derived from a primordial killing and developing of a patriarchal male.

A religious tradition, in addition to creed, faith in deity, and code of conduct (ethics) depends upon, above all, the modes of worship, rituals and symbols. Worship to the focus of man's aspiration i.e., the Supernatural Being, is the most outward and visible acts which one finds lot easier to practice than to live by the subtler and finer aspects of the philosophy of religion. To begin with, symbols and rituals represent by themselves deep spiritual and philosophical yearnings but in time. As is the case with any and every human endeavour, spiritual content is replaced by mere, rather convenient formalities with super structure of symbolism. "Identity" is always marked by symbols and rituals, political arena is infected rather pervaded by this phenomenon as well.

\* O my friend, Rituals do not bring about the union with the Master, I, therefore fall at Lord's door with the plea that I may be granted illumined intellect (Budh Bibeka.) [G.G.S., PP-641]

At the very time when Sennacherib's envoys were intimidating the tormented Judean king, an elaborate system of diplomatic ritual was being developed in the multistate kingdoms of China. These kingdoms dealt with each other as communities of equal status. In his standard work, Richard Louis Walker writes:

Each missionary had to go through a rigid pattern to the ruler of the state where he had been sent his proper credentials.....The envoys also had to be able to respond in proper manner to the toasts given at the banquets in their honour. This usually involved the ability to select for the occasion a fitting verse from the well-known songs of the time.

Here, for example, is a description of a credential, ceremony at the Turkish court:

*In the inner court of the Seraglio, surrounded by delicate marble pillars, was the Sultan's chamber guarded by ushers in robes of gold and silver. The ceremony required that the ambassador pay his respects to the Sultan by kissing his skirt. At the door two attendants seized the envoy's arms and wrists, and introduced the pinioned man to the sacred presence...The pinioned ambassador kneeled and kissed the imperial robe; then the breathless envoy was made to retreat backwards step by step. At the opposite end of the chamber, near the exit the diplomat made his quavering address to a motionless, bored and cold Sultan. If his Majesty was pleased, he deigned to murmur in reply; "Giozel (very well)."*

*Perhaps contemporary envoys would complain less sharply about their hardships if they had to follow the ancient Chinese practice in the signature of treaties:.....After long discussions about the terms of the treaties to be signed, the representatives participated in a very solemn ritual in which an animal-usually a calf-was sacrificed at some holy spot outside the walls of a city. The left ear of the sacrificed victim was cut off and was used to smear with blood both the document bearing the articles of agreement and the lips of the principals. One copy of the document was buried with the sacrificial beast and each of the signatories kept a copy.\**

It is worth noting that, the role of religion in politics is so effective, that even the rituals play a major role in formulating the political mind or action of a community or a nation.

Symbols represent a sort of value-system. Value is defined " In the sense that they are operative and effective on human minds and in human actions, and find embodiment in the objective institutions of society. There are five Sikh symbols known as five k's (kakkars); kesh (unshorn hair), Kangha (comb), Kara (Steel Bangle), Kachhehra (specifically designed under wear), Kirpan (sword). Since time immemorial man has felt the need of some sign or symbols as a mark to distinguish himself, his family or country. Flag is the most popular and stands for something that must be free to be agitated by the wind .\*\*

\* Abba, Eban, New Diplomacy. PP. 260.

\*\* E.M.C. Barraclough, Frederick Warne & Co. N.Y., 1969 PP-1

# SYMBOLS

## RELIGION IN POLITICS

Some of the symbols with religious aura, commonly used in the realm of politics can be identified as under:-

### FLAG

Pharaohs, Assyrians and others all had emblems held sacred with their deities' symbols on. Flag, which is the most prominent symbol, used to be an individual sign, turned into national sign. Flag is mentioned in one of the earliest Chinese accounts (1122 B.C.)

Sikh Flag historically began to be hoisted by 6th Guru Har Gobind\* and it was blue and saffron in colour. Tenth master gave to the Khalsa saffron Flag. Blue & Saffron, representing spiritual as well as temporal authority, merged into one which is known the national flag of the Sikhs. Flags of the nations, in due course of time have become the symbols of both religious as well as political identity.

The most visible of the symbols can be seen hoisting over temples as well as government buildings. It may have as many colours as nations, communities, round the globe. Green is Muslim and white with star of David of the Israel, ochre (Hindu and Buddhist), saffron for the Sikhs. Politically U.N.O.'s national head quarter presents wonderful exhibition of the flags.

### HORSE

A symbol of royalty, speed and courage. Horse is associated with several great events as well as personalities. Prophet Muhammad is believed to have gone to have a vision of Allah in Heavens on white horse. Once again, Sikh Gurus Sixth and Tenth, were fond of thoroughbred stallions. Alexander buried his horse in Punjab with royal ceremonies. Napoleon, Maharana Partap and Maharaja Ranjit Singh's love for horses have become legends. Political seals and emblems depict horses in artistic style. The Tenth Guru Gobind Singh is mentioned as '*Nile Ghore da Sawar*', Rider of the Blue Stallion.

### SWORD

As for the symbolic value, Sword or Sceptre perhaps surpasses all others. A symbol of power, gallantry and sovereignty, Even God-Almighty has often been described, in Sikh Scriptures, as the Being holding Sword in His Hands. It has been so popular, even Jesus Christ, the meek lamb is seen in paintings clad in armour with sword and shield. In present times, no special occasion of political significance goes by without sword. Presentation of swords to heads of state and dignitaries mark the highlight of celebrations-religious, political and social. Seals and emblems depicting religious symbols are quite familiar.

### PITAKAS AND CEREMONIES

In the ceremony of signing of Helsinki accord as final act in 1976, the documents signed by the participants were placed in baskets known as *pitakas* reminding one of Buddhist pitkas. The

\* B.Kahan Singh, Encyclopaedia of Sikh literature, language Deptt. Punjab Patiala. 1960 PP. 410

formalities of worship involved many a step, each taken precisely in awe and reverence inspired by the religion. Violation and desecration almost amount to a grave sin, believed to be fraught with danger. Same way, ceremonies accompanying political proceeding are held in as much discipline as possible. Actions in Parliaments, parades, Processions, presenting credentials, salutations etc., are more or less replicas of religious ceremonies performed in a shrine. So much so Goose-Leg parades by the guards at Lenin's Tomb in Kremlin cannot be dispensed with even by the Communist state. Some of the typical religious ceremonies form distinguished parts of strictly political observances.

### SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Heads of the new government initiate their rule, with a ceremony-taking oath in God's name.\*

### PRAYERS

Head of state and governments often make prayers to seek Almighty's help in solving and national problems. Sikh assemblies as a rule open with a prayer and a commandment from the Scripture. Taking a vow in presence of Guru Granth Sahib is so binding that political activity becomes very intensive in the form of war like political struggle, such as Morchas.

### OATHS

Pledges are made and oaths are taken by the politicians in religious, sacredness. Jawahar Lal Nehru on the night of 15th August, 1947, when India won freedom, assured the minorities in the form of religious oath, "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge....."\*\*\*

Besides animals, heavenly bodies, Plants, colours etc., (American political parties.....Republican and Democratic, use 'elephant' and 'donkey; as symbols respectively) ritualism includes verses from the scriptures offerings, and donations.

### GODLY-MEN

Supposedly holymen, as in the past, like priests and shamans still exert influence in political corridors. Pope Paul is virtually treated king without crown round the globe.

As a parody, Indian Tantriks and Swamis can be seen on the right side of the Presidents and Prime Ministers even today.\*\*\*

\* U.S.A. Canada, United Kingdom—swearing in is done on Bible. Muslim countries evoke Allah and Quran. In India Vedmantras, Hawans, and Aartis are performed frequently in an otherwise secular state.

\*\* L. Collins & Lapierre; Simon & Schuster, N.Y., 1975

\*\*\* Chandra Swami made quite a few headlines.

Sikh symbols are not merely signs. On the contrary they are the constant reminder of the fact that the wearer must be attentive and watchful to the spirit behind them in his personal and social behaviour. They also spell perfect equality among the members of Khalsa and also create sense of oneness and spiritual chord between Khalsa, Guru and the Almighty. Five ks' remind them all the time of dedication to Guru's ideals. In the words of Gokul Chand Narang, "Hindus had religion but no national feelings while Guru Gobind Singh made nationalism the religions of the Khalsa.\*

Tikka Guriaee (Saffron paste) was pasted on the forehead of the Guru, next in line and same was repeated by Sahib Sing Bedi, a descendent of Guru Nanak by placing Raj Tilak on Ranjit Singh forehead and proclaimed him the Mahraja of Punjab. Foreign visitors were greeted in Lahore Darbar in the air ful of Sandal incense. Even Mughal army, on a campaign, used to march first to the East led by a soldiar with a pitcher of Ganga Jali (Ganges water) on his head.



\* G.C. Narang, Transformation of Sikhism PP-6

## *Chapter 7*

### **RELIGION & POLITICS : SIKHISM IN THE PRISM OF HISTORY**

- (A) SIKH PSCHY**
- (B) SIKH POLITY**
- (C) BRIEF HISTORY**



## **RELIGION & POLITICS**

### **SIKHISM IN THE PRISM OF HISTORY**

#### **(A) SIKH PSCHY**

The Sikhs are spread all over the world and wherever they have gone they have established Gurudwaras (temples) for worship of God According to the Sikh way of life. These Gurudwaras exist in Britain, Canada and the United States. These are to be found in East Africa, Malaysia, South-East Asia, Australia and Newzeland too besides in the towns of Africa. The majority of Sikhs however (over ten million) live in India and these over 80 percent live in Punjab (India), which is tiny is land in the sea of Hinduism. That India can be described. Their influence far exceeds their numerical strength. They are famous all over India and abroad for their progressive farming, their role as brave soldiers of the Indian army, in sports (particularly hockey) and the transport industry and to a lesser extent in manufacturing industry commerce and the professions.

The Sikhs trace their origin to Guru Nanak (1469-1539) who was the founder of Sikh religion and the first Guru of the Sikhs. He was born at Nanakana Sahib (Pakistan) and from his childhood, he was inclined toward acts which were godly and humane. He can be described as a born saint, humanity lover and enlightened person. Before him, the saints of India were other worldly but Guru Nanak emphasised the fact that mere an otherworldly attitude was harmful for man, since he cannot lead a happy life without fulfilling his societal and social obligations. He travelled far and wide to awaken the people and to make them aware of their obligations towards God and Man. It was an arduous task which he completed at a great personal risk and facing numerous hazards. His itinerary included visits to Chinese border areas, Mayamar (Burma) and Afghanistan besides some countries of the Middle East. Wherever he went he gave the message of Love, Goodwill, Selflessness, Disciplined life and worship of one God, who possessed an extraordinary personality. He was poet, prophet and patriot, a religious reformer with an accent upon social reform rather than on ritual, a practitioner of folkmusic par-excellence and gave the message of the Universal Soul as reflected in the human psyche. He was highly imaginative person, but he did not allow his imagination to distract his mind from the stern realities of life. He strikes a balance in his sacred sayings between objective reality and its subjective appraisal. He lived up to the idea, unity of thought and action and he had a sense of witticism of which we have numerous instances in the legends which got current soon after he breathed his last and got merged with the Universal Soul. He spent the last years of his life at Kartarpur as a house holder cultivating land and giving discourses to the people on the new principles of Faith enu-

merated by him in his Bani particularly in Japji, the morning prayer of the Sikhs. His holy verses are included in the Holy Granth of the Sikh under Mohalla I. He died in 1539 at Kartarpur.

Its is significant that Guru Nanak wore a motley dress.\* He wore the saffron robe like a Hindu Sadhu but like a Muslim he also wore a turban and carried a rosary. As a matter of fact, Bhakti movement in Northern and Southern India had already brought about synthesis of the two religions. It combined the personal devotion of a Hindu saint (bhakti), with the contemplative experience of mystical Islam(Sufism) and the spiritual practices of Tibetan Buddhism.Guru Nanak's way(Simran) was a new way and he expounded it with great beauty and clarity.

It was particularly the idea about salvation which he brought to maturity. The theory held by the followers of the Bhakti movement was at best incomplete and often vague. Salvation depended upon the single repetition of a particular hymn. Guru Nanak's new doctrine of salvation was about two sets of basic assumptions concerning the nature of God and the nature of man.

God Single and personal, the transcendent or with whom the individual must develop the most intimate of relationships. Guru Nanak expressed the understanding of God in a number of important terms : God is without form (Nirankar), eternal (akal) and ineffable (alakh). Great emphasis is given to the third idea; essentially God is unknowable. How then can he be known? He can be known because He is God of grace, concerned that men should possess the means of salvation. He therefore reveals himself in a way that is visible to all who will open their eyes and see. He is present every where, pervading all creation, particularly the human heart.

But men are wilfully blind. They shut their eyes to divine revelation which lies within and without. They know that they need salvation but seek it through futile religious exercises much as worship of statues in Hindu temples or ritual prayers in Muslim mosques. But externals of this kind bind them more firmly to the wheel of birth, death and rebirth.

Guru Nanak's teachings about salvation are expressed in a number of key words which occur again and again in the sacred scriptures of the Sikhs. They are the name (Nam), the word (Shabad), The Teacher (Guru) and the Order ordained by God (Hukam). Nam, the divine name and Shabad, the Divine Word together express the whole nature and being of man. Man however needs a guru, a divine preceptor. The divine preceptor is the voice of God, Mystically uttered within the human heart. Once awakened the enlightened man looks around and within himself to seek the Hukam, the divine order or harmony. Salvation is then a matter bringing oneself within this pattern or harmony through regular, disciplined meditation on the divine Nam. Ultimately this results in the devotee uniting himself with divine harmony and the wheel of transmigration stops. Before his death Guru Nanak appointed

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\* On his visit to Holy Mecca, Janam Sakhi says," Baba Nanak dressed up in blue like a Haji (Muslim pilgrim), held staff in one hand, rosary in the other, prayer carpet on his head and a book under his armpit, entered Macca like a Haji"....Janam Sakhi, Bhai Jawahar Singh, Kirpal Sing & Co. Amritsar, P-103

This shows Guru Nanak had no fad or taboo about the trivial things of life.

a disciple to succeed him Guru Angad -And from that time, for more than a century and a half, leadership in the Sikh community was exercised by a succession of Gurus, Total Ten. The tenth of these Guru Gobind Singh (1616-1708) brought the line to an end and transferred authority to the truly ordained community (Khalsa) and the holy scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib). Today it is the Scripture which is the most important.

The Sikh community evolved between the time of Guru Nanak and that of Guru Gobind Singh. . Its identity was forged in the context of the cultural, political and military development of the Sikh people. The community struggled for survival in the face of oppression by the Muslim Mughal emperors. It was incorporated into a martial race, which fought against Hindu ritualist rulers of the Shivalak hills and the tyranny of the Mughals. The psyche of the Sikh is like their two edged holy Sword (Khanda). It gives life when it is immersed in the holy vessel of sugared water and turns it into Amrit (The nectar of immortality) and is the scourge of the cruel oppressors. The beards, turbans and martial valour are symptoms of their psyche and the marks of their evolution. In other words the psyche of the Sikh is determined by his boldness to reject the ritualism of orthodox Hinduism and the acceptance of the Eternal Truth, ever lasting goodness and that aesthetical Beauty which makes one recite the Nam and utter the word Waheguru (the wonder of the Guru's Shabad) and which made the Sikh realise that God is the immanent spirit pervading this world and will be one's succour in the next.

In brief, the prominent imprints of Sikh Pschy are fear of God, love for suffering, obeying the divine will, hospitality and adventurous spirit. Since they only fear God, they are afraid of no one.

Even suffering and pain, especially for noble cause, fail to dishearten them. Their whole life is surrendered to the will of God, therefore, their political struggle is always an obedience to the Higher Command. Free kitchen (Guru Ka Lnagar) and open heartedness, in times good or bad, add upto the proverbial generosity of the Sikhs.

## **(B) SIKH POLITY**

*“Baba Ke Babur Ke Doou II  
Aap Kiye Parmesher Soou II”\**

*Selected Writings, PP-48*

*(Guru's house and Babur's family are both created by the God)*

With this couplet the Tenth Master sets the tone for Sikh Polity in the world . Sikh Gurus (Divine teachers or Enlightener Prophets), especially the first, second, third, fourth, nine and tenth), were all literary giants and men of poetic vision . Their mission, essentially spiritual, also aimed at Sociopolitical improvements of the people. Just like other divine personalities, they were universal in their outlook, utopian in aspiration but distinctly pragmatic when it came to realities of their contemporary world.

Since Sikhism has its roots in the historical ground, the Indian subcontinent and adjoining areas- Western and Central Asia in particular , these territories form a sort of theatre for Sikh history to unfold. Some of the discernible features of Sikh polity may be numerated as under:

### **DIVINE SANCTION**

*“Din Pat Inko Pehchano II*

*Duni Pat Unko Anumano II”.....(Dasam Granth, Selected Writings, PP-48.)*

*(Recognize the Gurus as Lord of Faith and the Mughals worldly masters.)*

A prolific poet Guru Gobind Singh carries on : By Providence, Guru Nanak and His House has been appointed as the custodian of righteousness whereas the Mughal dynasty is given the task of looking after worldly affairs. Continuing the narrative the Guru introduces, rather astonishing dimension to the cosmic play of divine or religious and mundane forces, by telling that if what is due and belongs to Guru's House is not given in good intention, that must be grabbed by Babur i.e. rulers by force. Metaphysically it may be interpreted that the negligence of religious obligations invites political repercussion, often, painful. The way around, it was equally binding on the Mughals to be attentive to their duties as rulers, otherwise, Divine retribution would follow with the Gurus leading the crusade.\*\*

### **PACIFIC RESISTANCE**

It is God , Sikhism categorically declares, who proposes and disposes Kings and their Empires at Will

*“Kira Thap De Patshahi*

*Lashkar Kare Suahu II” .....(Guru Nanak : Guru Granth Sahib ;P.144)*

*(A worm, He establishes, a king and reduces to ashes the armies)*

\* Guru Gobind Singh ,Bachittar Natak, (Selected writings, Guru Gobind Singh foundation, P.48.)

\*\* Sikh chroniclers give an apocalyptic account of Guru Nanak 's encounter with Babur at Eminabad (Saidabad ) in which the conversation centred around this 'covenant '..... Waheed -ud -din,Fakir ,Real Ranjit Singh, PP-51.

He is King of Kings, Shah Alam, Sahib, Sultan, Adil, Master, Nayak, Swami, Nath etc. Rulers , whatever nature of political system may be, must discharge their duties as a sacred trust . They ought to be accountable before All Power God as well as the public. Since man is the supreme creature in the real, of living organism, he is primarily responsible for the well-being of the entire system. The Universe is governed by the 'Laws of Nature' -as Guru Nanak says in Asa Di War:

***“Sun, Moon, Air, Fire , Rivers and Oceans***

***All move as per God’s order II”.....(Guru Granth Sahib PP- 463)***

So it is important that man must go by the ‘Divine Law’ (Dharma ) so as to keep law and order of their world. Men of authority have got to be deeply concerned with justice ,fairness and welfare of the masses failing which, men of religion must lead the public protest to set things straight. For this Guru Nanak calls for '*Peaceful Resistance*' .

***“Je Jive Pat Lathi Jaye II (Life without honour is worthless.)***

***Subh Haram Jeta Kichh Khaye II”.....(Guru Granth Sahib P: 142)***

Guru Nanak’s teachings were basically two thronged ... vehement opposition to hypocrisy and ritualism in the religious sphere as also resistance to tyranny and injustice in political matters. The Guru’s portrayal of his age is so sharp and poignant that it prompted historians to invest him with the title ‘Revolutionary’:

***“Kal Kati Raje Kasai Dharma Pankh Kar Udriya II***

***Kurr Amavas Sach Chandram Disai Nahin Keah Charriya II”***

**[ Guru Nanak : Guru Granth Sahib (Vaar Majh), P. 145**

*"This age of Kalyug is just like the butcher’s knife, kings themselves are butchers, Dharma has taken wings; there is the dark night of falsehood, I fail to see the Moon of Truth up in the sky".*

The wail of the lamentation takes into its fold both men of religion and politics. This was India (Hindustan up to the western extremes of Hindu Kush), ruled by the Lodhis in Delhi alongwith numerous Hindu states scattered all over the subcontinent. The Guru would make repeated references about this in his utterances. Himself a religious man, he was more critical of the religious heads of his day. Brahmins, Jogis, Pirs, Sidhas, Qazis, Pandits, Naths, Maulanas, Tapas, Shaikhs: all come under his scathing pen for it was the Guru who would often burst out, that it was due to their complacence and the escapist life-style that innocent masses were groping in dark.

***“Sidh Chhup Baithe Parbatin Kaun Jagat Kau Par Utara II” [ Varaan Bhai Gurdas, PP-71]***

*“No one but a religious leader”* The Guru said in a dialogue with the Sidhas (remnants of Buddhist tradition) on snow capped Hmalayas..... *“could stop the downward degradation, but he with regrets, saw no body around.”*

***“~~Koi Na~~ <sup>Koi Na</sup> Thamme Sadh Bin, Sadh Na Dise Jag Wich Koa II”...[ Varaan Bhai Gurdas, PP-71]***

*“No one but a saint can stop the downward degradation, but no saint is seen around.”*

The Guru had no alternative but to rise to the occasion. Commissioned by the God Almighty on

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er Bein.

**“Dharat Lukai II”**

(in the lost humanity.) [Varaan Bhai Gurdas, Amrit Kirtan, PP. 241.]

As he found India in, he chose Eminabad as the point to launch a peaceful  
 Mughals’ cruelties on helpless Indians:

**“John Dhaiya Jorin Mange Dan We Lalo II”**

Washed from Kabul with a wedding party of sin and demands by force

[Guru Granth Sahib. P.722]

In Sikh history for it is here that the Guru’s sweet but strong personality is  
 the starting point of chain of events epitomising contours of Sikh sociopo-  
 ss for the poor, honest, downtrodden people; his dramatic single-mindedness  
 el and parasitic nature of ill-gotten riches; craving to side with the suffering  
 p to the conqueror of Hindustan, staying in prison, spelling out his divine-  
 ing, above all, God Almighty 's praises amidst smiles and tears alike with  
 patriotic compassion; by singing the famous hymns “O Lalo”, Guru Nanak  
 remost Indian adoring, at the same time the lamenting about his mother land

**Tuk Hosi;**

**“Lalo II”.....[Guru Granth Sahib, P. 723]**

(I be cut into pieces and Hindustan shall recall my words.)

preamble to what followed in centuries to come. ‘Janamsakhi’ gives a graphic  
 ud-Din Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, one of the greatest em-  
 bound by Guru’s magnetism, fully obeyed his command as to set the prison-  
 h among the poor, always remember God and a promise to administer jus-  
 c.

egan with a clearcut mandate from the Lord of the Universe. To create  
 d of God-oriented, spiritually awakened, socially committed human be-  
 esthetic aspects of life would seek and strive for perfect harmony in an  
 rife ridden world. The Guru’s imprisonment at Saidpur was *The First* but a  
 very important step in this direction that set the pace for the later stages. *Peaceful resistance*, In  
 time, was bound to transform itself through the ordeal of blood. The movements and revolutions, as  
 if by Law of Nature, have had to reap the harvest of martyrs in order to provide the necessary dy-  
 namics. After Akbar the Great’s death, with Jahangir’s ascension to the Mughal throne, the Sikh pol-  
 ity had the first ever challenge of the kind, Guru Nanak’s fifth successor, the compiler of the Guru  
 Granth and builder of the Golden Temple, proved his valour by greeting death through YASA with a  
 smile on his face and with determination.

**“Tera Kiya Meetha Lage II**

**Har Nam Padarth Nanak Mange II”.....**

**[Guru Arjun : G.G.S., PP-394]**

*(Sweet is Thy will to me, Nanak beseeches God's name only.)*

Guru Arjun's martyrdom provided the much needed blood for the Sikh church to thrive on in the future.

### **FREEDOM**

Freedom has been defined as a state (Mental as well as material) without fear by Rabindera Nath Tagore. Guru Tegh Bahadur's sermon "*Neither to frighten nor to be afraid of*" seems to have influenced the writer of Geetanjali. This means the discipline and freedom (from cynicism, superstition, narrow consideration and slavery). Throughout history the dream of freedom has been lurking in the eyes of mankind. But Sikhism, it appears, has made it into a doctrine that pain and suffering without selfish tinge is the pre-requisite for the attainment of freedom which may be religious, social, cultural, economic & political. If Guru Arjun's sacrifice was for the sake of Sikhism's ideals of helping the helpless, of the sanctity of the 'Divine word', refusal to pay undue taxes as well as along with the Emperor's demand for closing Dukan-i-Baatal (shop of falsehood i.e. Guru's House), the Ninth Master lifted the zeal for dying in noble pursuits to still higher and loftier summits of freedom. Aurangzeb's reversal of Akbar's Din-Allahi, i.e. policy of religious tolerance and fair treatment of the ruled, made the Hindus once again easy targets for Imperial wrath. For Kashmiri Brahmins, it was a pitiful state of affairs.

Guru Teg Bahadur went all the way to Delhi to take up the issue with the Emperor about religious freedom. The imperial authorities, following the policy of religious bigotry, treated the guru and his companions with brutality instead. Bhai Mati Das was sawed into two, Bhai Sati Das was burnt alive and Bhai Divala was boiled in steaming water. The Guru's head was chopped off at a public execution in 'Chandni Chowk' Delhi \* (the memorial) is called 'Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib' - right in front of the Red Fort) To die happily and manly for the cause of freedom both religious as well as political, became a powerful theme reverberating throughout Sikh history up to the present time.

Sikh concept of freedom, therefore, embraces basic tenets such as equality, brotherhood (fraternity), service, sacrifice and martyrdom etc.

\* 1    "*Tilk Janju Rakha Prabh, Ta Ka II*

*Kino Bado Kalu Mehn Saka II*"..... [Selected Writings, PP. 48]

(The God, in this case Guru Tegh Bahadur protected cotton thread and saffron paste, the identity marks of Hindus and performed a great saga in Kalyug)

2.        The Guru's call for freedom of worship could be heard resonating in today's constitu-

tions and charters for human rights including U.N.'s 'Declaration of Human Rights'.

### ARMED STRUGGLE

The proverbial sword of the Khalsa has earned universal acclaim for the Sikhs as 'a marshal race'. In Sikh Philosophy, God has often been described as Master of the sword as opposed to wordly kings and emperors. The Guru held that there is only one True king mightier and above them, the Supreme being. In order to see people's revolt against tyrannical rulers succeed, peaceful struggle normally gives way to armed conflict. Without stern moralistic or spiritual control, mass movements eventually take on bloody trappings, ending up, more often than not, in anarchy and anguish. The Gurus were aware of the violence, destruction and bloodshed caused by indiscriminate use of the 'sword', not only in the name of power struggle but religion as well. Christian Crusades, Islamic, Jihads and Maha Bharta's Dharmyudh were enough to convince them that the use of arms must be based upon the solid rock of 'Righteousness'\*. *Khalsa Akal Purkh Ki Fauj* (Sarab Ioh, Amrit Kirtan, PP. 291-92.)

Guru Arjun's peaceful but soul stirring martyrdom proved a revolutionary turn for the future Sikh history. Before his departure for a tryst with destiny in Lahore, the fifth guru himself commanded his only son to get armed and confront the hostile forces as 'Master of Miri and Piri'-both 'Saint' and a Soldier'. Truly so he put both the 'Swords' on, at the hands of reverend Baba Buddha, who also happened to be the head priest of 'Hari Mandir' (later Golden Temple). The Sikhs would move about as self appointed 'Sword Arm' of the edifice of Dharma and 'Righteousness'.

The Guru fought a few battles with the invincible Mughal army in which his new untrained recruits fared quite well. The Guru had begun to appear as virtually, the King in the audience (congregation) with full regalia and had for himself constructed 'Akal Takhat'..... Throne of the Immortal Being.....symbolizing political power.\*\*

Revered and adored as Sacha Patishah the (True King) by the people though, the Guru found an atmosphere not so amiable for his adventures with the sword. He retired to the Shivalik foothills but the candle was lit once for all. At the time of Ninth Master's execution in Delhi, the terrified state of the public, rather shocked Guru Gobind Singh. The auspicious moments of Khalsa's creation were fast approaching. Khalsa, by virtue of sword, would turn sparrows into hawks and sheep into lions.

\* **"If thou desirest to play the game of love then come to my lane with thy head on thine palm."** [Guru Nanak G.G.S. P-1412]

**"Such a person is recognised as true brave one who fights for Dharma, gets cut into pieces but never leaves the field."** [B. Kabir, G.G.S. PP-1105, ]

Indians suffered from Adler's inferiority complex.

[Dr. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, PP-35]

\*\* " He did not use his sword in anger....."

[Muhsin Fani, Dabistan-i-Mazahib; PP-220]



Sword as 'Kirpan' became Khalsa's most pronounced symbol (5 K's), which was always to be raised as a last resort and always in defence of righteousness.

**"Chunkari - Az Hama-i-Heelt-i-Dar Guzasht II**

**Halal ast Burdan Ba Shamsheeri Dast II" [Zafarnameh, selected writings, PP. 482]**

*(When all the peaceful means have failed, it is righteous to get hold of the sword)*

The Tenth Master's emphasis on sword and arms was so insistent that he composed a lengthy poem 'Shaster Nam Mala', giving God all the marshal names his poetic imagination could imagine of. Ordinary folks, in the hands of Guru's charismatic personality' turned into heroes who could dare the lion in his den and challenge the awe inspiring Aurangzeb in his own court'\*..... Creator of the Khalsa would sing to the glory of warriors of righteousness defining his brand of 'Dharam Yudh' in such beautiful stirring strains:

1. *"Blessed is his life in the world who utters God's name while contemplating the battle in his heart. II"* (Selected writings, PP. 15)
2. *"I have no other desire but to fight for righteousness. II"* (Ibid, PP. 54)
3. *"I only gain the trust of God the Truth if I fall dead fighting with the arms on the battle field. II"* (Ibid, PP. 62)
4. *"When the final moment arrives I may fall dead. II"* (Ibid, PP. 63)

The Guru sacrificed his all : his father, mother, sons, comrades in arms, suffered unspeakable agonies but his spirit remained as undaunted as ever, The Khalsa's sword can be seen flashing throughout history against the Mughals, Afghans, Iranians, Marhattas, Gorkhas, the British-turn by turn and even in free India in the form of gallant resistance to the discriminatory policies of the Government of India.

### **SIKH PATRIOTISM**

India with its geographical confines, has truly been a single nation administered by a central authority only for short spells of time. During Arya Vrata times, it was fractured landmass ruled by several royal 'gan-rajyas'. The Aryan kings would be at with each other and non-Aryan principalities as well. Historically Chandra Gupta Maurya brought most of northern India including modern Afghanistan under his sway but it was Ashoka the Great, who reached southern plateaus of the Subcontinent. Centuries later Ala-ud-Din Khilji of Delhi Sultanate went further down to the South. The great Mughal Aurangzeb almost succeeded in claiming to be the Emperor of the whole of Hindustan respectively.....\*\* Religious, racial, tribal, clannish or family loyalties used to be more important than the love of one's country in those days.

\* *" Chirion Se Main Baaz Turaoun II" (I will have the hawks torn into pieces by the "Bheron Ko Main Sher Banaoun II"... sparrows and I will convert sheep into lions.)*

[Panth Parkash : Transformation of Sikhism; PP-23]

\*\* India became a single, united, political unit only during the British rule.

With the rise of nation-state structure towards the end of the medieval period, countries with clearly defined borders, political systems began to be enthused with love and pride of the mother/father land.

In India, it was reserved for the Sikh Gurus, like so many other initiatives of theirs to inject into the people of India, a sense of nationhood and a sentiment to live and die for the honour of their people. In Sikh view, Almighty is the only ruler, entire mankind, for that matter the whole universe, his kingdom.

God is also a father figure, hence the doctrine of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man assumes utmost importance among the Sikh tenets. Geographical and cultural conditions, however, set the humanity apart in separated units which are governed by various political structures. The concept of nations, according to Sikhism is not limited by borders, races and colours for the whole humanity becomes one nation. Sikh approach therefore, is applicable anywhere and everywhere. In principle, there ought not to be barriers and borders so far as common values of mankind are concerned. But practically for the sake of management of these segments, people entrusted with the task of governance would rather act like managers and executives. It is in this strain that Guru Nanak described Indian sub-continent as Hindustan. It is indeed, heart warning to see Guru Nanak denouncing Ibrahim Lodhi, the Pathan Emperor of Delhi's weak, demoralized and dispirited defense of 'gem-like Hindustan.\*

Exposing the hypocrisy the double facedness of Khatries, the ruling race of Hindu India to renounce their own language and speak the language of the foreigner occupants instead, to earn the favour of their masters, Guru Nanak declares them 'apostates':

*"Khatrian Tan Dharam Chhodia"*

*Malechh Bhakhya Gahi II"*

[ G.G.S., PP. 663]

He even, incensed at Babur's atrocities on innocent people, made a strong note of resentment to his Beloved God Almighty breathing whose name the Guru lived every single moment of his existence:

*Thou have saved Khurasan ( Kabul's old name)*

*but terrorised Hindustan. II*

*People were tortured so much and their are*

*cries all around, do you not pity upon them ? II .....[G.G.S. PP-360]*

Then looking at the uneven forces of the invaders and the defenders, Guru complained to the Creator:

*"O Creator, thou belong to all II*

*If one powerful beats another equally*

*powerful, then I resent not II" ..... [G.G.S. PP-360]*

\* 1. The Dogs (Lodhis) have spoiled the gem (Hindustan), when they die no body will remember them. [G.G.S. PP-417]

2. One gets excited to see Guru Nanak use name 'Hindustan' couple of times in his hymns.

Use of the vernacular Punjabi as medium to spread his gospel was another conscious attempt to awake the people from the age long slumber. Carrying on the torch of patriotism, later centuries witnessed the wonderful drama of rescuing Hindustan unfold from the clutches of Iranians and Afghans by the valiant Khalsa.\* In the hay day of the Sikh Empire's glorious period, when the world stood dazzled at the Khalsa army's splendid victories, even then Lahore Darbar was not interested in going beyond traditional, natural, north-western borders of Hindustan\*\*, which demarcation was kept intact by the British also. Pakistan, nowadays, is also confined by the same boundaries drawn by the gallant Khalsa in nineteenth century.

### **DEMOCRACY**

The Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man is a recurrent theme, one finds repeated again and again sung aloud in the Sikh Scriptures. If God is the prime rather the only source of all power, the only Master of life, growth and death i.e. creation, sustenance and destruction; three high points of the stream of conscious life, then His Supreme Creation the Human society can naturally and logically be held as recipient as well as cosharer of that power. Human, all religions speak in one voice, is the crown of the species and human life, the most precious gift by the Creator. He, so to speak, is inheritor, agent, and kind of viceroy of God Almighty on earth:

*"Is Dharati Peh Teri Sikdari II*

*Awar Jon Teri Panhari II"*

[PP-374]-[Guru Granth Sahib]

This was the idea behind the transfer of kingly powers to the people giving rise to the concept of popular sovereignty. Sikh religion is quite clear and emphatic about people's sovereignty in that the Sikh Gurus placed the community of their followers (congregation), a step higher than their own holy status:\*\*\*

*"Gur Sangat Bani Bina, Dooji Ot Nahin Hai Raie II" [Varaan Bhai Gurdas, PP-74]*

- \* Dr. H.R. Gupta, History of the Sikhs volume 4, Munshi Ram Manohar Lal publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- \*\* During Macnaghten Mission's visit to Lahore for Tripartite Treaty of 1838 A.D, between Lahore Darbar, Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk and the East India Company, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was offered Jalala Baad upto Kabul in lieu of Sind for his support in Anglo-Sikh conquest of Afghanistan, but the Maharaja, a realistic statesman that he was, laughed away the matter. However, Kabul became a sort a satellite to Lahore. Ladakh up to Sinkiuang was conquered by Zorawar Singh in 1834 A.D.
- \*\*\* Holding off the urge to mix up modern democracy and Guru's idea of congregation, it is however, clear, Sikhism highly esteemed peoples' wish and will:....'Sangat Ikki Visve, Guru Veeh Visve': Sikh adage.

Guru Nanak answered the Sidhas, when they asked as to who was the source of his strength?

In political terms, democracy with its paraphernalia voting, polling, parliamentary and constitutional structure became popular only in the twentieth century. American President Lincoln's famous words:

*"Government by the people,  
Government for the people,  
Government of the people."*

Sums up essentially the spirit of the democratic system, which, United State of America was the first to put into practice after the American revolution in 1776.

However, Sikhism, with its message of classless, casteless and nonsectarian society was the forerunner in practising these ideals in an organized manner. In the life-time of Gurus, what mattered most even in the selection of the next successor of Guru's holy throne, was inherent quality and talent. Bonds of blood, kinship and favouritism had no place at all in the process of picking up of suitable candidate. In the cases of second, third, and fourth Gurus, the incumbents' own sons were ignored since they did not come up to the mark as to ascend such a high office. In later Guru period, from fifth Guru Arjun on to the Tenth Master, Congregation, through its spokesmen, played decisive role in the choice of deserving successors. Guru Amardas, who is credited with institutionalizing the Sikh religion in conscious attempt to distinguish it from Hinduism, also gave the slogan:

*"Pehle Pangat Paachhe Sangat 11"*

All those who came to see Guru Amardas would first sit in the rows to eat from the Guru's kitchen and then go to have glimpse. Even as powerful man as Emperor Akbar had to abide by the rule.

### **TWIN DIVINITY**

In one of the last episodes of his life, Guru Gobind Singh, whereas he ended the chain of Bodily Gururship by installing "Guru Granth Sahib" as the Guru for eternity.....thus transferring his 'Soul', into the 'Word' ...and he also, through a commandment, dissolved his physical being into the 'Brotherhood of The Khalsa': 'Guru Granth' & 'Guru Panth'. *This is of utmost significance that Guru projected his soul into the collective body of the community.* Before his departure from the world of the mortals, while sending Banda Singh Bahadur as leader of the Sikhs, the first generalissimo over to Punjab with a clear-cut political agenda, he instructed his hand-picked nominee to always go by the council of five ones.....and.....never, ever to go dictatorial.

### **WELL BEING OF ALL : 'SARBAT DA BHALA'**

Sikh Philosophy derived its thought content from the Guru's Word, hence its all embracing nature, the Supreme Reality, the wonderful. Lord, in Guru Granth Sahib, has been defined in myriads of similes and metaphors. They all converge upon the Monotheistic Diversity of the Ultimate Reality i.e. One essence but countless in appearance. All living creatures, especially human beings, carry the same spark within, life's bounties are for one and all to enjoy. All are partners in the Divinity as well as the delicacies of Mother Nature.

1. " *All are partners in Thine Being,  
Thou look stranger to no one II*" (G.G.S., PP. 97)
2. " *Thou are our Common Father II*" (Ibid)
3. " *Neither is some one superior, nor inferior II*"..... (Ibid)

The Sikh Polity, therefore, has had to be prohuman in character\* and intent and general welfare for all mankind irrespective of creed, caste and colour, has a practicable goal. Welfare as concept involves economic, social, political & spiritual well being. Banda's short term rule, Misals' military government and later the Sikh Empire all testify to the fact that during the hay day of Sikh power, justice was equal and fair for every body. Religious bigotry was nowhere to be found.

### HUMILITY

In comparison to the Christian concept of God's kingdom on earth, Prophet Muhammad's Nizam-i-Mustafa and Hinduism's Ram Rajya and that of Workers' Paradise of Marxism, Sikh Political Ideology has a much humbler and far nobler ring to it 'Halemi Raj' : state and government based upon humility, humbleness and nobility. All combined they could be rephrased as a polity dedicated to 'Kalyanam' of the mankind. Rulers as well as government officials ought to be gentle, respectful, eager to help the public while transacting official business.

Sikh Polity, once equipped with the means of state power and authority, in fact, endeavours to bring 'Heavens' down on 'Earth':

".....*Hun Hukam Hoa Meharvaan Da II*  
*Pai Koi Na Kisai Ranjanda II*  
*Sabh Sukhali Wuthia, Hun Hoa Halemi Raj Jiu II*....." [Guru Granth Sahib, PP. 74]

"In a Sikh State, spelled out by Sikh Theology, there would be no suffering. All would enjoy good things of life, for now, this is the rule of humility ordained by the 'Merciful' God".

### MORALITY

Sikhism historically, owes its birth to a revolt more than any thing else; against immoral, hypocritical and worthless practices of the day, both in religious and political spheres. Practice must conform to preaching. The Gurus oppose with all means available, the unethical doings of religious leaders on the one hand and go to any length including laying down their lives and taking up arms to uproot the evil in the form of political tyranny and injustice on the other. "Ends", so The Guru said, "would never justify the means."

\* ".....*Kamal-i-Qaramat Qayam Qarim II* (God. the source of all excellence, the  
*Raza Baksh Razak Rihaqul Rahim II*.....". *miracle of all miracles, of ever lasting  
nature and graceful ; Master of will,  
[Zafarnameh, selected writings, PP. 476] livelihood, liberator and merciful.)*

**'Sachon Ore Sabh Ko Uppar Sach Achaar II'..... [Guru Nanak, G.G.S., PP-62]**

Everything is beneath 'Truth', yet 'Truthful Living is still.....'Higher'.

Political campaigns and games of power....Guru would 'often' declare solemnly, have got to be launched on moral grounds with clearly defined objectives with ethical core.\*

**"Raje Chauli Nianv Ki....." [Guru Nanak] ..... (G.G.S., PP. 1240)**

i.e. kings must take an oath of justice.

Zafarnamah,\*\* the Epistle of Victory by the Tenth Master, is marvellous composition in Persian, so far its poetic beauty, lyrical delicacy and charming diction is concerned-but it is a far outstanding work in its reprimands of Imperial misconduct. deceit and un-Islamic actions.

### **MIRI PIRI**

Two swords worn by Guru Hargobind-who built Akal Takhat, The Throne of the Immortal Being, right in front of Harimander, the Temple of God, popularly known as Golden Temple in Amritsar-stand for political as well as spiritual power residing simultaneously in the Person of the Guru. In actual practice, the concept behind the dual sovereignty represented supremacy of Spirituality i.e. Religious philosophy and ethics over worldly grandeur. the political power. Force is an ingredient so essential for any social formation as it has to keep its law and order, in place of chaos and brutality. Religious sanction in Guru's ideology of social stability and peaceful progress, are very much needed to keep the use of force measured, proportionate and under check.

### **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

Sikh leaders (Monarch or Democratic) must respect people's wish and will.

### **GURU GRANTH, HARIMANDIR, AKAL TAKHAT**

For spiritual inspiration, politician must turn to Harimandir seeking Divine Guidance from Guru Granth and looking up to Akal Takhat as the Highest Seat of Authority.

### **UNIVERSAL WELFARE AND EQUAL JUSTICE : SARBAT DA BHALA**

Without an iota of discrimination, the Sikh Polity and state ought to serve justice and 'good' (Sikh Prayer) of *ONE AND ALL IN GOD'S NAME AND RESPECT FOR ALL RELIGIONS. NON-SECTARIAN, MULTICULTURAL AND DIVINE SOCIALISM: EVERYTHING FOR EVERYONE IN GOD'S NAME* forms the linchpin of 'Sikh Polity'. (Also the concluding lines of The Sikh Prayer)

\* A few years ago, President George Bush of America, on the eve of 'American Armed Intervention into Panama, justified his actions in the name of high ethics and as final resort to solve the problem. (Globe and Mail, Toronto, Canda, July 1990)

\*\* 'Zarnamneh : Indeed a thought provoking, long sermon on rulers' moral turpitude especially, the unethical behaviour of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, Mughal grandies and Hindu Hill chiefs as well.

" Hamun Marad Baashad Shawad Sukhanwar, Na Shikame Digar Dar Dahane Digar."  
[A 'Man' ought to keep his word, what is inside should be outside in his mouth]

(Selected Writings, PP-496.)

## SIKH VIEW

Sikhism presents an all encompassing view about the Supreme Reality, Universe and the Man. Fundamentally it looks upon man as divine in origin, although he is composite of body, mind and soul. His progress implies the balanced development of all the parts. Human life has a goal and purpose and not an accident or a void. For dynamic living, one must follow the principles of *Kirt-Kirna* (honest labour), *Wand-chhakna* (sharing the fruits with others), *Nam-Japna* (loving remembrance of God), to live truthful life and holy company of spiritual beings. An ideal man, according to Sikh philosophy is a combination of *Bhakti and Shakti* (loving devotion and power to act righteously). Sikhism views the society free of class, creed, colour; egalitarian, non-sectarian, based on human values i.e. Brotherhood of Man. Sikhism enjoins certain duties and commitments: or duties towards family, society and nation and humanity, *Grast-Udasi* detached householder. spiritual-cum-worldly person, Self-discipline necessary for self-realisation. Control over the five vices; Lust, anger, worldly attachment, greed and pride. These are necessary, but must be held in check. Since society must be governed by the humans under some kind of political setup, a Sikh must act like a *Saint-Soldier* and always be ready to fight tyranny and injustice. In order to lead a successful, purposeful and contented life, *God's Grace* is the ultimate element which also paves the way for individual soul's union with the Supreme Soul.

Sikh way of life, and for that matter indeed, the Sikh polity is built on the twin pillars of *Sewa* (service) and *Simran* (remembrance of God).

In brief, Sikhism favours an ideal, benevolent, non-sectarian, religion based and democratic society as well as state. It is a sad fact though, idealism, when faced with reality finds itself bruised and injured.

A close study of the *bani* of Guru Nanak leaves no one in doubt that not only religion and politics but all aspects of life are given a synoptic view.\*

"Sikh Scripture draws a beautiful blue print of an Ideal Capital City graphically:

***"Begum Pura Shehar Ko Naon II***

***Dukh Andoh Nahin Teh Tthaon II***

***Na Tashwish Khiraj Na Mall II***

***Khauf Na Khata Na Taras Zawal II"*** [B. Ravidas, *Guru Granth Sahib* PP-345]

[In the 'Capital City of our Dreams known as Beghum Pura', no one knows pain and torment; there is no terror, no crime at all, nobody is helpless and there is no fear of downfalls.]

\* Dr. Darshan Singh, *SIKHISM (Issues and Institutions)*, Sehgal Book Distributors, New Delhi  
1996, PP-90

## **SCRIPTURES**

### **PRIMARY: GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

No Sikh study, so to speak is ever possible without 'Guru Granth Sahib', Harimandir Sahib and 'Akal Takhat Sahib', sort of 'Sikh Trinity', for a philosophical sweep. In addition to Sikh Scripture, other related literature also provides deep insight into the whole body structure of Sikhism in matters of religion as well as political development. Guru Granth Sahib: Compiled and edited by Fifth Guru Arjun, the Prince among Martyrs, who himself happened to be poet par excellence and literary genius and scribed by Bhai Gurdas; the scripture is revered as living embodiment of the Gurus. Completed in 1604 A.D., sacred Scripture of the Sikhs is looked upon as Inspired Word of God. It is also venerated as Guru or holy teacher, guide and is the presiding Presence in every Sikh place of worship. Its contents, set in Ragas, are hymns of God-consciousness, loving devotion and deep moral reflections\*. Among its contributors are six of the Gurus of Sikhism and the number of medieval Indian saints, drawn from different denominations and castes. In the original, its language is medieval Hindi and Punjabi with terminology drawn from several languages of India and from Arabic and Persian.

Granth, which is derived from the Sanskrit, implies like Quran and Bible, book-*The Book Par Excellence*. Unlike other Scriptures, it is neither history, nor mythology nor a collection of incantations. Its contents are spiritual poetry, the vision of the cosmic order and exhortation to the higher life. It remains unique in the perspective that it contains the utterances of God inspired people who have communicated the Divine Word in a spirit of deep humility and compassion for mankind. Present Scripture Adi Granth. (original book) is also known as Damdami Bir since it was recompiled by Guru Gobind Singh at Damdama Sahib and was declared by him, the Eternal Guru of the Sikhs in Hazur Sahib. As Guru Granth Sahib is the treasure house of Sikh Philosophy and ideals with all the issues, concerns and affairs to be dealt with in this work, it is naturally to be considered as primary source.

### **SECONDARY:**

Following Scripture are treated as Secondary sources since these are based upon the contents of Guru Granth Sahib and give exploration, exposition and elaboration of the subject matter contained in the Primary Sikh Scripture.

### **BHAI GURDAS'S EXPOSITION**

A close relative of Guru Arjun, Bhai Gurdas has been likened to St. Paul of Christianity, Hazrat imam of Islam and Ved Vyas of Hinduism. He flourished at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. He was first cousin of the mother of Guru Arjan, the fifth Guru, and remained closely associated with the Gurus. The works of Bhai Gurdas consist of forty lengthy poems called vars (religious cantos) and a collection of 556 briefer works called Kabitts, which contain

\* G.S. Talib, Sri Guru Granth Sahib ( Eng. Trans.), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1984,PP-XXII



the Sikh tenets and a panegyric of the Gurus. The Kabitts are verses in Braj and are seldom read. It is presumed that Bhai Gurdas wrote his own work not much more than sixty years after the demise of Guru Nanak. He served as a scribe under the Master's supervision to finish writing 'Adi Granth'. The subject of his compositions is the analysis, explanation and glorification of Guru's teachings, Dr. Mohan Singh in 'The History of the Punjabi Literature', writes: "His work is deemed to hold the key to the Sikh Spiritual treasury and to make the best and purest Rahatnama (the code of conduct).\* He died in 1629 A.D.

### DASAM GRANTH

With Tenth Master appearing on the scene, Sikh literary movement acquires colourful dimensions of rich scholarship in mythology, religion and a comprehensive understanding of all contemporary systems of thought. Linguistic jugglery, poetic deftness and delicacy of thought which is the hall mark of Adi Granth's medium continue to flourish in Dasam Granth. Guru Gobind Singh moved about in the company of poets and learned scholars of Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Braj and Punjabi. Himself a 'Master Poet' his own compositions revel in poetic beauty of metre and are treasure of religious, philosophical, spiritual and poetical scholarship. 'Dasam Granth', the book of the Tenth Master, was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh\*\* in Amritsar after Guru's demise and contains some of the best works by the prolific pen of the Guru. Like the Adi Granth, the book of Guru Gobind Singh is in metrical throughout, but the versification frequently varies. It is written in the Braj dialect, and in Gurmukhi script, except the concluding portion, the language of which is Persian, while the alphabet continues to be Gurmukhi. The Braj Bhasha of Guru Gobind Singh is almost such as is spoken in the Gangetic provinces, and has few peculiarities of the Punjabi dialect. One chapter of the Granth of Guru Gobind Singh is considered to be narrative and historical, namely, the Bachittar Natak, the Persian Hikayats, or stoires, also partakes of that character, from the circumstances attending their composition and the nature of some allusions made in them. The other portions of this Granth are mythological than the first book, and it also partakes more of a worldly character throughout, although it contains many noble allusions to the unity of the Godhead, and to the greatness of the Ruler of the Universe.\*\*\*

\* Dr. Mohan Singh Diwana; History of Punjabi Literature; PP-47

\*\* He was a great scholar and writer himself. As high priest of Harimandir, his services to the Panth are highly commendable. He was ordered to be cut into pieces by Zakaria Khan, the Governor of Lathore in 1734 A.D.

\*\*\* Ramesh Chander Dogra & Dr. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion and Culture, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1996, PP-117

## ZAFARNAMEH

Literally the epistle of victory, it was written in answer to Emperor Aurangzeb's Firmans to Guru Gobind Singh after the battle of Chamkaur. It was composed in 1705 ad it contains 111 stanzas. The Guru here used the heroic style, full of similes and metaphors, It is the tenth Guru's literary masterpiece in Persian and has a great historical value. It shows the relationship between the Sikhs on the one hand, and the Hindu rajas and Mughal rulers on the other hand. It also indicates that the stand of the Tenth Guru on the struggle against the Muslim rulers was based on human rights and the need to end injustice and oppression. The Guru pleaded for open diplomacy, and the practice of moral values in political matters. Spirituality is moral life in action. True religion is in reality a struggle for upholding moral values and vindication of justice, equality and freedom.

The Zafarnameh is an affirmation of the justifiability of violence for a good cause: When affairs have passed the limits of conciliation and all other peaceful avenues have failed, it is right and just to assert your basic rights with your sword in a righteous cause. It is an excellent piece of poetry in Persian and shows Tenth Master in his most charismatic and boldest disposition. \*

Written in the style and meter of 'Firdosi's Shahnamah'. It begins with invocation to God and there after the whole letter reads like a rebuke to the Emperor whose wicked deeds, in Guru's view, had brought disgrace to the noble name of Prophet Muhammad and his Islam.

In contrast to Machiavelly's *The Prince* and Kautalya's *Arth Shastra*, which stress the use of *ends justify the means doctrine* for *realpolitik*, Tenth Master's Zafarnameh lays maximum emphasis on high standards of morality and ethics while conducting political affairs, come what may.

\* *The Epistle of Victory*: G.S. Bedi; Hukam Singh Road, Amritsar; 1968.

## **INSTITUTIONS**

An institution can be defined as an organisation, establishment, foundation, society or the like devoted to the promotion of a particular objective especially one of public, educational or charitable character\* . A building devoted to such work is also held to be an institution.

Religion, politics or society, they all have chain of institutions in order to justify their existence and realise their objectives. They operate as regular principles which organise most of the activities of the individuals in a society into definite organisational pattern from the point of view of some of the perennial basic problems of any society of ordered life\*\*

### **GOLDEN TEMPLE**

Built by Guru Arjun, "The Temple of God", originally known as 'Harimandir', it ranks among the wonders of the world. Also called 'Darabr Sahib', since Guru is the True King in Sikh Ideology, Hence his chamber is the Imperial court in the fashion of Mughal Durbar i.e., Diwan-i-Aam and Diwan-i-Khas, It rises from the middle of Pool of nectar in the heart of Amritsar the religious capital of the Sikhs. Purely and absolutely confined to 'Divine Singing and Prayers', it remains the heart throb of the Sikhs throughout. Rulers of the day tried, time and again, to destroy it but each time Temple's desecration gave new life to the persecuted community. Sikh History, both in religious and political terms, revolves around the Golden Temple.\*\*\* In 1589 Mian Mir, a Muslim saint, laid the foundation stone of the temple which was completed in 1601 and the Granth Sahib was installed in 1604 A.D. It has four doors symbolising all mankind is one and every one is welcome to Guru's house. Art work in marble, jems and gold was done by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Being centre of inspiration of religion, it became the focus of political confrontations.

### **AKAL TAKHAT SAHIB**

Akal Takhat Sahib is the 'Throne of Immortal Being' and the magnificent memorial of the Sixth Master, the Master of 'Miri' & 'Piri', Guru Hargobind. Situated in front of the 'Golden Temple', the Sacred Throne is the symbol of spiritual freedom, humanity and selfless sacrifice. Throughout the centuries, Sikhs have sought guidance from this tower of divine light. Beneath its golden domes and hoisting flags, time has seen many a miracle happen in its marbled courtyard. Many a tale of cherished memories still reverberate here and there: two saffron flags symbolising Miri and Piri, the delicacies of Darshani Deorhi (the waiting chamber ) and Lachi Ber (a tree), etc., etc.

\* Webster's Dictionary, Portland House New York, 1983, PP-737

\*\* International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, The Macmillan Co. and the Free Press, U.S.A.,PP 410.

\*\*\* 1. Paying homage to 'Golden Temple', having a dip in the tank of immortality has been a longing, stirring in every heart. Maharaja Ranjit Singh Adorned it in Kingly Fashion with marble, gems and gold. The monarch humbly traces the source of his strength in the inscription right atop the front door.

\*\*\* 2. Massa Ranghar, Ahmed Shah Abdali had to pay high price for their disrespect to the 'Temple of God'. Same was repeated in the case of Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, after army raid on Golden Temple in 1984

The fact that Hrimandir and Akhal Takhat happen to be in the same complex, but distant, facing each other yet apart, vividly describes the role religion plays in politics according to Sikh Philosophy. Being in close vicinity, Temple and the Throne symbolise Sikh Polity in full glare i.e., Miri and Piri, Bhakti and Shakti, Raj-Jog, Degh-Tegh Feth, Khalsa Ji Ke Bol Bale (Sikh Prayer), are the changed titles of the same topic. At the same time however, distance between the two marks out the gray area between religion on one extreme and politics on the other.

### **FIVE BELOVED ONES**

Democratic practices of the Gurus at times, had to be kept alive at a very high risk. One of the factors that contributed to Guru Arjun's terrible yet glorious fate at the hands of Mughal Emperor Jahangir was the Guru's ardent wish to respect the peoples' will. When the Sikh community of Lahore came to know of Diwan Chandu Lal's insulting remarks against the Guru's House, in which he likened it to a gutter, they sent a word to Amritsar to refuse Diwan's daughter's hand for 'Hargobind', his only son. The Guru complied his people's wish at a horrible price.

People, of course, God-oriented, spiritually awakened and given to high ideals of love, morality, service and sacrifice in whose gathering.....so said the Guru.....God Himself resides\*as the fountain head of all power and glory; are risen to such a high pinnacle by the Tenth Master, that after his wonderous act of baptising 'Five beloved ones' who are revered as 'pioneers of the Khalsa Brotherhood' the creator of the Khalsa himself bowed before them to beseech the gift of Nectar.\*\* The first five initiated into Khalsa Holy Order on 30 March, 1699 in Anand Pur Sahib were as follows : Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Himat Singh, Bhai Mohkam Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh.

"Wahu Wahu Gobind Singh, Aape Gur Chela 11" [Gurdas Singh]

### **SARBAT KHALSA**

The Spirit of equality, in religious assemblies and of equitable division of labour as well as booty that came their way after the successful conclusion of a political campaign marked the 'Chivalrous Period of the Misals'\*\*\* (Misals-small states as confederacies). The general assemblies of the Sikhs, held at Amritsar, were called 'Sarbat Khalsa', to discuss emergencies such as foreign invasion, response to government's persecuting policies and commemorating festivals like Diwali and Vaisakhi or grave community affairs both religious and political. Resolutions were known as 'Gurmatta' (Unani

- \* 1. "God resides in the congregation II" ..... G.G.S., PP-94.  
2. "How to recognise true congregation, where only God's name is expounded II" ..... Ibid.
- \*\* Who can afford to remain unmoved by these touching words:  
"I am, what I am because of them, otherwise millions like me roll in dust",  
(Gian Parbodh, Amrit Kirtan. PP-294)
- \*\*\* Military Kingdoms. Duncan Greenless; Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib, Adyar, Madras, 1975. PP. 113.

mous decision in the light and Guidance of Guru Granth Sahib supported by historical incidents). They were binding on the Khalsa commonwealth in The Guru's name. All transactions took place in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib virtually held, metaphysically as 'The True King'. As misals gave way to the powerful Sikh Empire built by Ranjit Singh, The Maharaja of Punjab, Sarbat Khalsa and Gurmattas, if need be, were confined purely to religious affairs. Lahore Darbar had virtually assumed all executive powers inherent in the mystified body of Sarbat Khalsa.

The General assemblies of the Sikhs, particular during the Misal period till the rise of Ranjit Singh, raising the freedom fighters' bands to monarchy, were called Sarbat Khalsa. They had no formal canonised apparatus, like the modern constitutions of assemblies and parliaments, to conduct their affairs; but the proceedings were done in a spiritual fashion that made everyone present feel Guru's presence all around. Sarbat Khalsa had a ring of sacredness which left no room for cheap politicking. Everything, in word and deed, was done in the name of The Khalsa (the collective body of the Sikhs and its creator Guru Gobind Singh)\*

During the fateful years of Lahore Kingdom's downfall prior to first Anglo-Sikh War, it is heartening to note the remarks of Lord Harding, The British Governor General about the revolution brought by the Khalsa Army, "It was a democratic revolution accomplished by Sikh army." \*\*

#### GURMATTA

After Guru Gobind Singh's Demise Sikh movement changed into peoples' revolt led by leaders like Banda Singh Bahadur and others down to the final chapter of Anglo Sikh war when one phase of history came to end. Sikhs were pitted against, the Mughals, Afghans, Persians, Marahattas as also the British in not too a direct way. During these momentous events, Sikhs would meet in collective assemblies normally at Akal Takhat then called Akal Bunga with in Darbar Sahib Complex in Amritsar. Generally they would meet on Diwali and Vaisakhi festivals. General Assemblies would deliberate on circumstances as to what to do in order to face the situation confronting them. They would formulate their unanimous decision by consensus in the light of Guru's words (Guru Granth Sahib). Decision made this way were known as Gurmatta (Guru's Counsel). An incident is found in Shah Mohammad's Jung Namameh involving traitor commanders' conduct in first Anglo-Sikh war.\*\*\* The

\* In recent times, after the Blue Star operation Indian Government through congressite Sikhs like Buta Singh organised Sarbat Khalsa to denigrate Akali Dal, but was rejected as 'Sarkari Tamasha' by the Sikhs. Another Sarbat Khalsa was also called by the militants in 1986 in which they declared 'Khalistan' a sovereign Sikh State as their goal. However, it lost, its gravity in the cross currents of terrorism and political complexities.

\*\* Dr. Sangat Singh, The Sikhs in History, uncommon brothers, New Delhi 1996 PP-126.

\*\*\*1. "Pichhon Baith Singhan Gurmatta Kita" (After the first encounter the Sikhs, having watched traitor commanders' treachery, decided through a Gurmatta to counteract the British advantage)

Shah Mohammad, Jung Namah., PP-10

2. K.S. Thapar, ' Gurmatta in Practice' PP & P., 1975 PP-289

first formal Gurmatta was passed in 1745 when Sarbat Khalsa resolved to organise Sikh forces into regiments or cavalry. Under the overall command of Nawab Kapoor Singh. Now a days, Sikh politics has adopted Matta in place of Gurmatta as a political norm.

#### **CONGREGATION (SANGAT)**

An extremely familiar, one of the fundamentals in Sikh parlance, Sangat, has sacred connotation. An assembly of God-loving, God-fearing and consequently God-oriented people is what goes as congregation among the Sikhs. Primarily it is held, out of tradition, in the holy precincts of a Gurdwara. (Guru's door) in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib. However, 'Sangat' is not whimsical about the venue, place or platform. It could be held anywhere, but it must, as a rule, concentrate upon God as central theme; singing His Glory and Bounty is what could be described as moving spirit. The metamorphic effect of congregation on a person's spiritual as well as temporal aspect is miraculous which is illustrated in history abundantly. Since democracy needs awakened electorate, sangat is the most suitable venue for an individual's overall development.\*

#### **PANGAT (ROW OR LINE) & FREE KITCHEN (GURU KA LANGAR)**

In a Sikh free kitchen, whether in a Gurdwara or at private places one and all without any discrimination what so ever, are invited to sit in a row on the ground (In foreign countries, chairs and tables are used sometimes) In accordance with the spirit of equality, fairness and sharing which is one of the basic Sikh themes. Third Guru Amardas made it mandatory for the visitors including Akbar the Mughal Emperor of Hindustan to first partake of food in Langar (Guru's food free for all) then come to have audience with the Guru.

*"Langar Daulat Vandiyai, Ras Amrit Khir Ghiali.....II"*

(In Guru's langar, wealth, spiritual and material, is distributed, sweet dish of milk and rice with added butter is served.)

.....G.G.S PP-967.

These institutions played fundamental role in the development of political thought as well as activity. Congregation for example, was looked upon by the rulers as rebellious force. A body of devoted Sikhs later on turned into the Khalsa with a mandate : Khalsa shall rule. Same way Pangat, Sarbat Khalsa and Gurmatta which were basically religious institutions became very active in forging the collective spirit in the community to act and react in the contemporary political atmosphere.

- \* 1. In popular Sikh view Guru is held one point lower than the sangat. It means sangat only becomes superior if Guru as an additional factor is there. It also conveys the sense that real democracy trickles down to social and political realm.
- 2. Nirmalas (a missionary order started by Guru Gobind Singh) believe sangat is a joint word of *Swaym and gat* meaning there by in a Sikh Sangat, one's egoistic nature goes away leaving behind the true self.

## **(C) HISTORY**

With Guru Gobind Singh's physical departure, the spirit infused by him into the Khalsa came into full play. In terms of sacrifice, chivalry, morality, and generosity, Sikhs' overall conduct in the face of heaviest odds, this century could well be termed as Epic Age. That is why the episodes and sagas related to these years have become an indispensable part of Sikh Prayer. Epoch struggle begins with Banda Bahadur, the first ever nominated leader to the Sikhs in post Guru period, with a definite agenda chosen by the Tenth Master himself.

Guru Gobind Singh had come into this world to uphold Dharma (Cosmic Law) as he describes in his own words in Bachittar Natak (Wondrous Drama), he had a mandate and definite agenda to work for through the Khalsa. He set into motion a dynamism which was committed to bring about a change in society in all aspects. It is obvious, Guru was not oblivious to the importance of political power. Being conscious of the power of government of the day, its nature and policy which were tyrannical and devoid of true content of religion although rulers did everything in religion's name. They twisted, distorted and interpreted it to suit their ends. Guru had a mission ordained by the Almighty to accomplish. Even years before the creation of the Khalsa, he had enunciated his clear cut philosophy of religious society and political power.

In Krishan Avtar, Dasam Granth, he concluded his account with, "Without political power Dharma can not be established and without Dharma society becomes an admixture of scum". This doctrine was, in fact, continuation of Miri & Piri of sixth Guru Hargobind in concrete terms. It has been defined and explained as definite agenda Banda Bahadur was entrusted with to act upon and have Guru's vision of future humanity materialised into reality. Before Banda dashed to Punjab to lead the mass revolution which was aimed at putting in place a political system based on Guru's dictum : "to uphold the saints and destroy the wicked", Guru had conferred upon him the emblems of royalty i.e. the flag, the dram, five arrows. Having been blessed by his mentor, Banda rushed to Punjab to bring about a revolution based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. M.A.Macauliffe describes how the Guru granted sovereignty of the land to his Khalsa.

"Mother dear, I have been considering how I may confer empire on the Khalsa."\*

### **FIRST GENERALISSIMO — BANDA SINGH BAHADUR\*\***

The "Banda", whom the last Gukru sent to Punjab was born at Rajauri in Poonch in 1670. The story goes that remorse at killing a pregnant deer led him to renounce the world, and he became an accomplished yogi. At Nander he met Guru Gobind Singh, who accepted him a Sikh. He was a man of great courage and personal magnetism. Sikhs flocked to Banda's banner. Led by him they

\* Dr. H.R. Gupta, History of the Sikhs. PP-301

\*\* Some historians say he was renamed Gurubaksh Singh but he is still popular as Banda Bahadur.

overran the south - eastern districts and captured Sirhind in 1710. They razed the town to the ground and put its populace along with its Governor ( who had orderd the execution of the Guru's younger sons) to the sword. From there they marched northwards to Ludhiana ,Jullundur , Hoshiarpur and Pathankot; then South-Eastwatds to Karnal and across the river Yamuna to Saharanpur. Every where they routed the Mughals, slew officials and ransacked towns. Within a couple of years Banda became master of most of the Punjab.

The Muslim of northern India, alarmed by this sudden occurrence called for a holy war ('Jihaad') to exterminate the Sikhs. Emperor Bahadur Shah abandoned his battles against the Rajputs and the Marathas and returned to his capital.

The hand of fate turned against Banda. Bahadur Shah was succeeded by Farrukhsiyar who ordered the Governors of Lahore and Jammu to proceed against the Khalsa leader. Banda was deserted by a large section of the Sikhs, befooled by Abdul Samad Khan, the Mughal governor of Lahore. The Mughals surrounded Banda's forces and starved him, into surrender. He and his family and several hundered of his soldiers were led in chains to Delhi. There they were subjects to inhuman tortures and then publically beheaded . On June 9,1716 came the turn of Banda . He was forced to kill his son and was totured to death in Mehrauli. Banda's heroic death touched the imagination of the populace and signified that oppressors were liable to be called upon to account for their sins of omission and commission. This singularly helped to unleash dynamic forces in the body politic and, despite the setbacks, instilled irrepressible confidence in the community. He after the conquest of Sirhind permitted the Muslims, freedom of worship to recite *Khutba and Namaz*. He also made a fundamental change in the land oriented economic system by abolishing Zamindari system and making tillers and farmers the owners of their land. Till the end, Banda carried on Sikh revolution in accordance with Guru Gobind Singh's command as to fully follow the tenets of Sikh religion. By his exploits he was able to break the myth of Mughal invincibility. Indeed, Mughal empire never recovered from this shattering blow and set on the down hill course to final collapse. Historically Banda's unique contribution lies in the fact that he was the pioneer in the field of mass revolutions from bottom to top. He provided the model for later Sikh coins and above all, left a legacy of heroism, sacrifice and undaunted spirit in the face of heaviest odds for the posterity.

For some years after the death of Banda, the fortunes of the Sikhs remained at a low ebb. Muslim governors of Punjab were determined to wipe out the Sikhs and ordered the immediate execution of anyone who wore his hair and beard unshorn. A contemporary Persian chronicler records that the extensive plain of the Punjab filled with blood asif it had been a dish . The Harimandir in Amritsar was blown up and thousands of men, women and children butchered.

At last the tide turned in favour of the Sikhs. The authourity of the Mughal Government was weakened by the revolt of the Jat tribes around Delhi and by the incursions of the Maratthas from the south. This was followed by the invasion of Nadir Shah, and Ahmed Shah Abdali between 1739 and 1768 . Nadir Shah and Abdali ,not only dealt mortal blows to the Mughals but also destroyed the power of the Jats and Maratthas . What was perhaps more important for the Sikhs, they reduced the



Muslim government of the Punjab to impotence . The Sikhs kept out of the way of the invaders and were content to harass their retreating forces by relieving them of their loot and freeing the Hindu captives they were taking with them . Nadir Shah was impressed by their fighting qualities . He saw Sikh horsemen emerge from the Jungle, discharge their muskets and vanish before his troops could even load their guns He asked the Governor of the Punjab about them,“where are their homes?” "Saddles are their homes", replied the Governor,“they are fakeers who visit their Guru’s tank twice a year, bathe in it , and disappear .” Nadir Shah warned him, “Take care , the day is not distant when these rebels will take possession of your country.

The Sikh attacks on Abdali’s troops became more daring. Three times they occupied the city of Lahore while, Abdali was busy elsewhere. Abdali turned on them in fury on Feb.5,1762. Between thirty to fifty thousands are believed to have been killed in a single day. The carnage goes down in history as the ‘Wadda Ghallughara’ or the great massacre (Chhota Ghallughara took place years before in which several thousands Sikhs were killed by the authorities). However this was not enough to destroy the Sikh spirit. A few months after the 'Wadda Ghallughara' they defeated the Afghans near Amritsar and once more occupied southern Punjab. Two years later Abdali descended on them again. This time the Sikhs faced him in open combat near their sacred city and forced him to retreat. On his last invasion of India in 1768, they harried his troops right up to Peshawar and occupied northern Punjab as well. It was said that fighting the Sikhs was like slashing a sword through water.

#### **MISALS : STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE : ROAD TO IMPERIAL GRANDEUR**

The word 'Misal' has a number of meanings. It means a tribe, clan or voluntary association. Saniapat uses the word 'Misal' for a group of people. It also means 'alike or equal', also a file of papers. According to S.M. Latif, 'Misal' means 'the various clans under their respective chiefs' leagued together to form a confederacy', implying that the chiefs and followers of one clan were equal to those of another. Misal period saw Sikh Doctrine of political power blossom into full. Missals formation was based on equality and brotherhood. Their objectives included freedom, religious tolerance and sovereign power. They achieved their goals through Sarbat Khalsa, Gurmattas and singular struggle in the name of God, Guru and the Khalsa.

Ousting Mughals, Marathas and Afghans turn by turn from Punjab, Missals now set out to grab as much territory as they could. In this scramble for power. Sardars were often engaged in fratricidal battles. Nominally though, Dal Khalsa was still much like an old lion invoking dread and respect. It had branched into twelve sort of independent principalities. Old Sirdar like Nawab Kapur Singh and Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, the Sultan-ul-Qaum were replaced by younger Missaldars who were more energetic and adventurous. The struggle for supremacy raged on in full fury among the 'Bhangis', 'Kanahyaas', 'Sukarchakiyaas', 'Ramgarhias' and 'Foolkiyas'. Baghel Singh of Karorsinghia Missal is famous for his exploits around Delhi and beyond. There were twelve Sikh Misals that appeared on the scene;

1. Bhangi, 2. Nishanwalia, 3. Ramgarhia, 4. Ahluwalia ,5. Kanahyaa, 6. Faizulpuria ,7.

**Sukarchakiyaa, 8. Dalewalia, 9. Shahid, 10. Nakkai, 11. Krore Singhia, 12. Foolkiya.**

It was with understandable pride that the Coins were struck in the name the Gurus by the 'Misal' confederacy. The inscription on them read:

*"By the Grace of God and the Sword to Victory*

*Thus was ordained by Nanak and Guru Gobind."*

### IMPACT OF MISALS

By displaying rare spirit of adventure against the persecutors of their faith, by supporting the cause of the poor and the helpless and by preserving social equality among their ranks, the Sikh Misals made Sikh religion popular with the young and daring men in villages. Their bravery and heroism made the Sikh religion a mass movement in Punjab. They developed the Sikh character to dizzy heights and added some of the noblest features to their community life\*.

The valiant Sikh soliders bravely faced the armies of the Mughals, the Marratthas, Afghans and the Iranians without any fear. They levied a cess called *rakhi* and guaranteed protection to the inhabitants from the banks of Jamuna to to the banks of Indus. The Sikh Misals produced a deep effect on all the political powers in India at the time.

The most important factor in the political life of a country is its own securitiy and survival as a nation. It is in this aspect that the north-western frontier assumes the most important position. No other land anywhere else has contributed so mcuh to shape the life of the people as this frontier has done in India. The foreign invasions accross this frontier have greatly affected not only its political life but also its social life , economic life, its art, its literature, language, thought and culture, above all, its religious and political life.

The Sikh view was to put a stop to the ingress of all foreigners,. The Sikhs dominated the whole country from the river Indus to the Ganges , from Puncch to Sind. The Mughals, Rohillas, Jatts, Rajputs, Marathas, Hill Rajas, the British, and Duranees all were terrified of the Sikh Misals despite disunity and mutual warfare among them.\*\*

Of all the Indian people , who rose on the ruins of the Mughal Empire , none were more distinguished and outstanding than the Sikhs .Their struggle against the enemies of their faith and homeland were marked by their overwhelming fighting capacity, astonishing energy, stubborn perseverance, unprecedented sacrifices and their unshakable faith in their destiny , predicted by Guru Gobind Singh and the brilliance of their success.\*\*\* Qazi Noor Mohammad says that the Sikhs were the "beau ideal of a human being and were popular among the people of the Punjab".

It may be recalled that Qazi came in the train of Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1764, and was keen observer of things around him. Some of the remarks made by him about the Sikhs are note worthy:

\* Dr. H.R. Gupta, History of the Sikhs' PP-387

\*\* Ibid

\*\*\* Ibid

1. "They (the Sikhs) never kill a coward and do not obstruct one who flees from the field".
2. They respect the chastity of women as part of their faith and honour: "adultery does not exist among them."
3. "They do not rob a woman of her gold and ornaments, may she be a queen or a slave girl".
4. They "never resort to stealing and no Thief exists among them and they do not keep company with the adulterer and the thief."
5. "When in festivities, they surpass Hatim (in generosity)".\*

Coming from the pen of a bigoted Qazi, who otherwise used most offensive expressions against the Sikhs (whom he called dogs), these remarks testify to the impact of the religion on Sikhs' political struggle in this period.

The 'Misals' did not retain their democratic character for long. As soon as the Sikhs dispossessed the Mughals and became landowners themselves, leadership became hereditary. *It seems the pulls and pushes of realpolitik were making inroads into the Sikh Psyche.* It was left to Ranjit Singh to abolish the Misal system by absorbing them and forming a powerful and united Sikh Kingdom.

#### **SIKH EMPIRE : 1799-1849, A.D. : MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH (1780-1839)**

In 1780 at Gujranwala was born one destined to be the first Sikh Emperor. Ranjit Singh of the Sukarchakia Misal. His father was killed in battle when Ranjit Singh was only ten years old. The territories he acquired by inheritance and by marriage were administered in his name by his mother-in-law Sada Kaur, a very able and astute woman. By the time he was seventeen, Ranjit Singh took over the administration of his estates in his own hands.

Ranjit Singh was an ambitious man with a clear vision of what he was after and daring to grab every opportunity that came his way. He left his home town, Gujranwala in July 1799, captured Lahore and made it his capital. He assumed the leadership of the Sarbat Khalsa and set the seal on his new-won authority by capturing Amritsar in 1802. It was he who rebuilt the Harmandir in marble and covered its dome with gold leaf. An inscription to that effect exists above the entrance to the *sanctum sanctorum*. Gradually Ranjit Singh extended his domains till the entire region between the Indus and Sutlej came under his sway. He wanted to go beyond Sutlej to the Jamuna to bring the remaining Sikh states under his control but was checkmated by the English. Knowing his limitations, Ranjit Singh abandoned his designs to expand eastwards and signed a treaty of friendship with the English in 1809.

\* Dr. Ganda Singh, "Character of the Sikhs as seen by Qazi Noor Mohammad", PP & P, Vol. XV, Oct. 1981, PP-425-27

Ranjit Singh gave priority to reorganizing his army. He recruited the best fighting men available without consideration of religion or caste. However, he did not put much faith in the loyalties of foreigners. German, French or English, he said, all these European bastards are alike. In the Anglo-Sikh wars which took place only ten years after his death, not one of the foreign officers in the employ of the Sikh court fought on the side of the Sikhs; many offered their services to the British. The generals who led his armies in the campaigns were all Punjabis: Mohkam Chand, Diwan Chand, Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, Hari Singh Nalwa, Akali Phoola Singh and Colonel Shaikh Basawan. Along with these men, Ranjit Singh had others whose advice he sought in matters of state. Fakir Azizuddin and his two brothers became his chief advisors on diplomatic affairs: Raja Dina Nath took over administrative and revenue matters. In 1818, Ranjit Singh captured Multan and the neighbouring districts. The next year he annexed the whole of Kashmir to his kingdom. Four years later, the tribes of the Frontier rose in a religious war against the Sikhs. Ranjit Singh's armies decimated the Afghans and Pathan forces and the whole of the north-west Frontier province right up to the Khyber Pass passed into his control. In July 1838, Ranjit Singh put his signature to a treaty. A year later (1839) he was dead.

Ranjit Singh was the most popular hero of Sikh history. Deprived of the discipline of a father's authority, he dissipated his youth (The love of wine, women and horses remained with him to the last). He responded to the Punjabis' call to lead them to fulfil their historic destiny. He liquidated the warring misals and united them into the Khalsa Brotherhood. He expanded the basis of his state from a religious to a secular one, giving positions of trust and power in civil and military to Muslims and Hindus without any distinction. He raised India's most powerful fighting force and for the first time in two thousand years of the history of Hindustan turned the tide of invasion and brought the traditional conquerors of India, the Pathans and Afghans, to their knees. These achievements were enough to endear him to the hearts of all Indians. To add to these was Ranjit Singh's lovable character. This gave the peasant folk, from whom he had risen, a sense of kinship with him. In the gaudy pomp and splendour of his court, he lived a life of simplicity, always dressed in plain white clothes. He was courteous in speech and utterly humble in his dealing with men of religions.

There are many anecdotes told of his total lack of arrogance. He was a stern but kind ruler. Despite his many conquests, he did not allow wanton destruction of life or property. Throughout his life he never passed a sentence of death.

He was single-minded in his pursuit of setting up a powerful Sikh kingdom. He used every weapon in his armoury—craft, cunning, diplomacy, humility and compromise—to achieve this end. A well-known anecdote gives a clue to his character and the reason for his success. It is said that his favourite courtesan, Bibi Moran, after whom he had a coin struck, jibed at his ugliness and asked, "Where were you when God was doling out good looks?" The monarch replied with complete presence of mind, "I was busy seeking power." (Real Ranjit Singh)

### **THE PRODUCT OF SIKH CULTURE**

Sarkar-i-Khalsa was the climax of years along struggle of Sikh aspirations. Whatever may be the case, Ranjit Singh was the finished product of the Sikh culture which he epitomized in the feudal at-

mosphere of the times. Some Sikh Scholars tend to portray him as priest or Jathedar of Akal Thakat. They seem to forget the basic fact that Ranjit Singh was primarily a politician, a fighter and an empire builder by nature and also a Sikh. His day would begin with the glimpse of and the commandment from Guru Granth Sahib. Everything he did was in the name of the Guru and the Khalsa. He struck the coin in Guru Nanak's name. Governmental authority was known as Sarkar-i-Khalsa as also Khalsa army. He would take special fancy to see people around him in Sikh appearance. Particularly, his use of placing pieces of paper before Guru Granth Sahib, whenever he suffered irresolution regarding some important issue speaks highly of Ranjit Singh's devotions to Guru's word. While in Amritsar, he would always sit or stand with his face towards Harimandir.

Voices are heard that if he had not appointed non-Sikh officers such as Dogras to high positions, the Kingdom of Punjab would have survived. Contrary to this myth, entertained by good intentioned scholars, spirit of Sikh Culture and religion tells another story. This is as clear as the sun that the Sikhism places maximum emphasis on equality of Human Race ensuring the fruits of labour with other fellow beings. In this regard, Ranjit treated all his subjects with one eye i.e. fairly and equally in the capacity of a Sikh monarch. As an administrator, he had only one criteria of selecting candidates for official positions, the merit. One wonders, how otherwise, could he have run his government which was the desired fruits of centuries of Sikh struggle. If some nobles of Lahore Darbar who had assumed Sikh appearance and paraphernalia to gratified themselves with the Maharaja who was emotionally a Sikh from head to toe, those very people failed to justify their status later on, it is all together different matter.

Honesty of the heart, loyalty to a cause and to be true to one's salt are very subtle virtues that know scientific instrument has so far been invented to measure up. Moreover, a dispassionate analysis of the history compels a man with heart and mind to ask if non-Sikh nobility (not all) played a destructive role and a downfall of the Sikh empire, the conduct of reputed Sikh nobility; the Sandhanwalias, the Attariwalas and the Majithias is equally unfortunate rather disaml in face of what happened after Maharaja's death. As for religion, all were very good Sikhs rather standard ones but in the chess game of power and politics they proved mismatch to the need of the hour.

Ranjit Singh is also condemned on another count that he allowed non-Sikh, Brahmanical tendencies and rituals enter into Sikh way of life. In simple look at the atmosphere prevailing at the time shows that Maharaja was highly respectful to religious men of all faiths, in particular, to the Sikh priestes. What ever kind of interpretation of Sikh Principle was offered to him by the religious Sikh advisors of his court, he accepted it with open mind and heart. He would never adopt formal signs of royalty i.e. the crown, the throne and high sounding, mouth full imperial titles. He was satisfied rather pleased to be addressed as Singh Sahib or Sarkar. All though Persian was official language, he would usually converse, communicate and dictate his orders in Punjabi the state language or Urdu with the foreign visitors. On top of this, he would be at ease to answer the queries as to the source of his power in the manner that would disarm the questioner: "*Guru Nanak is the king, I am his rapatia (reporter or watch man.)*"

In the light of above discussion, it can be said that Ranjit Singh the Maharaja of Punjab was the ultimate product of the Sikh Culture of his times.

### **THE SIKH EMPIRE : POLITY**

Historians wonder at the systematized growth as an organic whole of the Sikh community in the Imperial nationhood of the nineteenth century.....that some of them try to trace the outlines of a 'providential Design' latent in its development and the Hand Divine as the Author behind. With The Gurus bodily out of sight, the post -Guru period makes a fascinating reading material for the students of history. Sikh polity developed in the light of 'The Guru's Word' and shaped by currents of time can roughly be divided into phases such as:

- (a) Banda's Sikh State. (b) Missal's Military Confederation and Khalsa Commonwealth.
- (c) Sikh Empire under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Sikhs under the British and in free India respectively fall under second category.

Approximately all the highlights of Sikh polity and State are present, in the infantile weak state though at every stage, but they take on full life in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time, when the Punjab Kingdom alias 'Sarkar-i-Khalsa' was reckoned among the four or five big powers of the day. How religion with all its positive and negative aspects becomes a dynamic force behind one of history's most dazzling Empires, can well be estimated from the pillars Sikh Empire rested upon:

**1. NON-THEOCRACY :** It was religion inspired government and not a typical theocratic state since there was no state religion. It was based upon the blue print drawn by the Gurus in broad outlines but it was far removed from the concept of "God's chosen people destined to rule over the others." Sikh monarchs were not at all like the Mughals Gods Shadow (Zil-i-Ilahi) or 'Sons of God' in the manner the Christian Kings of Europe deemed themselves. They were commoner kings.

### **GURU-THE SACHA PATISHAH**

The Gurus were the true king, their writ ran in both the worlds, thus Sikh Maharajas were humble servants of the Guru and rule in his name Particularly, Guru Nanak. Sikh coins and seals used to have the inscription :

***"Degh-o-Tegh-o-Fateh Nusrat Bedarang II***

***Yafat Az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh II"*** ( The Sikhs in history, PP-91)

"Food, worldly possession, sword (power and gallantry), Victory instantly are obtained from the House of Guru Nanak-Guru Gobind Singh."

Emperor Jahangir was furious because Gurus were addressed as True King by the faithful in utter disrespect to the Mughal throne. Reports reached him that The Gurus had established virtually an Empire within An Empire. Khusrow's revolt and Guru Arjun's kind treatment of the fugitive prince added fuel to the fire and The Guru fell victim to the Imperial wrath.\*

\* The emperor himself records it in his memories, the 'Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri', PP-35: ".....There lived at Goindwal on the bank of the River Beas a Hindu named Arjun in the garb of a 'pir' or 'shaikh', so much so that he had by his way captivated the hearts of many simple-minded Hindus, nay, even of foolish and stupid Muslims...who called him 'Guru'. From all directions, fools and worshippers were

Contd. →

Guru gobind singh, in whose hands, Sikhism attained fulfillment, made his manifesto public :

*"In Gharib Sikan Ko Deoun Patshai II*

*Yeh Yaad Rakhen Hamri Guriaie II"*

[Panth Parkash]

"I shall make these poor Sikhs Kings of the Country, so, they will remember our pontificate. These prophetic words remained the guiding star for the Sikhs in the darkest period of their history. Even Lehna Singh of Bhangi Missal is reported to have answered Ahmed Shah Durani When the Afghan conqueorr got fed up with Dal Khalsa's tenacity and defiance, offered Bhangi Sirdar Governorship of Lahore in return for truce with Kabul.....as under :

".....Thank you for the offer but the Guru has already granted us Kingdom which we are trying to erect by dint of sword.....Thanks again for the delicacies of Kabul but we being freedom fighters in struggle cannot afford to taste them since they suit kings and emperors, which we are not as yet."

The idea of The Guru, as the 'Powerhouse' of worldly glamour is the Sikh view point. This further up the scale goes to Immortal Being, who in a single glance can make a pauper a king with all the mundance pleasures at his command :

"Lakh Khushian Patshahian Je Satgur Nadar Kare II" \*      If true Guru casts a glance, it amounts  
"Na Saazo Na Baazo Na faujo Na Farash II                      to millions of pleasures and kingships  
Khuda wanda Bakshanda-i-Aish-o-Arsh II                      [Zafarnameh, Selected Writings, 476]

Some power flows from the guru down to the Khalsa (Congregation), the mystic body of the whole Panth (Sikh Community). No body, even mighty Ranjit Singh would dare offend the Khalsa even though he ruled in the name of Sarkar-i-Khalsa.\*\*

**MILITARY (POWER ORIENTED) GOVERNMENT.**

*"Garreeb Ki Rakhya II*

*Jarwane Ki Bhakhiya II"* [Sixth Master]

".....Sword for the protecting the weak and the destruction of the powerful wicked ones...." Thus replied Guru Har Gobind in a query to ' Smrath Ram Dass' later Shiva Ji's Mentor , a Marhatta Saint; in a meeting in Kashmir defining the ethical role of the Sword in Sikh faith.

→ attracted towards him and expressed full faith in him. for three or four generation, they had this shop going well. For years. The thought had been presenting itself to me that either I should put an end to this false traffic or he shold be brought into the fold of Islam. When this news ( of the Guru having shown special favour to Prince Khusrau) reached the ears of our majesty, and fully knew his heresies, I ordered him to be brought into my presence and, having made over his houses, dwelling places and children to Murtaza Khan (Shaikh Farid Bukhari) and having conficated his property, I ordered that he should be put to death by "Yasa" i.e. the punishment of fire and water..."

\* [G.G.S., PP- 44]

\*\* He would call himself Raptia, the reporter who reported to Guru Nanak, the True King.  
[Dr. Ganda Singh, The Sikh Digest, Canada 1988]

Ranjit Singh's Empire was, surely based upon the grand Khalsa Army which was the foundation stone, pillar and protector of the great kingdom. It was composed of all the sections of his subjects with a majority from the Sikhs and the Punjabis. The Khalsa army organized by the Maharaja was one of the finest warring machines of the world and was highly praised by the English. Gorkhas and other marshal races of the time dreaded it. It never engaged itself in the fashion great armies of other Empire builders conducted themselves. The Maharaja had given the army clearcut instructions to keep out of the way of the public and treat their enemy on the battle field and afterwards with decency and grace. He once instructed General Hari Singh Nalwa particularly, while on campaign around Kheybar Pass, to take special care that the precious library of the Afghan Governor be saved during military operations.

Ranjit Singh was known the world over as, the 'Lion of Punjab' for his dare devil spirit, majesty, generosity and especially for bringing central Asian conquerors of India to their knees. His court, records Steinbach a European Officer of Lahore darbar, presented the sight beyond imagination in grandeur. but in the midst of such a pageantry, Ranjit Singh would sit dressed very simple with only one ornament, his all conquering Sword in hand.

### **RESPECT FOR ALL RELIGIONS**

In Sikh paintings of both traditional and modern style, especially on the walls of the historic Sikh Shrines (Gurudwaras), one picture which strikes most is the one where in Guru Nanak is flanked by Bala, a Hindu and Mardana, a Muslim, his life long companions. This captures the whole spirit of the religion of the Sikhs and is of utmost importance to non-sectarian approach in human affairs. Guru Nanak's call of Na Ko Hindu Na Muslam..... at the beginning of his ministry, like divine ray of hope in the pitch darkness of communal strife, disharmony and sharp divisions set the stage for later Sikh history.

*"Na Ko Bairi Nahin Begana*

*Sagal Sang Hum Ko Ban Aai II"* [Guru Arjun : Guru Granth Sahib PP- 1299]

"With love for all, with enmity towards none, is a celestial song running through the whole of Guru Granth Sahib. "One God's light in all human beings", was not only preached by the Guru with conviction, it was put into practice too in the most celebrated example of having Saen Mian Mir, of Lahore, lay down the foundation stone of the Golden Temple, the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Sikh faith, with its four doors in all the four directions (NEWS), Harimandir, the Temple of God, which has remained Sikh's heart throb throughout history to the day, is the living monument of Guru's message of love, equality, and prosperity for one and all without the slightest tinge of discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, colour, gender, status or age. This was a revolutionary and altogether a novel idea for those who found Indian society a living hell of factions, fractions and human degradations. Bhai Gurdas, the spokesman for par excellence of Sikh Theology describes the pathetic scene in following words :

**"Sach kinare reh Gayia Kheh Marde Bahman Maulane.....II"**

(Varaan Bhai Gurdas, G.K. Jaggi, PP-69.)



[Religious heads of both Hindustan and Islam are engaged in cut-throat polemics leaving the Truth aside]. The bitter, bloody feuds between Hindus and Muslims were given an additional impetus by the reigning monarchs like Alaudin Khilji, Sikandar Lodhi of Delhi Sultanate by their religious tilt favouring their co-religionist flagrantly. In addition to the Emperor's cruelties towards their subjects, religious fanaticism with respect to non-Muslim communities invariably formed the lynch pin of the official policies which deprived a large section of humanity of the barest means of existence. In such monstrous times,\* the Guru's call of 'Universal Love, Non-sectarian, Peace and Honour' was nothing short of heavenly melody which soothed the troubled minds, fearful hearts and restive souls.

**"Manas Ki Jaat Sabho Ekai Pehchanbo II"**

[Realise thou.....all mankind as one !]

[Selected Writings, PP-92]

The ninth Guru's martyrdom in Delhi in 1675 A.D. was solely for the religious freedom of Hindus of India Eventhough the Gurus themselves strongly opposed the shallow ritualism or any kind and also the fact that they were not Hindus. Sikhism's non-sectarian streak is, so prominent that some writer like Khushwant Singh, Kapur Singh \*\* and others have taken pain to prove that one of social goals, The Gurus set themselves for, was to serve as a bridge between Hindus and Muslims. The idea of co-existence among the antagonists was virtually put in practice by the Guru and later Sikh leaders with equal emphasis.

The Tenth Master's love for Pir Budhu Shah of Sadhaura has become a popular tale of history and then Pir's suffering at the hand of Mughal officials for his devotion to the Guru provided the ground for Banda's raid on the town in later years. While portraying Aurangzeb's profile rather harshly because of his wicked deeds solely for gaining the Mughal throne, The Guru, at the same time admires his qualities as a person, a general and a ruler and with a strong condemnation for his hypocrisy in Din (Islam).

**"Shahanshah Aurangzeb\*\*\*Alamin II**

**Dara-i Daur Ast Dur Ast Din II"**

**[Zafarnameh Selected writings. PP-512 ]**

\* Roman Senator Juvenal, decimus, Junius (60-140 A.D.) said, " It is true that we have appointed the guardians to guard the people but who shall guard the guardians?" .... during the chaotic times of Roman empire. Sachi Sakhi, PP-35

Guru Nanak scorns kings and officials for their atrocities on the public:

**"Raje Sheehn Muqaddam Kute II**

**Jaye Jagayan Baithe Sute II"**

.....G.G.S. PP-1288.

\*\* Kapur Singh goes at length in 'Sachi Sakhi' to define Sikhism's dynamism as an historic force to bring about harmony between the Aryan (Hindus) spirit on the one hand and that of Semitic (Islam) on the other.

\*\*\* 'Zafarnameh' does not spare Hindu Hill Rajas on this count as well.

After Guru Gobind Singh, when the Khalsa under the command of Banda Singh was engaged in a life and -death struggle against the Mughal Empire for the liberation of the Punjab from under its yoke, they never reduced it to a communal strife against the Muslims whose co-religionists the Mughals were. The Mughal newsletter of April 29, 1711, tell us that "for any Muslim who approaches him (Banda Singh), he fixes a daily allowance and wages and looks after him he has permitted them to read 'Khutaba and Namaz'\* with the result that 5000 Muslims have gathered round him.

### **NON SECTARIAN**

Sikh Kingdom established over North-Western Hindustan in the first half of 19th century is a classic case in the study of an imperial state and its policies. Punjab, Peshawar upto Kashmir with adjoining areas, were all provinces of Durrani's Afghan Empire when missals and later Ranjit Singh appeared on the scene. The East India Company had become the paramount power in Trans Jamuna Hindustan by then, so it was only Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa, fate had chosen, to be the liberator of Cis-Jamuna India which they indeed proved themselves.

Ranjit Singh, the youthful conqueror of Lahore was to be the man of destiny in this wonderful drama of Punjab's rise to the pinnacle of glory. His first public act, so the story goes, was a visit to the royal mosque (built by Shah Jahan. the Mughal Emperor of Taj Mahal fame), to pay his respects to the sacred shrine of the Muslim majority of his would be kingdom.....a master feat of diplomacy, the gesture epitomised Sikh Empire's future policies.\*

Having conquered back different areas of his kingdom from the Muslim lords and then treating them with utmost respect and decorum is something that the Lion of the Punjab is remebered for, by the friends and foes alike. Full religious freedom for all sections of his subjects, equitable distribution of power and position based upon merit alone, equal respect for all the religions and rich donations to sacred shrines withour discrimination were the corner stones of his official policy. Peace, religious tolerance, communal harmony and equal and fair scale of justice for one and all-regardless of religion or stature in a country that remained for decades the hot bed of wars, and bloody turmoils and it would suffice to make modern, advanced, multi-cultural democracies feel envious of Ranjit Singh Punjab. A look at the galaxy of courtiers, generals governors and other officials in the service of Lahore Durbar would bear testimony to the common make up of the Empire in letter and spirit. Prime Minister, Raja Dhian Singh and his Dogra Rajput brothers; Misser Beli Ram, Dina Nath-the finance Minister; Diwan Sawan Mal-Governor of Multan and several others; Punjabi Hindus, Jamadar Khushal Singh and his family

\* Khafi Khan in 'Muntakhib-ul-Labab', however, paints Banda as blood sucking monster since he razed Sirhind and other towns to ground.

\*\* Historinas and visiter to the Lahore court are all unanimous inviewing total lack of religious bias in Ranjit Singh's character. 'Jawahar Lal Nehru', in his 'Discovery of India is full of praise for Maharaja's singular achievement in this field.

form U.P.; Virbhadar Singh Gurkha General from Nepal, Faqir Aziz-ud-din, the minister for foreign affairs and his brothers; General Sultan Mehmud; Gauns Khan and several other Punjabi Mussalmans; General Ventura; Allard; Court; Honing Berger, Steinback, Governor Avitabile and scores of other Christian – European officers-along with Hari Singh Nalwa -Commander-in-chief; Sham Singh Attariwala; Lehna Singh Majitthia; Sandhawalias; Ahluwalias; Akali Phoola Singh and other Sikh Sardars.all of them were like the gems studded in the Punjabi Crown.\*

Had the British not foreclosed his options\*\*, Ranjit Singh would have brought in to force, the Indian Nationalism in place of Punjabi Nationalism which forces beyond his control forced him come down to. During the last years of his legendary career, the General Shaikh Bassawan, a Punjabi Mussalman led Punjabi army in Victory Parade through the Bazzars of Kabul and miles away on the snow capped Himalayas, another Dogra General Zorawar Singh subduing The Chinese and the Tibetans beyond Ladakh. This was, perhaps, the finest moment of policies of Sikh State or of any State, for that matter. Faqir Waheedud-Din tells a heart-warming tale of how gracefully Maharaja conducted himself when faced with such a situation as touching off religious sensitivities.

Once, Ranjit Singh, Faqir Aziz-ud-din relates, while having a morning walk with Faqir in attendance, outside Lahre, spotted a cart drive by. Body-guards of the Maharaja stopped the man. When asked what he was carrying, he answered that he had a manuscript of the Holy Quran, his life time's work. Finding no suitable muslim buyer in India, he was now on way to Kabul and other Muslim countries beyond. "This man seems to think", the Maharaja intervened, "there is no body in Hindustan, good enough to appreciate his art and labour...Well old man! how much do you expect?" the calligraphist told his price and the Maharaja clinched the issue by ordering money to be paid far more than the calli-graphist had asked for. The old man handed over the manuscript, which indeed was a piece of art, to the Maharaja who, took with utmost respect, put it on his eyes and gave it to Faqir Aziz-ud-din to read a passage from it. Aziz-ud-din complied with the Imperial wish, read out a Sura (Chapter) from the Quran which meant, 'Light of Allah is in every body and everywhere. God is one and common father of all'. "So says our Guru Granth Sahib", Maharaja wondered about, "Then where is the difference?" "Yes your Majesty! The 'Truth' is one and the same. People only define it defferently."

\* Punjabi poet Shah Mohammad pays rich tribute to 'Mahan Bali's unbiased outlook: "Razzi Rehnde Hindu Mussalman Doven Unah Nall Na Kisai da Waste Ee.II"

[Jangnameh, PP-1]

\*\* J.D. Cunnigham; History of the Sikhs, PP-245.

Faqir Aziz-ud-din explained." That is why Akal Purkh (The Immortal Being) has given me one eye", the Lion of Punjab burst into laughter, "So that I look upon every body with one eye." The Royal party galloped away. No better testimony to Sikh ideal of respect of all religions, is possible in which the mighty Sikh Emperor would take his natural defect i.e. the one eye so literally and mataphorically so as to conduct his state policies gracefully.\*

### THE BENEVOLENT MONARCHY

Wise men of both East and the West believe that man is the product of his environments. Psychology, anthropology, geography, in fact all the branches of human learning and knowledge, except religion, force this view in their way. It is only 'religion' which sees in physical body of 'man; the 'Divine Spark' at work. However circumstances do mould one's outlook towards life and the whole range of existances, nobody would deny this.

The times and circumstances in which Sikh Religion made its appearance, it took a long time in shape its 'Ideology' as well as 'Institutions'. the medieval period was on the way out, the modern age way in and the monarchy was well established rather the only world-wide accepted mode of political establishment. Large Empires, great Kingdoms, small States and petty principalities abounded the 'Global Scene'. India, then Hindustan, which has remained historically the theatre of operations with reference of Sikhism had well entrenched monarchies, i.e. Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire, contemporary to the Gurus from 'Guru Nanak' to 'Guru Gobind Singh', who gave this faith finishing touches. Sikhs, in later phases, had to contend with the Afghans and the Brithish Empire which is counted among the greatest Empires of the world.

This may well be the most important factor in Sikh Scripture 'Guru Granth Sahib's utnmost emphasis on 'God Almighty' as all Powerful King ,Emperor, in reality the only 'True Emperor' in this transitory realm of matter 'His Kingdom'. God the 'True King', in Guru's eyes, is not mere hypothesis or idea. He does exist, for sure and his reign lasts from one end of time to the other.

*"Asman Dharti Chalsi Mukam Ohi Ek II"* .....[Guru Granth Sahib, PP. 64]

[Every thing, the Skies, the Earth (Planet with life on ) shall go away-only God shall remain for ever!]

God's Kingly Power got transferred to Guru's through a mysterious design and he, as one with God, takes over as 'True King'\*\*. This was the turnig point in Sikh history in that it brought the Mughal

\* Such stories made him a folk hero.

*"Ikko Akh Sulkhani, Jihri Tipan Dhale I*

*Nion Nion Karan Salaman Do Akhan Wale I"*

[Maharaja's single eye forced mighty ones with two eyes to bow before him.]

\*\* Historically Sikhs began to call fourth Guru Ramdas the True King who was the founder of city if Amritsar-the Sikh religious Capital in Punjab.

emperors into conflict with the Guru's House. God in totality becomes the central theme in Sikh Gurus hymns, singing Almighty's praises in varied aspects, their fertile imagination could touch upon. Describing him in all possible attributes leavened with human passions Gurus concentrate, time and again, upon his glory, power, will authority, compassion, caring and .....grace. Since universe in order to keep its law and order and to avoid turmoil and chaos, needs central authority, which Gurus insist, only Almighty is capable of having and using in the best way he deems fit.

Rightousness and justice, in Guru's philosophy of politics, actually, the life as a whole, are two pillars, 'Divine Government' rests on. These are the characteristics, means and ends. Against this lofty criterion of Divine Kingship or government of any type as the ,case may be, the Gurus judged and evaluated monarchies of their times. What they found in political circles around filled them, particularly Guru Nanak, with remorse, revulsion, pity and anger for the rulers.

Guru Nanak's, on the whole, sweet, lyrical poetry at once changes tone while commenting on the contemporary political scene and starts flashing off sparks of utter despair and severe condemnation. Some glimpses are worth nothing :

[On the general trend of lust & greed of the rulers and public ignorance]

*"Lab Paap Due Raja Mehta Kurh Hoa Sikdar II*

*Kaam Neb Sad Puchhiye Beh Beh Kare Vichar II*

*Andhi Rayyat Gian Vihuni Bhahe Bhre Murdar II".....[Asa Di Var, G.G.S., PP. 468]*

[Corruption, deceit and meanness of the judges and officials.....]

*"Kazi Hoi Ke Bahe Niaye II*

*Phere Tasbi Kare Khudaye II*

*Waddhi Laike Haq Gawaye II*

*Je Ko Puchhai Tan Parh Sunaye II" .....*[Guru Nanak, G.G.S., PP. 951]

[Rampant debauchery coupled with total neglect of responsibilities.....]

*"Shahan Surat Gawaaeeya Rang Tamashe Chaye II"*

.....[Rag Asa, Guru Granth Sahib, P.417]

Babur's invading armies inflicted cruelites on women, princes and innocent people, moved the Guru to sing songs of blood and lamantation in the city of the dead.....

*"Paap Kin Janji Lai Kabloun Dhayai Jorin Mange Daan Ve Lalo II*

*Saram Dharam Doi Cahhal Khaloye Kurh Phire Phardhan Ve Lalo II*

*Khoon Ke Sohile Gawaeaye Nanak Rat Ka Kungu Paye Ve Lalo II"*

.....[G.G.S., PP. 722]

Bhai Gurdas reinforces Guru's verdict on state of political affairs in his Varan (Punjabi) by saying, Bhaye beadli patshah, Ulti warh khet kau khayee and Parja andhi gian bin. [ PP-14, 36, 36] \*

Years later, Guru Gobind Singh in his time, censures Aurangzeb in such a sharp language that his 'Zafarnameh' can be cited as heavenly Statute Book on the morals of Kingship and the art of state craft.

\* GIAN RATNAWLI ; G.NARAIN SINGH, BHAI RALA SINGH & SONS, AMRITSAR, 1914.

[On sinfulness of Aurangzeb.....]

**"Thy crafty nature is fully well known to God Almighty our heavenly sire, Who will no longer suffer thee to holdsway over this great empire....."**

[On Divine Punishment.....]

**"O, commit not the sin of homicide**

**Forgetful of the Lord's wrath divine,**

**For soon or late thy blood be shed**

**By the unfailing sword of Lord Benign," .....[Zafanameh, selected writings, PP. 512]**

How correct and penetrating Guru's analysis about the conditions of his times has been .... can be verified from some other historians\* as well. Sayyad Muhhamad Latif in his 'History of the Punjab' has this to say: ".....Corruption, degradation and treachery stalked openly the land. The county was desolate; and vice, cruelty, extravagance and profligacy overspread its surface. Honour. Justice and position were brought and sold. The rulers of the land were sunk in voluptuousness and pollution of a most revolting description and immersed in an abyss of enfeebling debauchery....."

".....The springs of true religion had been choked up by weeds of unmeaning ceremonial, debasing superstitions, the selfishness of the priests and the indifference of the people. Form had supplanted the reality and the highly spiritual character of Hinduism had been buried under the ostentatious paraphernalia of sects. The centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression and the spiritual subjection and stagnation had aggravated the demoralisation to an enormous degree....."

Against this back ground and with the heritage of Religion and Political idealism to bank upon, Sikhs struggled very long and very hard to create a Kingdom of their Gurus' dreams. It was monarchy indeed, the benevolent monarchy.....Banda's attempts to give popular government under Sikh control, especially making tillers the masters of the land were initial but a determined step in this direction The Misal system of the Misaldars, who were locked in life or death struggle against both internal and external enemies, was quite an improvement on Banda's prototype which elicited praise from writers like William Irvine.

- \*  
1. Muhammad Latif; History of Punjab; PP-21-22.  
2. Gokal Chand Narang; Transformation of Sikhism; PP-18  
3. Tarikh-i-Farishta recounts a story about Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khilji of Delhi in which Sultan asked his Qazi how he should treat Hindus. Qazi replied, " Your Majesty! Hindus are like the Earth and slaves of the Mussalmans...." Sultan smiled as he was doing the same already.

.....[M.A. Macauliffe, The Sikh Religion, Vol. 1, PP. 45]

"In .....all the 'paraganas' occupied by the Sikhs, the reversal of previous customs. A low scavenger or leathersmith, the low in Indian estimation, had only to leave home and join the Guru, when in a short space of time he would return to his birth-place as its ruler, with his order of appointment in his hand. As soon as he set foot within the boundaries, the well-born and wealthy went out to greet him and escort him home....."\*

Almost a century's long struggle, drenched in blood; when climaxed in Ranjit Singh's 'Sarkar-i-Khalsa', holding sway over North-Western Hindustan, the political structure it offered to the people, oppressed for years on end, was exactly that of Sikh political philosophy blossomed into kingship; gentle, kind, compassionate kingship committed to fairness and justice for all.

India, divided between British and Sikh domains in the first half of the 19th century presented quite a contrast. India beyond Yamuna, under the British flag remained comparatively safer and quieter as opposed to Sikh India (Punjab Kingdom) under the saffron flag which had to suffer the attacks from abroad and the inner persecution of the Mughal rule. Still, Ranjit Singh's Punjab had managed to become the focus of envy as well as adoration in the eyes of people in India and the world outside.

Raised from the ruins of the Mughal and Afghan Empires the Sikh Kingdom surprised everybody; political rivals, historians and most of all, general public with its achievements. With so little to draw strength from, and a whole lot to accomplish, the Sikh Emperor (he was content to call himself Maharaja or Sarkar though) gave to the country, devastated by decades of long wars, a kind of government, which people would fancifully call 'Sat yug' a utopian, mythical period of peace, truth and contented living as was there in the beginning of the universe. Equal participation in the government upto the highest level, respect for all religions and peoples' will, stability and prosperity, fair, easy and impartial treatment, honour for art, merit and tolerance may be counted among some of the most brilliant achievements of the kingdom of Punjab and that too in the feudal age.

As a man, Ranjit Singh was what legendary characters are supposed to be made of, larger than life, a warrior, statesman, a politician and above an Empire builder, who would use every weapon in his armoury...craft, cunning, diplomacy, bullying, humility, and compromise....to obtain his aim.\*\* There may be some kings, famous for welfare, fairness and justice in the name of Almighty. History books, no doubt, have many names that are credited with establishing powerful, well organized political structures that served mankind well in their own time. But, there will certainly be very few rulers, if any who would in one aspect or the other would match Ranjit Singh's Sikh Empire (of Qul Mulk-i-Punjab.....that was how the state was entered in official records). He, perhaps, surpassed all

\* William Irvine; Later Mughals (Vol. 1); PP-98-99.

\*\* Khushwant Singh, The Sikhs, Lustre Press Pvt. Ltd., Varanasi, India; PP. 28.

previous or post regimes, monarchies\*or democracies whatever, in the realm of preciousness of human life and compassion. There was no death punishment at all in his rule. However, grave the crime and heinous the criminal may be, life was never condemned to death. Royal clemency and mercy was even extended to the kingdom of animals and birds.

Human trait was, indeed, so pronounced and prominent in the Maharaja's character that Sir Lepel Griffin in his 'Ranjit Singh' Oxford; P.16', highly applauds the way he treated his vanquished enemies with dignity and honour.

By giving to the people of the Punjab, who suffered unspeakable tortures at the hands of foreign rulers for years, a powerful, grand but benevolent monarchy, he translated into reality, the Guru's dream of 'Halemi Raj': the Rule of Love, Justice and Humility was built with the might of the 'Sword' but the great Maharaja of Punjab would always remember Sikh Prayer.

*"Let in the name of God, sayth Nanak, there be peace, progress and prosperity for one and all... II"* The benign Ranjit Singh, lives in the folk lore to this day-THE LION OF THE PUNJAB.

We have on record, reproduced in facsimile in 'The Real Ranjit Singh' by Faqir Waheed-ud-din, one of the Maharaja's farmans.

"The well-wisher, Faqir Nur-Ud-Din Ji may you be happy ! It is hereby decreed by His Highness with the utmost emphasis that no person in the city should practise high-handedness and oppression on teh people. Indeed, if even His Highness himself should issue an inappropriate order against any resident of Lahore. If should be clearly brought to the notice of His Highness, so that it may be amended. The protector of Bravery, Malwa Singh, should always be advised to dispense justice in accordance with legitimate right and without the slightest oppression and, furthermore, he should be advised to pass orders in consultation with the PANCHES and judges of the city and in accordance with the Shastras and the Quran, as pertinent to the faith of the parties, for such is our pleasure. And should any person fail to act in accordance with your advice or instruction, you should send him a formal letter, so that it may serve as a proof on the strength of which His Highness may punish him for disobedience."\*\*

\* 1 The Fundamental State Document, The Mahazar was designed to bring all matters affecting the life and well-being of his subjects, both Hindus and Muslims directly under Emperor's control. It sought to obviate the possibility of playing with the life of the people in the name of orthodoxy of Islam" .... Rizvi, S.A., Dr.; Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar's Reign' Munshi Ram Manohar Lal; New Delhi, 1967 PP-49-50.

2. " In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security and in their gratitude our best rewards".

[Queen Victoria's Proclamation. 1857 A.D., Sachi Sakhi, PP. 65]



This was, Perhaps, the only order of its kind in the history of the world issued by a king authorizing a subordinate officer of the State to withhold any order issued by the king himself which, appeared to him to be inappropriate and oppressive. the credit for this extreme humility in the interests of the people goes to the follower of Guru Nanak who had enjoined upon the kings to take a vow of dedication to impartial justice (Sarang ki Var 1, VIII-2, G.G.S., PP. 1240)

## **SIKH POLITICAL HISTORY UNDER THE BRITISH**

**(1849-1947)**

Under the British the Lawrence ( Sir Henry and John ); and later Sir John alone, took over the rule of Punjab ; They reduced land taxes, introduced the usual “neutrality” towards religious other than Christian mission work, village school and courts, and succeeded in winning the general satisfaction of the people .

Not all Sikhs, however, accepted British overlordship with good grace . Among the most vociferous antagonists was Baba Ram Singh (1815-85) who exhorted his followers to boycott the British textiles and wear Khadi (More than half a century before Mahatma Gandhi ), have their own postal service and courts. In fact, Baba Ram Singh is the real pioneer of the struggle for independence of India. His followers known as Kukas or Namdharis launched a struggle to oust the British from Punjab. for that matter, from India. They were the sworn enemies of the British rule. They started the campaign of reformation among the Sikhs, which had political undertones as well. All the features which in later years were adopted by Mahatma Gandhi, were in reality started by Baba Ram Singh and his followers. Although Namdharis worked to establish Sikh rule in Punjab, their movement of *Swadeshi* coupled with the boycott of Western goods and ideals had larger implications in Indian context. Baba Ram Singh's socio-religious reforms movement clearly had political backlash. Movement, however, turned violent as some Butchers were killed by Kukas in Malerkotla and other places which caused the government to react harshly. Over the issue of the slaughter of cows scores of Namdharis were captured and blown off from cannons and Ram Singh was exiled to Burma where he died in 1884 A.D. Baba Ram Singh was, indeed the fore runner of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah.

The Sikhs had to contend with new challenges. The Arya Samaj movement was making rapid strides in the Punjab , large numbers of adherents from among the Sikhs ,Christian missions were also gaining converts from the poorer sections of the community . Sikh leaders launched the Singh Sabha to counteract these movements and instill faith in the orthodox Khalsa traditions through publication of literature on Sikhism and the opening of Khalsa school and colleges. The British Governments gave its blessing to this literary - educational movement , The famous Khalsa college of Amritsar was founded in 1893.

On the literary front the movement was fortunate in having the celebrated poet- philosopher Bhai Vir Singh among its leaders. Bhai Vir Singh founded the Khalsa Tract Society and the weekly journal Khalsa Samachar .

An important innovation introduced by the Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1908 was the setting up of an education committee to organize annual education conferences in different parts of the country . Its political facet was represented by a body called the Chief Khalsa Diwan . The politics of the Chief Khalsa Diwan were pro-British and indifferent if not hostile to the nationalist movement which was underway that time .

### **RAISING THE FLAG OF FREEDOM**

Nationalism as a political philosophy involving love for country began to attract the attention of political thinkers in 19th century. But in practice it was used as a means to oust the British rulers from India, for the first time, by Bhai Maharaj Singh, a disciple of Bhai Bir Singh of Naurangabad. Bhai

Maharaj Singh, a saintly preacher became the leader of a popular movement against the occupation of the Punjab by the British forces in 1846. He was arrested in 1849 on account of his anti-British activities and was deported to Singapore where he died 1856. Sikh nationalism is in fact the love for whole mankind and the universe, but in political terms, the idea of national aspiration drew its strength from Sikh philosophy.

It is estimated that in World War I one third of the British army was composed of Sikh soldiers. Sikhs also served as policeman in different parts of the British Empire extending from China to the Middle East. Hundreds of pensioners and their families settled in Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, East Africa and the Middle East. Contacts with the world outside made the emigrants conscious of the absence of political rights in their own country. The American and Canadian government passed laws to keep the Asiatics out of the American continent.

### **PRE PARTITION INDIA**

#### **AKALI MORCHAS (Gurdwara Reform Movement)**

After the loss of their kingdom by treachery and the British machinations, the Sikhs looked for an opportunity to challenge the foreign government. They were locked in a love-hate relationship with the British. In the beginning, soon after the annexation of the Punjab, the British let loose the reign of terror to suppress anti-British feelings of the Sikhs.\* In due course of time, however, the British adopted a favourable attitude and Sikhs began to join the Indian Army of which they soon became a sword arm. Reformation movements in the form of Singh Sabha followed by Chief Khalsa Diwan were assisted by the British favours. Meanwhile, with the turn of century, circumstances both internal and external, underwent tremendous changes. Congress and the Muslim League, representing two major communities of Indian society were already there fomenting political stirring. The Sikhs slowly came to realise their position in the current atmosphere of the country. Under the impact of the Sikh renaissance, a lot of education and contact with Western countries, Sikhs also became awakened to their place in the political scheme of things in India. Also Ghadarites and Babbar Akalis added to the stirrings of the time.

Ghadarites inspired by the religious teachings worked for the independence of India in America, Canada and other countries. They were extremely helped by the Gurdwaras, donation money and manpower mostly Sikhs. It is worth noting, that leftist movements such as Ghadarite drew heavily on Sikh religion. KamaGata Maru episode in which Baba Gurdit Singh and his passengers on board Japanese Ship inhumanly treated by the Canadian Government were received with bullets by the British authorities at their arrival at Calcutta Port.

After the first world war came the Non-Co-Operation Movement with the horrible shooting tragedy at Amritsar in 1919; the Sikhs played a heroic part in the national movement led by Gandhi. At the same time they were waging a great fight on their own; they tried, at times by force to get the possession of the Gurdwaras, drive out the corrupt mahants who held them as their hereditary possessions.

The Sikh 'Gurdwaras' had always been other besides places of worship. They were used as meeting

\* Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, wrote in April 1849 that the "Hatred of Sikhs against the British exceeds the national and religious animosity of Sikhs against Afghans." PP&P-Vol. VIII, April 1974, PP-16-17.

places, schools and rest-houses for travellers. Most of the historic 'Gurdwaras' were well endowed and had the revenues of large tracts of land attached to. Hindu idols were worshipped along with reverence to the Gurus. Some of them were men inclined to carry on their debauchery within the Gurudwara precincts.

In April 1919 took place the tragic massacre of Jallianwala Bagh where General Dyer fired upon an unlawful (but peaceful) meeting and killed and wounded over 1500 men, and children. A Majority of the victims of the firing and the insolent order were the Sikhs. Newly educated Sikhs became more cautious in their search for identity which led them to seek inspiration from Guru's Word and religious and historic traditions. Adventurous among them adopted name Akali (the follower of Immortal) and

They began to assemble and give call for reforms in the Gurdwara affairs. Since priests and custodians the Mahants had large endowments attached to them they wouldn't like to be separated from the wealth, lands and luxuries. Authorities supported the Mahants for their political ends. Stage was soon set for confrontations.

The British Government began to back the 'Mahants' against the Sikh congregations. The year 1921 saw a series of tragedies. There was a fracas at Taran Taran resulting in a few deaths. A month later the Mahant of Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak now in Pakistan had 130 Sikh worshippers, who had come to take possession of the shrine, butchered by his hirelings. Then the movement to liberate the Gurdwaras was launched in full force.

In the summer of 1922 the biggest passive resistance movement was launched at 'Guru Ka Bagh' a small plot of land attached to a Gurdwara. The Mahant had forbidden the Sikhs from taking timber from the land, as had been their practice for the use of the kitchen attached to the gurdwara. The 'police' backing the 'Mahant', began to arrest Sikhs for trespass. The batches of a hundreds protestors marched in a peaceful procession to 'Guru Ka Bagh' and were given a merciless thrashing with lathis by the police and arrested. After many months, the land was handed over to a city gentleman and a Bill to regulate the management of the Sikh shrines was being processed when the Government struck once more. One night in the autumn of 1923, fifty-seven leaders of the movement were arrested. They were charged with conspiracy to overthrow, the British rule in order to set up a Sikh State. The trial went on for three years and all but a few were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment.

The movement ended in 1925 with the passing of the 'Sikh Gurdwara Act' and the release of the leaders. In the five years of agitation over 30,000 men and women had gone to jail, nearly 400 had been killed and over 200 wounded. Seven hundred village officials were dismissed and over Rs. 15 lakhs realised in fines and forfeitures. The political results were even more far-reaching.

Akali movement was basically socio-religious movement which had several aims and objectives. The foremost among them was to reform the working and management of Sikh shrines. It was a mass movement for the freedom and reform of historical Gurdwaras. Propagation of Sikh religion and Punjabi language was another motive. Above all it sought and achieved the fulfilment of its desire to bring the British down to their knees and carve out a place for them in fast changing political environment in the country. Akali movement adds to the glorious chapters of the Sikh history as this was the first and only movement of its kind perfectly peaceful and sort of convincing demonstration of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent Satyagrah which had caught the imagination of world community. It also threw up new gen

turned their attention towards Gurdwaras. What they saw there, shocked and repulsed them. eration of leaders to work in Western democratic setup. By sheer spirit of sacrifice, suffering and perseverance, Akalis got kind of religious state in the form of S.G.P.C. under the British law.\* On the other hand Gurdwara Act and its paraphernalia of elections etc created sharp division in the community, which pushed the Sikh concept of congregation and democracy on to the sides. Akalis have been viewed as the advanced troops of the war of independence of India. Shiromani Akali Dal is the product as well as glorious legacy of Akali movement of early twenties of the out going century. Akali Dal began to be treated and respected by the British as sole representative organization of the Sikhs at par with the Congress and Muslim League.

Soon after the successful ending of Akali movement, Sikh politics watched an interesting and intensive game of power and the race to get to the top. Master Tara Singh, finally made it to be recognised as the sole leader of the Sikhs by defeating his such rivals as Baba Kharak Singh and others within the Akali Dal and Sir Sunder Singh Majithia in the outer field. He neutralized the Sikh Maharajas. In this adventure, Master Tara Singh was favoured by the circumstances in the form of Baldev Singh at his side all through.

Akali movement which won international fame was solely based on the fundamental of Sikh religion. Akali volunteers were inspired by the martyrdoms of the Gurus, the sacrifices of eighteenth century and the Divine Word enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib. Akali Jathas (bands) would leave for arrests after the prayer, commandment and sacred vows taken at Akal Takhat Sahib in Golden Temple Complex.

The loss of political power in 1849 had its concomitant impact on the Sikh faith and ecclesiastical polity. Sikhism was greatly weakened by the exodus of a large body of people who had adopted the Sikh form during the period of Sikh ascendancy for worldly gains, and whose allegiance to its principles and traditions was tenuous. Also, Brahminism had reasserted itself and idols were pushed into the holy precincts of some of the Sikh Shrines.

#### **AKALI MOVEMENTS : PUNJABI SUBA TO EMERGENCY AND SO ON..**

##### **CRISIS OF IDENTITY**

The crowing success of the Akali Movement of 1920's, which was proudly described by no less than a leader like M.K. Gandhi in glowing terms\*\*\* as the first battle of 'War of Independence of

\* Sohan Singh Josh, Akali Morchian da Itihas, (Amritsar, 1972), PP-125

\*\* Mr. D. Patry, Asstt. Director of C.I.D. of India: "Hinduism has always been hostile to Sikhism.. It has already made serious inroads into domain of Sikhism." (Aug 11, 1911)

\*\*\* Sardul Singh Caveeshar wrote, "The Sikh knows that if his religion is safe, he can certainly regain the lost liberty of his country; but if his religion is not safe, even if his country be free, there is no guarantee that he shall be able to maintain that freedom. In fact it is the freedom of his religion that is the best safeguard for the freedom of his country" ..... (The Akali Movement 1944, PP-141)

India', is The Gurdwara Act of 1925' and S.G.P.C., the 'Religious Parliament' of the Sikhs duly elected under the 'Statute Book' The Sikh politics of present times revolves around S.G.P.C. \* Which has usually remained the strong hold of 'Shiromani Akali Dal' The Sikh political party equivalent of the Indian National Congress and Muslim League of British India in history and significance. S.G.P.C., ever since its inception, has been the central playground of Sikh politics and been used by the ambitious politicians as a spring board to captapult themselves into the power structure of national politics.

In direct violation of the linguistic Policy of the Government of India' with Nehru at its helm, Punjabi speaking state was denied for decades which in Akali Supremo Master Tara Singh's eyes, amounted to discrimination against the Sikhs. Akali Dal had to launch vigorous mass movements, Punjabi Suba Morcha, to see the justice done. Religion, Golden Temple and Akal Takhat, as usual, provided the spirit and the platform in all these years.

### **EMERGENCY MORCHA**

Mrs. Indira Gandhi took over as Prime Minister of India soon after Lal Bahadur Shastri's death in 1966. By temperament she was imperious in nature and very haughty and dictatorial. J.L. Nehru himself an autocrat was also a master in art of dubious diplomacy. In international forums he would show his face as socialist but in habits and inclinations, he was more Western than the West. With regard to his attitude towards Sikh political aspirations, he was extremely hypocritical, stubborn and cynical, before partition, he would often remark in public meetings or press conferences that "brave Sikhs of Punjab deserve a place in the North where they too will feel the glow of freedom",\*\* but soon after independence, as Prime Minister of India, he made a complete turn about. This set the stage for future confrontations between the Akalis and the government of India. The story of Punjabi Suba Movement is sufficient to prove Nehru's animosity towards the Sikhs.\*\*\*

Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister carried on same policies so far as the Sikhs are concerned. The declaration of the state of emergency by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the night of June 25-26, 1975, to save herself from the aftereffects of Allahabad High Court Judgement unseating her for her corrupt practices, shook the very foundations of the democratic spirit underlying the Constitutions. Paradoxically, the emergency was within the framework of the Constitution.

In shock and disbelief, timid and supine nation almost capitulated. There were individual cases of protest, especially by the students of Delhi University for a couple of months, and an obituary notice in the Time of India, "death of Mrs. Democracy, wife of Mr. Freedom", but by and large the people in hushed tones took it casually. According to the Amnesty International, 140,000 persons were detained without trial during the emergency,\*\*\*\* and of them 60,000 were Sikhs.

\* Formed in 1920, as a mini parliament, S.G.P.C. runs like a state and is central arena of the Sikh politics. Situated in Amritsar it has often been under the control of the Akali Dal. Founded in 1920, Dal has been active in Punjab's as well as National politics as a political arm of S.G.P.C. and aims at maintaining the separate identity of the Sikh community.

\*\* J. L. Nehru in press conference, Calcutta.... Sachi Sakhi PP-157.

\*\*\* Justice Gurnam Singh paying tribute in Punjab assembly in 1964, "A true understanding of the Sikhs and statesman-like comprehension of their genuine problems evaded our late Prime Minister." The Statesman, Sep. 15, 1964.

\*\*\*\* Inder Malhotra, Indra Gandhi. A personal and Political Biography, London 1989, PP-178

Akali movement against the emergency projected the Akalis on international scene as champions of civil liberties and human values. Significantly Indira Gandhi tried to win over the Akalis by offering covetous propositions of political power, but they refused all temptations. The year of emergency, 1975 was marked as tri-centenary commemorations of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom in New Delhi in protest to Aurangzeb's policies of religious persecution. This was religion's straight forward intervention in purely political movement for the sake of nobler and higher cause.

In nutshell, In 1975, when Prime Minister India Gandhi's emergency provoked world-wide condemnation of Indian Government and when all the opposition leaders were put behind the bars. Akali Dal, launched a well organised public morcha which was withdrawn only a day after Mrs. Gandhi had lifted emergency under national and international pressure.\* Holy Akal Takhat, Manji Sahib Hall in fact the Whole Goden Temple Complex used to be the spectacular venue of the Emergency Morcha.

### **DHARAM YUDH OF 1982**

Closer to our times the Akali movement of 1982 had its beginnings in 'Delhi Gurdwara Elctions. Mrs. Indra Gandhi could not forget the humiliation at the hand of Akali and would not forgive them. To teach them lesson, she devised a strategy of provoking the Akalis through Nirankaris into launching a morcha and the game was played so deftly which plunged the Akalis, the Sikhs, the Punjab, in fact whole of India into the horrible years of bloodshed, terrorism and carnage. Of course she had to pay heavy price for this. The government of the day, through Giani Zail Singh ----then Home Minister, throwing out the window all legal, moral and constitutional formalities imposed their 'own' Jathedar Santokh Singh, as President of Delhi Gurdwara Committee. Akali leaders loudly protested and the Morcha began disguised though, as a movement for Punjab's Water rights. Things got out of hand, The governments both provincial and central mishandled the situation--- and so she failed to evolve what the situation demanded-a strategy of combating communalism and separatism in Punjab on which the tactics would be based, paving the way for Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala's rise on the political firmament. 'Extremism'.....was next to follow which plunged Punjab into the most horrible years of terrorism and mass killings. The events took their own momentum culminating in the raid on Goden Temple and Akal Takhat with worse consequences to follow for the leaders, the Sikhs , and India alike. The vibrations and tremours still continue to threaten the whole edifice of religio-political infra-structure of the Indian sub-continent.

Sikh Politics has virtually become politics of Akali Dal in Punjab. Religion has been, In fact, so predominant in modern politics that it has often set off sharp controversies about religion versus politics. Jawahar Lal Nehru would often take pride in India's secular constitution, its non-religious, non-communal character; in reality, the proclivities of the Hindu majority were taking over both the

\* Akali agitation against emergency was coterminous with the announcement for holding of general elections in Jan. 1977 and withdrawl of emergency. In fact Akali morcha was withdrawn 24 hours later.

personnel as well as the system. Contrary to V.B. Patel's obvious religious (he would be referred to as 'Iron Man' with Shiva Ji Maratha's heritage), Nehru's imprint on Indian Political Structure was that of a philosopher statesman. A man of the new age, he avoided overtly religious tendencies, would call himself a socialist but could not resist the romantic tinge in retaining the prefix 'Pandit' i.e. a scholar of Hindu texts.

Father of non-alignment in International arena of the Super Powers cold war era, he would, at times, muse about the need and importance of 'faith' in human affairs: *"the legs-astride position of Prime Minister [Jawahar Lal] Nehru is .....of considerable importance If (he) swings a few inches either way.....toward the democratic West or toward Communism-his shift can sway the suspended minds of millions in India.....He says there is something wrong in a world that contains both poverty and technical progress.....He appeals to everyone who thinks that it is probably sinful to be rich, and certainly sinful to have atom bombs.....Nehru acknowledges the human need for religious faith, but [has warned that religion] 'seems to stand for blind belief and reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation."* .....Time, U.S.A., May 7, 1951. \* Strangely, Nehru would become stubborn whenever the Sikhs under Master Tara Singh raised any due demand in accordance with the constitution and the declared policy of the Government of India.

#### **FREEDOM SANS GLORY**

Congress leaders Gandhi, Nehru and Malviya etc. had assured the Sikh leaders that no constitution will be accepted in free India without Sikhs' consent. In the high drama of division of India, Sikhs cast their lot with the Congress. But according to Akali Chief M. Tara Singh all solemn promises were forgotten at the first ray of the dawn of independence which set the stage for future confrontations.

The British rulers brought with them European, especially their own traditions into India. Theirs was the constitutional monarchy within which Democratic institutions as also the press operated with freedom and responsibility. Same was likely to happen in India in general and in the Sikh's in particular : The Kingly aspirations were replaced by the democratic set up : parties, office-bearers constitutions, bye-laws, ballots, elections, newspaper and propaganda proved like heady-wine to the masses . An interesting feature of the period is the history of personal clashes among the Sikh leaders in the name of 'Panth' that almost amounted to 'Civil War'. All that has been discussed in the previous chapter filters down, in the final analysis, to what Akali Leader Master Tara Singh has so succinctly summed up :

"I do not say that Religion and Politics are one or united, I simply say that they cannot and should not be separated."\*

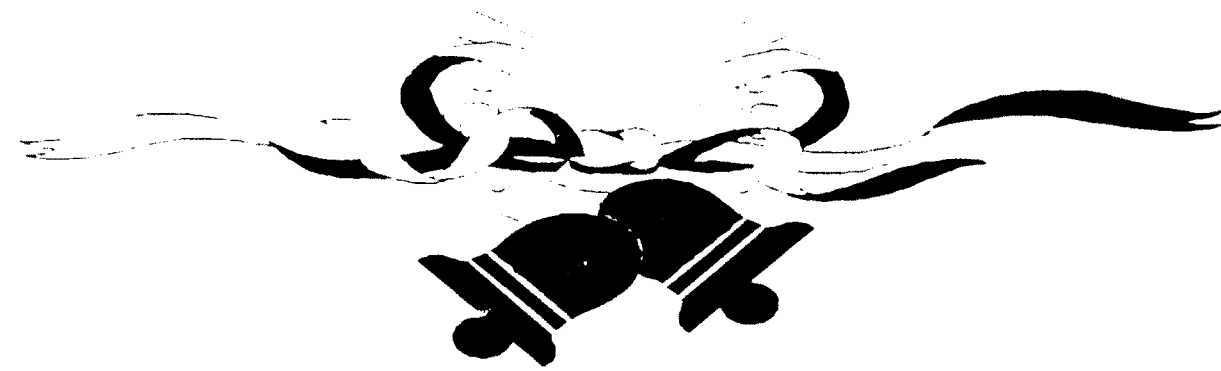
In Sikh Politics, all power and authority lies in God-Almighty and the Guru (all the ten Gurus and the Divine Word Guru Granth Sahib), is the 'True King'. Metaphysically Guru's blessings rain down upon leaders, who are strong, virtuous, popular and given to high ideals in times good or bad.

It seems, history through mysterious design, has placed the Sikhs against odds. Geographically, their home land is placed on the high way of the invaders from the west Asia. When whole of India lived comparatively safer life, they have to bear the brunt of attacks. During Ranjit Singh's time, the British

\* Parbhat (Urdu), 15 March, 1960.



were a step ahead of him in number of instances like Capture of Delhi and campaign in Afghanistan. In spite of their tremendous sacrifices and immense amount of blood shed in the cause of righteousness, freedom and human values, they have to suffer under democratic setup just because democracy is the game of numbers and they happen to be a minority in present day Indian State. More over, post partition India claims to be governed by a *secular* constitution which is by definition non-religious in nature whereas Sikh polity is fundamentally based on *religion*. This paradox is the root cause of the *identity crisis*, the Sikhs find themselves presently about which they are still bewildered.



## *Chapter 8*

### **CONCLUSION :**

**(A) GAME OF POWER**

**<< MAN...RELIGION...POLITICS >>**

**(B) EPILOGUE**

**(C) SUMMING UP**

## CONCLUSION

### (A) GAME OF POWER

#### <<RELIGION.....MAN .....POLITICS>>

All, having been said and done, comes down to 'Man' in the final count down. What is it that, makes a person successful and basking in glory and an other suffer disgrace, public rebuke in the by and large similar circumstances. we have seen in the forgoing pages the history of mankind, in both religious and political arena, unfold in a stunning, exciting and wonderful drama, All religions have their ups and downs in different intervals adding lustre to the pages of history books as also dark chapters depicting sheer horror, and revulsion.

All religions put forward the manifesto of dreamland which is for sure, to be brought into reality when, whence no body knows. The religious Scriptures, lives of Prophets and the message conveyed by them, all aim at lifting man's soul to the heavens and turning this realm of material existence into paradise, the Utopean world for the humanity to live in for ever. This is sort of 'High-way to Heaven' and 'Back to Earth' a two-lane road between Earth, the planet of human life and Heaven.

Why is it so then that two persons of the same faith kill each other, slip down to the lowest level of degradation to achieve political ends and that too in the name of "Religion"? Why is Akbar the Great, a Muslim, reading Khutba in Allah's name to beseech Almighty to eliminate all thoughts of animosity, discrimination and evil and is adored by the masses a 'Mughal-i-Azam', the Great Mugal and his great grand son, Aurangzeb also a Muslim, ruling over a larger Empire, conducting his policy in the name of Islam is condemned to public centempt ?

Religion normally draws a rosy picture of a dreamland, a utopian world of beauty, colour and joy which is only possible if man has some degree of control over the resources and means available to him. Futhermore, men of God, the prophetic figures of history all have got to live in the social context, they visualise the realm of their ideals only in material often contemporary metaphors. God himself being depicted in fantastical, imperial grandeur even in the most orthodox of religions. It is then natural and imperative indeed that 'man' the living pulsating toy of five elements\* should desire, aspire and strive for ultimate source of gratification, the power of political authority and government which the world of matter has to offer.

Power itself and lust for power \*\* are very central to any political system, thus the way, 'man'

\* In Indian view human is made of Earth, Water, Fire, Air and space.

*Human body is composed of five elements .....II* (G.G.S.PP- 1427)

\*\* "*Power is an ultimate aphrodisiac*"...Dr. Kissinger, Walter , Issacsum, & Simon, Schuster, New York 1992, PP-13.

acting in and influencing the world about him is what counts most. Despite the number of political structures quite large, scholars usually agree that there are major three types, in one form or the other, that remain effective, no matter what the circumstances may be.\* Montesquieu, a French philosopher classifies them as 'republican, monarchical and despotic' which differ from Aristotle's Scheme in that Greek philosopher had 'aristocracy and democracy' aspects of his 'republican government.'

It seems rather paradoxical that religion which has its vocation, to tone down the material temptations should instead sharpen them.\*\*

History is, of course, replete with the names of great rulers whose great deeds and brilliant achievements have come to stay like legends and fairy tales in human memory. On the contrary, this is also equally true that unbridled lust for power on the part of those who brutally abused religion, played havoc with life, civilization, art, ethics and everything that stood in their way. Kings, despots, dictators, generals, presidents or leaders of present times in the blind race of getting to and staying at the top by hook or crook have, invariably, turned on deaf ear to the inner voice of conscience.

There is another aspect of 'Religion' affecting the personality of the men in the 'Power-Game', otherwise, good intentioned and of noble character. Often they tend to be single tracked and 'absolutes' in nature.\*\*\* For them any undertaking even remotely associated with religion, has got to be executed as the 'Divine Will': their inclination to always read between black and white, foreclosing all options but one leaves them no room for a realistic grasp of the situation. Doing so they fail to make necessary moves so as to affect a favourable change in the circumstances and find themselves ultimately end up in their self created cage.

Through a metamorphic change, they consider themselves chosen by God and act like eccentric and whimsical persons. Their ego knows no bounds and absolute power corrupts them absolutely. Their sensibilities to aesthetics and the simple joy of life get so much dulled as to make them brutal and pathetic figures. Virtually they act on Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's aphorism in the reverse way :

"Juda Ho Din Sayasat So To Reh jati Hai Changezi."

[Religion, rather turns them into fanatics who would be capable of committing Mongol atrocities.]

In history's arena, this attitude of thinking and acting in absolute terms has cost many a ruler his kingdoms and political power. Whereas cloak and dagger policies, conspiracies and murders stick out as regular feature in the game of power, absolutist tendencies have also been extremely harmful.

\* The Baron de Montesquieu, The Spirit of Law; London 1966; PP-8

\*\* It is the idealization of the final aspects of the life that human beings at a particular time aspire to live. (Dr. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism; S.G.P.C. , Amritsar.) PP. - 1

\*\*\* During the critical period of transfer of power, Congress, Muslim League and Akali leaders were invited to Simla by Lord Wavell who thus remarked about Master Tara Singh, " The Sikhs, who are in a position to negotiate on the spot, are disunited and poorly led. Master Tara Singh is stupid and emotional."

(Wavell's Journal, London, PP-427.Sachi Sakhi, PP-109)

Diplomatically smart power seekers often using 'Chankiya's Matsya Purana'\* or Machiavellian craftiness outmanouever their rivals easily. Nurturing a misconception of religion and morality, such people usually lose sight of the relative reality and are cheated away by the master politicians. East India Company's ascendancy in India, right from the Battle of Plassey (1757), in which the English Commander Robert Clive deceitfully defeated Nawab Siraj-ul-Dowla of Bengal to the second Anglo Sikh War of 1849 is a classic case in study. The wily British played the same trickery with all Indian potentates over and over who were more-powerful but weak, shallow and greedy characters.

Ideal but pragmatic, smart but honest and handsome blending of personal and national ambitions; more the person is gifted in these trades, more successful he would likely to be in the game of power. Magic and chrisma of personality factor in addition to boldness and above all the vision of the future is what decieds the fate of rulers. It took more than three centuries to build an ideal Sikh state but it vanished like a bubble from the above the surface of water in less than a decade.

Guru Nanak describes this phenomenon of the game of power i.e. religion.....man.....and .....politics in a wonderful and touching manner. An eye witness to Babur's raid on Saidpur, he gives a graphic account what happened there. But the telling line is how Guru describe the key to Babur's success in India.

***"Koti Hun Pir Waraj Rahaye Jan Mir Sunia Dhaiya II***

***Koi Mughal Na Hoa Andha Kinehn Nan Parcha Laiya II"*** (G.G.S., PP-418)

[Several holy men" says Guru, "were rounded up by the Lodhis in the hope their divine powers will blind the Mughal but nothing happened." Guru goes on :

***"Onhi Tupaktan Chalia Onhi Hast Chirhai II"*** (G.G.S., PP-418)

To describe his analysis of the whole episode. Babur's forces, Guru holds, used guns, cannons and dynamite i.e. artillery against Lodhi's elephants. This whole poem reads like live coverage of the modern day media. One wonders at the Guru's grasp of reality so factual in detail and so sorrowful in description. History confirms it by way of illustration what happened on the battlefield of Panipat establishing Babur a better general, better leader and equipped with better material resources compared to his opponent Abrahm Lodhi, Sultan of Delhi.

Of course, both were good practicing Muslims but far different in personality which titled the balance in Babur's favour.

Sikh religion constructs politics based upon morality. Religion can not be absent from politics.

\*1. Chankiya's (Kautaliya) Arth Shastra is the famous Indian Text on the art of politics and ruling.

Sam, Dam, Dand, and Bhed are the four pillars of Chankiya Niti. Mastsaya Purana means big fish eats samll fish i.e. Might is Right.

2. Machiavelli, an Italian theorist of political science is known for "The Prince", a treaties legitmizing deceit and cunning for political ends.

## **(B)EPILOGUE**

Nineteenth century opened in India with three powers trying for supremacy : the British, the Marhattas and the Sikhs. There was the Mughal Emperor but in name, in Delhi but he too, was under the protection of the Marhattas. Great Empire of the Mughals had been torn into pieces\* and these forces were hotly engaged in the scramble to power on its ruins. As though by Providence, the Marhattas were ousted by the British from triangular game even before the first decade ended. India beyond Jamuna now virtually in the hands of the British and Western India this side of the Jamuna had fallen under Sikh sway, in the form of fractured, numerous states. Setting foot in Delhi, the British had become the paramount power of India. Precisely at this moment Ranjit Singh appeared on the horizon like a brilliant star.

He had conquered Lahore and established his rule almost all over Punjab. He was proclaimed Maharaja by Sahib Singh Bedi, a descendent of Guru Nanak, fulfilling the Guru's Prophecy that Khalsa shall rule. Ranjit Singh ruling in the name of Khalsa had a dream : the dream of a United Sikh Empire at least upto Jamuna in the East. In a dashing drive, he conquered all states and arrived at Ladwa, Karnal in the vicinity of Delhi. Fate intervened once again. To his despair, the British had already reached Delhi. Now the two contestants were face to face in the outskirts of Delhi the traditional capital of Hindustan. How the events took off from here and how the youthful conqueror of Lahore managed to handle the most delicate and precarious situation of his career, would suffice to prove in glowing terms the thesis that in the final judgement, it is 'personality' that counts most.

The British always nervous about European development were keen to protect the Western frontier along Jamuna. The French warrior Napoleon was rumoured to be on move through Iran Afghanistan towards Indus. The Czar of Russia was also spreading his wings in Central Asia. Both, however, coveted Indo-Genetic Plains. On the other hand, Lahore Kingdom did not seem to be better placed. In addition to the internal instability and shakiness, it was kind of under siege from North to South. Gurkhas of Nepal were chipping away at Himalyana borders around Kangra. With Kashmir, Peshawar and Multan annexed by Kabul, traditional Afghan conquerors were also looming along the Khyber Pass.

States between the Jamuna and the Satluj, mostly Sikh, became the bone of contention. In order to sort things out, the British sent Charles Metcalf, a bright young man of East India Company, as envoy to Punjab for negotiations. Amidst usual greetings, formal parleys began with both parties jockeying for favourable positions. In response to the British demand of friendship treaty between the two powers, the Maharaja wanted the British to accept him as sovereign of all the Sikhs implying his suzerainty over Malwa States upto Delhi which had already become a sort of 'fait accompli'. While the dialogue

\* Empires rise but to fall has been a constant theme in history. Guru Nanak's Sikh religion has a philosophy of its own to explain this :

*"Ja Kau Aap Khuaye Karta Khus Laye ChangiaayeeII"* [G.G.S., PP-417]

[Those whom God wills to see ruined, He takes virtue away from them. The Guru also gives voice to the transitoriness of imperial grandeur just like the temporary nature of beauty, youth and flowers...*"Dhan Joban Ar Phulrah Na Tthiarhe Din Char II.... G.G.S. PP-23"*]

and royal festivities were going on, circumstances both in Europe and India underwent a sudden change giving the British a pretense to adopt a rigid approach towards the Sikh Monarch. Maharaja, in order to force the issue, made another dash over the Malwa States, his hawkish general Diwan Mohkam Chand making lightning raids which enraged the British envoy, who was following the Lahore King all the way, meanwhile the Malwa Sikh States decided to go over to the British weakening the Maharaja's stand considerably. But he was, as usual, defiant in adversity.

The British sent an army detachment under Sir Ochter Lony, who passed through Malwa at a slow pace, feeling the pulse of the people as well as the circumstances. Maharaja in retaliation strengthened the Fort of Phillaur on the Satluj facing Ludhiana by posting the 'Fire Brand' Diwan as commander-in-chief there. It was a classical scenario of cold and hot war, both sides would avoid to the utmost but go to the finish as a final resort, giving meanwhile all possible venues to diplomacy to succeed. War would be inevitable as either of the two crossed Satluj. Both waited and measured each other up. Losing Malwa States, already his, meant death to his dream of uniting all Sikhs under his flag in one grand Empire, between Jamuna and Hindukush in the West. On the other hand, for the British who had, had designs, to inherit Mughal's India, as next imperial race, taking hands off the said states was equivalent to signing the death warrant of their Supremacy in India since young and ambitious Maharaja promised to be another Napoleon for them. He would be too strong to be browbeaten.

Mysterious are the ways by which Heaven decides the fate of Empires in an eye wink. The Maharaja and Metcalf were both staying in Amritsar when Muharram, the sacred Muslim festival came about. The Muslim escorts of the British emissary participated in a traditional procession which paddled by the Golden Temple. The customary wailing and beating was enough to upset the proud and touchy Nihangs of Akali Phula Singh, the custodian of Akal Takhat. A bloody scuffle followed in which Metcalf's Muslim soldiers, trained in European style delivered themselves fairly well and far better than the Akalis, the traditional fighters. It was an unexpected but dangerously sensitive incident which might have jeopardize everything both parties had been trying hard to save: Power and Prestige.....Anyway, both the Maharaja and Metcalf were astute enough not to let things go out of hand. But the fate of the Malwa States had already been sealed.

Looking at the bloody scene with a penetrating and visionary glance, the Maharaja understood the mystery of British success all through England to the river Jamuna : they were better equipped with up-to-date weaponry, a highly trained army, chain of command, parliamentary system, and a capitalist economy. Skilled diplomat, they indeed, were the men of the future.

Shrewd diplomat, like Metcalf sensed change in Maharaja's stand and by way of encouragement offered him rosy vistas : The most favoured nation status, no intervention across Satluj and perpetual friendship with the Lahore Kingdom.

Although Diwan Mohkam Chand, the gallant commander-in-chief was in favour of deciding the matter on battle-field, but the Maharaja, knowing his limitations and having a better understanding of the realities and the prowess of the opponent he was faced with, he listened to the wiser counsel of Faquir Aziz-ud-Din, his foreign minister and Fateh Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala State and decided to sign the treaty with the British, famous in history as the Treaty of Amritsar (1809 A.D.).By not letting emo-

tions take a better edge of him, he truly behaved like a statesman and was both defiant and magnanimous at the same time.\* Within a few years, he rose to the zenith of his power and glory, his Empire was reckoned among the big powers of the day and he himself became and remains a legendary figure larger than life in history as well as the hearts of the people. A kind, gentle and just Sikh King, Maharaja Ranjit Singh continues to live in the fables as the Lion of Punjab.

".....Mahanbali Ranjit Singh Hoia Paida\*

*Nal Zor De Mulak Hilaaye Giya.... I*

*Multan, Kashmir, Pishaur, Chambs*

*Jammu, Kangra, Kot Nivaaye Giya.... I*

*Tibet Des. Ladakh Te Chin Tori*

*Sikka Apne Naam Chalaaye Giya..... I.*

*Shah Muhhamada Jan Pachas Barsan*

*Achha Raj Ke Raaj Kamaaye Giya... I....."*.....[Jang Nameh Shah Muhammad]

[The most powerful Ranjit Singh was born to rule the state and to restructure the map of the country. He conquered a number of provinces like Multan, Kashmir, Peshawar, Chamba, Jammu, Kangra and Ladakh, right upto China.]

The above mentioned stanza from Shah Muhammad's epic tale outlines the borders of Sikh Empire which was the direct outcome of the Treaty of Amritsar.\*\* Setting the Maharaja free from the worries regarding the border with the British, the treaty enabled him to conquer North-Western India and build his rule on his own strength, kindness and justice.\*\*\*

This Work intends to conclude as it had begun in the Guiding light of Guru's Word :

Raja Takhat Tikai Guni

Bhai Panchayan Rat II" .

[G.G.S., PP-992]

[By virtue of qualities suitable for a King (rulers, men of authority or administrators in modern media) one occupies throne and acts in respectful awe of peoples' representatives.....]

\* Sita Ram Kohli, Jang Nameh Shah Muhammad, 1960, PP-141

\*\* Young Maharaja's counterpart in negotiations Sir Charles Metcalf later rose to become Governor General of India and still later of Canada.

\*\*\* Personalities do make the difference in deciding the fate of the nations. Dr Henry Kissinger records, "As a Professor, I tended to think of history run by impersonal forces, but when you see it in practice, you see the difference personalities make."

A Biography-Kissinger, Walter Isaacson, Simon & Schuster, New York 1992, PP-13



### (C) SUMMING UP

*In* summing up it may be stated that an inter-relationship between politics and religion has to be established for a smooth running of the state and for providing a prosperous peaceful life to the individual citizen of the state.

Man must never be made a mere means for political or economic ends. Man is not made for the state but the state for man. Man is not made for production but production for man. For a society to be responsible under modern conditions it is required that the people have freedom to control, to criticise and to change their government, that power be made responsible by law and tradition and be distributed as wide as possible through the whole community. It is required that Economic justice and provisions of equality of opportunity be established for all the members of society. In modern times the common destiny of mankind is increasingly acknowledged. One of these is the unity of mankind through an organised world religion. This has been exactly the aim of Sikh religion which insists upon "Sarbat Da Bhala", the goodness of all irrespective of caste, colour or creed and which gives a call to all to end the dichotomy of the religious word and the acting upon it. All the religions of the world can have common programme for individual and social progress. The dimensions of the problem include ordinary citizens, law enforcers, judges, respectable businessmen, publishers, civil servants, leading heads of religious bodies, professional men and so on. What makes the problem so serious is the widespread failure of those governmental authorities who say one thing and do another. Politicians always set aside all ethical norms when they have to choose between personal ambition and public interest.

The world and its people will not move beyond the present morass until the major goal setters, heads of different states and their governments do not accept responsible society as a higher level than has been done so far.

Apart from political control the conscience of each individual citizen has to be aroused so that he can distinguish between the price and value of things. At present the world stands at the threshold of the 21st century, when technological advances will be more advanced. We shall have to give up the notion that the economic order is not just an enlarged market-place. Economic life has its socio-political connotations and in the last analysis it is a social system related to all phases of human existence. It is here that instead of the mere ritual religion in the abstract, a syncretising of the good points of all religions will have to come into play.

The religious groups of different denominations have to play a dominant role to meet different socio-political crises. Throughout the world two out of four families are under fed. There is a widening disparity in living standards between the industrialised nations and the emerging nations. This disparity has not only economic but political consequences. Peace is threatened. Some economic authorities point out that there is simply not enough capital available to provide facilities to keep up with unchecked population growth in under developed countries. Some political authorities have insisted that disarmament is a side issue so long as the ghost of overpopulation stalks the greater part of the Earth. Standards of living have a direct bearing on political tension and both therefore depend in part on the rate of population growth. Programmes of population control can be enforced by ethical compulsion which religion alone can enforce. The selfishness of certain Western democracies and the equally condemnable self centredness of the Mono Polar Power (U.S.A.) today and the Communist Block during the days of the

cold war resulted in "warfare states" rather than "welfare states".

No one can pre-determine or even envision the precise forms of the economic and political institutions that would be appropriate for an environment persons would be truly free in. Nevertheless, since law rests on ethics and ethics is rooted in ethos, it is instructive to note some of the basic value strivings that are emerging with the new world civilization as a result of the resurgence of religion both in the East and the West.

(a) For the new nations under the leadership and guidance of the United Nations. There is a growing conviction that immorality attaches to acts of intervention or satellite imperialism.

(b) Countries undergoing rapid social change and newly emerging as autonomous nations deserve to manifest their own traits drawing on traditions which are rich in cultural value and distinctive in quality thus adding to pluralism and diversity in the context of world wide interdependence.

(c) Economically developed nations must give disinterested aid through loans and capital investment resisting the temptation to impose their own way of life while sharing assistance. There is a growing consensus in UN that highly developed states must not turn the situation that prevails in less developed countries to their own aggrandizement be it economic or political.

(d) The Universal declaration of Rights and Freedoms is an important cluster of goals and norms for guiding the constitutional and institutional growth of nations. Many of the agencies of UN are slowly and steadily building codes and policies which create ethical values. Here may be cited the examples of the Commission on Human Rights and Food and Agriculture Organisation, the World Health organisation, the International Labour organisation and other similar UN agencies.

All the above ideals can be achieved if we remember that religions emphasize the equality of Man before his creator God and all religions (the liberal sections) decry racist doctrines. Despite the violence and revolutionary turmoil that prevails in the world the common man's desire for peace is as insistent as ever but to achieve the above ideals man has to take birth again and this is possible only if man is willing to adopt himself socially and politically to the new changes. People want to get out of the clutches of poverty, ignorance, disease and exploitation. For that mankind has to forge a common creed which would put science and technology to work for personal and social betterment. This is possible only if people practise religion rather than dispute about it. What is needed is secular democracy and economic progress guided by the religious ideals of Guru Nanak, (Everyone's Welfare should be the concern of all) and the ruling elite should not forget that religion is the only altar for confession of the past sins and of future conduct.

### **GLOBALIZATION AND THE SIKHS**

Following the cosmic law of rise and fall, 20th century has witnessed unprecedented change in the life, tone and environment on global scale. Marvellous advances in technology, kingship melting into democracies, it also saw, first time in history an atheistic philosophy hold sway all across the world. With communist revolution in Russia in 1917, Marxism spread like a wild fire cutting across the borders and sea frontiers. Now, towards the end of current century, Marx-Lenin's dream of 'Utopia' of creating classless society based on *dialectical materialism* has remained elusive as ever.

Capitalism as a philosophy of economic and political system played a major role in the ascendancy of European powers among which British out-did every other contender to become the paramount power. Soon after the industrial revolution, the nation states of Europe found capitalism, an ideology of free and

competitive market quite handy and most effective tool in their trade cum imperialistic exploits. It found in communism of Marx and Lenin a serious and formidable challenger in 20th century but which due to contradictions, both internal and external of its own, failed to dislodge capitalism from its position. The clue to the outcome of this historic confrontation is, perhaps, found in the nature and structure of both the systems respectively. Capitalism had democracy as its fastest ally. Communism has had political ring to it which in fact, leaves little room for democracy or people's free choice. Because of this major difference, capitalism, by dint of democracy as its main stay not only survived but ousted the revolutionary challenger.

Now a days, European brand of capitalism, with overbearing American imprint intertwined with parliamentary democracy is the only political structure which has taken the globe into its embrace. It is however, not the climax of the story. Capitalism's victory over communism both as an economic and political structure is also proving hollow since it falls short of satisfying human urges of peace, love, contentment, compassion and above all, morality. Whereas communism sought to 'dehumanise' the humans by treating them like a single block or a machine ; capitalism, in a different way, treats human beings as a *commodity of trade and human talents as goods* for the consumption of free and open market. Human, rather spiritual element is getting lost day by day into the jungle of passion, power and greed. Primarily as economic philosophy and system, communism has failed and capitalism is doomed to failure. The vacuum thus created as large as black hole in the sky, can only be filled by religion. *In order to make men live in totality like an organic whole; physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually, the mankind needs single most recipe which religion can only provide.*

It is in this regard that Sikhism has a blue print of philosophy to offer to the world which is right on the doorsteps of next century and poised to enter the next millenium : *The Philosophy of divine socialism. It opts for social set up which will be primarily religious with strong stress on morality content i.e. every one to enjoy the freedom of religion. It will be democratic in structure and form, but it will be congregational rather than the parliamentary with an enlightened, strong, popular leader at the centre who is capable of striking a balanced blend of religious commitment and political goals. Strong but not autocrat and a kind of Darwesh leader (the varied form of Badshah Darwesh ) who knows ins and outs of the science of diplomacy and is supposed to be at ease to use it as an art to operate within the gray area between religion and politics. It is indeed, the gray area or common ground which decides the fate of emperors and their empires ; leaders and their governments in modern dictum.*

*The present process of globalization and regional fragmentation is going to lead the world to become Multicultural Society which means different ethenic groups and religions are going to live in peaceful co-existence with each other in real sense. Sikhism, with its all encompassing message of Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man is going to play an active role in this context. Sikh texts have a story to tell with a powerful message. It is about Guru Nanak's visit to Multan when he was greeted with a bowl full of milk by the holy men of the city implying there was no room for him in the city. The Guru received the message with a smile and placed Jasmin flower on the surface ever so gently. The holy men were satisfied and bowed at Guru's feet. What a touching example of multiculturalism! As Sikh Scripture - Guru Granth Sahib, contains ever lasting message of devising new strategy to meet the needs of times in accordance with intrinsic*

values of the ideology (Dharma,) i.e.; "**Jug Jug Aapo Apna Dharam Hai Sodh Dekhuhu Bed Purana.II**" It is upto the Sikh people to come out with the suitable and effective scheme of things in times to come to stay and walk on their own foot in the future.

In short, Sikhism draws the blue print of a state founded on *religious nationalism*. This would be, in essence, a state without state which will be run by the constitution of freedom, legitimate rights of all the people, no fear, no enmity, no hatred but overwhelming sense of sharing the fruits of life with one another.



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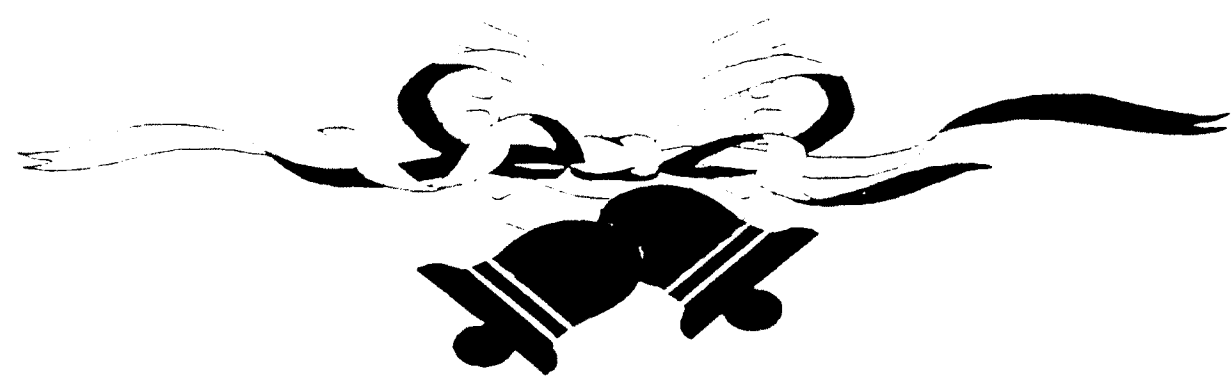
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