2

The Earliest Manual
on the Sikh Way of Life

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While referring to a manuscript in the Library of Guru Nanak Dev University, W.H. McLeod has observed that it was 'a dramatic find'.[1] The manuscript in question is a manual of instructions (*Nasihatnama*) on the Sikh way of life, and forms a small part of a large manuscript numbered MS 770. This manuscript was prepared in Sammat 1775 (AD 1718-19). The *Nasihatnama*, thus, becomes the earliest dated manual on the Sikh way of life. Since it is a copy, the original must have been written earlier, which takes it closer to the time of Guru Gobind Singh. In the history of the study of *rahitnamas*, i.e. manuals on the Sikh way of life, MS 770 *does* become a dramatic discovery. Its significance can be appreciated in the context of the study of *rahitnamas*.

I

As pointed out by a number of scholars, suggestions and ideas about the Sikh way of life (*rahit*) are found in *Guru Granth Sahib* and in the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas in the seventeenth century. Such suggestions continued to be included in various kinds of Sikh literature during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. At the same time, however, appeared the form known as *rahit-nama*. W.H. McLeod has observed that the *rahitnamas* record the Sikh Panth's distinctive code of conduct, and the pattern of prescribed behaviour, attributable to Guru Gobind Singh. These

writings have occupied a position of substantial influence in the, religious tradition of the Sikhs.[2]

The twentieth century scholars interested in the Sikh way of life, Sikh ethics and gender relations have used the evidence of *rahitnamas* and commented on their nature and character. Some other scholars have studied the *rahitnamas* directly.[3] Analysis of individual *rahitnamas* began in the mid-1960s,[4] and to this interest has been added the study of *rahitnamas* in general.

As Piara Singh Padam points out, the word *rahitnama* is a compound of two words: the Punjabi word *rahit* and the Persian word *nama*.[5] The word *rahit* refers to 'mode of living' and the word *nama* to something written in the form of a letter, document or book. A *rahitnama* therefore is a manual on the mode of living. According to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, *rahitnamas* lay down norms for the Sikh way of life in accordance with the principles of Sikhism; they also talk of the acts which infringe those principles and are, therefore, prohibited.[6]

The script of the *rahitnamas* is invariably Gurmukhi and their language generally Punjabi. The *rahitnamas* are both in verse and prose, and their size ranges from eight to fifty pages. In the late nineteenth century, Sikh scholars like Pandit Tara Singh Narotam began to list a large number of writings in the category of *rahitnamas*. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha refers to a collection of 37 *rahitnamas* made by Pandit Bhagwan Singh. However, Bhai Kahn Singh expressed the view that numerous compositions regarded as *rahitnamas* were not in accordance with the Gurbani and the writings of Bhai Gurdas. Among the well known *rahitnamas*, Bhai Kahn Singh includes the following: *Tankhanama*, *rahitnamas* attributed to Chaupa Singh, Prahlad Singh, Desa Singh and Daya Singh, *Prashan Uttar* of Bhai Nand Lal, and the *Prem Sumarg*. Also included in the list are Gurbani, the *bani* of Bhai Gurdas, the works of Bhai Nand Lal, *Sarabloh Parkash, Gursobha, Mahima Prakash, Gurbilas* of Bhai Sukha Singh, *Gurpartap Surya, Ratanmal (Sau-Sakhi)* and *Wajibularz (Bhagatavali)*.[7] This list includes works which contain norms of the Sikh way of life but are not formal *rahitnamas*. It may be added that Bhai Kahn Singh is not uncritical of formal *rahitnamas*. For example, he states that the *rahitnama* of Chaupa Singh contains many interpolations. The *rahitnama* of Prahlad Singh

contains contradictory statements: Guru Gobind Singh was not at Abchal Nagar in 1695, and the Khalsa had not yet been created. The *Prem Sumarg* was composed by a Sikh in the name of Guru Gobind Singh and the *Tankhanama* by a Sikh in the name of Nand Lal.[8]

A number of *rahitnama* texts have been published by scholars. *Bhai Nand Lal Granthavali* edited by Ganda Singh contains two *rahitnama* texts.[9] The *Rahitname* published by Piara Singh Padam contains the texts of 14 *rahitnamas*. Six of the formal *rahitnamas* are the same as those listed by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha: Bhai Nand Lal's *Tankhanama*, *rahitnamas* of Prahlad Singh, Chaupa Singh, Desa Singh, Daya Singh, and the *Prem Sumarg*. Two other formal *rahitnamas* are Bhai Nand Lal's *Sakhi Rahit ki* and *Rahitnama*. The other six are: Bhai Sahib Singh's *Rahitnama* and *Muktinama*, Pandit Nihal Singh's *Khalsa Ustat*, Bawa Sumer Singh's *Khalsa Panchasika*, Bhai Buddh Singh's *Khalsa Shatak*, and *Wajibularz (Bhagatavali)*. According to Padam, none of these works is a composition of Guru Gobind Singh. They appear to have been written by Sikhs during the eighteenth century, invoking the name of Guru Gobind Singh to make them authoritative. In their present form, they appear to have been written after 1720, though the possibility of older material being included in them cannot be ruled out.[10]

According to Gobind Singh Mansukhani, the *rahitnamas* were written by some of the devoted Sikhs of the Guru; they contain detail of the Sikh code of discipline. He tries to refute McLeod on the point of five Ks, referring to the evidence of the *Rahitnama* of Chaupa Singh. However, Mansukhani does not actually cite the *Rahitnama*. He concedes that there may be later interpolations in the extant *rahitnamas*. In his anxiety to prove that the formulation of the five Ks has come down from the days of Guru Gobind Singh, Mansukhani adopts an uncritical attitude towards the evidence of the formal *rahitnamas* he uses.[11]

According to Nripinder Singh, the *rahitnamas* constitute a unique body of literature in a style that bears little resemblance to that of the compositions of Guru Gobind Singh in the *Dasam Granth*. Of the several *rahitnamas* two are singularly significant and by far the longest ones: the *Prem Sumarg* and the *Chaupa Singh Rahitnama*. There are eight other *rahitnamas* which are

valuable. However, authorships are spurious: Guru Gobind Singh is claimed to be the writer, dictator, overseer or patron of these *rahitnamas*. But they cannot be from the pen of the Guru. Even when their author is supposed to be the same, there are dissimilarities between the *rahitnamas* attributed to them. According to Nripinder Singh, Bhai Randhir Singh has adopted the textual approach in his study of the *Prem Sumarg* and Mohan Singh Diwana the literary approach to deal with stylistic nuances. He goes on to add that J.S. Grewal in his review of the *Prem Sumarg* rejects the claims of Bhai Randhir Singh and Mohan Singh who 'unrealistically exaggerate the role of literature in the development of human destinies and institutions'. Only a handful of students of Punjabi literature and Sikh history have explored the nature of *rahitnamas* in the twentieth century. Nripinder Singh names the scholars who have made some comment on the *rahitnamas* without undertaking a serious study. Among them are Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, Bhai Jodh Singh, Ernest Trumpp, Max Arthur Macaullife, S.S. Kohli, and Avtar Singh.

Nripinder Singh asserts that the *rahitnamas* form an important part of Sikh religiousness and the ethical concerns which developed within the Sikh moral tradition. 'It is too early in Rahitnama research to attempt any comparative study of the various texts that have come down to us.' Nevertheless, he suggests that, though these writings may not be from Guru Gobind Singh's pen, or even from that of his close associates, there is a possibility that someone or several people from the Sikh community started working on an elementary arrangement of rules of conduct for easy reference, either through suggestion from the tenth Guru or from an inner compulsion at witnessing or participating in the life-style forged through the creation of the Khalsa, especially after the passing away of the Guru in 1708. A larger work bearing on *rahit* must have come into circulation sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century.[12]

Nripinder Singh points out that as religious and moral documents, the *rahitnamas* are not divorced from the political history of the period; they embody and enrich, inform and incorporate the finer elements produced by the struggle of the Sikh people in a particularly tumultuous period of their history. The *rahitnamas* can be read as 'interlocutions wherein the Guru's

word prevails in establishing what is appropriate, necessary and required for the formation of the community'. The insistence on uncut hair as part of the *rahit*, for example, is one element in the *rahitnamas*, which acquires a quasi moral status: 'mutually devised action for living the virtuous life required of its members a "common form" that was uniquely their own'. The concept of *tankha*, i.e. penalty for expiation imposed publicly for the transgression of the Sikh religious and moral code, marked out the moral necessity of accepting responsibility for one's actions and indicated the subordination of the individual to the collective will of the community. Gambling, cheating, falsehood and intoxicants constitute a set of moral failures which would endanger the community. The *rahitnamas* condemn these as vices destructive of human association. The *rahitnamas* are a singular literature that informs us of the religious insights of the Sikh community in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; they project the positive way in which they contributed to the development of Sikh moral behaviour and character, and they indicate the state of Sikh ethical awareness at the time of their writings. They specify institutional arrangements morally significant for the existence of the Sikh community. The *rahitnama* injunctions on societal inter-relationships, in which they insist on the necessity to break away from the customs and conventions of Hindus and Muslims, were governed by the historical circumstances.[13]

Jeevan Deol looks at the *rahitnamas* as the defining texts of the eighteenth century Khalsa and as the codes of conduct written by and largely for the Khalsa. Their main concern remains the Khalsa, its rituals and the minutiae of its everyday life, though some *rahitnamas* discuss the relationships between Khalsa and non-Khalsa Sikhs or define some of the rituals of non-Khalsa life. Deol takes up three *rahitnamas* which certainly belonged to the eighteenth century: the *Tankhanama* attributed to Bhai Nand Lal (MS 770), the *Rahitnama* attributed to Chaupa Singh, and the *Sakhi Rahit* appended to this *rahitnama*. All these three *rahitnamas* highlight the concerns which were central to the definition of a member of the Khalsa. In the *Tankhanama* the central duties of a Sikh are attachment to the ideal of *nam, dan,* and *isnan* and obedience to the Word (*bani*). At the centre of Sikh identity is the community of believers constituted through worship and

commensality. The other two *rahitnamas* insist on the distinctive identity of the Sikhs. By excluding both non-Sikhs and non-Khalsa Sikhs from the Khalsa's sacred universe, the *rahitnamas* butteress its distinctiveness and ensure that it remains the territory of the Khalsa alone. The insistence that every Singh should bear arms and keep his hair long marks out a Singh as a member of the Khalsa community and inscribes a collective narrative on his body. The ultimate meaning of the Khalsa is its pursuit of political sovereignty. The climax of the *Tankhanama* comes with the theme of Khalsa's military prowess and its eventual attainment of sovereignty.[14]

Rai Jasbir Singh is one of the few historians who have written directly on the *rahitnamas*. He states that three *rahitnamas* were attributed to Bhai Nand Lal and one each to Bhai Prahlad Singh, Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Desa Singh. All these authors were believed to be attendants of Guru Gobind Singh. It was also believed that these *rahitnamas* were written at the instance of Guru Gobind Singh. For three of these *rahitnamas* even the date of their composition was supposed to be known, i.e. 1695 for the *Rahitnamas* of Nand Lal and Prahlad Singh, and 1700 for the *Rahitnama* of Chaupa Singh. Rai Jasbir Singh argues that the language of the *rahitnamas* is very different from that of *Chandi di Var* and the *Janamsakhi* of Guru Nanak composed in 1733. Therefore, the *rahitnamas* were composed after 1733. Furthermore, the *rahitnamas* give expression to anti-Mughal sentiment, which could be a reaction to the efforts of Mir Mannu to annihilate the Sikhs. Two other things were important for the writers of the *rahitnamas*: one, that the Mughals should not succeed in obliging the Sikhs to deviate from their tenets and two, that the Sikhs themselves should not compromise their tenets. The *Rahitnama* of Bhai Desa Singh refers to the debate among the Sikhs about the authenticity of *Dasam Granth*, which had started in 1740. It also says that Bhai Desa Singh stayed in a Bunga at Amritsar which had been occupied by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. There is a reference to Abchal Nagar and Muktsar, both of which find mention in Koer Singh's *Gurbilas* composed in 1751. Rai Jasbir Singh concludes that the *rahitnamas* were not written in the time of Guru Gobind Singh. Even during the eighteenth century the *rahitnamas* could not have been composed

before 1750. Therefore, in Rai Jasbir Singh's view, these *rahit-namas* were written in the 1750s. But they were attributed to the contemporaries of Guru Gobind Singh, who wrote them at his instance in order to make the *rahitnamas* more authoritative.[15]

Swaran Singh Sanehi states that the available *rahitnamas* provide ample evidence that they did not contain the principles laid down solely by the Gurus; the Sikh congregations or learned Sikhs also added their views to these documents according to the exigency of their times. Though their number is said to range from thirty to forty, only half a dozen writings called *rahitnamas* are actually available. This does not mean, however, that the earlier Sikh literature does not contain injunctions about the Sikh way of life. What we do not find in the earlier literature is the various punishments prescribed for different kinds of offences. The *Rahitnamas* attributed to Bhai Nand Lal present an inferior type of poetry showing no regard for the metre or rhythm. Therefore, the author of these *rahitnamas* could not be the Bhai Nand Lal Goya traditionally associated with Guru Gobind Singh. For similar reasons, the authorship of Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Daya Singh could also be rejected. The *rahitnamas* contain contradictory statements and interpolations. Swaran Singh comes to the conclusion that all the *rahitnamas* were the works of a much later period than what is stated in them. Guru Gobind Singh must have given instructions with regard to the Sikh way of life, particularly after the institution of the Khalsa. However, it is extremely difficult to identify his direct injunctions in the available *rahitnamas*. On the other hand the fact that the *rahitnamas* are not the genuine works of Guru Gobind Singh, or of his prominent Sikhs, does not imply that the *rahitnamas* made no contribution to the religious, literary and social life of the Sikhs.[16]

According to Gurinder Singh Mann, the declaration of the Khalsa created an unprecedented situation. On the one hand, it required a more elaborate *rahit* and, on the other it paved the way for phasing out the office of the Guru, the authoritative figure to answer questions. The result was the creation of manuals of Sikh belief and practice known as *rahitnamas*. The first text of this type, according to Mann, was prepared in 1701. This has not survived but a version seems to have been incorporated in a text

attributed to Chaupa Singh. The reference appears to be to the
Sakhi Rahit appended to the *Rahitnama* attributed to Chaupa
Singh. According to Chaupa Singh, the *rahit* recorded by him
was by no means comprehensive; the Sikhs could add something
to its content while remaining in harmony with the spirit of Sikh
beliefs enshrined in the *Guru Granth.* The authority of the *rahit*
was rooted in revelation but it was clearly an evolving set of rules
designed to meet the needs of the community in changing
circumstances. Sikh savants continued to write their versions of
the *rahit* which reflected the needs of the Sikh community at
various junctures in Sikh history. With the coming of the printing
press the need to generate a single authoritative document became
clear. Eventually, in 1950, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak
Committee finalized the *Rahit Maryada* which has served as the
standard of Sikh belief and conduct.[17]

W.H. McLeod has studied the *rahitnamas* much more
systematically and in much greater detail than any other scholar.
He published an article on the problem of Punjabi *rahitnamas* in
1982,[18] followed by another in 1986 on the Khalsa *rahit* as a
marker of Sikh identity.[19] A year later, he published *The Chaupa
Singh Rahit-nama* which contains the texts and translations of
two *rahitnamas*, besides a longish introduction and meticulous
annotation.[20] More recently, he has published *Sikhs of the Khalsa:
A History of the Khalsa Rahit.* This work is not confined to the
formal *rahitnamas*; it also contains what McLeod refers to as
'either proto-*rahit* compositions' or the 'the other Rahit material'.
His book consists essentially of two parts, the second part
containing translations. In the first part there are four chapters
which are relevant for any discussion of the *rahitnamas* of the
eighteenth century. Apart from the introduction which contains
information, among other things, on *rahitnama* manuscripts and
printed editions, previous translators, and a summary history of
studies concerning the *rahit*, the first four chapters relate to 'the
beginnings' upto the time of Guru Gobind Singh, the *rahit*
materials of the eighteenth century, and the six *rahitnamas* of the
eighteenth century.

The six *rahitnamas* of the eighteenth century identified by
McLeod are the following: the *Tankhanama* attributed to Bhai
Nand Lal, the *Rahitnama* attributed to Prahlad Rai, the *Sakhi*

Rahit attributed to Bhai Nand Lal, and the *Rahitnamas* attributed to Chaupa Singh, Desa Singh and Daya Singh. The order of their occurrence in the chapter also indicates McLeod's understanding of their chronological order.[21]

About the authorship of these *rahitnamas*, McLeod has argued that Bhai Nand Lal Goya, who is generally associated with Guru Gobind Singh, was not the author of any of the *rahitnamas* attributed to him. It is possible however, that there was a person called Nand Lal in Guru Gobind Singh's entourage, that in fact that there were three or four anonymous authors who acquired this name. 'Whatever the situation, we can at least conclude that Nand Lal Goya was not the author of the *rahitnamas*. They may have been written by a different person called Nand Lal or they may have their name attached to them in order to give them some form of authority.'[22]

According to McLeod, Daya Singh of the Panj Piare can also be eliminated as the author of Daya Singh *Rahitnama*. The traditional linking of his name with one of the Panj Piare is the result either of deliberate deception by the actual author or of the simple coincidence that the author's name was also Daya Singh. McLeod looks upon the *Rahitnama* of Daya Singh as a later work on the argument that it is a lengthy piece of work and that it has been written in a comparatively modern *khari boli* prose. McLeod refers to some of the features of this *rahitnama*, which suggest that the *rahitnama* was written towards the end of the eighteenth century.[23]

Virtually nothing is known about Prahlad Rai. It is unlikely, however, that the author of the *rahitnama* attributed to Prahlad Rai was a person of this name who was a Brahman Sikh courtier of Guru Gobind Singh. The work is said to have been completed on 13 February 1696, but it refers to initiation and also to a Sikh who 'has been a Khalsa of the Guru from birth'. It also contains an injunction against the wearing of red clothing, which indicates a date after the late 1720s. Therefore, McLeod is inclined to place the composition of this *rahitnama* in the 1730s.[24]

Chaupa Singh, who is known as the *khidava* of Guru Gobind Singh, belongs to the Chhibber family of Brahmans, one of whom produced the *Bansavalinama Dasan Patshahian Da* in 1769. The *Rahitnama* attributed to Chaupa Singh bears indisputable evidence

of having been written by a Brahman Sikh. It is possible that a
portion of this work can be traced to the personal servant of
Guru Gobind Singh. Its length and complexity suggest that it
came later than the simpler versions attributed to Nand Lal or
Prahlad Rai. The earliest extant *Chaupa Singh Rahitnama* has
been placed in the period between 1740 and 1765, with the
strong probability that it was written during the 1740s.[25]

The *Sakhi Rahit Ki,* according to McLeod, bears all the marks
of an early product. However, its contents do not reflect any sign
of the turmoil created by Banda. It rather seems to have been
written during a peaceful period, being aimed at the Brahmans
and not at the Muslim perpetrators of Banda's downfall. This
rahitnama is always found as an appendix to *Chaupa Singh
Rahitnama,* never as an independent work. On the whole,
therefore, McLeod is inclined to place its composition in the mid-
1730s.[26]

McLeod notices that the earliest extant *rahitnama* manuscript
is a copy of the *Nasihatnama* (later erroneously termed *Tankha-
nama*) as one of the three *rahitnamas* attributed to Nand
Lal. It is one of several works, which together bear the date
1718-19, and are numbered MS 770. It was one of the two most
popular of the early *rahitnamas*. A much later version appears in
MS 234 of the Punjab Languages Department, Patiala, where its
date is given as 1825-6. Another copy dated 1856-7 is included
in MS 1018 at the Guru Nanak Dev University Library. As
Tankhanama, this work has been included in several anthologies.
One modern version is included by Ganda Singh in his *Bhai
Nand Lal Granthavali,* another modern version which is almost
the same as the Ganda Singh text is in Piara Singh Padam's
Rahitname.[27]

McLeod has observed that the scholars who have edited the
texts have separated the individual words that were linked in the
original manuscripts, and that they may also have corrected the
spelling and the grammar of the original. 'In most cases they will
have correctly reproduced the meaning intended by the original
scribe. In some cases, however, they will have concealed his
intentions. They may also have tidied up a style which scholars
would prefer to have reproduced in its untidy condition.' McLeod
winds up his account of the *Nasihatnama* with a statement which

is both meaningful and significant: 'MS 770 still awaits a Gurmukhi edition. It will be very interesting to see what is done with this carelessly executed manuscript.'[28]

II

W.H. McLeod observes that there are numerous errors in the text of MS 770. Several words have been miscopied, and several others have been misspelt; whole lines have been left out at places. A portion of almost ten verses has been missed by the scribe. The scribe's carelessness is important as it means that he was copying an existing text, from which it follows that the *Nasihatnama* contained in MS 770 cannot have been the original one. The original work can be very close to the *Gursobha*, that is, within a few years of Guru Gobind Singh's death.[29]

The text of MS 770 collated with MS 234 and another manuscript in the library of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, namely MS 29 (dated AD 1831), which apparently has not come to the notice of McLeod, clearly indicates that the errors in MS 770 are even more numerous than what is stated by McLeod. Significantly, almost all the errors get explained if we assume that the copyist was not actually literate in the Punjabi language, or in Gurmukhi script. Incidentally, McLeod is wrong in saying that the word *tankha* or *tankhahia* does not occur in MS 770; the words are spelt as *tankhaee* and *tankhaai*.[30] McLeod's argument in favour of the original manuscript having been written within a few years of Guru Gobind Singh's death does not go far enough: there is no feature of the manuscript which can be invoked against the assumption that the work in question was composed before the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

For his translation of the *Nasihatnama* McLeod has used six texts, including MS 770 and MS 234 (but not MS 29). The structure of his translation is provided by the text of the *Tankhanama* published by Ganda Singh in 1968. In other words, MS 770 has not been used by him as the basic text.[31]

McLeod has classified the contents of the *Nasihatnama* under the following headings: duties and privileges of a Khalsa, doctrine and devotion, dress and outward appearance, bathing and personal hygiene, crime and misdemeanours, social relationships,

sexual morality, charity, the *sangat*, *Guru Granth Sahib*, rituals, *karha prasad*, preparation and consumption of food, weapons and warfare, false teachers, attitude towards Hindus, attitude towards Muslims, and sundry prohibitions. McLeod goes on to add that the work concludes with a triumphant couplet in praise of the Khalsa, the mighty Khalsa which though few in number will yet overwhelm the Turks and demolish all enemies of truth. All those who acknowledge its rule shall find eternal liberation. Out of this long list, McLeod mentions six features as of particular interest. These are: warfare, strong opposition to Muslims, attendance at the *sangat*, the distribution of food (presumably in the *langar*) and its consumption in general, the preparation of *karha prasad* and sexual morality.[32] These features relate to the religious life of the Khalsa, their ethics, and their political aspirations. Almost the entire content of the *Nasihatnama* can be appreciated in terms of these three aspects of the Khalsa way of life.

We may note at the outset that several epithets are used for God in the *Nasihatnama*: Har, Jagdis, Gobind, Wahiguru, Khalik (*Khaliq*), and Akal. The epithets Wahiguru and Akal are characteristically Sikh; the others come from the Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions, and from Islam. However, all these epithets occur in *Guru Granth Sahib*. There is no doubt that the unity of God is assumed and, by implication, there is no belief in gods and goddesses of the Indian tradition. Worship is to be addressed only to Wahiguru.

The negative and positive injunctions of the *Nasihatnama* are addressed to the Sikhs. The epithets used for the Sikhs are not without significance: *sikh, sadh, sadh-sikh, khalsa,* and *singh.* The use of the term Singh indicates that the *Nasihatnama* was composed after the institution of the Khalsa in 1699. However, this term is used only once. The term Khalsa is used for those whose duty is to bear arms and to fight. We know that the Singh and the Khalsa were not equated in the time of Guru Gobind Singh.[33] There is a possibility, therefore, that the Khalsa in the *Nasihatnama* is not necessarily equated with the Singh. We may also note that there is no reference to the Khalsa as the Guru, which would not be expected if we assume that the work was composed before 1708. However, the form of salutation used at

the end of the *Nasihatnama* is *Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Wahguru ji ki Fateh*. This salutation is likely to have come into currency before the death of Guru Gobind Singh.[34]

A good deal of importance is given to the Guru, though he is referred to only thrice. At the end of the *Nasihatnama* he is referred to as *Patshahi Dasvin* (The Tenth King). This carries the implication that he is coming after nine predecessors, and that he is just like them if not actually one with them. The Sikhs are instructed to look up to the Guru for everything and never to turn to anyone else. Every Sikh is expected to keep a *golak* in order to accumulate savings for offering to the Guru. Any Sikh who is disrespectful to the Guru in any way is denounced as deceitful. An outsider who slanders the Guru in the presence of a Sikh deserves to be killed by the sword, a duty which the Sikh who hears such a slander should perform. These references to the Guru are indicative of a situation in which he has opponents and slanderers. We know that the institution of the Khalsa had provoked opposition from within the community as well as from outsiders.[35]

There is no reference to *Guru Granth* or to the *Granth Sahib* in the *Nasihatnama*. However, the terms Gurbani, Gurbachan and *shabad* are used in a way which suggests that the references are to the *Granth Sahib*. The Sikhs are expected to bow to the *shabad*, which carries the implication of bowing to the *Granth*. They are expected to sing no song other than the Guru's *bachan*, which again is the word of the Guru and, therefore, the *Granth*. The Sikhs are expected to remain attached to Gurbani, which can possibly refer to the *Granth* in particular.

There is hardly any doubt that the scripture is present in the place of congregation (*satsang*) for which neither the term *dharmsal* nor *gurdwara* is used. However, a Sikh is expected to go to the congregational worship in the morning and concentrate on the praises of God being sung; he should not indulge in talk, while hearing the praises of God; he should not hesitate to seat a poor Sikh beside him; he should not talk without an understanding of the *shabad*; and he should bow to the *shabad* at the end of the performance of *kirtan*. All these details enable us to visualise the performance of *kirtan* and *katha* (which are specifically mentioned elsewhere in the *Nasihatnama*) in a *dharmsal* or a *gurdwara*.

There is hardly any doubt that *karha prasad* was distributed at the end of the performance of *kirtan* and *katha* in the *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara*. The method of preparing the *karha prasad* indicates that a Sikh was expected to be very meticulous in its preparation. All its three ingredients (wheat flour, *ghee* and sugar) were to be taken in equal quantities. The spot where the *prasad* was to be prepared was swept and plastered; the utensils to be used were scrubbed and washed; the person to prepare the *prasad* was expected to bathe and to recite Wahiguru Wahiguru all the time, and nothing else; a new pitcher was to be used for fresh water; when the *prasad* was ready it was to be placed on a four-legged low table and praises of God were to be sung around it. This was the way to receive grace in the preparation of the *prasad*. While distributing the *karha prasad* the person doing so must cover his head. Before eating *prasad*, whether *karha prasad* or food (in the *langar* or elsewhere), a Sikh was expected to utter Wahiguru.

The *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara* was not the only place where a Sikh was expected to perform worship. He was expected to rise early in the morning, take bath with cold water, and recite *Japji* before eating anything. After that he was expected to go to the *satsang*. In the evening he was expected to recite the *Rahiras*, and to praise God before going to sleep at night. Before going to some other place in connection with his business he should go to the *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara* and offer formal prayer (*ardas*) for the success of his undertaking. On his return, he should go to the *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara* to make a suitable offering before going home. The *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara* is thus seen as the most important institution of the Sikhs. The injunction to stick to one's *dharma* in this context appears to be a reference to the Sikh *dharma*. In any case the *Nasihatnama* underscores the importance of following injunctions with regard to the Sikh way of life, both the positive and the negative injunctions.

The *Nasihatnama* underscores the importance of deeds, both good and bad. A Sikh is expected not to indulge in backbiting, slandering, gambling or stealing. He is not expected to appropriate anything that does not belong to him. He is expected to be generous and charitable, especially towards the Sikhs who come to him as guests. He is expected to keep the promise he makes.

He is expected not to blow out a lamp (he should extinguish it by fanning); he is expected not to extinguish fire with water that has been partly drunk by himself or by someone else. Above all, he is expected to avoid the naked state. He should not take his bath naked; he should not eat with his head uncovered; and as we have already noticed, he should not distribute *prasad* without covering his head. Even for the sexual act he should not be in a naked state.

This last injunction is clearly intended to be a curb on sensuality and is related to the conception of proper sexual relations in the *Nasihatnama*. A Sikh is expected to observe strict fidelity to his wife. He must not visit a prostitute and he should not develop sexual relations with another woman.

The injunctions meant specifically for the Khalsa can be appreciated in the context of the foregoing paragraphs. A Khalsa should not indulge in slander; he should practise charity; he should curb sensual pleasures; he should avoid misdeeds; he should discard all false sense of honour, that is, pride; he should flee from a strange woman; he should keep awake at night; he should not have eye on things which do not belong to him; he should remain attached to Gurbani; he should never harm a created being because the Creator of all beings is offended if anyone of them is harmed; he should protect the poor; he should recite the Name and remain attached to it; he should stick to his *dharma* even at the cost of his life. All these injunctions could be, and have been, given to all Sikhs.

However, there are other injunctions in the *Nasihatnama* which are specifically and almost exclusively given to the Khalsa. A Khalsa should fight in the van; he should kill *khans*; he should destroy the enemy; he should attack the opponents; he should ride the horse; he should be ready for fight all the time; he should bear arms; and he should kill the Turks. All these injunctions relate to a situation of political struggle against the contemporary rulers and their supporters who are referred to as Turks. The injunctions not addressed specifically to the Khalsa but related to the political situation can be appreciated in this context. A Sikh is not expected to show any respect for the authority of the Turks. He is not expected to touch iron with his feet, since iron had acquired a certain degree of sanctity through its various uses,

especially in the form of weapons. Since the Turks were the enemy, a Sikh was not expected to take meat from a Turk for eating.

The *Nasihatnama* ends with a sure prophecy of sovereignty and rulership. All the slanderers of the Khalsa shall be eliminated, or they shall hide. The rule of the Khalsa shall be established by the Guru who would transform all the four castes into one and worship Wahiguru. They shall ride horses and keep hawks. The Turks shall run away at their sight. Each one of them would fight a lakh and a quarter of the enemy. Anyone of them who dies fighting shall attain to liberation. They shall ride caparisoned elephants and their spears shall wave in the air. At their doors, drums shall be beaten. When the number of Khalsa musketeers reaches 1,25,000, their rule shall become universal. 'The Khalsa shall rule and no opponent shall withstand them; dishonoured, they shall all submit and only they who seek refuge with the Khalsa shall be saved'.

The evidence for the claim of the Khalsa to sovereignty comes from the coins struck in the time of Banda and the inscriptions which they bear. The earliest of these coins was struck in 1710, i.e. within two years of Guru Gobind Singh's death. It is difficult to imagine that Banda Bahadur himself would come upon this idea or have this aspiration. It is more likely, therefore that the idea was conceived by Guru Gobind Singh himself. The view of Ratan Singh Bhangu that the Khalsa was meant to be sovereign from the very beginning may or may not be literally acceptable. But the contemporary evidence available on Guru Gobind Singh leaves no doubt about his political activity. The idea of rulership for the Khalsa harmonizes better with the known personality of Guru Gobind Singh than with the career of Banda Bahadur before he met Guru Gobind Singh. Indeed, if we assume that the *Nasihatnama* was written before the death of Guru Gobind Singh it becomes the most important evidence in support of the idea that sovereignty for the Khalsa was conceived by Guru Gobind Singh.

The essence of the Sikh way of life is given in the very first answer ascribed to Guru Gobind Singh. It is the pursuit of *nam, dan* and *isnan*. All these three terms appear to have acquired a comprehensive meaning in Sikh tradition before the institution

of the Khalsa. *Nam* represented almost the whole ideology of Guru Nanak, especially the sum total of his religious teachings and ethics. *Dan* in Sikh tradition had come to represent charity out of the honest earnings of a Sikh; it included not only what a Sikh contributed to the common funds of the community but also what he voluntarily did for others. Similarly, *isnan* represented not only physical cleanliness but also ethical living. The essence of a Sikh way of life was thus meant for all Sikhs, whatever the term used for them. It certainly included the Khalsa. The concern of the writer with the religious and ethical life of the Khalsa, and their political aspirations, comes out clearly in the text.

III

The translation given below is based on the text of MS 770 as reconstructed by collation with MS 234 and MS 29. The reconstructed text is not given here because of the shortage of space. The broad procedure followed in reconstructing the text may however be stated:

1. The cluster of 12 lines at the beginning of MS 234 and MS 29 points to an obvious omission in MS 770. These 12 lines were added to the text of MS 770.
2. Similarly, two complementary lines at different places in MS 234 were added to rectify an obvious omission in MS 770. For the same reason, one complementary line was added from MS 29.
3. There are two lines in MS 770 which are not there either in MS 234 or in MS 29. Both these lines were retained.
4. There are 18 lines in MS 234 and MS 29 which are not there in MS 770. These 18 lines were not added to the text of MS 770. Thus, the total number of lines added to the original text of MS 770 is only 15.
5. There are 14 lines in the three manuscripts which vary. If the line given in MS 770 makes sense, it was retained. Otherwise, it was replaced by the line from MS 234, or MS 29 on the same criterion.
6. There are 18 words in MS 770 which do not make sense in the given context. They were replaced by words from MS 234, or MS 29.

7. At seven places in MS 770 the words are incomplete, whereas in the other two manuscripts these words are complete.
8. There are 10 words in MS 770 in which vowels are missing. There is one word in which a vowel is superfluous.
9. There are 170 words in MS 770 which have different spellings. Since they all make sense in the context, they were retained.

It will be seen that the text of MS 770 as reconstructed for translation remains very close to the original text of MS 770. The changes made are the necessary minimum.

TRANSLATION

Guru ji ki fateh
Nasihatnama[36]

Question by Bhai Nand Lal ji and answers by Guru Gobind Singh ji

DOHRA

Nand Lal ji asked: 'Guru ji! Please tell me which are the commendable deeds and which are not.'

DOHRA

'Listen to me Nand Lal: the Sikh way is to cherish nothing but *nam, dan* and *isnan*.'[37]

CHAUPAI

'He who does not go to the *satsang*[38] in the morning is a great defaulter. He who allows his mind to swerve in the congregation shall not find a place in this world or the next. He who indulges in talk while hearing to the praises of God (in the congregation) will go', says Gobind, 'to the abode of *Yama*'. 'He who does not like a poor person to sit beside him is a grave defaulter. He who talks without understanding the *shabad* gains nothing. He who

bows to the *shabad* at the end of the performance will attain to God.'[39]

DOHRA

'He who entertains greed while distributing *prasad*, or distributes it unequally, will remain in sorrow forever.'

CHAUPAI

'Now listen to the way of preparing *prasad* in the cauldron:[40] the three ingredients must be in equal quantities; the floor must be swept before it is plastered; the utensils must be scrubbed and washed; the person to prepare the *prasad* must bathe before entering the cooking place; he must recite only Wahiguru all the time; a new pitcher should be filled with fresh water meant for use; when ready, [the *prasad*] should be placed on a *chauki*;[41] praises of God should be sung. The whole point [of this procedure], Nand Lal, is this: the *prasad* gets rightly prepared through God's grace.'

DOHRA

'Listen to me, Nand Lal: he who shows any sign of submission to the Turk,[42] or touches iron[43] with his foot, remains subject to the cycle of death and rebirth.'

CHAUPAI

'He who does not bathe with cold water, who eats food[44] without reciting the *Japji*,[45] who wastes the evening without reciting the *Rahiras*,[46] who sleeps during the night without praising God,[47] who indulges in backbiting to spoil things for others, and who ignores the injunctions of *dharm* – his whole life is futile. He who does not keep his promise', says Gobind, 'finds no place. He who takes meat[48] from the Turk to eat, who sings anything other than the Guru's word,[49] who is lured by women's songs, be sure Nand Lal, will go to hell.'[50]

DOHRA

'He who calls himself *sadh* but does not appropriate *rahit*,[51] commits a fraud; better than his talk, Nand Lal, is silence.'

CHAUPAI

'He who undertakes a journey without performing a prayer,[52] who eats food without making an offering on return, who appropriates an abandoned article, who lies with a woman other than his wife and who does not give charity[53] to the needy will find no place of honour in God's court. He who does not listen attentively to *kirtan* and *katha*, who talks disrespectfully of *sadh-sikh*,[54] and who resorts to slandering, gambling or stealing, will remain subject to eternal suffering. If a Sikh finds any person defaming the Guru, he should use his sword to make an offering of such a person.'[55]

DOHRA

'Listen to this Nand Lal: he who does not keep a *golak*[56] and trades deceitfully,[57] shall suffer in hell a thousand times.'

CHAUPAI

'He who blows out the *deepak*,[58] who extinguishes fire with water that has partly been drunk, who eats without uttering Wahiguru,[59] who visits a prostitute, who develops illicit relations with a woman, is not liked', says Gobind. 'He who deceives the Guru is a great defaulter.[60] He who prays to anyone other than the Guru, who sleeps in a nude state, who indulges in sexual intercourse all nude, and who bathes all naked' (is a great defaulter).[61]

DOHRA

'Besides indulging in these evil deeds, he who eats food bareheaded, and who distributes *prasad* bareheaded, is a great defaulter.'

CHAUPAI

'The *khalsa* is he who abandons slander, who fights in the van, who gives charity, who kills Khans,[62] who subdues the five,[63] who discards evil deeds, who abandons pride,[64] who shuns women (other than his wife),[65] who keeps awake during the night, who does not cast greedy eyes on what belongs to others,[66] who loves Gurbani, and who fights face to face.'

DOHRA

'The *khalsa* is he who recognizes that all human beings belong to the Creator and who does not harm them. When the created beings are harmed, Nand Lal, the Creator is offended.'

CHAUPAI

'The *khalsa* is he who protects the poor, who destroys the wicked, who recites the Name,[67] who fights the enemy, who concentrates his mind on the Name, who is detached from all other ties, who rides the horse, who fights every day, who bears arms,[68] who promotes *dharm*,[69] and who dies for his faith.'

DOHRA

'The proclamation of God shall prevail, and the slanderers [of the *khalsa*] shall not be able to oppose [them]. The slanderers shall be obliged to take refuge in forests and hills; the *khalsa* shall attain to liberation.'[70]

CHAUPAI

'Listen to me Nand Lal ji: I shall verily establish my own rule. I shall merge all the four castes[71] into one, and make them recite the name of God. They shall ride horses and keep hawks; the Turks shall take flight on seeing them. I shall empower each Singh to confront a lakh and a quarter (of the enemy); he who dies fighting shall attain to liberation. Their spears shall wave in the air, and they shall ride caparisoned elephants; drums shall be

beaten at their doors. When they acquire fire arms in plenty,[72] they shall rule everywhere.'[73]

DOHRA

'The *khalsa* shall rule and none shall withstand them; shorn of honour, they shall all submit, and only they who take refuge with the *khalsa* shall be saved.'[74]
Here ends the *Nasihatnama*[75] uttered by the Tenth King.[76]
Wahiguru ji ka Khalsa, Wahiguru ji ki Fateh!

NOTES

1. W.H. McLeod, *Sikhs of the Khalsa: A History of the Khalsa Rahit*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 68.
2. Ibid., p. 1; idem, *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism*, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1984, pp. 2, 3.
3. For example, Rai Jasbir Singh, 'Rahitnamas: Their Period of Writing', *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Thirteenth Session, 1979, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1980.
     Swaran Singh Sanehi, 'Rahitnamas of the Sikhs', *Journal of Sikh Studies* (1984), vol. XI, pt. 1.
4. J.S. Grewal, 'The Prem Sumarg: A Theory of Sikh Social Order', *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, 1965, Patiala: Punjabi University, pp. 100-11.
5. Piara Singh Padam (ed.), *Rahitname*, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1995 (rpt.), p. 43.
6. Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1999 (rpt.), p. 1015.
7. Loc. cit.
8. Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, pp. 479, 796, 806, 574.
9. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Bhai Nand Lal Granthavali*, Patiala: Punjabi University, 2000 (rpt.), pp. 186-93.
10. Padam, *Rahitname*, pp. 43, 44.
11. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, 'Sikh Rahat-Maryada and Sikh Symbols', in Jasbir Singh Mann and Harbans Singh Saraon (ed.), *Advanced Studies in Sikhism*, Irvine, CA: Sikh Community of North America, 1989, pp. 178, 179, 182, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189.
12. Nripinder Singh, 'Rahitnamas and Aggrandizement of Khalsa Tradition', in Dharam Singh (ed.), *Sikhism and Secularism: Essays in Honour of Professor Harbans Singh*, New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1994, pp. 301-5.

13. Ibid., pp. 308-17.
14. Jeevan Deol, 'Eighteenth Century Khalsa Identity: Discourse, Praxis and Narrative', in Christopher Shackle, Gurharpal Singh & Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair (eds.), *Sikh Religion, Culture and Ethnicity*, Richmond: Curzon, 2001, pp. 35-9.
15. Rai Jasbir Singh, 'Rahitnamas: Their Period of Writing', pp. 116-19.
16. Swaran Singh Sanehi, 'Rahitnamas of the Sikhs', pp. 66, 75, 76, 77, 79.
17. Gurinder Singh Mann, *Religions of the World: Sikhism*, London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd, 2004, p. 78.
18. W.H. McLeod, 'The Problem of the Punjabi *Rahitnamas*', *Exploring Sikhism: Aspects of Sikh Identity, Culture, and Thought*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 103-125.
19. Idem, 'The Khalsa Rahit: The Sikh Identity Defined', ibid., pp. 126-35.
20. Idem, *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1987.
21. Idem, *Sikhs of the Khalsa*, p. 65.
22. Ibid., p. 66.
23. Ibid., pp. 67, 71, 72.
24. Ibid., pp. 67, 70, 71.
25. Ibid., pp. 67, 70.
26. Loc. cit.
27. Ibid., p. 16.
28. Ibid., pp. 16-18.
29. Ibid., pp. 68-9.
30. Ibid., p. 82. In fact, the occurrence of these words in MS 770 could suggest to the later copyists the title *Tankhanama*.
31. Ibid., p. 279.
32. Ibid., pp. 83-7.
33. For example, in a *hukamnama* of Guru Gobind Singh dated 6 February, 1702 the person who is called 'my Khalsa' by the Guru is Bhai Mihar Chand and not Mihar Singh. In another *hukamnama* of the same date the names mentioned are Dharm Chand and Karam Chand as well as Mihar Chand. In yet another *hukamnama* the names mentioned are Bhai Bindraban and Gulal Chand. In a *hukamnama* of 1704, the names mentioned are Sukhia, Mukhia and Parsa. In all these *hukamnamas*, the Khalsa are asked to come to Anandpur fully armed. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Hukamname Guru Sahibaan, Mata Sahibaan, Banda Singh ate Khalsa ji de*, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967, pp. 168-71, 175, 181.
34. The form of Khalsa salutation used here is not a new thing. There are indications that this form had emerged in the time of Guru Gobind Singh. In his *hukamnama*, dated 3 February 1708, there is a reference to '*Wahguru ji da Khalsa*'. Ganda Singh, *Hukamname*, p. 191. In the

Gursobha, both '*Wahguru ji ka Khalsa*' and '*Wah guru ji ki Fateh*' appear, though separately. Shamsher Singh Ashok (ed.), *Shri Gur Sobha*, Amritsar: SGPC, 1967, pp. 53, 105, 131. For detail, see *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, ed. Harbans Singh, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1998, vol. IV, pp. 400-2.

35. Ashok, *Shri Gur Sobha*, pp. 42-58.

36. The first two *dohras* and the first eight lines of the *chaupai* are taken from MS 234 with some minor changes on the basis of a comparison with MS 29, but the title *Nasihatnama* is retained, which is actually given at the end.

37. For *nam, dan,* and *isnan*, see W.H. McLeod, *Historical Dictionary of Sikhism*, London: The Scarecrow Press, 1995, pp. 66, 109, 146. *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, vol. I, pp. 502-4; vol. III, pp. 159-61.

38. Literally, true association, *satsang* refers generally to Sikh congregation in the *dharmsal* or the *gurdwara.*

39. The term *shabad* appears to refer to the *Granth Sahib*.

40. The word used in the text is *karaha* (cauldron). Since the sacred food (*prasad*) was prepared in it, it was called *karha prasad*. Its three ingredients are wheat flour, sugar and *ghee*.

41. *Chauki* is a four-legged low stool or table. Probably, the idea was to keep it lower that the seat of the *Granth Sahib*.

42. The phrase *mohar turk ki* can refer to the coin of the state headed by a Muslim. It can also mean the royal seal on a *farman* (imperial order). Showing respect to it would symbolise submission.

43. The word *loh* (iron) may refer to weapons of iron. However, iron by itself had sanctity because of its various uses in the Sikh tradition.

44. The word *prasad* is used here obviously for food and not for sacred food.

45. The composition of Guru Nanak known as *Japji* was recited early in the morning apparently since the days of Guru Nanak. In *Guru Granth Sahib*, the *Japji* has 38 *pauris* of Guru Nanak, followed by a *shlok* of Guru Angad. *Shabadarth Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, Amritsar: Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, 2000, vol. I, pp. 1-8. For detail, see *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, vol. II, pp. 347-9.

46. Guru Nanak's composition known as *Rahiras* was recited in the evening since his own times. In the *Guru Granth Sahib*, it has two constituents, *So Dar* and *So Purakh*. *So Dar* consists of five stanzas: the first three stanzas by Guru Nanak; the fourth by Guru Ram Das, and the fifth by Guru Arjan. *So Purakh* consists of four stanzas: the first three stanzas are by Guru Ram Das and the fourth stanza by Guru Arjan. *Shabadarth Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji*, vol. I, pp. 9-12. For detail, see *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, vol. III, pp. 431-2.

47. The word used in the text is *kirat* and not *kirtan*. It refers to the Sikh practice of praising God before going to sleep.

48. The term *halal* is not used in the text but the situation does refer to it by implication. However, the emphasis appears to be on having no relations with the Muslims who wielded power and authority.

49. The word used in the text is *gurbachan*, literally, what is uttered by the Guru. It appears to be synonymous with the *sabad*.

50. The term used in the text is Jampur, i.e. the city or the abode of Yama, which is hell.

51. The use of the word *rahit* in the text does not appear to refer to the formal *rahit* as it is understood today, but it does refer to the Sikh way of life which is inclusive of all commendable practices and beliefs. ‾

52. The word used in the text is *ardas*. It could be used for any prayer. However, there are indications in the *Dabistan-i Mazahib* that the practice of collective prayer by the Sikh congregation had developed by the mid-seventeenth century: *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, ed. J.S. Grewal and Irfan Habib, New Delhi: Tulika/Indian History Congress, 2001, p. 76.

53. The word used in the text is *dan*. The emphasis in the Sikh tradition is on giving something to others rather than receiving anything from others. For details, see *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, vol. I, pp. 502-4.

54. The words *sadh* and *sikh* are used together in the text as synonyms.

55. The word used in the text is *bhetan* (to offer or make an offering). However, the import is clear: the slanderer must be punished with death.

56. In the *Dabistan-i Mazahib* it is stated that every Sikh according to his resources put together money and took it to the *masand* by way of offering (*bhet*); the *masand* used to take all the offerings to the Guru's establishment: *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, p. 66. In the *hukamnamas* of Guru Hargobind the terms used for offering are *karvar* or simply *kar*: Ganda Singh, *Hukamname*, pp. 65, 67. In the *hukamnama* of Guru Har Krishan the term used is *bhet*. Ibid., p. 73. In the *hukamnamas* of Guru Tegh Bahadur the terms used are simply *kar*, *karbar* and *kar bhet*. Ibid., pp. 83, 88, 89, 92, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 104, 105. In a *hukamnama* attributed to Mata Gujri, the terms used are *kar bhet*, *sukh manat* and *ardas*. Ibid., p. 123. In the *hukamnamas* of Guru Gobind Singh the terms used are *kar*, *kar bhet*, *manat*, *dasvandh* and *golak*. Ibid., pp. 132, 133, 135-7 145, 153, 156-7. It appears, therefore, that the term *golak* was used for the first time by Guru Gobind Singh. However, it remained in currency along with other terms. In the *hukamnamas* of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi the terms used are *golak* as well as *kar*, *kar bhet*, *dasvandh*, *chaliha* and *sukh-manat*: Ibid., pp. 199, 201, 203, 205, 209, 211, 213, 214, 215, 217, 219, 223, 225, 226, 229. All this evidence clearly shows that there were several categories of offerings, and *golak* was one of them.

The use of the word *golak* suggests that a receptacle was kept for voluntary cash offerings in *dharmsals* or *gurdwaras*. Possibly, some Sikhs kept such receptacles in their homes to deposit offerings from time to time, for their eventual transfer to the Guru, a *dharmsal* or Gurdwara.

57. The terms used in the text are *chhal* (deceit) and *vapar* (trade). Therefore, the import can be specific in terms of buying and selling. But it can also be more general: that of conducting any trade deceitfully or dishonestly. It can also mean that not to keep the *golak* is to deceive the Guru.

58. The word *deepak* (or *diva*) refers obviously to the earthen lamp that can be blown out. But it should be extinguished by fanning.

59. By the early eighteenth century, the epithet Wahiguru had come to be used for God as conceived in the *Granth Sahib*.

60. The text is not clear, especially the term *Gur talpi*. Therefore, the translation given here carries only the general import.

61. The words given in bracket are not there in the text but in the context of the *chaupai* there is hardly any doubt that this is the import.

62. The term *khan* refers strictly to a title. However, since this title was conferred on individuals connected with the state, it came to be associated with the holders of power. In the present context it can be equated with 'Turk'.

63. 'The five' are generally believed to refer to *kam, krodh, lobh, moh* and *hankar*. The phrase can also refer to the five senses.

64. The term used in the text is *aan* which can mean honour. However, in the present context it appears to refer to a false sense of honour, or pride.

65. The term used in the text is *par-triya*, literally, 'another's woman'. It appears to carry the import of a woman other than one's wife.

66. The term used in the text is *par-dristi*, which appears to refer both to 'another woman' and things belonging to others.

67. The term used in the text is *nam-jap* which can mean both recitation of the name through Gurbani and remembrance of God.

68. The phrase used in the text is '*sastar ko dharay*', which suggests a certain degree of sanctity attached to weapons.

69. The use of the word *dharm* in the present context leaves hardly any doubt that it refers primarily to Sikh faith.

70. The text is not very clear and it is possible to interpret it differently. However, in the context of the preceding *chaupai*, the import appears to be what is given in the translation.

71. The term used in the text is *char varan* which can be taken to refer to the four main castes of the traditional social hierarchy, i.e. the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya, and the Shudra. However, if taken literally, the mass of the people below the rank of Shudras would be left out. The import of the phrase in the present context is 'all categories of people'.

72. The phrase used in the text is *'sava lakh jab dukhe palita'*, literally, 1,25,000 matchlocks. It is interesting to note that preference is given to fire arms over the traditional weapons of war. There is evidence of the use of matchlock in the time of Guru Gobind Singh by his warriors. See Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh: Its Soldiers and their Arms', in *The Khalsa and the Punjab*, ed. Himadri Banerjee, New Delhi: Tulika/Indian History Congress, 2002, pp. 26-7.

73. The phrase used in the text is *ude ast* (sunrise and sunset). This would mean 'wherever the sun shines' and therefore 'everywhere'.

74. This is the earliest known use of the couplet which became in due course a part of the Khalsa anthem. For detail, see *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, vol. III, pp. 441-2.
   Significantly, however, the victory of the followers of Guru Gobind Singh in the future is prophesied in the *Gursobha* which is believed to have been composed in 1711. Ashok, *Shri Gur Sobha*, pp. 136-7.

75. The use of the term *Nasihatnama* is interesting. It carries the import of being a manual of instructions. By the early nineteenth century, the term preferred for a work of this kind was *rahitnama*, as given in MS 234.

76. The phrase used for Guru Gobind Singh in the text is *patsahi dasvin*. The use of the compound word *mukh-vak* carries the import that the content of this work was actually uttered by Guru Gobind Singh. This may not be taken literally. However, it does not necessarily follow that what is presented here is not in accordance with the ideas of Guru Gobind Singh.