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### **ABOUT THE BOOK**

This book deals with the concept of Ideal man as visualized by Guru Nanak. It presents an exhaustive and analytical study which develops a philosophical and systematic conception of a perfect man. The concept has been discussed within the metaphysical framework of Guru Nanak's spiritual thought and the general structure of Sikhism.

In this book the author has tried to crystallize the idea with special reference to Guru Nanak's poetic composition- Siddh Goshti and a contrast between the gurmukh and the siddha has been drawn. It reflects the socio-ethical life of gurmukh who is embodiment of spiritual and moral virtues with social implications.

Besides discussing the nature, constituents and ideal of man's life, she has established the fact that the ultimate nature of man is spiritual in nature and is also identical with the essence of Reality. In order to develop a rational, efficient and precise concept the author has used analytical method along with other methods like comparative, historical, contextual and literary criticism etc. She has taken care to give objective interpretations of the symbolic and mystical meanings of the ideas of the gurus. It has been tried to interpret Guru Nanak's idea of man in the context of his own times and explained the same in the modern terminology so that it can be explicable to have an objective analysis of the thought.

The study is aimed at giving reader a brief but quite comprehensive vision of the ideal man. It should successfully accomplish the need of the readers, especially those living abroad and not familiar with the sources for an objective view of the concept of ideal man as depicted in gurbani.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

The author is a student of comparative study of religions with specialization in Sikh studies. She is post graduate (in Religion, Political Science and Punjabi), B.Ed., M. Phil. and Doctorate in Religious Studies. She is a sound scholar and perceptive writer. Though it is her first book but more than fifty Articles (in English and Punjabi language) are published in National and International Journals, Magazines and online publications. Her two books in Punjabi language ('Sikh Chintan anusaar dharma da sankalp' and 'Dharam') are ready for publication.

In addition, she is a Member of Translators' team of "Encyclopaedia of The Sikh Literature" Vol. 1 (English Translation of '*Mahan Kosh*' by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha) published by Punjabi University Patiala in 2007. She has experience of teaching Punjabi language to Senior classes (for 27 years) and Religious Studies (M.A.) in Punjabi University Patiala.

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ  
“ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਖੋਜਤ ਭਏ ਉਦਾਸੀ॥”  
(ਸਿਧ ਗੋਸਟਿ, ਮਹਲਾ ੧)

**Dedicated**  
To  
**Shabad Guru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji**

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	5
<u>THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN GURU NANAK'S THOUGHT</u>	7
[a] Introductory	
[b] Nature and Constituents of Man	
[c] Man's Unique Nature	
[d] Ideal Man's Life	
<u>THE CONCEPT OF GURMUKH IN SIDDH GOSHTI</u>	22
[a] Introductory	
[b] Gurmukh and Its Synonyms	
[c] Gurmukh in Siddh Goshti	
[d] Gurmukh Vis-à-vis-Siddha	
<u>GURMUKH AND SOCIAL REALITY</u>	41
[a] Introductory	
[b] Gurmukh's Attitude Towards Life and World	
[c] Householder's Life	
[d] Socio-ethical Life	
<u>CONCLUSION</u>	58

## KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

a	-	ਅ
ā	-	ਆ
ai	-	ਐ
au	-	ਐਉ
b	-	ਬ
bh	-	ਭ
c	-	ਕ
ch	-	ਚ
chh	-	ਛ
d	-	ਦ
dh	-	ਧ
e	-	ਏ
f	-	ਫ
g	-	ਗ
gh	-	ਘ
i	-	ਇ
ī	-	ਈ
j	-	ਜ
jh	-	ਝ
k	-	ਕ
kh	-	ਖ
l	-	ਲ
m	-	ਮ
n	-	ਨ
o	-	ਓ
p	-	ਪ
ph	-	ਫ
r	-	ਰ
s	-	ਸ
ś	-	ਸ਼
t	-	ਤ
u	-	ਉ
ū	-	ਊ
v	-	ਵ
y	-	ਯ
z	-	ਜ਼

A humble attempt is made to transliterate the Gurbani terms  
by using the above symbols.

## INTRODUCTION

Since times immemorial the study of man has attracted the attention of philosophers, seers and religious teachers. For them man has posed problematic situation. He is mystery and it is very difficult to understand his origin, nature and goal in his life.

In almost all the scriptures of the east and the west the understanding of multi-dimensions of man has very significant import. In the primitive period some mythical explanations were propounded to unravel the mystery of man. With the passage of time rational probe into this problem was initiated by the philosophers of different countries.

The present study is mainly concerned with Sikhism which has close affinity with Islam and Indian religious traditions. These religious traditions provided an intellectual environment for the origin and growth of Sikhism. Whatever the concept of man has been developed by Guru Nanak and other contributors of Sri Guru Granth Sahib has some relevance with Islam and Indian traditions. Secondly, the concept of man advocated in the Vedic tradition has also been partially accepted in Sikh theology but it has been transformed with some modifications. Sikh concept of man has been evolved out of this cultural milieu which was provided by Islam and Indian theistic traditions.

The Sikh viewpoint tries to reconcile the Islamic and the Indian spiritualistic views of man. Man has been presented as a manifestation of the one (*ik*). It is just like the rays of the sun, which emanate from its primordial source. The rays may look to be many but their ontological status is One. On the basis of hymns of Guru identity with the Ultimate Spiritual Being, he becomes perfect. This, perhaps, is the basic issue for Guru Nanak, which he visualized in his ideal man (*gurmukh*). His compositions seem to have direct or indirect concern with man's spiritual development so that he could become perfect in this very life.

The theme of the present study is 'The Concept of Ideal man in Guru Nanak's bani (in the context of 'Siddh Goshti). Guru Nanak exhorts a man to become an Ideal person having unique character & identity. After explaining the nature of Ultimate Reality, in the mool-mantar and in the beginning slok of 'Japuji', he at once comes to the problem of an Ideal man and poses a question: "How can we become truthful and how can we break the bond of falsehood"? Then he answers himself in the same stanza: "By obeying His Will, which is written along with everyone"

Guru Nanak's concept of ideal man seems to have been derived from his metaphysical structure which is explicitly explained in the 'Japuji' and other hymns (*śabad*) which are explanatory expositions. In this series the 'Siddh Goshti' is one of such compositions in which Guru Nanak systematically explains

his concept of ideal man. We have selected this composition for the purpose so that in-depth analysis could be done. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib synonym of gurmukh have doctrinal unity though emphasis has been laid on diverse aspects of the ideal man. Keeping this idea in mind we have dealt with the concept of gurmukh in the context of the 'Siddh Goshti', but references from other hymns of Guru Nanak. We have also taken support of other contributors of Sri Guru Granth Sahib so that objective view of gurmukh could be systematically presented.

To provide a systematic study to the reader, this book is divided into three chapters, excluding introduction and conclusion. Every chapter is divided into four sections for highlighting the thought. In the first chapter it is tried to explain the nature and constituents of man, his uniqueness as compared to other lower species and the aim of man's life. The second chapter, which contains the central theme of this work, describes the concept of Ideal man (gurmukh) in comparison with the ideal man (siddh) of Siddhas as presented in 'Siddh Goshti'. The third chapter reflects the socio-ethical life of gurmukh who is an embodiment of spiritual and ethical virtues with social implications. In comparison with the siddha, gurmukh has positive and dynamic attitude towards life and world. He leads the life of a householder (grihsthi) and works for the uplift of society. He himself is emancipated and emancipates others too. Really he represents the ideal man of Guru Nanak Dev ji

I am grateful to my late parents and my teachers for their inspiration and to the entire intellectuals whose works I have consulted. I am indebted to Dr. Sureet for her encouragement and support at various stages in finalizing my book. I humbly say that this study of the topic is not final because it is an extensive subject to be further explored. I conclude with the request to all readers for sending their suggestions and views.

## THE CONCEPT OF MAN IN GURU NANAK'S THOUGHT

### **(a) Introductory**

Religion is a distinct form of search for the nature of Reality, the universe, man and their other aspects. Out of so many problems, generally highlighted by the religious leaders, man seems to occupy the most significant position. Man is given so much vital significance because religion is mainly for the benefit of mankind. Sher Singh, a Sikh scholar, emphasizes the same view that "Man is the central figure in the whole universe. No religion or philosophy can exist without man nor can either be said to be complete without giving an explanation of the nature and purpose of man's life."<sup>1</sup> The philosophers use the term self for man. They point out "... the problem of self is interwoven with the central problem of Religion."<sup>2</sup>

Philosophy in one way or the other directs man in relation to the nature of Reality, theory of knowledge and the structure of society. As such, we come across a fact that in the west, Socrates was the first great philosopher who conspicuously drew attention towards the problem of self. His slogan "Know Thyself" is the essence of search for man's nature both from within and without. Similar idea came up in the Upanishadic period when the seers concentrated on the inward search for self-knowledge (*ātman-bodh*). Whatever may be their conclusions or points of differences, the fact remains that they made efforts to probe into the nature of the self. In the light of Indian thought C.D. Sharma emphasizes that, "the true self has been the main topic of investigation in the Upanishads. Socrates of ancient Greece has also persistently advocated the supreme necessity of 'Know Thyself.'"<sup>3</sup> With this background, we find that Guru Nanak and other Gurus also focus their attention on the problem of man and his ideal nature. This idea is founded in the 'Japuji', which comes in the beginning of the Sikh Scripture, i.e., *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

Guru Nanak after explaining the nature of Ultimate Reality in the Mūlmantra (creedal tenet) and in the beginning *slok*, at once comes to the problem of an Ideal man. He puts a question as how to be a *Sachiâr* (truthful man).<sup>4</sup> In other words, Guru Nanak poses a question that who is ideal man. He also takes up the problem of pathway to become an ideal man. Before we take up the problem of the concept of an ideal man, it seems desirable that we may discuss the different constituents or elements of man. The viewpoint of man in Guru Nanak's hymns (*shabads*) takes the point of view of spiritualism in which spirit is the very essence (*taṭ*) of man whereas body (*deh*) as an inseparable material aspect is also associated with it. In continuation with the spiritual

tradition of Indian culture, Guru Nanak views man as a combination of both spirit and body as inseparable aspects of the real self of man. The subtle aspect of man is spirit as a conscious self (*shiv*) and the gross aspect is the body (*shakti*). When the gross or material aspect dominates a man becomes materialist, egoist and selfish, and a person who is dominated by spirit is altruist and well-wisher of humanity. The problem before Guru Nanak is not to prove the spiritual and material elements of man but to make him perfectly free so that his spiritual aspect may completely control and guide his bodily self. For this purpose, Guru Nanak proposes a definite procedure, called the pathway to perfection or self-realization.

Before discussing the main problem of man's ideal nature, it would be proper for us to explain the nature and constituents of self or man in the light of Guru's revealed statements (*bānī- śabad*).

#### **(b) Nature and Constituents of Man (jīv)**

There are different interpretations of man given by the scholars about the nature and constituents of man. Sher Singh is of the view that, "There are two main constituents of the human being, one is soul and the other is body. The two are one in essence, but one is subtle and the other is gross."<sup>5</sup> Another writer points out that, "Man is made of three constituents- body, mind and soul."<sup>6</sup> An evolutionary viewpoint is also put forth about man. It is said "His being is constituted of reality which finds its expression at four different levels: matter, life, mind and spirit."<sup>7</sup> But, in the light of Guru Nanak's thought, "The proper study of man lies in considering him as an integral unity of matter, life, mind, reason and spirit."<sup>8</sup> Guru Nanak studies man as a whole and remarks that man in essence is a spiritual being but living in the world (*jagat*) with purpose of developing a perfect man in a social context. He is a psychological being with a mind (*surati*) and a social and ethical being with emotions and sentiments towards others. Moreover, he is rational being with a power of making discrimination between good and bad. Above all, man is a spiritual being, who has craving for the Divine.<sup>9</sup> Similarly Trilochan Singh interprets: "Guru Nanak presents man in his totality - man projected into existence, being in the spirit and being in the world, man in the midst of multiplicity, yet bearing within himself the sign and yearning for unity with the whole ....Guru Nanak does not ask man to deny the temporal existence but urges him not to succumb to the fascination of the visible and the exterior world. Man is advised to breathe and live simultaneously in both worlds- the spiritual and the material."<sup>10</sup>

Based on above given interpretations we can conclude that in Sikhism man is neither a mere body nor a spirit. In a broad sense, he is made of two elements: matter and spirit. The former is called not self, that is, physical body (*deh*, *kāiā*, *sarīr*, etc.) and the latter is named spiritual self (*ātmān*). According to Santokh Singh, "Man's nature shows him to be a member of the two worlds. He is a natural being having animal like instincts and impulses of anger, fear, sleep, sex and self-preservation; and he is a spiritual being aiming at the ideal of achieving self-perfection."<sup>11</sup> In the same strain Guninder Kaur observes that, "Man, it may be said, is that point where existentialism and spirituality meet, the juncture where the horizontal and vertical plans unite."<sup>12</sup>

"Man is in real sense the micro-manifestation (*pind*) of the Ultimate Reality, a ray of God's Light, a spark of the Divine or a drop or wave of ocean. The real self is common to all *Jīvas* as it is one with Absolute Being. It is the underlying unity of all persons."<sup>13</sup> This real Self is *ātmān*, which clothes itself in vesture called the body (*deh*). In the fourth stanza (*paūrī*) of the 'Japuji' Guru Nanak states it clearly that "the spiritual self enters the body according to the law of *Karma* (actions of the past)."<sup>14</sup> "At God's Will (*hukam*) the living beings (*jīva*) come to be."<sup>15</sup> At this stage, the individual self is *jīva* that gives consciousness to the body.

The human body is the temple (*mandir*) of God. In it inheres the spiritual self (*ātmān*)- the part of the Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*).<sup>16</sup> According to Guru Nanak, the human body is the product of the union of the mother's ovum (*rakat*) and the father's sperm (*bindu*).<sup>17</sup> The five gross elements (*panch-tattu*) [i.e. earth, water, fire, air and ether] conjoined together make up our body.<sup>18</sup> G.S. Mansukhani explains "... human body is complex mechanism. Physically it is made of bones, muscles, flesh, blood, skin, nerves, etc. The brain controls the physical system of the body. The functions of the body are motion, assimilation, reproduction, excretion and respiration. Each organ not only performs its functions but also works in harmony with other organs."<sup>19</sup> He further states, "There are five motor-organs (*karam-inḍrīs*) and five cognitive organs (*giā nindrīs*). Both types of organs are essential for the individual. Man cannot live fully without the aid of these organs."<sup>20</sup> All these organs work under the direction of mind (*man*). These are guided for the achievement of the goal of life - self-realization. The human body is a means for the realization of God. The significance and value of the human body (*deh*) is to recognize the purpose of spiritual development so, it is God's gift.

Guru Ram Das compares the human body (*deh*) with a mare (*tejani*) which becomes a means to reach ultimate goal. The Guru says that:

*The human body is the mare created by Rām...  
riding the mare of the body I cross the  
tumultuous (sea of existence) and unite<sup>21</sup>  
with my Lord, by the Guru's grace.*

Thus, the human body can serve as a springboard for spiritual development. From this point of view, the Gurus and the other contributors of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advise us to keep human body pure and healthy. It should keep pure by thought, word and deeds. In the words of Sher Singh, "Naturally any idea of ruining this body by ascetic exercises or penances was opposed by the Guru. Necessities of life must be attended to. We must work to maintain the body. But the necessity of maintaining the body should not make us bodily-minded. We should not be led to worship it and be engrossed in sensual pleasures making 'eat, drink, and be merry' our motto. The body is only a means. To indulge in it will be irrationality and animality."<sup>22</sup> Man should not forget that the importance of body lies in its being means for spiritual development.

In many hymns of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, the physical body without *nām* (holy name of the *ik*) is also called false. It is subject to decay and dissolution. So it is compared with an earthen pitcher (*Kachī gagrī deh*), and thus it is false body (*jhūthī dehī*), or dust (*dehī māṭī*), etc. Such examples of metaphors are given in the Holy Scripture only to warn man that the human body is not to be considered as eternally real. It should also not be mutilated and neglected. The attitude towards one's body should be balanced. Sikhism, therefore, affirms the relative reality of human body, which is in agreement with the general framework of Sikh theology.

One of the important things about the body is its relation with the mind. Ajit Singh Sikka quotes from *Malhār kī vār* (*paurī* 21, *Slok* M. I) and interprets Guru Nanak's thought that, "... mind influences the body and the body follows the mind."<sup>23</sup> According to Sher Singh, "The body at its farther end becomes mind, which is an evolute and, therefore, phenomenal."<sup>24</sup> The constituents of body combined together evolve human mind. This idea could be supported from the Scripture itself where it has been given that "human consciousness (*man*) is the evolute of five elements."<sup>25</sup>

The real teaching of Sikhism (*gurmatī*) starts from the initial development of human mind. It is to develop from gross elements to the subtle most self-consciousness. The mind in essence is Divine. In the broadest sense, it means consciousness (*suratī*). Guru Amar Das refers to mind in the sense of consciousness, the self, the spirit or the soul and suggests to recognize its illuminative essence (*joṭ sarūp*).<sup>26</sup> Sher Singh quotes: "In other words, mind at its

farther end also merges into the Self. The region of soul is entirely non-material. The soul is a necessary aspect of our being. In fact in the light of the Guru's monistic system, body, mind and soul all lie in the same line with no unbridgeable gap between them."<sup>27</sup> Thus, the affinity between the body and the mind is very intimate and inseparable.

The mind is a dweller in the human body. By its very nature, the mind is unsteady and restless. In the Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains its nature as mercurial<sup>28</sup> and wild.<sup>29</sup> Metaphorically the mind is compared with an elephant (*maigal* or *kunchar*) who dwells in the body but wanders all the directions. It is conquered by gurū-oriented person (*gurmukh*) with the goad (*ankush*) of Gurū's teachings (*gurśabad*) by stilling his ego (*haumai*).<sup>30</sup> S.S. Kohli interprets Guru Nanak's view that, "The thief is subdued by the word and lives in the city of the body (like a civilized citizen)."<sup>31</sup> In *Rāg Basant*, the nature of mind is illustrated (in detail) as such: it is through one's meeting with the Gurū that the intellect (*mati*) becomes sublime and refined. The mind becomes immaculate and ego washes away. The Gurū reminds repeatedly that egoity (*haumai*) is the manifestation of a separative tendency of human mind.<sup>32</sup>

Professor Teja Singh asserts that: "As long as man does not find the Guru, his mind is bound within these three conditions [*sato, rajo, tamo*] and suffers ups and downs. It is the Guru who brings him to the fourth condition [*turiā avasthā*], which is of balanced desires and harmony of mind."<sup>33</sup> In this form, the mind is named as moon, mirror and diamond. He has recognized real essence of the Self and his mind is illumined with the all light and has been emerged with the Supreme Mind. In this regard, W.H. McLeod states that, "... *man* [mind] is something priceless; the treasury which contains all treasures, the abode of God Himself if man will but recognize it.... In unregenerate man, however, the man is impure, unrestrained. Its evil propensities are permitted to assert themselves, and in consequence man remains a slave to his passions and so to death."<sup>34</sup> In its regenerated form mind is called donkey (*khar*). Guru Arjan Dev says:

*O vicious mind, I trust you not for, you  
are intoxicated with yourself.  
Like the donkey, you can be untethered only  
when on your back is the load of God.*<sup>35</sup>

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains to the Siddhas that:

*The mind comes under control with the  
help of the Gurū. When God is merciful,  
He leads us on to the Gurū and his  
mind abides in its Self.*<sup>36</sup>

Guru Arjan Dev advocates Guru Nanak's view and writes:

*Yea, one's mind is held only if the Lord<sup>37</sup>  
Is in utter mercy (pūran kirpā).*

Otherwise the mind is surrounded with the five vices i.e. lust, anger, greed, attachment and conceit (*kām, krodh, lobh, moh and ahankār*). Guru Nanak states the helplessness of engrossed mind in these words:

*The others are five and i am alone.  
How shall I keep my property or home safe?  
They oppress and ponder us always to<sup>38</sup>  
Whom should I request for protection?*

The above given two states of mind are characterized by Rattan Singh Jaggi as *parkāshmaī man* (illuminated mind) and *andhkārmaī man* (darkened mind).<sup>39</sup> It is illuminated when it is attached to *Paramātmā* but is darkened when it is engrossed in the objects of the world. W.H. McLeod points out that, "Man's nature is, for Guru Nanak, dependent upon his affiliation and that nature is transformed when his affiliation is transferred from the world to the divine Name."<sup>40</sup> According to Guru Nanak, the mind is mostly attracted towards *māyā*. Due to ignorance (*agiān*), man is inclined more towards evil than towards good. His mind is weak and it becomes easy prey to forces of evils. "The prayer of a Sikh lays emphasis on the higher plane for the intellect and lower for the mind, [*man nīvā*" *matī uchī*], because the mind is mostly attracted towards the vices .... The mind, if let loose, can play havoc and, if kept under control, can raise us spiritually."<sup>41</sup>

Intellect controls the mind and the actions of man. Therefore, the intellect (*budhi*) has to be trained to make the right approach to a given situation. It should be good, creative and purified. In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak assures that evil intellect (*kubudhi*) vanishes by reflecting on the revealed utterance (*gur-shabad*) of the gurū.<sup>42</sup> In fact, the ego centric intellect (*manamati*) is to be obliterated and gurū-oriented intellect (*gurmati*) is to be developed by surrendering oneself before the gurū. In the Words of S.S. Kohli, "The grace of the Lord and the gurū plays a great part in the conquest of mind."<sup>43</sup> Guru Nanak points out, that this faculty guides a man in his ethical, social and spiritual fields of life. He writes that:

*It is through the intellect that we remember  
Lord or Master (sāhib), receive honours,  
realize the truth  
And judge the worthwhileness of dān<sup>44</sup>  
(to help the needy persons).*

Every human being possesses the thinking power or intelligence although in a varying degree. Guru Nanak writes in Sri Rāg that without *surati* (consciousness or intelligence), there is none.<sup>45 (a)</sup> But the enlightened intelligence (*bibek budhī*) is desirable for the progress of man towards its higher plane. It withdraws the mind and the senses from all evil thoughts and helps man in realizing his real Self (*ātmān*).

The *ātmān*<sup>45(b)</sup> is a manifest part of the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmān*). It is the support and the essence of human life, which is inherently active. It is the Light (*joti*) of God. We read Guru Nanak's view in 'Sohila' as such:

*Though art the spirit that pervades all.  
It is Thy Light that lights all hearts.*<sup>46</sup>

Ishar Singh calls body of a man "... a wonderful machine with five sense organs, five action organs, five vital airs, the mind and intellect. Before this machine appears in this world, God infuses in it a part of His own Self, the Spirit, the Soul (*Atmā*). This spirit, the soul is all consciousness, all light and makes the machine of the body conscious and active."<sup>47</sup> Guru Amar Das explains this idea as:

*O My body, the Lord put His light in thee  
and so thou came into the world.*<sup>48</sup>

The *ātmān* is the non-material and the subtlest constituent of man which cannot be grasped by the sense organs. Thus we can say that activity of the other constituents of man is due to the presence of *ātmān* in the body. In nutshell, spiritual self is a regulative principle of human body. Guru Arjan Dev confirms this assertion by addressing the human body in the following words:

*In his [soul's] company thou hast an  
Individuality in all respects...  
Without him thou art clay...  
Without him thou art deserted.  
In his company thou art respected and  
Honoured and related to the world.*<sup>49</sup>

Metaphorically speaking the body has been considered as the wife of the soul. Guru Arjan Dev. has portrayed this relationship in a form of dialogue between the body and the soul (dhan and pir). The wife (*body*) requests her husband (*ātmān*) to remain with her forever, but the husband works under the Will (*hukam*) of his own Master (God).<sup>50</sup>

The Gurus between the *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* have affirmed same relationship. Here *jīva* is wife separated from her husband *Brahman* due to egoity (*haumaī*). The separative identity limits the Universal Consciousness into

individual consciousness (I-am-ness). Self-assertion gives man his individuality and ties him down to the world. Thus, *haumai* acts as a wall (*bhīt*) between the individual self and the Universal Self.<sup>51</sup> Lajwanti Lahori states that: "Although there is an essential similarity between the individual self and the God, yet in the present state of existence of *jīvātmā* there is no identity between the two....The difference between the two is because of *avidyā* (ignorance) which creates the sense of *haumai* in *jīvātmā*."<sup>52</sup> In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak assumes that he who obliterates his *haumai* merges in God.<sup>53</sup>

*Jīva* is a sort of miniature form of *brahman*. There are various verses in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, which indicate that God (*Parmātmā*) and the individual self (*jīva*) in essence are the same. When the individual self identifies itself with the Supreme Self, the inner duality disappears from within. At this state of realization *Pārbrahm* abideth in the soul and the soul in God.<sup>54</sup>

In the light of *gurbānī*, Sher Singh arrives at the conclusion that: "God and the soul of the individual are in essence the same .... The simile of ocean and waves is generally used by the Guru to indicate the relation between God and the individual souls."<sup>55</sup> He adds that " ... two are the same like the sun and the ray, like the fire and the spark and like the heap of dust and its particles....Although the waves and the ocean both consist of water, yet there is a great difference between the two. It is through egoism, which is subjectively known as *Avidyā*- ignorance and objectively considered, it is called *Māyā*. *Haumai* is the essence of the individual self."<sup>56</sup> He further explains, "All individual souls get differentiated under the influence of the infinite shading of the three *gunas*, thus causing infinite varieties of *haumai* leading to the performance of various *karmas* whose impressions or effects are carried by the *Jīvas* by means of their subtle bodies. This makes possible the continuity of the individual self in the series of births and deaths."<sup>57</sup>

In the same context, Teja Singh states that: "Regeneration comes when, at the call of Grace, we begin to subject our tiny self to the highest Self, that is God, and our own will is gradually attuned to His Supreme Will, until we feel and move just as He wishes us to feel and move."<sup>58</sup>

No sooner does the I-consciousness or *haumai* that gives rise to a perverted view of individuality disappears, the identity between the Absolute and the finite self (*jīva*) is realized. This possibility of realizing the real self is only possible for a man. He has the capacity of being conscious of his empirical self and gradually acquiring a vision of the Universal Self and thus merges into the *Brahman*, the Pure Consciousness from which he emanated.

### (c) Man's Unique Nature

Man occupies a unique position in the creation. As compared to other species, the status of man is superior, for he is the only creature who is conscious of his purpose of human life. Based on *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* Lajwanti Lahori says, "He is distinguished from the rest of the creation because he can transcend himself in the act of knowing all the aspects of himself. Man is different from the rest of the world for he has the capacity for becoming aware of his consciousness, and this capacity of his alone distinguishes him from rest of the animal and material world."<sup>59</sup>

Man as the self-consciousness being has the possibility of merging himself with the universal consciousness. From the point of view of spiritual development and potentiality of self-realization, man is at the top because the self-realization or self-recognition is self-identification with the Supreme Being. Guru Arjan Dev recommends the superiority of man by saying that:

"Man is the Supreme creature in the  
whole of the Universe."<sup>60</sup>  
God created eighty-four lakhs of species,  
he gave supremacy to human being<sup>61</sup>

Ishar Singh in this context writes, "In the order of God's nature, man's status is highest and he is at the helm of all living beings."<sup>62</sup> "Thus man stands at the highest pedestal of the cosmos; he is the last step of the stair-case of the creation."<sup>63</sup> Bhagat Kabir confirms the supremacy of human life above the gods also. He writes that:

*Even the gods long and pray for the human body.  
It is so priceless because only through this  
human life one can meditate on nām.  
And merge with the Supreme Reality<sup>64</sup>*

In Indian and Semitic traditions the superiority of man is also asserted over other creatures.<sup>65</sup> Kapur Singh, a Sikh writer is of the view: "The man being the highest yet point in the process of creation, on the phenomenal plane, where the evolutionary impulse has apparently near exhausted its initial momentum, it is man on whom now the responsibility rests for consciously revitalizing this impulse for a further evolutionary leap."<sup>66</sup>

Lajwanti Lahori rightly observes, "Man is at the meeting point of matter and spirituality, the finite and infinite. He is at the upper threshold of animal life and at the lower threshold of spirituality. It is for him either to rise and reach the highest peak of spirituality in response to the call of spirit within him or to let him be drowned back into the lower forms of animal life pulled down by his ego-oriented tendencies."<sup>67</sup> She further comments that, "In fact, his uniqueness lies in

his passion for Truth and in his ability to realize it. For, he alone has the power to solve the mystery by transcending himself, while other living organisms have no such power."<sup>68</sup>

In addition to this man is also superior to other creatures from the point of view of intellect. He has the capacity to use reason as a tool for making discrimination between truth (sach) and falsehood (*jhūth*), right and wrong to get at the highest state of consciousness. Guru Nanak says:

*He distinguishes the true ones from the false.*<sup>69</sup>

In the words of G.S. Mansukhani, "Man is a thinking animal and as such the crown of the whole creation."<sup>70</sup> Man has a multi-dimensional personality. He embodies in him every quality, which goes to make him the master of the creation. Every element in man has its counter-part in Nature. In this context Pritam Singh points out that, "Man as a product of Nature's evolution is a unique specimen of that evolution, holding the key to the mystery of Nature."<sup>71</sup>

These metaphysical views about the unique position of man in relation to God and universe are in conformity with the thought of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak points out that:

*Man and the universe are similar to each other.*<sup>72</sup>

Bhagat Pipa also holds the view that:

*The jīva (pind) and jagat (brahmand) are  
Identical with the Absolute Being,  
Who is immanent in His Creation.*<sup>73</sup>

It is only man who is microcosm (*pind*) as compared to other lower species. Here his nature is unique.

Thus, man is a prototype of the universe. The Being, which is manifested in this microcosm (*pind*), also resides in the macrocosm (*brahmand*). Man in relation to the Universe is regarded as a universe in miniature. The Divine element or the Universal Soul is the essence of both of them. Therefore, Bhagat Pipa advises that:

*Understand yourself from within and you  
Will understand the universe and God.*<sup>74</sup>

Man is a mediator between God and the universe hence he has a unique position in relation to God and universe.

#### **(d) Ideal of Man's Life**

The Gurus consider the ideal of human life (summum bonum) as God-realization. Bhai Jodh Singh states that, "The Guru's advice about the objective of human life is to search out the spiritual element in man and to realize that the

*nirankār*, the original source out of which man has been created is within us. He further emphasizes that we are to make efforts to realize Him or to be one with Him."<sup>75</sup>

In many hymns of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, this life is named as a priceless gift (*mānas janam dulanbh*).<sup>76</sup> Guru Arjan Dev makes a man conscious that:

- (i) *After a long period he is blessed  
with this human body.  
He transmigrated in various  
lower forms of life.*<sup>77</sup>
- (ii) *He remained in the cycle of birth  
and death for millions of years.  
Now he has obtained the human  
body (*mānas deh*).*<sup>78</sup>

This is a golden chance (*durlabh deh*) to be free from the transmigration and achieve the ideal of life for which God created it. G.S. Mansukhani is of the view that "... the creation of man could not have been purposeless."<sup>79</sup> "He designed him for happiness and love."<sup>80</sup>

Kapur Singh also explains the perspective of Sikhism as an ideal of human life in his own rational way. In very clear and explicit terms, he writes, "Sikhism urges man to divinise the whole of humanity on this earth by transforming mind, life and matter, through a conscious effort and will, and with the aid of the spiritual technique of the *Nām-Yoga*."<sup>81</sup> The scholar has used the verb 'to divinise' as an aim to make an ideal person. As discussed earlier, man is a constituent of material elements but he has divine aspect as well. In Sikhism, the man is considered Ideal When the material elements transform and the spirit dominates matter. Perhaps the ideal man of Guru Nanak achieves such an ideal. In conformity with Sikhism, Kapur Singh tells "Nām simran is the technique of self-realization. It is so significant that without *nām* the life of man goes waste."<sup>82</sup>

As discussed above man's superiority lays in his capacity to know his real self and utilize this supreme life to be one with the *Brahman* from whom he is separated. Separation is suffering (*vijog*) and the union (*sanjog*) with God is the eternal bliss (*anand*). Just as the wife (*sohāgani*) in separation from her husband (*bhatār*) suffers and bears the pangs of separation, similarly the soul away from God pines to meet with Universal Self. Thus, aim of man's life is the merging of the *ātmān* with *Parmātmā*. If a man does not utilize this rare opportunity, his life is fruitless.<sup>83</sup>

This life is a testing ground. There are two alternatives; either the *jīvātmān* (individual self) rejoins its original source (the Supreme Reality) or it continues moving in the cycle of births and deaths. The Guru makes conscious to

the seeker that he has obtained the human body (*mānukh dehuriā*) which can help him to realize his real self. It is from here that further upward movement towards God-realization starts. In other words, this is your chance to meet the Lord of the Universe. Join the Saadh Sangat, the Company of the Holy; vibrate and meditate on the Jewel of the Naam.<sup>84</sup> A meeting with the saints confirms the devotee in the remembrance of the mystic unity with Him by removing the veil of *haumai* (I-consciousness): "In fact, Guru Nanak wants to lift man from lower stage of *haumai* to the higher stage where only God's Will [*hukam*] prevails."<sup>85</sup> God is pleased best when man surrenders himself to His Will. This is the gurmukh's way of thinking and carrying out God's Will. He intimately relates to the Guru's conception of truth.

Truth-realization is the *summum bonum* of human life. It is achieved by living a life in tune with the Divine Law (*hukam*).<sup>86</sup> According to Bhai Jodh Singh "The object of man's life is to work according to the Will of God."<sup>87</sup> He interprets Guru's view of *hukam*: "To do what He has willed us to do. 'Hukam' is literally 'order'. It is submitting our own will to that of God that enables us to see the Great Reality, or better say, to find the Great Reality dwelling in our souls ... the knowledge of Divine Will means the destruction of egoism."<sup>88</sup> According to *gurmat*, the human life is not sinful in its origin but it emanates from a spiritual source. Therefore, it is also spiritual in its essence. Transcendence from *haumai* and *māyā* is the ideal of human life.<sup>89</sup>

Avtar Singh explains from ethical standpoint that, "It is the self which has to continuously strive to the ideal self, as a self, in its social relationship, and also what a religionist may say 'to be acceptable to God'. The uplift has to be of the whole self."<sup>90</sup> He again, clarifies that, "The ideal is to be a fully realized self or to be a *sachiāra*."<sup>91</sup>

According to *gurmat* the ideal of spiritual realization is to help other fellow travellers for spiritual development. The *sachiāra* or gurmukh who has attained the ideal by following the path of *nam-simran* does not cherish the feeling of egoistic satisfaction to the exclusion of any thought of the family of mankind. This idea intimately interweaves with the idea of immense feeling for others. The outlook of the ideal man (gurmukh) is to develop a sense of social and corporate life. In Guru Nanak's own words, in the 'Japuji', this idea is summed up:

*By obeying the Name one finds the door of liberation.  
By obeying the Name one becomes the  
Spiritual support of one's family.  
By obeying the Name the teacher himself  
is saved and saves his disciples.*<sup>92</sup>

This ideal of liberation (*moksha*) is not cutting of all connections with the world but it is something, which increases connections with the family of man and his co-travellers. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the theory of mukti is conceived differently. In the words of M.A. Macauliffe, it is "absorption in God."<sup>93</sup> "To become absorbed in God is the ideal of man .... The ideal is abhedata- non-duality- merging of the individual into the Universal Self. It is merging of the drop into the ocean.... Mukti is denied as a lower ideal. Love of God and to be near His beautiful person and feet are made the highest aspirations of man." <sup>94</sup>

Guru Arjan Dev gives preference to love for God vis-a-vis mundane objects. According to Guru Arjan Dev:

*I crave not the kingdom, nor the mukti.  
But I crave O God, love of Thy lotus-feet.*<sup>95</sup>

Again,

*Neither Emancipation, nor any (other) way,  
Nor any joy equals the  
Loving Adoration of God.* <sup>96</sup>

In the words of Guru Nanak:

*He seeketh the sight of the Lord  
(prītam) at his gate.  
O, of what account to him is  
heaven or deliverance.* <sup>97</sup>

In the end, we can conclude that the destination of man's life is to reach the realm of God's Light and eternal Bliss after meditating on God's Name and toiling hard (*masakat-ghāl*). Guru Nanak states in the last *slok* of 'Japuji' that:

*They find the realm of Divine Light and  
Emancipate others from darkness.* <sup>98</sup>

A scholar explains "...the ideal of human life leads not only to the individual salvation but in the salvation of the human race."<sup>99</sup> This is the most essential part of the ideal of a liberated man (*jīvan-mukṭī*). It is a state of *jīvan-mukṭ* the state of entire, complete merging of individual's will with Supreme Will of God.

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- (b) "There are many terms which have been used in the religious traditions to indicate the spiritual essence in man, like, self, soul, *rū h*, spirit, *ātmān*. But here in the context of Sikhism we are making use of the word *ātmān* which will have its general and spiritual meaning.
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## THE CONCEPT OF GURMUKH IN SIDDH GOSHTI

### **(a) Introductory**

An ideal man (*gurmukh*) forms the epitome in Sikhism. His activities and pursuits are oriented towards achievement of an ideal of human life which has been advocated the Gurus in their revealed hymns (*śabads*). In fact, his personality traits reveal the entire structure of man as given in Sikh Scriptures. Guru Nanak exhorts a man to become a perfect man.

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak discloses to the *siddhas* that he has outwardly become recluse (*udāsī*) in order to find out an ideal man (*gurmukh*) who is God-oriented (*gurmukh Khojat bhae udāsī*).<sup>1</sup> As such the central theme of the 'Siddh Goshti' seems to project the ideal concept of man— *gurmukh*. Guru Nanak has adopted dialogue as the medium to put forth the qualities of the ideal man.

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak has discussed different philosophical problems but here our main concern is only with the ideal man as presented in this composition. His hymns (*bānī*) are an effort to project the ideal personality of *gurū*-oriented man which is harmoniously and simultaneously developed from within and without. Guru Nanak's approach towards human personality is holistic in which all the aspects are harmoniously developed with the continuous association of the *śabad-gurū*.

The *śabad-gurū* is the regulative principle for transforming human personality and makes it perfect in all aspects. Unlike the *siddhas*, Guru Nanak advocates that ideal man could be possible only in a social structure, which functions as a necessary condition for the development of human personality.

The ideal and perfect person, according to Guru Nanak, is *gurmukh* who is an embodiment of some human virtues, which are good for an individual and society. The ideal man of Guru Nanak is humanitarian from the core and he always struggles for the uplift of his fellow beings. This ideal of the *gurmukh* has been contrasted with the ideal of the *siddhas* who had renounced the world to attain emancipation. We propose to discuss the concept of *gurmukh* with special reference to the 'Siddh Goshti' and will also draw a contrast between Guru Nanak's ideal— *gurmukh* and ideal man of the *yogis*— *siddha*.

Before we discuss in details the concept of *gurmukh* in the 'Siddh Goshti', we may explain the terms, such as, *gurmukh* and other similar terms which occur in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

### **(b) Gurmukh and Its Synonyms**

In order to portray an ideal man, Guru Nanak and other contributors of *Guru Granth Sahib* have made use of different terms, like, *sachiār*,<sup>2</sup> *gurmukh*,<sup>3</sup> *bhagat*,<sup>4</sup> *sevak*,<sup>5</sup> *mahāpurakh*,<sup>6</sup> *āshak*,<sup>7</sup> *sikh*,<sup>8</sup> *gursikh*,<sup>9</sup> *giānī*,<sup>10</sup> *brahamgiānī*,<sup>11</sup> *sādh*,<sup>12</sup> *sant*,<sup>13</sup> *jan*,<sup>14</sup> *dās*,<sup>15</sup> *sūrā*,<sup>16</sup> *sohāgan*,<sup>17</sup> *mukt*,<sup>18</sup> *panch*,<sup>19</sup> *jīvanmukt*<sup>20</sup> and others. All these terms comprise their specific connotations in particular contexts. For example, (i) *Sachiār* is invested with the search for cardinal virtue of Truthfulness which is the Supreme ideal for man; (ii) *Gurmukh* (God-oriented person) is an ideal man of faith with complete orientation to the *śabad-gurū* ; (iii) *Bhagat* (devotee) is a man of devotion ; (iv) *Sevak*'s chief characteristic is complete surrender before Gurū and God ; (v) *Brahamgiānī* (a person of cosmic awareness) is completely an enlightened self.

It seems that these terms are used by the Gurus to depict the ideal image of man. We agree with Taran Singh's statement, "These epithets even are sufficient to give a glimpse of the ideal level of human existence."<sup>21</sup> For an ideal man different words have been used in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* indicating almost the same meaning. Avtar Singh, a Sikh scholar, points out that, "In Japuji, this real self is termed by Guru Nanak, *Sachiāra*, which is the apex of self-realization (*kiv sachiārā hoīe*)."<sup>22</sup> The scholar further explains that "It may be interesting to mention here that though this ideal or real self is named here as *Sachiāra* Guru Nanak himself has used many terms to refer to this apex of realization. For example, in his famous discourse with *siddhas* (included in *Ādi Granth*, and called *Siddh Goshti*), we first find the reference to realized self as *Sant* and then in the next few stanzas, this ideal self is identified as *gurmukh*. When we come to the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, we find that sometimes this ideal self is called *Brahamagiānī* and all that was said about the *gurmukh* is said about *Brahamagiāni* in his composition *Sukhmanī* ...."<sup>23</sup>

Though these different terms used in the Scripture emphasize different aspects of the ideal man, yet it does not follow that other aspects are missing in his personality. Some scholars lay emphasis on theoretical and rational aspects of an ideal man's personality (*brahamgiānī*). It appears that Guru gives balanced significance to all the aspects of human personality. Hence, *brahamgiānī* is a practical person in the social context.<sup>24</sup> He is enlightened being who actively participates in all walks of social life. Similarly, *gurmukh* is not only a man with ethical personality but he utters the unutterable (*akath*) and knows the secrets of inner life through the Guru.<sup>25</sup>

In fact, the ideal man of Guru Nanak is an embodiment of the cognitive, conative and affective aspects of human personality. Based on these three dimensions of human personality *giān mārg* represents the cognitive aspect

whereas *karam mārg* represents the conative dimension and *bhagatī mārg* refers to the affective one of human personality. Emphasis on one aspect of personality does not mean that other ingredients are missing. Guru Nanak wanted to develop an ideal man who could harmoniously develop these three aspects without ignoring any one of them. Avtar Singh also supports this viewpoint. He says, "The self, through its cognitive, affective and conative functions, is to proceed to its ideal realization."<sup>26</sup>

In order to develop such an ideal man Guru Nanak seems to have selected a term *gurmukh*, which covers almost all the important aspects of a realized self or a perfect man.

### (c) Gurmukh in Siddh Goshti

The term *gurmukh* is a general word which could be applied to any man or woman who implicitly accepts the instructions of the teacher (*gurū*). *Gurmukh* is expected to be entirely dependent on the *gurū*. The literal meaning of the word *gurmukh* is the face of the *gurū* or "*gurū's* mouth by implication."<sup>27</sup> But its religious and metaphorical sense requires a deeper interpretation which ensures that whatsoever the Guru utters is to be accepted by the disciple.

The word *gurmukh* has been defined by different scholars from different standpoints. Ravinder G.B. Singh gives the root and meaning of the word '*gurmukh*' as "Guru Nanak also uses the term *guramukha* (Skt: *gurū* [*gT+ku*] + *mukha* [*mu+khan*]) for one who looks upon his *gurū* for instructions and directions, as against one who is *manamukha* (Skt: *manas* [*man+asun*] + [*mukha*] or self-willed."<sup>28</sup>

The root meaning of the term suggests that *gurmukh*, as an ideal man of Guru Nanak is a person who abides by instructions of the spiritual Guru and acts upon them both in spirit and letter. Such a person makes spiritual struggle and ultimately realizes Reality within his own self. Guru Nanak says:

*"Through the gurū he realizes light within."*<sup>29</sup>

Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha gives connotation of the term *gurmukh* based on the literal meaning of the word. He writes, "... a *gurmukh* is a person who is face-to-face with the *gurū* and never turns away from the *gurū*."<sup>30</sup> This definition suggests that *gurmukh* is an ideal man in the eyes of Guru Nanak:

*The person who perfectly abides by spiritual  
guidance of the Gurū (śabad-gurū)  
and ultimately merges in Truth.*<sup>31</sup>

On the same lines, Professor G.S. Talib defines the term gurmukh (one facing God-ward or towards the preceptor) as " ... a person of deep spiritual yearning and vision and is an exalted appellation."<sup>32</sup>

Guru Amar Das in his *bānī* illustrates the multi-farious personality of the *gurmukh*. He says that:

*A Gurmukh is a person who realizes  
his real self from within  
(nānak gurmukh jāntai  
jā kau āp kare pargāsu).*<sup>33</sup>

In the words of Guru Nanak:

*Gurmukh does not get himself engrossed  
in falsehood and remains always in tune  
with Truth and loves Truth.*<sup>34</sup>

Again, in the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak tells that:

*It is gurmukh who remains  
ever merged in Truth.*<sup>35</sup>

The *gurmukh*, thus, is an enlightened person who is active participant in the social life and struggle for harmony and unity of mankind. For this very reason, some scholars (Bhai Jodh Singh, Kapur Singh, G.S. Talib, *et. al.*) consider that gurmukh is God-oriented person. As such, they seem to suggest that gurmukh as an ideal man of Guru Nanak always sees individuals as manifest units of God.

In *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, the ideal man is a manifestation of God because he is corporate with the intrinsic values of the Supreme Reality with complete orientation to the light of the Divine. In *Rāg Prabhātī* Guru Nanak has made a mention of the ideal men who are admitted into the Divine Court (*dargāh*). Guru Nanak says:

*Rare are such men in this world whom  
after testing, God has gathered unto  
His own treasury.  
They have transcended the barriers of  
caste and colour and given up  
mineness and greed.  
Imbued with the Name (nām),  
they have become sacred  
places (tīraths) full of purity, having  
destroyed the pain and dirt of egoism.  
Nānak washes the feet of such  
God-oriented saints (gurmukh)  
in whose heart is enshrined the True One.*<sup>36</sup>

They are identified with God. Guru Nanak remarks that:

*Those who have realized the self,  
they become the Supreme Self  
(jinī ātam chīniā parmātam soī).*<sup>37</sup>

Again,

*He (gurmukh) on whom is the grace  
(nadri) of God (harī prabhu) singeth  
the praise of God.  
He is immaculate and pure of heart  
and very embodiment of the Transcendent  
and perfect gurū.*<sup>38</sup>

The opposite word of *gurmukh* is *manmukh*. With the contrast of both the terms, we can evolve the term *gurmukh*, which Guru Nanak had in his mind at the time of a dialogue with the *siddhas*:

The Siddhas ask:

*Who is concealed, who is liberated,  
Who is united within and without?*<sup>39</sup>

Guru Nanak replies:

*God is concealed in every vessel (body).  
The God-oriented (gurmukh) is liberated;  
He is united within and without  
through the Word.  
The self-oriented (manmukh) dies and  
comes and goes again and again.*<sup>40</sup>

In the following stanza (*paurī*) Guru Nanak explains:

*The manmukh has lost,  
The gurmukh has gained.*<sup>41</sup>

Thus in these stanzas one idea is clear that both (*gurmukh* and *manmukh*) are opposite to each other.

According to Bhai Jodh Singh "Guru Nanak divides men into two categories only: the God-oriented (*gurmukh*) and the self-oriented (*manmukh*). God-oriented are those who, shedding all evil, practise the truth and draw closer to the Creator. The self-oriented follow the whims of their minds, practise untruth, fraud, deceit, etc. and remain involved in the worldly enjoyments."<sup>42</sup>

Guru Nanak in the 'Siddh Goshti' advises that one should destroy all egoistic tendencies from within. And one should do away with duality (*dūja mete*) and realize oneness with the One (*ik*).<sup>43</sup> Taran Singh writes that "When a man shakes off his narrow egoity, he merges his self with the cosmic self. Such a man considers himself as a drop in the ocean of life and understands that his good or interest is common with the good of the other members of the human society or family. Such a man identifies himself with the society. He has no individual interests."<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand, Taran Singh explains, "... an egoist creates a world of his own like the spider that weaves a web out of his own self and is entangled in it and is thus killed ultimately by his own false creation. An egoist lives in an

imaginary world of his own wherein he himself matters the most and remains the centre of the entire universe or a small circle of his relatives is all that matters."<sup>45</sup>

He further adds that "A *Gurmukh* is the antithesis of an egoist. He meditates on the Name and so purifies his mind that all the evil and selfish tendencies leave him.... The discipline of the Name inculcates in the devotee the virtues of temperance, honesty, non-attachment, moderation, gratitude and love of the Lord. These are the qualities of a servant of God too. This plane of character guarantees the state of bliss and continuous pleasure to a *Gurmukh*."<sup>46</sup>

In the words of Guru Nanak:

- (i) *The gurmukh is blest with the Name  
of the Immaculate Lord;  
And he stills his ego through the Word,  
singing ever the True Lord's praise.*<sup>47</sup>  
*Yea, he remains merged in the True Lord.*
- (ii) *The gurmukh thinks of knowledge and Truth  
and burns ego by the word of the gurū.  
He is pure in mind, thought and Word,  
and so he merges in Truth.*<sup>48</sup>
- (iii) *He recognizes the hukam, accepts  
it and merges in God.*<sup>49</sup>

Thus the knowledge of Divine Will means the destruction of egoism. Guru Nanak explains in the 'Japuji':

*If one was to realize His Will (hukam)  
he would not say 'I-am' (haumai).*<sup>50</sup>

*Gurmukh's* will is in harmony with the Supreme Will of God. As referred earlier Guru Nanak poses a problem of how to be Truth-oriented (*kiv sachīārā hoīe*)? In reply to this question it is stated that:

*One can become possessed of Truth or Truth-  
oriented by submitting to the Will of the  
Ordainer the destiny set for it at the time of  
creation of the self (hukam razāī chalnā  
nānak likhiā nāl).*<sup>51</sup>

We agree with Avtar Singh "...this answer shows that the concern of Guru Nanak is with Will, which he takes to be fundamental and an important criterion of self-realization. The Will issues in actions and so we identify the *gurmukh* or *sachīār* by his actions."<sup>52</sup>

In fact, Guru Nanak's mission is to elevate man from the lower stage of *haumai* to the higher one where only the Divine Will prevails. In *gurbānī*, there is a tremendous effort to raise man from the stage of *manmukh* to *gurmukh*. Lajwanti Lahori points out that "*Manmat* (ego-centric intellect) has to be obliterated and *gurnat* (gurūwardly Intellect) is to be developed.... Man has to

change his orientation: from being a *manmukh* (egocentric) he has to become *gurmukh* (Gurū-centred)."<sup>53</sup>

In the 'Siddh Goshti', the lower nature of man is described as under:

*The manmukh strays from the path  
and so is subject to death  
He has an eye upon another's possessions,  
and so loses the merit of life.  
He is strayed by doubt and wanders  
about in wilderness.  
He recites set incantations at the  
crematoriums (mūsai maEtri masāVi),  
and so loses straying from the path.  
He knows not the Word (śabad)<sup>54</sup> and  
speaks evil (lavai kubān).*

Moreover, manmukh is bound by the evil inclinations of māyā- *the she-serpent (sarpanī) eats it up.*<sup>55</sup>

*Manmukh* is under the sway of passions. His impulses are inclined to the desires of the accumulating wealth, worldly allurements and at last come to harm because he wastes his life led by craze of wealth. The bad effects of māyā on *manmukh* are explained by Guru Amar Das in the following words:

*Bewitching is the love of māyā, which without  
teeth, has eaten up the whole world.  
The manmukhs are eaten away but the  
gurmukhs are saved because their  
minds are absorbed in the true Name.  
Without the holy nām the world wanders  
about madly but the gurmukh hath  
seen (Him) within one ... the  
nectar (of life), the manmukhs  
know not its taste,  
As the deer digressed by delusion does not  
know the musk and wanders about.  
Rare are the Gurū-oriented persons (gurmukhs)  
who are awakened to the Reality and are  
able to see the Supreme Lord within.*<sup>56</sup>

*Gurmukh* is an elevated man who transforms his worldly nature into the nature of the Divine. The delusive power of māyā does not affect him because he is continuously absorbed in God. After self-realization the *gurmukh* transfers his individual affections from the mundane world to God resulting in absorption with God. Guru Nanak explains in the 'Siddh Goshti' that:

*He unlike the manmukh, abides in the fear  
of God and sings the immaculate praise  
of God and attains the state of unalloyed  
bliss (sehaj)*<sup>57</sup>

He becomes victorious after conquering his ego. His individual will is attuned with Supreme Will. He realizes Will of God pervading throughout the

universe so he develops an optimistic attitude towards the world and life. His mission in life is service of humanity. So he is always prompted for good deeds. While sojourning in the spiritual domain the *gurmukh* remains practical in life and solemnly performs his worldly duties. Guru Nanak explains in the 'Siddh Goshti' that:

*Gurmukh practises righteousness while  
living in the midst of the family.*<sup>58</sup>

We may conclude that *gurmukh* presents the image of a balanced person who simultaneously reflects on the Supreme Reality and participates in the social life as an active member of the society. Bhai Jodh Singh reiterates this view that "Guru Nanak was against giving up of worldly activity."<sup>59(a)</sup> Social affirmation is one of the most significant contributions of Guru Nanak to the Indian religious tradition.

Our primary concern is with the philosophical analysis of the 'Siddh Goshti'. It would be proper to discuss and contrast the *gurmat* ideology with the prevalent practices among the *yogis* and the *siddhas*<sup>59(b)</sup> with whom this dialogue was carried out by the Guru. It would help us to have clear-cut viewpoints of *gurmat* and the *siddhas*.

#### **(d) Gurmukh vis-a-vis Siddha**

"The perfect man of the Yogic tradition is siddha' and the ideal man of Guru Nanak is *gurmukh*."<sup>60</sup> In order to discuss a contrast between the two ideal personalities, it is necessary to discuss the ideology of Guru Nanak and his ideas about the Supreme Reality and the world.

In the 'Siddh Goshti' two names of the *siddhas* are mentioned: Charpat and Loharipa, who came forward as the representatives of the *siddhas*. In this dialogue, Guru Nanak draws a distinction between his ideology and that of the *siddha yogis*.

"Guru Nanak strongly felt the disastrous influence of the *yogis* on Indian society. To counteract their unworldly, unhealthy, anti-social and anti-human influences, Guru Nanak visited almost all the strong holds of the *yogis* to give to their leaders a new direction of life and outlook."<sup>61</sup>

T.S. Sodhi observes that "The philosophy of Guru Nanak in proper terminology may be named as idealistic philosophy. It is to be clear in mind that idealism is of so many types and the idealism which the great Guru conceived was not the idealism of empty idealism. What he conceived, lived, practised and preached was not only existing ideas but in actuality also. Moreover, his idealism

was not the idealism of individualistic nature but of social basis. It is here he came in clash with the ideology of Siddhas, mentioned in 'Siddh Goshti'.<sup>62</sup>

When we consider the philosophy of man in 'Siddh Goshti', we find that Guru Nanak seems to give idealistic viewpoint of man but materialistic aspect of body is not ignored altogether. Guru Nanak and the *siddhas* represent the idealistic viewpoint of human life but their attitude is different. The *siddhas*' conception of the ideal man ignores the bodily self whereas the ideal man of Guru Nanak gives due importance to the bodily self as well. There is synthesis between idealism and materialism. As mentioned earlier the body is the temple of God, a vehicle through which the soul is uplifted and meets its source, God from which it is separated. *Gurmukh*, the ideal man of Guru Nanak is strictly monotheist. In 'Siddh Goshti', Guru Nanak explains that:

*Gurmukh believes in non-dual dynamic  
Reality (gurmukh nānak eko jānai).*<sup>63</sup>

In the words of G.S Talib, "This means that God is believed to be the one and sole Reality in the cosmos, and no god or goddess or power like Satan or Ahriman or any other has reality such as God's."<sup>64</sup> Bhai Jodh Singh also interprets on the same lines and states that: Gurmukh's devotion is addressed directly to the One True God.<sup>65</sup> In *Āsā Rāg* this idea is confirmed by Guru Nanak. He says:

*My God is one, the one alone: One Absolute.*<sup>66</sup>

In the 'Japuji' He is called as *Sāchā*:

*He was true in the beginning, true when  
the Yugas began, True He is now  
and True He shall ever be.*<sup>67</sup>

Guru Arjan Dev explains in *Mārū Solhe* that:

*There may be thousands of attributive names  
(kirtam nām) of God based on His qualities.  
But one name (sati nāmu) is  
The Truth Primordial,  
The Reality is Thy name from times  
Immemorial (parā pūrbā).*<sup>68</sup>

Guru Nanak in the 'Siddh Goshti' has repeatedly used the attribute of Truthful (*sāchā*) for God which signifies that the Guru laid emphasis specially on social and moral aspects of God with a view to develop all these attributes in the ideal man. If God is Truthful, then the man who remembers Him will be truthful. For this reason we infer that the Ultimate Being is moral and the ideal is also stated to be moral. The ideal man that is '*gurmukh*' is the partial manifestation of Supreme Being.

The ideal man of Guru Nanak is aware of the fact that God is the Creator (*kartā*)<sup>69</sup> and the world is His creation in which He is immanent. *Gurmukh* sees God pervading in all.<sup>70</sup> The *gurmukh* knows that:

- (i) *Within us is God, without us is, God too,  
The God is in the three worlds....  
He is the manifestation of the Primal Being,  
The Immaculate Name of God, He is Himself  
The Creator Lord.*<sup>71</sup>
- (ii) *God is merciful; He leads us on to the gurū,  
And this mind abides in its self.*<sup>72</sup>

Guru Nanak is of the firm belief that:

- (i) *The vicious fires of lust and wrath are  
Quenched by the glance of grace  
(nadri) that our God casts upon us.*<sup>73</sup>
- (ii) *Then the God Himself ferries us  
Across (āpe pār utāmhārā).<sup>74</sup>*
- (iii) *He is a bestower of comforts,<sup>75</sup>  
treasure of virtues .*

Therefore, the ideal man also becomes embodiment of all virtues and leads ethical life imbued with the love of God.

Moreover, in the 'Siddh Goshti', Guru expresses Ultimate Reality both as transcendent and immanent in the same stanza.

Guru Nanak says that:

- (i) *He the Formless and the immaculate  
from nirguna above qualities became<sup>76</sup>  
sarguna the repositior of all qualities.<sup>77</sup>*
- (ii) *He is both qualitiful and qualitiless.*

Sher Singh puts this idea that: "He is within and without His Creation."<sup>78</sup> In this sense the attribute of *niranjan* is used for the Supreme Being that which is not touched or affected by the *māyā*. In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains that:

*The God-oriented man (gurmukh) is  
Blessed with the nām of the<sup>79</sup>  
immaculate God (niranjan).*

Same ideal of non-attachment is laid down for a *gurmukh* while living in this world as a householder; he is expected to be distinct from it.

On the other hand, the ideal man of *yogīs*, though affirms the existence of *Ishvara*, yet He in the words of Trilochan Singh "... is not the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the Universe.... He is not the transcendent *Aka*

*Purusa* of Sikhism, but a *Purusa* who has been since eternity. He cannot be summoned by prayer, devotion and faith, but his collaboration can be acquired by a yogi for his inner life. *Ishvara* can hasten the process of deliverance; he helps them towards a more speedy arrival at *samadhi*. *Ishvara's* role is comparatively small." (Quoted Mircea Eliade).<sup>80</sup> Trilochan Singh again quotes *Yoga Sutra* 1.26 by Patanjali and writes that "*Ishvara* was the guru of the sages of time immemorial, for he adds *Ishvara* is not bound by time. Thus *Ishvara* for Patanjali is only a Macro- Yogin, later on called Adi Natha or Adi Siva."<sup>81</sup>

Y. Masih correctly points out that, "... in Yoga philosophy, 'God' has been smuggled in the system as an extraneous concept. *Ishvara* is at most only an aid in winning concentration. God does not directly grant the boon of *moksa*, which the aspirant has to win for himself by his own efforts. 'God' is not taken to be a theistic concept in as much as He is not the Creator of the World process.... We conclude with Edgerton that the Yoga system is really atheistic...."<sup>82</sup> S.S. Kohli remarks that, "God of Yoga is a special *Purusha*, and not the Creator and liberator. Liberation in Yoga does not mean unity with God. It is only the separation of *Purusha* from *Prakriti*. But the discipline laid down by Guru Nanak takes the disciple above *Prakriti* or *māyā* and ensures unity with *Brahman*. It rejects the idea of a limited God of Yoga and describes *Prakriti* as subservient to *Brahman* who is the Creator."<sup>83</sup>

As a result of the above facts we can conclude that Guru Nanak's *gurmukh* is theist, the *siddha* is atheist. The ideal man of Guru Nanak is on the firm belief that:

- (i) *The entire design of the universe is operating according to the Will (hukam) of God.*<sup>84</sup>
- (ii) *The world is the handiwork of the True One and so is real.*<sup>85</sup>

"This point of view" writes Bhai Jodh Singh, "presented the world in the form of a school to learn *dharma*, and not a snare where we have to live by following the divine will."<sup>86</sup> Guru Nanak states that when the self realizes this Divine Will his egoity (*hauma*) is destroyed. In the 'Siddh Goshti' this view is explained in the following words:

*Hukam being wondrous is inexplicable.  
It is through the realization of hukam one  
realizes the secret of life which is  
the essence of Truth (sāchā).  
It is only through annihilation of I-consciousness  
that one can become pure.  
If there is truth (sāchā) inside,  
then he is a true Yogi.*<sup>87</sup>

Hence a true Yogī is freed from *haumai* and he is very close to Guru Nanak's ideal man (*gurmukh*). The *siddhas* enquired from Guru Nanak:

*From where has the spirit of man come?  
Where does it go and where is it absorbed?  
How can Reality and liberation be attained?  
How can we attain the love of the Divine?  
You say, He is the Creator and Knower, How<sup>88</sup>  
can this mystery be understood, O Nanak?*

Guru Nanak replied:

*The thought of the origin leads one to wonder-  
state (vismād) or sublime and wonderful  
is reflection of the Primal Being.  
His abode in the beginning was in  
perpetual sunnya (divine silence)  
The wisdom of the Guru is  
revealed in every heart.  
Through the Guru's Word, the  
eternal spirit is attained.  
The perfect Reality is attained effortlessly  
(not through hatha yoga).  
The seeker who searches and serves  
Him and thinks not of anything<sup>89</sup>  
else will attain Him.*

Thus Guru Nanak's dialogue with the *siddhas* brings out clearly the attitude of *gurmukh* towards the world and God.

According to Guru Nanak the idea behind the creation of the world is the development of the human self or for attaining the status of *gurmukh* through ethico-spiritual struggle. To quote Guru Nanak:

- (i) *The earth has been created for the God-oriented.  
Birth and death play in it.<sup>90</sup>*
- (ii) *The gurmukh considers the world to be  
the medium for attaining perfection.  
He is advised to live in the world  
because by despising the world,<sup>91</sup>  
one gets not to God.*

G.S Talib asserts that, "The seeker after God is exhorted to live amidst the tasks and duties of the world, in the midst of human society and to fulfill in a spirit of dedication to God the duties of a good and useful life. When Guru Nanak met the *Siddha-yogīs* in somewhere in the Himalayas, upbraided them for their forsaking the scene of the life of the common folk, who remain stuck up in their sins and suffering."<sup>92</sup> Bhai Gurdas in his first *vār* gives account of Guru Nanak's meeting with the assembly of eighty-four *siddhas* and explains Guru Nanak's viewpoint against their pessimistic outlook towards the world. He told them:

*You holy men hide yourself on the mountains;  
who will, then, liberate mankind?  
The yogīs devoid of gnosis (giān) know*

*only how to keep their bodies besmeared  
with ashes day and night.*<sup>93</sup>

Same idea has also been given by Hazari Prasad Dwivedi after analysing the beliefs and practices of the Nāth Sampradāya. He quotes some remarks of Ibn Batuta, the Egyptian traveller regarding the practical life of the *Yogīs*.<sup>94</sup> They followed the teachings of Gorakhnath who preached his followers for the renunciation of worldly activity. He says:

*If a householder discourses on knowledge,  
If a man taking intoxicating  
drugs engages in meditation,  
If an ascetic nourishes desire,  
All three are tied in a tight  
noose says nāths.*<sup>95</sup>

In this context Bhai Jodh Singh asserts that "Guru Nanak laid stress on two things in his discourses with the Siddhas. One was that the Siddhas instead of withdrawing to high mountain caves and thick forests should live amongst the common folk and give them right guidance so that tyranny of the rulers which they were undergoing could be removed. Second, they should not condemn householders who provided the where withal to support their physical life."<sup>96</sup> So a *yogī's* style of life is not approved by Guru Nanak. His ideal man (*gurmukh*) is forbidden from leaving home, wandering in waste places, living on begging, smearing the body with ashes and other such unnatural practices. Bhai Jodh Singh further explains the above mentioned thought of Guru Nanak as under: "The Guru taught that the putting on the robes of an order could not lead anywhere...."<sup>97</sup>

S.S Kohli explains that "The *yogīs* of the times of Guru Nanak had developed a *yoga* of nerves and circles, which was strongly rejected by the Guru, Such a *yoga* is known as *hatha yoga*. This is the *yoga* of the ascetics. But the *yoga* of the Guru is the *yoga* of the householders."<sup>98</sup> In the Sikh Scripture *hatha yoga* practices are condemned, again and again, because these are entirely mechanical techniques for suppression of the institutional forces and to exercise control over the functioning of the physical organs. As such it is purely a bodily method. Sher Singh also condemns that, "The practice of Yoga is more or less physical in nature and the Guru discarded it because it does not help a Yogi (Yogin) in giving up egoism and selfishness and it is not a process for building up a moral character, so essential for house-hold life. Moreover it is a very complicated and difficult method to be practised by everybody."<sup>99</sup>

The ideal man of the *siddhas* is expected for "... the cessation of the modifications of *citta* [chit] and this cessation is obtained through concentration

for which the eight-fold path or discipline has been laid down. This discipline is called Ashtānga Yoga."<sup>100</sup>

Guru Nanak believes that a control over one's senses does not necessarily mean control over one's mind as well. Expressing this attitude Guru Amar Das remarks:

*Even if the bodily postures of siddhas  
are learnt And a mastery over  
senses is gained the dirt of  
ego is not destroyed.*<sup>101</sup>

Therefore, Guru Nanak emphasizes the concept of *nām-yoga* in a dialogue with the *siddhas* and explains the life-style of his ideal man (*gurmukh*). He says:

*Without the support of the Name, the mind  
finds no rest, nor its hunger  
(for wordly goods) is appeased.*<sup>102</sup>

He emphasizes that:

*With the Name one converses (truly) on yoga.  
For, he, who is imbued with the Name,  
practises true austerity.  
Yea, the essence of the true living is  
to be imbued with the Name.  
Without the Name all that one utters is vain.*<sup>103</sup>

Therefore, Guru Nanak instructs his disciples in Japuji:

- (i) *In the ambrosial hours of early morning  
(amrit velā) reflect on His True Name  
and on His greatness (great attributes).*<sup>104</sup>
- (ii) *The Name is a gift of God.  
It is through the Perfect Gurū that  
one is blest with the Name.*<sup>105</sup>

When the *siddhas* put Guru Nanak many questions and asked him to explain them his doctrine that *śabad* makes one cross the ocean of *sansār*, Guru Nanak replied:

*The śabad is the Gurū and the surati  
attuned to it is the disciple  
(śabad gurū surati dhun chelā) ...  
He who reflects on the gospel  
of śabad through the Gurū's  
instructions his fire of egoism  
is extinguished.*<sup>106</sup>

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak laid down that:

*Meeting with the satguru one's darkness is*

*dispelled and one's ego is stilled.*<sup>107</sup>

So the ideal man of Guru Nanak ascends spiritually with the help of Gurū (*śabad*):

*The gurmukh through the word of the Gurū,  
swims across the ocean of sansār and  
realizes the one (ik) here and hereafter.  
He understands the real meaning of  
irā, pingalā and sukhmanā.  
For the True God is above the three  
channels of breath and he is merged  
in Him through the Word of the Gurū.*<sup>108</sup>

The Gurū in the form of *śabad* modifies human consciousness and elevates it to higher stages of development and ultimately merges in the Ultimate Reality.

In the *yoga* system and Sikhism *gurū* occupies the highest position. To achieve the ideal of life a *gurū* is a must for the *siddha* also. S.S. Kohli gives contrast between the function of the personal *gurū* of the *siddhas* and the *śabad-gurū* of Guru Nanak as such, "During his discussions with the *yogīs* of his day, Guru Nanak gave a complete picture of his discipline, which can only be practised with the help of the *gurū*. In the Natha cult 'for the attainment of the state of neutrality (*sahaja*), a Yogi, following his *gurū*'s instructions, has to check the downward flow of the semen, hold up the breath and stabilize the mind', the disciple of Guru Nanak has to ascend the spiritual zenith through the Name-culture following his Guru's instructions."<sup>109</sup>

The ideal man of Guru Nanak does not hanker after occult or supernatural powers (*riddhi* and *siddhi*).<sup>110</sup> Guru Nanak declares in the 'Japuji' that:

*Supernatural powers lead man astray  
(riddhi siddhi avarāsād).*<sup>111</sup>

In fact those are hindrances in the way of spiritual path. In the words of Bhai Gurdas, Guru Nanak in reply to the *siddhas* states that:

*Without the True Name he has  
no other miracle to show.  
He takes shelter in nothing but the word  
of the gurū and the congregation.*<sup>112</sup>

On the other hand, *siddhas* acquired occult powers and through these powers acquired fame and control over society. Bhai Jodh Singh points out that: "The *Siddhas* through a display of supernatural powers; the use of *jantras*, *mantras* and *tantras*, the expectation of blessing and the fear of curses created

awe in their minds and the people in terror ministered to their wants and became their followers."<sup>113</sup> Guru Nanak explains in the 'Siddh Goshti' that:

*Gurmukh attains miraculous  
power (ashat siddhī).<sup>114</sup>*

But like the *siddhas* he does not display these powers to fulfil his lower desires.

Another aspect of the *siddhas*' practice which has been condemned by Guru Nanak is their attachment to the symbols of external appearance. The Guru explains:

*Yoga is neither in the patched coat  
nor in the Yogi's staff,  
Nor in ashes smeared over the body  
nor in the blowing of horns.  
Abide in the Pure One amid the impurities  
of the worldly life.  
Thus shalt find the way of the true Yoga.<sup>115</sup>*

Guru Nanak rejected emphatically the formalism and outward symbols of contemporary *yogīs* because these were neither ends in themselves, nor have any inherent efficacy in them. When these cease to fulfill the goal for which they were adopted they become lifeless things with no significance. The *siddhas* were told that these outer symbols were of no value if they did not help to promote our inner self.

In the 'Siddh Goshti', Guru Nanak was asked by the Yogi:

*Put on the garb of the school of Yogeshawaras,  
in the shape of ear-rings, a wallet  
and a patched coat.<sup>116</sup>*

Guru Nanak replied:

*The gurmukh will understand that this is how  
the way to Yoga is found.  
Wear the earrings of keeping your mind  
constantly fixed on the Word  
And, thus, destroy your egoism and mineness  
(haumai mamtā).  
Get rid of lust, anger and pride, this is made  
plain by the Guru's Word.  
Let the thought that God pervades all be  
your patched coat and wallet;  
Thus says Nanak the One God will save you...  
Let the heart turned away from  
sensual pleasures be your bowl  
And the adoption of the qualities of the  
five elements be your cap.  
Let your body be the prayer-carpet of deer- skin  
and the disciplined mind the ropes  
round your loins and with charity,  
contentment and self control  
Cherish the Name through the Guru, O Nanak.<sup>117</sup>*

At the end of this chapter, it has become essential to give brief idea of gurmukh's view of liberation in comparison to a *siddha*. The *siddha* strives for his own liberation i.e. *kaivlya*, *gurmukh* is the person of altruistic nature; he thinks not only for his own self but also for fellow beings to be liberated.

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59. (a) Bhai Jodh Singh, "Guru Nanak and the Siddhas", Harbans Singh (ed.), *Perspectives on Guru Nanak*, p.280.
- (b) (1) The Siddhas are known as the Kanphata Jogis but the Guru generally uses the word *Siddha* for them .... Jogis in the days of Guru Nanak seem to be a strange mixture of Saivism, Buddhism, Yoga of Patanjali and Vedantism." (Sher Singh, *Philosophy of Sikhism*, p. 124).
- (2) "Siddhas were the Tantric masters of Buddhism. The Siddha cult sprang up in the seventh century A.D. In the eleventh century A.D. the Buddhist Siddhas gave birth to the Natha sect. It is believed that the Natha School was started by Gorakhnatha. He was the founder and outstanding teacher of the Saivite sect of ascetics practices of the hatha Yoga" (G.W. Bridge, *Gorakhnātha and the Kanphatā Yogis*, p.172).
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## GURMUKH AND SOCIAL REALITY

### (a) Introductory

In previous chapter we have discussed that Guru Nanak's ideal person needs society for his perfection as an individual and as a harmonious unit in a society. It implies that social life is necessary for an ideal man of Guru Nanak.

We need not enter into detailed discussion of different theories of the ideal social order which have been put forth in the East and the West by the materialists and the idealists. It would be sufficient to make a mention here that we shall discuss idealist view of society which was conceived by Guru Nanak in his hymns and the same idea was carried forth by his nine spiritual successors (*Gurūs*).

The idealistic view of society conceives a spiritual unity in which only spiritual beings are included and they are capable of realizing such a unity within themselves while living in the society as a householder. There is possibility that some human beings less conscious of spiritual unity but on the whole, majority of them is capable of being aware of such unity. The spiritual unity conceives the persons as spiritual units who are perfect in all respects. The aim of religion is to make imperfect persons perfect ones.

Guru Nanak being an idealist thinker and religious leader treats an individual as a spiritual unit in the whole spiritual unity of society which constitutes a spiritual whole. Guru Nanak, being an idealist and spiritualist thinker envisages a spiritual unity because individual selves are spiritual in essence and they determine the fabric of society. It is, perhaps, the effort of Guru Nanak to evolve a spiritual self which is perfect in all respects. He calls perfect spiritual self a *gurmukh*.

His ideal man (*gurmukh*) becomes perfect only in a society. Therefore, Guru Nanak treats social life as a reality for ethico-spiritual struggle. Society is necessarily a condition for making man a perfect man. It is only in a society that man is transformed from *manmukh* to *gurmukh*.

The *gurmukh* is not only expected to exalt his own self but also to enlighten and elevate his fellow co-travellers. He is invested with a vision of the Divine presence in the human beings. He identifies his interests with others and dedicates himself to the service (*sevā*) of humankind. His deeds mark altruism (*parupkār*) with a socialistic approach whereas the ideal man of the *siddhas* is basically individualistic.

In the 'Siddh Goshti' such references occur that the *gurmukh* saves innumerable persons (*kot tetīs*)<sup>1</sup>. It means that his actions not only pertain to his individual self but are also related to society. He (*gurmukh*) is considered spiritually complete only as a part of the society as a whole.

Before discussing the concept of an ideal man in social order, it will be proper to know the structure of an ideal society or social order which Guru Nanak wanted to create.

The ideal society, which Guru Nanak visualized, was assembly of ideal spiritual persons (both men and women). They are endowed with positively dynamic non-attached attitude towards life and the world. They do not renounce this world but lead a married or householder's life (*grihsthi*) discharging ethical conduct and doing social services as a source of inspiration for other human beings. In few words, spiritually awakened persons (*gurmukhs*) as an embodiment of socio-ethical qualities are the fount of Guru Nanak's ideal society called *sādh-sangat* (lit.a congregation of saints) or *sat sangat* (lit. a congregation of good persons). In the words of Avtar Singh, "The *Sat-sangat* as envisaged in Sikhism is constituted of the social group of the good persons who sit together and reflect on the various problems along with the performance of the spiritual function of worship .... *Sat Sangat* also becomes a medium of the ethico-spiritual education."<sup>2</sup> An ideal man who is member of such a society imparts divine knowledge, kindles the heart with the love of God, removes all sins and teaches purity through personal example, to the fellow beings. Guru Nanak supports this idea and asserts that:

*Gurmukh is blest with the Name,  
compassion and purity.  
He is honored at the Lord's court ....  
He himself is united with God,  
unites others too.*<sup>3</sup>

Ganda Singh, a Sikh historian, asserts that. "The teachings of Guru Nanak related mostly to the spiritual uplift of mankind and social goodwill and understanding among people of different creeds and classes, based on the common fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man .... Guru Nanak was not a visionary or a speculative theorist. He preached no complicated philosophy, couched in the unintelligible language of the other-worldly people. He was practical man— one with the men of this world.... Guru Nanak's laboratories, both for the demonstration and practice of his teachings, were the institutions of *sangats* (congregations), and *pangats*.... The forums of the *sangats* were known as *dharamsālas*.... It was in these *sangats* and *dharamsālas* that the Guru's Sikh learnt practical lessons in Sikhism."<sup>4</sup>

We agree with Kapur Singh's view that "Sikhism seeks to establish a social pattern, and eventually a global society in which the socialist ideas of individual welfare, equality and freedom shall have full application."<sup>5</sup> From above definitions we come to the conclusion that the ideal society of Guru Nanak aims at the spiritual, ethical and social unity of human beings.

Simply for this very reason Guru Nanak has a positive attitude towards social life, which requires spiritual struggle for continuous progression. Hence, his attitude is dynamic. From these points of views, we shall discuss the concept of *gurmukh* in the next section.

#### **(b) Gurmukh's Attitude towards Life and world**

The ideal man of Guru Nanak (*gurmukh*) has positive and dynamic attitude towards life because in his view this world is true not only because it is created by the True One. It is true because the Creator abides in it.

In the 'Japuji' Guru Nanak calls this world *dharamsāl*,<sup>6</sup> a place for the performance of deeds of *dharam*. In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains that:

*The creation and destruction of the  
cosmic process is just a sport of God  
but within this process the existence  
of the earth has been justified as an  
abode for the creation of gurmukh  
(gurmukh dhartī sāchai sājī).*<sup>7</sup>

Again, Guru Nanak affirms this idea:

*The Lord sustains the universe for the saint  
(sant), which in other words means  
the perfection of human soul.*<sup>8</sup>

Hence, the ideal man of Guru Nanak does not withdraw himself to the jungles and run away from the active field of struggle of life. This world, which is an embodiment of moral, social and spiritual-struggle, becomes a means for the achievement of his ideal.

For an ideal man this world is a concrete reality. He is advised by Guru Nanak to live in it, to exert and to be active for personal as well as for social welfare. Harbans Singh rightly observes, "One conspicuous mark of Guru Nanak's teachings was its spirit of affirmation. It took the world as real and embraced man's life in its various aspects. Withdrawal was considered the negation of faith. Contrary to the prevailing notion of piety, the emphasis was not on turning away from reality but on a willing, even joyous, acceptance of it."<sup>9</sup> He further explains that "From this attitude of acceptance and affirmation was derived a keen concern for the actual life-situation of the day."<sup>10</sup>

The real spiritual life according to Guru Nanak is in being dynamic at all levels of daily life. His ideal man lives in the world, conducts all the social activities and serves his fellow beings to the best of his capacity. In this context Daljeet Singh asserts that, "It is a point of great significance that the *gurmukh*'s virtues are not merely pious and preparatory, meant to secure salvation for him, but his role is positive and dynamic."<sup>11</sup> For the scholar the positive and dynamic

roles of gurmukh are of great significance because other Indian religious traditions had advocated different religious philosophies and methods for achieving the ultimate goal of life. As a result there was an ascetic attitude in the Indian society.

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Loharipa, the mouthpiece of Gorakh, illustrated the general characteristics of an ideal *yogī* or *siddha* of his times in these words:

*They live far away from the city life in the  
shrubs, and the trees of forests.  
They eat roots (kand mūl) and fruits for  
food.... With a view to cleaning  
themselves they take bath in the  
holy water (tīraths).*<sup>12</sup>  
*This is considered to be the secret of yoga.*

Thus, for the ideal man of the *siddhas*, to renounce society and family life had become the first article of faith. The *siddha* way of ascetic life, which is outcome of their pessimistic attitude towards life and world, is not approved by Guru Nanak for his ideal man. He (*gurmukh*) is strictly prohibited from retiring society and wandering in waste lands. In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains that the way of life to be adopted by his disciple is as under:

*In markets and thoroughfares, man should  
remain alert, and not let his mind run  
after the wealth and women of neighbors'.*<sup>13</sup>

Guru, further, advocates restraint of the mind, without having to renounce society. Guru Nanak in the beginning of the 'Siddh Goshti' makes it clear that ascetic life is useless and one cannot become pure merely living away from the life of a householder. In the view of Guru Nanak, society does not make a man impure. Man becomes impure when he is too much engrossed in the worldly objects and forgets true *nām* or *śabad*, which makes him pure while living in this world and society. In the words of Guru Nanak it is mentioned as under:

*What use is this wander-lust like a yogī's?  
For, one's purification is only through Truth:  
And without the True Word,<sup>14</sup>  
not one is emancipated.*

Thus, Guru Nanak brings out vividly the contrast between the attitude of *yogī* and that of *gurmukh*. When Charpat *yogī* asks:

*The ocean of the world is deep and  
impassable, how to get across it?  
O Nanak! give me your true thoughts about it.*<sup>15</sup>

Guru Nanak replies:

*Just as the lotus (kamal) and the duck  
(murgāī) swimming in a river  
remain unaffected by water,*

*So by keeping your attention fixed on the  
Word and repeating the Name  
this ocean of fear is crossed.  
With their thoughts fixed on one God,  
They live as if in a secluded place, amidst a  
sea of desires they remain desire less.*<sup>16</sup>

Here Guru Nanak uses two similes of lotus and duck for the explanation of his attitude of non-attachment (*nirleptā*) in comparison with the attitude of the *siddhas* who renounced the world with a view to achieve the ideal of non-attachment. The ideal man of Guru Nanak while leading a normal family life enjoys the comforts, but does not get lost in the pleasure just as the lotus blooms in the water but its petals do not get wet and the duck floats carefree on the stream yet its feathers remain dry.

This attitude of detachment involves the renunciation of *māyā*. The *gurmukh* lives in the world but cuts him off from the evil effects of the worldly attractions. G.S. Mansukhani supports this view as, "The true devotee dwells in the midst of worldly associations and yet he remains immersed in meditation, in the bliss of God's love, with the result that worldly afflictions seem to make no impression on him."<sup>17</sup>

Avtar Singh is also of the opinion that "The non-attachment, therefore, is to be a matter of the attitude and is not to be realized by leaving the home and running away from social responsibilities."<sup>18</sup> He defines the attitude of detachment from socialistic point of view. He writes that "... the cultivation of non-attachment has to be carried on within the context of social participation.... Non-attachment, in Sikhism, is not equated with renunciation of social duties, or asceticism ... man should not renounce the social context but at the same time he ought not to be attached to it."<sup>19</sup>

Thus, the ideal man of Guru Nanak with a dynamic and non-attached attitude leads the life of a householder and performs his social responsibilities for the uplift of society.

### **(c) Householder's Life**

In the light of the 'Siddh Goshti' it is very clear that the ideal man of Guru Nanak leads life of a householder (*grihsthi*). This may be expressed in Guru Nanak's own words that:

*Gurmukh practises righteousness while  
living in the midst of the family.<sup>20</sup>  
He achieves his goal of life while living  
with his wife and progeny.<sup>21</sup>*

On the basis of the 'Siddh Goshti', Jagjit Singh interprets the prevalent religious practices of the *yogīs* and the *siddhas*. He is of the view that, "In consequence of his ideology, one great practical step Guru Nanak took for the social involvement of his creed was to establish the primacy of the householder's life. It was such a big departure from the old religious tradition that the Nāthas accused Guru Nanak of putting acid in the pure milk of religious life in order to spoil it."<sup>22</sup> It may be relevant to add here that Guru Nanak combined his spiritual mission with the domestic obligations of a father, husband and son. Professor Talib gives historical fact that around 1521, after his *udāsīs* (missionary journeys) were concluded, Guru Nanak "... put off the ascetic garb, reinvested himself with householder's clothing so to say, and set up a small farming colony and missionary centre at Kartarpur ... he practised godliness— guiding, teaching, composing the *bānī* and serving any travelers that came. This was the ideal that he set up for others to follow."<sup>23</sup>

Guru Nanak put into practice his teachings which he imparted during his journeys. He spiritualised householder's life. With his personal example he set a precedent of an ideal man (*gurmukh*) at Kartarpur.

Bhai Jodh Singh states that "While living in family, one is expected to live life of truthfulness and self-restraint. He is expected to abide by the instructions of true Guru and thereby he can achieve the highest state of perfection."<sup>24</sup> Kahan Singh Nabha, a well know authority on Sikh theology, further adds that, "Householder's life has been given key importance in Sikh thought. The ideal man in *gurmata* is expected to be householder who remembers God all the time while discharging all his responsibilities."<sup>25</sup> G.S. Talib remarks that, "The ideal life commended by the holy Gurus is that of the householder engaged in beneficent activity, keeping his mind absorbed in contemplation and devotion."<sup>26</sup> G.S Mansukhani states that, "The house-hold is a school where self-love is transformed into service of others."<sup>27</sup>

From the above comments of the Sikh scholars, it is clear that householder's life is not a bar in attaining the highest state of perfection rather it is a means. In the words of Mohan Singh Diwana, *grihsth* "... is attachment with the Lord realized through attachment with the temporary relationships, which are accepted in a spirit of detachment."<sup>28</sup> Hari Ram Gupta, a Sikh historian, points out that "Between the ascetic and the epicurean, Nanak chose the middle path or the *Grihstha Ashram* or the life of a householder. It was an ideal path as it offered opportunities for social, material and spiritual growth of an intergrated man."<sup>29</sup>

Significance of the life of a householder is explained from philosophical point of view by Santokh Singh. He remarks, "... no social structure can come into

existence, which is composed only of ascetics, *sanyāsīs* and *yogīs*, who neither live a householder's life nor earn by the sweat of their brow. The philosophy behind leading a householder's life is two-fold; one, to meet the requirement of biological need of sex and preservation of mankind and the other, to serve as a basic unit of a social structure."<sup>30</sup> This thought has also been emphasized by Hari Ram Gupta as such: "There was no place for the passive recluse in Guru Nanak's teachings as his religion concerned the active householder."<sup>31</sup> Guru Nanak regarded married life as the best mode of life. Therefore, he recommended married household life to the life of a recluse and *yogī* for the *gurmukh*. "A householder" writes Sher Singh, "... earns and bestows on others whereas a recluse depends on others and becomes a burden to society."<sup>32</sup>

"Guru Nanak had no sympathy," writes Ganda Singh, "for the way of the ascetic *Siddhas* and *Yogīs* who had forsaken the world and with it, their duties and obligations to society."<sup>33</sup> We should keep in mind that the *siddhas*, with whom Guru Nanak had discourses, were not householders. They were opposed to the life of householder and society.

Guru Nanak has given the practical life of his contemporary *yogīs* and also criticised it as under:

*They preach renuciation to the world,  
but establish their own maths.  
Leaving their own abodes, how will  
they find the truth. Attached to  
mineness they love women.  
They are neither avdhūts nor sansārīs.  
O yogi! stick to thy seat to remove  
the misery of thy doubt.  
Art thou not ashamed of begging  
from door to door?....  
They call themselves celibates,  
but do not practise continence.  
When begging, they call women mothers,  
but cast lustful eyes on them.*<sup>34</sup>

According to Guru Nanak, manmukh has an eye upon another's possessions and so loses the merit of life.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the disciple of Guru Nanak is strictly prohibited of extra-marital relations. He is warned in the 'Siddh Goshti' that:

*"He should not let his mind run after  
Other's possessions."*<sup>36</sup>

Here Guru Nanak wants to indicate that *gurmukh* should feel contented with himself and he should not be disturbed to look at other person's possessions like property, money and wife. He is expected to have full control over his mind which comes only through *nām-simran*. *Nām-simran* is such a spiritual food for

the mind which satisfies it and keeps it calm and stable. All the riches of the world are realized from within through the grace of true *gurū*. In addition, after realization of perfect calmness of mind (*sehaj*) one has entered into true trade of human life for which he has taken birth on this earth.

According to Sikhism, the main objective of human life is to enter into the trade of *nām-simran*, which is the real spiritual property of man. Here Guru Nanak wants to emphasize that *nām-simran* and *grihsth* should go hand in hand. The *siddhas* ignored the householder's life and developed a negative attitude towards *grihsth*, which resulted in asceticism and celibacy.

According to the *siddhas*, celibacy is important because it maintains human with the preservation of semen (*bind*) which is a very necessary factor for arousing the *kundalinī* or exercise of *prāṇāyām*.

In this sense, Bhagat Kabir also condemns mere celibacy, which was advocated by the *siddhas*. He argues:

*If celibacy is the criterion to attain the highest  
stage of spiritual perfection,  
Then eunuch would be the first to get  
liberation (paramgatī).*<sup>37</sup>

In such a background of the *siddhas'* asceticism Guru Nanak rose against the life-style of celibacy and renunciation, which gives much inferior position to women. In the words of Avtar Singh, "... the restoration by Sikhism of the ideal of the life of the householder as superior, morally and spiritually, led to the restoration of the decent and equal status to women."<sup>38</sup> Dorothy Field observes, "Even the sexes were to be regarded as equal. The spiritual pride of hermits and ascetics was especially condemned."<sup>39</sup> Guru Nanak asked at the top of his voice:

*Why call her evil from whom are great men born?  
Without woman (bhand) none could  
come into existence.  
The Eternal Lord is the only One, O Nanak!  
who depends not on woman.*<sup>40</sup>

The ideal man of Guru Nanak with this attitude leads the life of a householder and attains the goal of his life. Dorothy Field states that, "... they live as hermits among their families."<sup>41</sup> Thus, we can conclude that Guru Nanak reconciled the ancient ideals of *parvritī* and *nirvritī* in the householder's life of a *gurmukh*. He advocated the life of a householder as a stepping stone for spiritualizing the goal of self-realization.

#### **(d) Socio-ethical Life**

For a householder family is the smallest social unit. He starts his life-style from a family in which he is born. With Guru's teachings, he moves from family to a holy congregation (sangat), which is a wider social unit or organization. Gradually social circle increases step by step. Finally, the *gurmukh* identifies his interest for human kind. He becomes altruist in his thoughts and deeds. Thus, a householder's life implies social involvement, which means that he is social being by nature and is a part of the society. Man is to realize his ideal self in society and he has to work for its uplift as well.

Guru Nanak makes social life a necessity for an ideal man which requires that while living in society the individual is expected to develop himself and other fellow beings so as to yield social unity. Guru Nanak writes:

*Gurmukh is one with the Supreme Reality  
and helps others to be one.*<sup>42</sup>

Thus, the spiritual development of ideal man requires inward progress and outward social involvement in identification with the interests of other human beings. Kapur Singh asserts, "... no individual is spiritually complete unless he considers himself as part of the society as a whole ... no individual can, for ever, or for long, experience God without the divine society, the *Sangat*..."<sup>43</sup>

For this, the ideal man of Guru Nanak is required to follow the basic commandments of the Sikh scriptures. All the Sikh Scholars agree to this statement that Guru Nanak summed up the Sikh tenets whereas he went, in the following triple precept:

*Kirt karo, wand chhako and nām japo.*

"It means, thou shalt earn thy livelihood by honest creative labour, thou shalt share the fruits of thy labour with thy fellow beings, and, thou shalt practise the discipline of the Name.... The first two precepts are to constitute the foundation of the Sikh society, while the remaining third is to vitalize and regenerate it."<sup>44</sup> According to these rules, the life of *gurmukh* is visualized as a synthesis of spiritual and social aspects.

S. Radhakrishnan also justifies two-fold development of man as he points out that "We cannot draw a sharp line of distinction between religious and social life."<sup>45</sup> He, perhaps, wants to say that social life is the expression of religious life of man. Thus, spiritual life cannot be separated from the social life.

But we find a contrast between the *gurmukh* and the *siddha* and the latter leads a life of recluse. He is egoist and individualist. In this context Y. Masih argues that, "Social service cannot be included as an aid to yoga, for the simple reason that the ultimate end of *Vivekakyāti* or *Kaivalya* cannot harmonise with social service."<sup>46</sup>

*Kirt karnā* and *wand chhaknā* were not advocated by the *siddhas*. They did not work hard to earn their livelihood. They were the parasites on the householders. Not to speak of sharing meals, even they did not share holy *nām* with others. On the other hand, *gurmukh* shares with his fellow beings both meals and holy *nām*. His altruism is manifested both at secular and spiritual levels. Guru Nanak states this characteristic of *gurmukh* in these words:

*The gurmukh is himself united, unites  
others too (with God).*<sup>47</sup>

According to the first tenet, "*Kirat karo*" *gurmukh* is expected to earn his livelihood by honest and hard labour. "He must work hard to produce the necessities of life by honest and fair means and by the sweat of his brow."<sup>48</sup> In Guru Nanak's view:

*To deprive one of his due is to eat  
the cow for Hindu and swine for the Muslim.*<sup>49</sup>

Thus, exploitation is forbidden for the disciple of Guru Nanak. Fauja Singh explains, "In the economic field, it laid stress on *haq halāl* (righteousness) in earnings and forbade encroachment by one on what rightfully belonged to another.... The accumulation of property, too, does not find favour with the Guru. It leads to greediness which is a big impediment in the way of moral and spiritual progress ... its accumulation is rendered possible only by act of injustice and high-handedness."<sup>50</sup>

The second tenet, "*wand chhako*", "... carries the process further. Even the wealth which individual legitimately and through his own honest creative labour acquires must not be reserved by him for his selfish, self-centred and exclusive enjoyment."<sup>51</sup> The *gurmukh* shares his earnings with others. In *Vār Sāragg* it is explained:

*They who eat the fruits of their own labour  
and share it with others, are the people,  
Nanak, who have found the right way.*<sup>52</sup>

The ideal man of Guru Nanak shares his earnings with needy persons because it is necessary for collective welfare and uplift of the society.

In the 37th *paurī* of 'Siddh Goshti, sharing (*dān*) is the significant part of the standard formula for ethical conduct of *gurmukh*. That is:

*God-orientation, service to others and  
purity of one's own life.*<sup>53</sup>

*Dān* is giving one's good to others. In fact, best *dān* is *nām dān*. Guru Nanak recognizes that a man's highest fulfillment comes when he shares holy *nām* with others and leads a moral life as well. He helps in doing so all those

associated with him. The ideal man of Guru Nanak renders every type of help to lessen human suffering in charity and shares his spiritual endeavor with his fellow beings.

It may be relevant to add here that *gurmukh* voluntarily shares his material and spiritual goods with his co-travellers. It is voluntary because he believes in brotherhood of man; he sees one Light (*joṭ*) pervading in all creatures so he feels pleasure in sharing. *Gurmukh* sacrifices his own comfort to make others happy. He has realized that to serve the people is to serve God. Ranbir Singh states that he shares, "... the fruits of his labour with others, not in charity but in spontaneous sympathy, as rose gives fragrance without knowing, without asking."<sup>54</sup> Charity (*dān*) of *gurmukh* is voluntary and for the uplift of other fellow beings. It is a medium for spiritual harmony and unity in the society.

Having discussed the two basic principles (*kirt karo, wand chhako*) we come down to the discussion of the third tenet "*nām japo*" (repeated remembrance of holy Name of God). Generally, *nām* is considered as purely a spiritual phenomenon, which elevates man from social life. In Guru Nanak's thought, *nām* implies social involvement. In the 'Siddh Goshti' it has been clearly pointed out that the ideal man is expected to share his spiritual progress with other fellow beings so that they may also become perfect in the society.

From this point of view, it seems that in Guru Nanak's philosophy of *nām* another dimension of social reality has been given which was missing in the philosophy of the *siddhas*. Guru Nanak seems to be a spiritual altruist who advocates the idea of sharing the spiritual good with other persons. The phrase *nām-dān* may be taken as one unit expressing the charity of sharing the spiritual achievement with others. The Guru has pointed out this idea to make it clear that the *siddhas* were not in favour of their sharing spiritual achievements. They make spiritual development for their own self and in the end, they withdrew from the social realities of life. Thus, *nām-dān* is one of the points of departure of Guru Nanak with the ascetic attitude of the *siddhas*. This is the basis of this positive attitude towards householder's life.

In conformity with this idea, Kapur Singh explains: "The Name...is to be practised in the context of socio-political life, in which man does not turn his back on the society, and does not renounce the world."<sup>55</sup>

In the 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak states that:

*It is with Name that the gurmukh reflects  
upon knowledge of good qualities.*<sup>56</sup>

Sohan Singh explains this idea in these words, "Guru Nanak's ethical thought emanates from his religious experience ... there can be no life of good conduct without the experience of God, this means that you cannot separate a

man's conduct in the world from his insight of God the two are two manifestations of One Lord, they are of the same species."<sup>57</sup> The practice of *nām* fills him with divine virtues. Thus, the spiritual life of *gurmukh* is inseparable from his social and ethical life.

According to Guru Nanak:

*Gurmukh is rid of vice and his  
virtue redeems him by working<sup>58</sup>  
under the guidance of the gurū.*

In the view of Guru Nanak cultivation of virtues (*gunās*) is the first step towards spiritual realization. In the 'Japuji' Guru Nanak declares that:

*Devotion is not possible without<sup>59</sup>  
virtues or good deeds.*

Moreover, ethical or virtuous life is not only a key to the spiritual uplift of a man, it is also a condition for developing cordial relations with human beings and thus, building perfect society.

A man's goodness is judged, not only by his ideas of goodness and his exalted views on ideal ethical life, but by his good conduct (*sach āchār*). It is, therefore, desirable that ideas in the mind and thought are to be put in practice both in spirit and letter. This idea has been asserted by Guru Nanak in Sri Rāg as such:

*Truth is high, higher still is truthful living.<sup>60</sup>*

In the 'Siddh Goshti' *gurmukh* is depicted as a virtuous man. He lives a truthful life. He is incorporated with the virtues of truthfulness, contentment and temperance.<sup>61</sup>

Truthfulness as a divine virtue is more important than a mere reflection on Truth. Truth is reflected in his thought, utterance and action. It means that there is no hypocrisy in the life of an ideal man (*gurmukh*)

The ultimate goal of human life is to be one with the Truth (*sāchā*) from which he is separated. This is brought out by Guru Nanak very well in one of his utterances in which he says:

*Gurmukh emerges from Truth<sup>62</sup>  
and merges in Truth.*

He also explains that:

- (i) *Gurmukh contemplates on the Lord with  
body and soul O Nanak, the Gurmukh<sup>63</sup>  
merges in Truth.*
- (ii) *Gurmukh always enshrines truth in  
his heart and thereafter he becomes<sup>64</sup>  
a liberated person.*
- (iii) *Gurmukh is imbued with Truth and*

*with honour quits the world.*<sup>65</sup>

The virtue of truthfulness is closely related with contentment (*sat santokh*) in the 'Siddh Goshti' and other hymns of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, both come together. Contentment plays an important role in the ethical, spiritual and social life of man. In fact it is the state of equipoise. The *gurmukh* who has envisaged the virtue of *sat* and *santokh* looks on pain and pleasures alike.<sup>66</sup> He remains in the state of equipoise both in the event of success and in the event of failure. *Gurmukh* is a man of forward-looking spirit with optimistic attitude. He is an embodiment of self-contentment and truthful living.

Guru Nanak's ideal man is truthful, contented and a symbol of temperance or self-control (*sanjam*). Guru Nanak explains to the *siddhas* the characteristics of *gurmukh* as he sleeps a little and eats a little (*khandit nindrā alap ahāran*).<sup>67</sup> Such a way of life is considered according to Avtar Singh, "... to be a disposition of moderation, choosing between the extremes of too much of eating and too much of rest on the one hand and complete fasting and not resting at all on the other."<sup>68</sup> The *gurmukh* leads a balanced life. It means he rejects both extremes: Self-gratification and Self-mortification.

*Gurmukh* controls his mind through a process of moderation and balance instead of violent self-control. On the one hand, Guru Nanak rejects the code of asceticism (*hath yoga*) on the other, the life that is led only to eat and sleep is cursed by him.

Besides, the above mentioned three cardinal virtues the ideal man of Guru Nanak is an embodiment of all ethical qualities of human being, i.e. wisdom (*sachu-vichār*), love (*prem*), compassion (*dayā*), fearlessness (*nirbhaitā*), purity (*such*), humility (*nimaratā*), altruism (*parupkār*), etc.

In the light of the 'Siddh Goshti' we find that:

- (i) *Gurmukh* reflects on the quintessence of wisdom.<sup>69</sup>
- (ii) He becomes wise in the wisdom of the Vedas ... knows the secrets of inner life,<sup>70</sup> and
- (iii) Utters the unutterable.<sup>71</sup>
- (iv) *Gurmukh* is awoken to the mystery of all the worlds.<sup>72</sup>
- (v) With the attainment of this virtue<sup>73</sup> he becomes Truth-conscious.

Therefore, he is able to discriminate between Truth and untruth. It may be relevant to say that the wisdom of the *gurmukh*, "... is not knowledge in the sense of frisking of the mind or clever devices, this is a synthesis of wisdom and truthful conduct not found easily."<sup>74</sup>

The *gurmukh* being a man of wisdom visualizes the Light of God in living creatures, and considers their life and existence as his own:

*Thus, he becomes compassionate to all.*<sup>75</sup>

According to Guru Nanak:

- (i) *Gurmukh sees God alone wherever he sees.*<sup>76</sup>
- (ii) *He eradicates enmity and opposition.*<sup>77</sup>

Positively, he has invested the virtue of love (*prem*). In 'Siddh Goshti' Guru Nanak explains that:

- (i) *Gurmukh is imbued with God's love,*<sup>78</sup>  
*by the Guru's grace.*
- (ii) *He contemplates his Lord with love in*<sup>79</sup>  
*heart.*

In the opinion of Taran Singh, "Repeating the Name is the way of Loving God. By loving, He is understood and drawn near. Love identifies man with God and the treasures of values and virtues open upon him."<sup>80</sup> The ideal man of Guru Nanak by loving God through His creatures becomes God-oriented man. He becomes an embodiment of Divine values, such as, truthfulness, compassion, purity, fearlessness, etc.

In 'Siddh Goshti' the Supreme Reality is attributed as: *Destroyer of Fear* (*bhau bhanjan*).<sup>81</sup>

*The gurmukh seeks refuge at  
the feet of nirbhau. God so  
he transcends the fear of death.  
He abides in the fear of God— the True one;*<sup>82</sup>  
*so he stills the ego and becomes a humble person.*

In the 'Siddh Goshti', Guru Nanak states that:

*Gurmukh is a person with humble  
nature who has stilled his ego*<sup>83</sup>  
*(haumai) through śabad.*

In the eyes of Guru Nanak humility (*nimratā*) along with sweetness is the essence of all virtues. Actually, the virtue of humility is central in Guru Nanak's thought because he lays emphasis on the removal of I-consciousness (*haumai*) which is the main evil and the ideal man is to get rid of it. The virtue of humility is manifested through many human virtues like service (*sevā*), altruism (*parupkār*) and self surrender to the *gurū*. *Gurmukh* is the servant of God and humanity. He is entirely a creative being. In 'Siddh Goshti' this idea is supported in these words:

*Gurmukh lives truthful life (sāchi kār kamāe).*<sup>84</sup>

He seeks good of all (*sarbat dā bhalā*) without any distinction of caste, creed, colour and sex. He serves for the uplift of whole humanity not only in the field of social and economic but also in the spiritual. Guru Nanak says:

*He is emancipated and emancipates others too.*<sup>85</sup>

The ideal man of Guru Nanak helps others in their development towards perfection and the realization of God.

Guru Nanak proclaims in the 'Siddh Goshti' that:

- (i) *Gurmukh attains the Supreme Reality through pure conduct.*<sup>86</sup>
- (ii) *He who is pure, is identified with Truth.*<sup>87</sup>
- (iii) *His body and mind become pure, pure too is his Word, and so he merges in Truth.*<sup>88</sup>

There is much emphasis on the virtue of purity (*such*), both physical and mental, for the achievement of the ideal of human life. As compared with the ideal man of the *siddhas*, Guru Nanak does not prescribe bathing at sacred pilgrimages (*tīrathas*) as essential for the realization of God. The *gurmukh* keeps body clean and neat in order to make it worthy of enshrining the essence of *paramātmā*.

With all these virtues envisaged, the ideal man of Guru Nanak has also to get rid of the vices named as lust (*kām*), anger (*krodh*), greed (*lobh*), attachment (*moh*) and egoity (*ahankār/haumai*). These five enemies practically fetter the whole mankind. These are obstacles in the way of man to become one with God. In the 'Siddh Goshti' it is assured that:

*The gurmukh gets rid of Kām, Krodh, ahankār with gur-śabadi.*<sup>89</sup>

Again,

*The vicious fires of kām and krodh are quenched by the glance of grace that our God casts upon us.*<sup>90</sup>

The ideal man of Guru Nanak has sublimated and regulated these vices in terms of the ethical values and thus he is transformed into a creative member of the society. His company inspires others to become ideal persons who come in his contact.

In the end we can point out that Guru Nanak's ideal man is an embodiment of ethical virtues, which have social implications. The life of an ideal man is dominated by the spiritual values and secular values are spiritualized and regulated by the former. Our findings of ideal man take us to this conclusion that *gurmukh* is a perfect man who shows spiritual, ethical and social values in a harmonious whole. We shall take up this idea in the next chapter that is conclusion in detail.

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54. Ranbir Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 39.
55. Kapur Singh, "The Essentials of Sikhism", Gopal Singh (Trans.), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. xiv.
56. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-33), p. 941.

57. Sohan Singh, "Ethical Aspects of Guru Nanak's Thought." Taran Singh (ed.), *Teachings of Guru Nanak Dev*, p.95.
58. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-39), p. 942.
59. *Ibid.*, 'Japuji' (Paurī-21), p. 5.
60. *Ibid.*, *Sri Rāg M. I* (5-14), p. 62.
61. *Ibid.*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-11), p. 939.
62. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-25), p. 940.
63. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-27), p. 941.
64. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-71), p. 946.
65. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-30), p. 941.
66. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-61), p. 945.
67. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-8), p.939.
68. Avtar Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
69. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-68), p. 946.
70. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-28), p. 941.
71. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-29), p. 941.
72. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-42), p. 942.
73. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-31), p. 941.
74. Wazir Singh, *Philosophy of Sikh Religion*, p. 70.
75. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-24), p. 940.
76. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-57), p. 944.
77. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-37), p. 942.
78. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-63), p. 945.
79. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-29), p. 941.
80. Taran Singh, *The ideal Man of the Guru Granth Sahib*, p.13.
81. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, 'Siddh Goshti' (Paurī-36), p. 942.
82. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-47), p. 943.
83. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-44), p. 943.
84. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-35), p. 942.
85. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-31), p. 941.
86. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-29), p. 941.
87. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-25), p. 940.
88. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-68), p. 946.
89. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-10), p. 939.
90. *Ibid.*, (Paurī-47), p. 943.

## CONCLUSION

A quest for the nature of man captivated attention of thinkers, religious leaders, mystics and Sufis. One of the concepts of man, which has been developed by Guru Nanak, carries with it the spiritual heritage of Indian traditions and tries to reconcile it with the medieval Islamic ideas which came in contact with the culture of India. Guru Nanak's concept of man tries to reconcile the medieval and modern viewpoints. Although the concept which he expounded is primarily mystical and spiritual, yet he articulated his experiences about the real nature of man in the language of the people which was understandable to them. The desire to communicate and share his spiritual experiences with people inspired Guru Nanak to put them in the form of revealed hymns, which are available in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The concept of man given by Guru Nanak is dynamic. Man has been considered potentially capable of becoming perfect and *gurmukh*. Man in the initial stages is a prisoner of his *haumai* and due to ignorance is also engrossed in *māyā*. He is always in the clutches of worldly desires which hamper his ethical and spiritual progress. Guru Nanak suggests *śabad-yoga* as the most important tool for making spiritual progress. According to Guru Nanak, the progress of man implies a holistic approach towards human personality in which all the dimensions or aspects are harmoniously developed. Such a perfect person seldom withdraws from social relations of human life. He actually lives as a perfect man in the society as a benefactor of mankind. He is expected to conceive all the men as manifestation of non-dual-Reality and tries to identify his interests with the interests of all human beings. Such ideas might have been already present in the previous religious traditions but Guru Nanak gave them a practical shape which was continued by other Sikh Gurus as well. In order to focus attention on this problem we have discussed this concept in the preceding three chapters.

According to the hymns of Guru Nanak and other contributors of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* man is the supreme creature in the whole of this creation which came into being at the Will (*hukam*) of God. According to the belief of the period of the Gurus, man's body is constituted of five elements and his *ātmān* or spiritual self is the expression of the Supreme Dynamic Reality. The *ātmān* being the manifestation of the Ultimate non-dual Dynamic Reality is the microcosm or miniature reality, which is enshrined in the human person. The *gurbānī* recognizes the spiritual self of man far superior to other living creatures of the universe. This point we have discussed in chapter first to show the uniqueness of man as compared with the other species of creation. We have tried to show that man is potentially the essence of One Reality (*ik*) and he is the only creature who has the potentiality of becoming perfect through his self-consciousness (*ātmān-*

*bodh*). The gross element may have identity with lower species but man's uniqueness and superiority lies in his capacity of developing himself to the peak of perfection.

In this process of spiritual journey the active role of the *gurū* as *śabad* has been advocated by Guru Nanak in his revealed hymns. He is of the view that without *gurū* the individual is helpless and is under the clutches of *haumai*. Moreover, due to ignorance (*agiān*) he is victim of delusion or *māyā*. The *gurbānī* has also gone to the other extreme of recognizing the birth in human form as the highest and emancipation is only possible in the form of human body. Therefore, neither the gods nor the lower animals can attain perfection. It is only within the reach of man who with the guidance of *gurū* can achieve the goal of self-realization, while living in this socio-political life. This idea has been developed in the concluding chapter of section (b) where the individual transforms his egoistic tendencies and cultivates the altruistic values. After the removal of *haumai* the individual becomes perfect.

All his activities are guided by the *gurū* and he is called *gurū*-oriented (*gurmukh*). We have tried to make it clear that Guru Nanak in the 'Siddh Goshti' develops the concept of *gurmukh* who has certain qualities (*gun*) which make him a perfect man in a social structure as envisaged by the *Gurū* himself. Guru Nanak draws a contrast between the *siddh* and the *gurmukh* to show that the former is ascetic and the latter is householder. The ideal man of Guru Nanak (*gurmukh*) develops an attitude of renunciation within but he does not withdraw from society. This point has been discussed in detail in the second chapter which is perhaps the central theme of this study.

The *gurmukh* is an all round developed personality. He harmoniously develops his cognitive, conative and affective aspects of his self in such a way as it makes him *gurū*-oriented and his activities are regulated by the Divine Law (*hukam*). He gives up the directions of his egoity (*haumai*) and completely surrenders his consciousness to the Divine Law (*hukam*). He becomes in tune with the cosmic dynamic principle. His activities become all altruistic and he struggles in life for the benefit of others. He becomes perfect (*gurmukh*) and wants others to be perfect.

In the same chapter, we have also tried to emphasize, that *nām-simran* is the basis of self-perfection, which comes through *śabad-yoga*. Here we have also made clear that Guru Nanak did not see *siddhas* eye to eye who follow *hatha yoga*, which leads to asceticism and egoity. Perhaps, this is the central point where Guru Nanak wants to make departure with the *siddhas* and advocates the life of social involvement.

In the third chapter, we have continued the discussion of the ideal man with reference to his socio-ethical virtues which make a perfect man. We have

developed the concept that *gurmukh* is an embodiment of spiritual and social virtues, guided by the spiritual values as given in the Sikh scripture. The *gurmukh* is perfect from within and identifies his interests with whole of humankind. His attitude towards life is full of dynamism, optimism and welfare of other beings. He is a synthesis of spiritual and material values in which the material values are not ignored and negated rather they are spiritualized with the revealed hymns of the *gurū* in the form of *śabad*.

In the *gurmukh*, we find reconciliation of asceticism and householder's life. Earlier in the Hindu tradition, these ideas in the forms of *parvirtī* and *nirvirtī* were advocated as the two stages of human life. Both *parvirtī* and *nirvirtī* could not continue simultaneously. However, Guru Nanak advocates simultaneity of the ideals which could be synthesized in the life of a *gurmukh*. The *gurmukh* represents simultaneously the *parvirtī* and *nirvirtī* aspects of human life. Guru Nanak tried to put this ideal in practice through his personal example when at the end of his life he settled down at Kartarpur and led the life of a spiritual householder.

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