Chapter III

Archival Threads: The Formation of the Janamsākhī Tradition

The earliest janamsākhī manuscripts appear in the mid-seventeenth century.[1] During this century major textual initiatives like Gurū Arjan's creation of the *Ādi Granth* and creating secondary literature such as Bhāī Gurdās' *Vārān* – which many scholars suggest contain the antecedents of janamsākhī anecdotes.[2] Sectarian rivals like Meharbān, the son of Gurū Arjan's elder brother Prithī Cand, were also using janamsākhīs to assert the understanding of Nānak's teachings.[3] By the seventeenth century, writing janamsākhīs entailed making claims about Nānak's teachings. This chapter reconsiders the janamsākhī archive by thinking about the proliferation of writing as a networked grid of interrelated claims and counter-claims about interpreting Nānak's writing by creating sākhīs.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the proliferation of these manuscripts led to increasing amounts of variation both in the number of anecdotes and the details of each

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[1] There is some disagreement about the precise date. For instance, when discussing the early janamsākhī tradition, Surjīt Hans states that janamsākhīs appear before the martyrdom of Gurū Arjan, the fifth guru, in 1606. Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature* (Jalandhar: ABS Publications, 1988). p. 178. W.H. McLeod gives a mid-seventeenth century date for the earliest extant manuscript but speculates that an oral tradition began either during Nanak's late life or shortly thereafter. See W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968); W. H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

[2] Bhāī Gurdas, ed., *Varan Gian Ratanavali* (Amritsar: Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, 1998).

[3] Kirpal Singh, ed. *Janamsakhi Shiri Guru Nanak Dev Ji*, vol. I (Amritsar: Khalsa College, 1962).

anecdote. This expansion also led to conflicting chronologies, the inclusion of an ever-increasing

variety of stories, and the expression of diverse interests through these texts' numerous modes of

narrating individual *sākhī*s.[4] Historians of Sikhism have delineated between four to eight

manuscripts traditions of janamsākhī and have predominantly described these texts as either

biography or hagiography. However, this chapter questions the ascription of "traditions" to the

manuscript archive because of two difficulties its use raises. Firstly, a paucity of extant

manuscripts to populate any one of these traditions and, secondly, the difficulty in finding any

single janamsākhī manuscript that abides by twentieth-century normative notions of Sikhism.[5]

Accepting that many of these manuscripts pose a challenge to normalized modern sensibilities

about Sikhism, can we create new renderings of the archive by pulling at various archival threads

while avoiding notions of orthodoxy? To what extent are we positioned to create alternate

archival perceptions by aligning these threads differently?

 In this chapter, examines how the janamsākhī archive is consolidated to consider how

increasing varieties of manuscripts get associated with the term janamsākhī. It problematizes the

inclusion of manuscripts that neither announce themselves as janamsākhīs within their contents

nor treat Nānak as a central protagonist within the janamsākhī archive. Disaggregating these

associations is useful to reconsider an approach to the archive to better represent its complexities.

I suggest that we re-think the Purātan and Bālā recensions—not as slightly variant iterations of

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[4] W. H. McLeod, ed. *Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984). p. 9.

[5] Although the Bālā tradition is represented in the greatest numbers, scholars have turned to Mss Panjābī B6 and Mss Panjābī B41 as sources from which a further edited version could be created that most closely resembled the modern religion. These two branches of the janamsākhī archive remain relevant today and continue to evolve through appropriations in different venues: the Purātan tradition, used today largely by secular scholars of religion; and the Bālā tradition, whose contents are still performed by exponents and are popular amongst practicing Sikhs. These traditions came to be understood as such in three distinct phases: first through the research of colonial scholars and Orientalists in the nineteenth century; then again in the early twentieth century when religious reformers collected and archived Sikh texts; and finally, with the research of secular scholars both in and outside of Panjāb.

otherwise uniform "original" tradition —but as vital hubs in a network of texts, individual actors, and relationships that represent unique engagements with Nānak's thinking and the expressions of *bānī* found in the SGGS. Disaggregating the notion of tradition opens possibilities for thinking about each janamsākhī manuscript through its variation and differences as representative of artifacts of an individual exponent's engagement or experimentation with non-oppositional language.

How are networks of interpretation established when exponents author or compile sākhīs? How do networks alter when they enter the archive and get categorized as janamsākhīs? How might we begin to access the individual interpretations of *bānī* put forth by the author-exponents who created these works? To re-interpret *sākhī*s as I suggest, looking for non-oppositional networks of interpretation and being, I propose that we read these networks by examining successive differences in any particulars *sākhī*'s content. Each manuscript becomes an incomplete relic of the endeavors of exponents who inherit and remold Nānak's thought.

3.1 The B6 and B41 Manuscripts of Malcolm, Colebrooke, and Leyden

John Malcolm (1769-1833) had an illustrious career as a soldier and diplomat, which, later in his career, involved his writing of histories and tracts regarding the peoples with whom he had interacted.[6] One of his earlier histories, *Sketch of the Sikhs; a singular nation, who inhabit the provinces of the Penjab, situated between the rivers Jumna and Indus* (1812) marks a point

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[6] Robert Eric Frykenberg, "Malcolm, Sir John (1769–1833)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew, Brian Harrison, and David Cannadine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); John William Kaye, *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B., Late Envoy to Persia, and Governor of Bombay* (London: Smith, Elder, and co.; [etc., etc.], 1856); John Malcolm, *Malcolm: Soldier, Diplomat, Ideologue of British India: The Life of Sir John Malcolm (1769-1983)* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2014).

of increased access to Sikh textual sources.[7] In Section I of this work, Malcolm translates some janamsākhī narratives to describe the life of Gurū Nānak; in Section III, he does the same to articulate the religious principles advocated by Gurū Nānak.[8] Malcolm does not explicitly mention how or when he accessed these texts; at the same time, however, we can glean a remarkable amount of information based on the specific anecdotes that Malcolm includes in the *Sketch*, as well as the paratextual comments that he makes about his research process.

While portraying the life of Nānak in Section I of the *Sketch*, for instance, Malcolm refers to a common trope used in the childhood sequence of janamsākhī recensions describing Nānak as uniquely inclined to religious questions and indifferent to worldly concerns, writing that Nānak "engaged in esoteric discourses."[9] Purātan manuscripts like the B6 use similar phrasing, saying that Nānak was interested in *agam-nigam kīān*, or deep and confounding thoughts, instead of playing with other children.[10] In other places, Malcolm also gives both Bālā Sandhū and Mardānā as Nānak's companions in childhood as well as during the travel sequences.[11] Bālā Sandhū is mentioned only in the texts that comprise janamsākhī tradition named for him.[12]

[7] *Sketch of the Sikhs; a Singular Nation, Who Inhabit the Provinces of the Penjab, Situated between the Rivers Jumna and Indus* (London: [J.] Murray, 1812); "Sketch of the Sikhs," *Asiatic Reseaches,or transactions of the society instituted in Bengal for inquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia* 11 (1812); Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth: Or, the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs*, trans. Ernest Trumpp (London: Stephen Austin and Sons, 1877).

[8] Malcolm, "Sketch of the Sikhs." pp. 200-208 and 266-281

[9] Ibid. p. 201

[10] "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī," (British Library, London). f. 2a

[11] Malcolm recognizes that travel *sākhī*s narrated by Bālā account for most of the miracles and wonders from his journeys. "Sketch of the Sikhs." p. 201 and 205. The Bālā manuscript recensions were the most popular rendition of janamsākhī compendiums during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, likely forming the dominant truths which informed both intellectual and lay understanding of Nānak's life and teachings. During the period of colonial reform, this tradition became scrutinized heavily for its "miraculous" components. Amongst colonialists and their ecumenical Sikh counterparts, it became largely discredited in favor of the more staid Purātan manuscripts— amongst which Colebrooke's Mss Panj. B6 is the oldest extant example. Surindar Singh Kohli, ed. *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala* (Chandigar: Punjab University Publication Bureau, 1975); Bhai Vir Singh, *Puratan Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji* (New Delhi: Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan, 2004).

[12] There are other examples of anecdotes included that suggest Malcolm's access to a Bālā manuscript. For instance, one of the earliest *sākhī*s encountered in *SOS* is the one known popularly today as *Sachā Saudā*, wherein Nānak is given funds to purchase salt from one village so that he might sell it for profit at another village. Bālā accompanies Nānak on this journey. When they come across a group of hungry mendicants—alternately described as *faqīr*s or

Reading Malcolm's description of Nānak's life and teachings along with his moving

network of relationships in the colonies and the metropole, we can surmise that he had access to

the both the B6 and B41 manuscripts.[13] We can especially glean this information by comparing

Malcolm's references to different *sākhī* accounts with the manuscripts possessed by Henry

Colebrooke—famed Orientalist scholar of Sanskrit, and then-president of the Asiatic Society of

Calcutta—and John Leyden, a Scottish Orientalist highly active during the period in question,

particularly known for his extensive knowledge of North Indian languages.[14]

The B6 represents one of the most important janamsākhī manuscripts; it is currently

housed in the British Library under the shelf mark *Mss. Panjābi B6*, and was gifted to the library

by Colebrooke himself—hence the common reference to this recension as the *Colebrookevālī*

manuscript. The Purātan recensions were "discovered" because of the B6, and it remains one of

the best examples of this small group of manuscripts.

A less noticed manuscript in the British Library collection is *Mss. Panjābī B41*, a Bālā

janamsākhī recension. As I show in the section below, the B41 came from John Leyden's library.

These two manuscripts are important for tracing the non-oppositional network of interpretation

and its archival inheritance—first in the janamsākhī, and then in texts written about the

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*sādhū*s in janamsākhī manuscripts—Nānak decides to use the money to provide them with food and clothing.[12] Malcolm also includes an amalgamated account from two *sākhī*s, *Khet Hariā* and *Sarp ki Chān*, wherein Nānak was sent to tend his family's cattle and fell asleep under a tree. As the sun came to shine directly upon the youth's face, a black cobra opened its hood to give him shade. The village chief, Rāe Bullār, witnessed this event and recognized Nānak's extraordinary nature. These three accounts are all unique to Bālā manuscript recensions. Malcolm, "Sketch of the Sikhs." p. 201 and 205.

[13] As I will further explore in Chapter 4, Malcolm's historical and theological focus on Gurū Nānak reveals that the janamsākhī also served as a backdrop for his explanatory dialogue with a traditional exponent, Ātmā Rām. This dialogue assisted in Malcolm's ability to give translations and details regarding Nānak that had heretofore been impossible.

[14] T.W. Bayne and rev. Richard Maxwell, "Leyden, John (1775-1811)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew, Brian Harrison, and David ed. Cannadine (Oxford University Press, 2004); Richard F. Gombrich, "Colebrooke, Henry Thomas (1765–1837),"ibid., ed. H.C.G. Matthew, Brian Harrison, and David Cannadine (Oxford).

janamsākhī. I suggest the early role of the B41 in bringing scholars' awareness to the diversity amongst the janamsākhī manuscripts.

Malcolm's Diplomatic Mission to the Khālsā Confederacy

The historical impetus for writing *SOS* was not directly related to the Khālsā confederation, but rather to the battle for the Mughal Sultanate raging between the East India Company (EIC) and two Marāthā rulers, Daulat Rāo Sindhiā and Jaswant Holkar. The Treaty of Surjī Anjangāon between the Marāthā ruler Daulat Rāo Sindhiā and the EIC at the end of 1803 signaled the Mughals' loss of control over Delhi and Agra since this treaty established a border for the EIC's territory at the Jamuna River. The frontier of British territories in India was directly flanked to the West by the Dal Khālsā territories, acquiring information about the Sikhs imperative.

Persisting friction with Sindhiā, however, required updating the treaty on November 21, 1805. Malcolm handled both the 1803 and 1805 diplomatic endeavors along with his Munshī, Kānwal Nain. While Malcolm was at Delhi with General Lake and Kānwal Nain on November 8, 1805, they learned of Holkar's attempt to cross the Sutlej to enter the Dal Khālsā confederated territories. General Lake decided to pursue Holkar while Malcolm concluded treaty negotiations with Sindhiā; Malcolm rejoined the EIC army immediately after. Holkar crossed the Sutlej and arrived at Amritsar by the end of November; the British were approaching the Sutlej at the same time. Holkar sent communications in advance to the Sikh chiefs imploring them to come together and fight against the British. However, it appears that the Sikh Chiefs were skeptical of his overtures, as they, in turn, sent emissaries to the British camp expressing concern about Holkar's presence in their territory.

The British were intercepted at the border of the Dal Khālsā territories and escorted to the

banks of the Beas River, where negotiations with Holkar were conducted beginning around

December 10. On December 25, Holkar accepted the terms of the Treaty of Rājghāt, which

returned territories to him South of the Taptee and Godāvarī, while limiting his advancement

northward. The ratification of treaties with Sindhiā and Holkar occurs on January 7, 1806. These

treaties establish the EIC's influence over much of central and northeastern India. They grant the

EIC symbolic control over the Mughal Sultan, marking the rise of the British as a dominant

political broker on the subcontinent.[15]

Malcolm's impressions about the Sikhs, the Khālsā Army, and Ranjīt Singh, formed over

approximately three-weeks spent under armed escort camped on the Beas River. His role as

diplomat ensured that he had the opportunity to meet and converse with tribal chiefs and

aristocrats. Beginning the *Sketch of the Sikhs* with this experience, Malcolm introduces the Sikh

nation in three sections: (1) religious institutions, usages, manners, and character; (2) Sikh

countries and government; (3) religion of the Sikhs. Most studies of Malcolm's work recognize

the significance of his "sympathetic approach" to writing about other people, cultures, and

nations, in which he demonstrates apparent regard for the peoples who formed the objects of his

studies, often bringing forth native voices within his work.[16]

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[15] Malcolm, *Malcolm: Soldier, Diplomat, Ideologue of British India: The Life of Sir John Malcolm (1769-1983)*. p.224-227. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in Western Scholarship* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1992); G. Khurana, *British Historiography on the Sikh Power in the Punjab* (London ; New York: Mansell, 1985); Darshan Singh, *Western Image of the Sikh Religion: A Source Book* (New Delhi: National Book Organisation, 1999); Fauja Singh, *Historians and Historiography of the Sikhs* (New Delhi: Oriental Publishers & Distributors, 1978); Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs* (Calcutta1962).

[16] This sympathetic approach has antecedents in the Scottish Enlightenment. With this approach, however, John Malcolm's significance in Sikh historiography is universally acknowledged. Even the harshest critics of so-called Western scholarship on Sikhism treat Malcolm generously not for his historical accuracy, but for his methodology. This method is often referred to as a "sympathetic approach," and involved gathering Sikh source material, and dialogic engagement with many Sikhs, including intelligentsia, lay soldiers, and aristocrats. Most importantly, however, Malcolm gives rhetorical preference to the Sikh textual perspective in contentious issues within the tradition. A 1981 reprint of *SOS* states that the book describes the customs and religion of Sikhs "in the most simple, objective, and interesting way thus making an everlasting effect on the minds of readers irrespective of the racial and

My point of departure begins with recognizing Malcolm's focus on Nānak in his description of the Sikh religion. He provides a detailed treatment of Gurū Nānak, depicting him as an individual of extraordinary genius who sought to reconcile the friction between Hindus and Muslims.[17] This theme pervades most of the Purātan and Bālā manuscripts. Malcolm's *Sketch* stands out from earlier work because his experience extended beyond dialogue with influential or everyday Sikhs about their nation of religion. He sought out works that were central to the Sikh tradition and interacted with exponents of the tradition to read these texts.

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ethnological differences." Malcolm expresses his approach succinctly by stating, "It is of the most essential importance to hear what a nation has to say of itself; and the knowledge attained from such sources, has a value independent of its historical utility. It aids the promotion of social intercourse, and leads to the establishment of friendship between nations." This approach was not a deterrent to maintaining a strictly factual narrative, but rather facilitated the best adjudication of facts.

       Scholars see this sympathetic approach as enabling a more comprehensive narrative than previous attempts; they take Malcolm's account to unproblematically and transparently represent Sikhs on their own terms. In contrast, however, I suggest that this method's appeal consists of its stadial historicist construal of the Gurū Period as an origin of identity and exemplarity.

       Jack Harrington to describe Malcolm as someone who conceived of the consolidation of British India, shaping the "British consciousness of Asia." Harrington argues that Malcolm's writing and diplomatic career reflect the British Empire's development vis-à-vis the ways in which contemporary Britons molded and reflected on the process of colonization. Harrington argues that, *The Sketch of the Sikhs* (1812), was perhaps his first attempt to assert himself as a both a regional expert and a military strategist—which, perhaps despite his intentions, helped contour the shape of the Sikh religion over the course of the next century and a half.

In his letters, Malcolm also mentions working on an account of Persian and a longer work covering the political administration of India for the last twenty years, for which he had original documents which few others could access. Kaye. 368, 372, and 373. Apart from the *Sketch of the Sikhs*, Malcolm worked on three other major works in the period directly following the successful mission against Holkar in 1806. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Political History of India, from the Introduction of Mr. Pitt's Bill, A.D. 1784, to the Present Date* (London: Printed for W. Miller, 1811); *Observations on the Disturbances in the Madras Army in 1809* (London: Printed for William Miller and John Murray, 1812); *The History of Persia from the Most Early Period to the Present Time: Containing an Account of the Religion, Government, Usages and Character of the Inhabitants of That Kingdom* (London: Printed for John Murray, 1815); Kaye. p.350.

       For works discussing Malcolm's importance, see the following: Sarjit Singh Bal, *Guru Nanak in the Eyes of Non-Sikhs* (Chandigarh: Publication Bureau Panjab University, 1969); Grewal; Khurana; Darshan Singh, *Western Perspective on the Sikh Religion* (New Delhi: Sehgal Publishers Service, 1991); *Western Image of the Sikh Religion: A Source Book*; Singh; Singh. Harrington, *Sir John Malcolm and the Creation of British India*.

       For recent studies on the Scottish Enlightenment see Thomas Ahnert, *The Moral Culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690-1805*, The Lewis Walpole Series in Eighteenth-Century Culture and History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Alexander Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment: The Historical Age of the Historical Nation* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001); *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Arthur Herman, *The Scottish Enlightenment: The Scots' Invention of the Modern World* (London: Fourth Estate, 2003); David B. Wilson, *Seeking Nature's Logic: Natural Philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, Natural Philosophy in the Scottish Enlightenment (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

[17] For more on this, see Chapter 4.

Henry Colebrooke, Calcutta, and Writing **The Sketch of the Sikhs**

After this diplomatic mission, Malcolm almost immediately began writing *SOS*. Despite Malcolm's apologies for the "hastiness" of *SOS*, he pursued it in spates from 1806 until its publication. After the Treaty negotiations, Malcolm traveled back from Panjāb to Delhi, slowly making his way east. He arrived in Calcutta by the summer of 1806 and was greeted by Henry Colebrooke (1767-1837).[18] Malcolm's personal experience and knowledge of the Khālsā Confederacy made writing a tract about the people and region expedient.

Colebrooke assisted Malcolm's endeavor by giving him access to his small collection of manuscripts relating to the Sikh tradition. In a footnote in the *Sketch*, Malcolm notes that Colebrooke was in possession of the two most central manuscripts in the Sikh religion, the *Ādi Granth,* and *Dasam Pādshā kā Granth*.[19] Malcolm does not indicate, however, whether he took a manuscript of the *Ādi Granth* with him from Panjāb to Calcutta in 1806; a recent biography states that his initial attempts to coerce a local Sikh chief to view a copy of the *Ādi Granth* did not result in Malcolm acquiring that text. However, at Calcutta in 1806, Malcolm did gain access to a copy of the *Ādi Granth* after some difficulty.

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[18] Malcolm spent seven months in Calcutta between July 1806 and January 1807 at the behest of George Barlow. Malcolm needed to be ready for diplomatic assignment, as Holkar was attempting to establish alliances with disaffected state leaders with whom the British had reneged upon Wellesley's policy of expansion using treaty alliances. Upon becoming Governor-General, George Barlow reversed this and created a non-interference policy to ensure the Company Armies did not get embroiled in costly domestic matters. Wellesley and Colebrooke encouraged Malcom to write *SOS* given the political situation and Malcolm's diplomatic experience in the region.

[19] The title, *Dasam Pādshā kā Granth*, marks a group of recensions of the *Dasam Granth*. Malcolm, "Sketch of the Sikhs." pp.197-198 For studies on the Dasam Granth see Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Dasama Grantha Dā Paurāṇika Adhiaina* (1965); Surindar Singh Kohli, *The Dasam Granth = Shrī Dasama Grantha Sāhiba: The Second Scripture of the Sikhs Written by Sri Guru Gobind Singh*, Shrī Dasama Grantha Sāhiba (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2005); Robin Rinehart, *Debating the Dasam Granth*, Aar Religion in Translation (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Furthermore, Henry Colebrooke used his networks in Calcutta to get Malcolm access to a Nirmalā "priest" named Ātmā Rām. With Ātmā Rām's assistance, Malcolm accessed the Sikh texts in his possession.[20] Malcolm continued his meetings with Ātmā Rām continued during brief stays in Calcutta until the *Sketch* was complete. It is likely that the manuscripts they discussed would have included those in both Ātmā Rām's and Colebrooke's possession. Given the centrality of the janamsākhīs as an interpretive form of *kathā*, it is likely that Malcolm's conversations with the Nirmalā priest included the recounting of *sākhī*s as per the Ātmā Rām's training as a traditional exponent.[21] This process lent itself to an incorporation of the B6 janamsākhī into the discussion, which was in Colebrooke's possession before Malcolm's arrival in Calcutta.

Malcolm returned to Calcutta in July of 1808 for a short period before a mission to Persia in 1809. In September and October of 1809, Colebrooke assisted and encouraged Malcolm to take up his draft again preparing it for publication. Malcolm finally produced a draft while in transit back to London. Malcolm sent drafts of the nearly complete work to John Leyden and William Erskine. Another draft of *SOS* was sent to Colebrooke as Malcolm was departing for his second furlough. This draft included a letter thanking Colebrooke for consistent support of the project and Malcolm.[22]

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[20] Malcolm, *Malcolm: Soldier, Diplomat, Ideologue of British India: The Life of Sir John Malcolm (1769-1983)*. pp.259-260

[21] See Chapter 2 of this dissertation for a more detailed discussion of the important of kathā in the training of exponents. Janamsākhīs were written to be performed as expansive readings of the Gurū Granth. In Chapter 4, I use the manuscript of commentaries and texts Trumpp brought back from Panjāb in 1872 to reveal how writing commentaries meant different things to Trumpp and the exponents who assisted him. Requesting commentaries initially resulted in production of *sākhī*s with occasional reference to a verse from the Gurū Granth. In later commentaries the process reversed, the compositions from the Granth had quick references to *sākhī* embedded in them to "define" the meaning of the verse. I suggest a similar dialogic process may have occurred when Malcolm brought Sikh texts to Ātmā Rām to discuss.

[22] A letter written to Colebrooke by Malcolm on July 12, 1809 that included the complete draft of *A Sketch of the Sikhs* reveals some of Malcolm's process of writing. Malcolm states that he will direct Colebrooke to his friend Leyden. He then asks that Colebrooke "peruse it with great attention and to make any alterations or ammendents you

Colebrooke's Search for Sikh Manuscripts

In *SOS*, Malcolm describes how difficult it was to be given access even to view the *Granth*; in 1806, the Sikh Chief who finally allowed him access to the text only did so after assurances that Malcolm would exhibit care and regard toward the text. Charles Wilkins' visit to the Sikh college at Patnā in 1781 shows a similar reluctance; his interlocutors informed Wilkins they would grant him access to the text after a ceremonial initiation. After this, he could also select a "gurū" who could teach the texts to Wilkins.[23] The ceremonial treatment and understanding of such texts as living would have limited circulation.[24] Given this state of affairs, how and when did Colebrooke acquire central texts like the *Dasam Granth, Ādi Granth, and Janamsākhī*?

By the nineteenth-century, Henry Colebrooke had established a reputation for inquiring after religious and legal texts.[25] It is likely that Colebrooke came across the B6 janamsākhī

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like. I have left division of the subject to be filled up by you. I think you will insert the contents of each chapter as it is usual to have chapters in papers published by your society." This suggest that Leyden's translations may have been directed to Colebrooke to peruse with the draft. Malcolm gave final control to add or alter sections as Colebrooke deemed worthy. The *Sketch of the Sikhs* may be a text which amalgamates the voices of Leyden, Colebrooke, Malcolm, and Ātma Rām in order to comment on BL Mss. Panj. B6 and BL Mss. Panj. B41. See Appendix F for letter. John Malcolm and Henry Thomas Colebrooke, "Letters, John Malcolm; H.T. Colebrooke," in *Ames, Charles Lesley. Ames Library Manuscript Collection*, ed. Univesity of Minnesota (Ames Library of South Asia, 1809-1827).

[23] Charles Wilkins, "The Sicks and Their College at Patna, Dated Benares, 1 March 1781," *Transactions of the Asiatick Society* 1 (1788).

[24] Some Sikh institutions continue an early practice of place the *Ādi Granth* on a central throne flanked by the *Dasam Granth* and *Janamsākhī* on lower pedestals. I had the opportunity to see such an arrangement of the texts during research visits to Nihang centers in 2006 and 2013. The Nihangs are a branch of Khālsā soldiers who practice martial arts.

[25] Colebrooke had a particularly long career in India arriving in Madras in 1782 and departing from Calcutta in 1815. He spent a significant amount of his early career in the Bihar area, close to Benares and Patna and subsequently in Calcutta where he became President of the Court of Appeal in 1805. Müller writes that Colebrooke was in Nagpur on a diplomatic mission between 1798-1801, thereafter he returned to Mirzapur (close to Benares) but subsequently gets appointed to the membership of the newly coined Court of Appeal in Bengal where he simultaneously accepts an honorary post as Professor of Sanskrit at Fort William College.

Although Colebrooke's research is generally thought to pertain mostly to juridical issues, he broached the topic of comparative mythology in a 1793 essay where he states that it may be curious if not useful to publish Sanskrit "legends as seem to resemble others known to European mythology." It was also during the early years of

manuscript before 1806, as John Malcolm mentions that Colebrooke had two important

manuscripts from the Sikh religion in his possession at the time Malcolm arrived in Calcutta

following his brief sojourn into Panjāb. However, it difficult to know precisely when or where

Colebrooke acquired the B6 manuscript.

We know he did not obtain it in Panjāb, but the more likely places where it may have

been acquired include Patnā, Calcutta, or Benares. Patnā, in particular, is known to have had an

institution where the teachings of the Sikh Gurūs were perpetuated, wherein Sikh texts were

housed and produced.[26] Patnā's Sikh College is described in an essay by Charles Wilkins—who

was one of the founding members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, best known for his

translation of the *Bhagāvad Gītā*. This essay shows a thriving center with numerous manuscripts

and a center containing a manuscript library as well as means for their reproduction by 1781.[27] If

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the nineteenth century upon coming to Bengal that Colebrooke was working on the religious systems of India including his scholarship on the *Rg Veda* as well as a burgeoning interest in the "religion of the Buddha." Colebrooke expresses interest in the "religions, manners, natural history, traditions, and arts" of the region in letters to his father as early as 1790. However, he states that the pursuance of such a research endeavour would require substantial leisure. F. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Collected Works of the Right Hon. F. Max Müller (London New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1898). pp.238, 255, 256, and 259. Rosane Rocher and Ludo Rocher, *The Making of Western Indology: Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the East India Company*, Royal Asiatic Society Books (London ; New York: Routledge, 2012); *Founders of Western Indology: August Wilhelm Von Schlegel and Henry Thomas Colebrooke in Correspondence 1820-1837*, Abhandlungen Für Die Kunde Des Morgenlandes ;Bd. 84 (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2013).

[26] He may have had occasion to acquire manuscripts on the Sikh religion during his appointments at Tirhut, Purneah, and Nattore beginning in 1786. Colebrooke wrote to his father about the Hindu religion in a letter sent from Patna, where a major Sikh teaching institute operated, in 1786 and makes explicit reference to Sikhs after moving from Tirhut to Purneah in 1789. Müller. p.236, and 240

Tradition traces the existence of a Sikh community in Patnā back to Nānak's journey to Bidar, Karnataka. Patna has retained a sangat since that time, when a congregational center was established in the house of a Patna jeweller named Salis Rae Johrī. Gurdwaras Nānaksar and Nānakpurī Sāhib are 10-15km from Hazur Sahib. The sangat established by Johrī This centered was still operating when Gurū Tegh Bahdur, ninth Sikh Gurū and father of Gurū Gobind Singh, came and spent time with the congregation. Gurū Gobind Singh was born and spent the first six years of his life in Patna. The site of Takht Sri Hazur Sahib is built upon the same site. Nānaksar and Nānakpurī Sāhib mark places visited by Nānak on route to Bidar, Karnataka. Another historical site is marked by Gurdwārā Nānak Jhīrā. This is where Nānak held discourses with Bidar's Sufis. A *sākhī* pertaining the encounter with Salis Rae Johrī can be found in the 1877 lithographed Bālā janamsākhī. See Malik Diwan Butta Singh, ed. *Pothi Janamsakhi* (Lahore: Matbai Aftab Panjab, 1871); Shamashera Siṅgha Ashoka, *Prasiddha Guraduāre*, Sāḍe Tīratha Asathāna Sīrīza (Paṭiālā: Bhāshā Wibhāga, Pañjāba, 1991).

[27] Wilkins.

Colebrooke acquired the B6 at Patnā, is it possible he mistook a janamsākhī for a copy of the *Ādi Granth*?

The B6 manuscript is undated but thought to have been compiled in the early seventeenth century, sometime between 1635 and 1651. The initial folios are blank but have several stamps bearing "East India Company" on the imprint, as well as a handwritten note stating that it was "presented by H.T. Colebrooke." Another note in the Devanāgarī script is written on the opening folios, which states "*nānak kā granth janamsākhī kā*." This note reveals a method of labeling similar to that seen in the *Dasam Granth*, often referred to as "The Tenth King's Book" ("*Dasam Pādishāh kā Granth*"); as Malcolm notes, this method may also have applied to what today are universally called janamsākhīs. Colebrooke and Malcolm may have taken this label as a title, such that they believed the work to be "*nānak kā granth janamsākhī kā*."

There are several different ways to translate this phrase. First, by omitting the word "janamsākhī" as unfamiliar, the title could be translated as, "The Book of Nānak." Two other possible translations include "The janamsākhī, Book of Nānak," or "The Book of Nānak, [the] janamsākhī." The first of these possibilities appears to reflect contemporary understandings of the word "janamsākhī" as the title for a book about Nānak. The second possibility reflects a biographical focus on Nānak, but it also may reflect the use of the term "janamsākhī" as a moniker ascribed to Nānak.[28]

As my archival research revealed, there are no manuscripts of the *Gurū Granth* known to have come from Colebrooke's collection. Assuming Colebrooke and Malcolm read the title

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[28] Placing titles after the name in the janamsākhīs is not uncommon. For instance, the title "Khan" follows the name Daulat. Its is particularly common with Nānak's name, apart from Bābā and Gurū, other monikers given to Nānak are placed after his name: Nānak Nirankārī, Nānak Tappā, Nānak Shāh, and Nānak Faqīr are common examples. This last rendering does not have any clear paths to meaning but may open an alternate way of reading the Purātan vis-à-vis the Bālā recensions.

literally as *The Book of Nānak*, they easily could have thought that the two books Colebrooke possessed were the two most important Sikh works: the book of the first Gurū and the book of the last Gurū. Common ascriptions in colonial works that Nānak founded a religious community and Guru Gobind Singh transformed it into a political entity facilitated this prejudgment. Such distinctions made both Nānak's and Gobind Singh's lives central to colonial ideas about Sikhism. Either Malcolm or Colebrooke could have extrapolated to imagine that the manuscripts were the *Ādi Granth* and the *Dasam Granth*.[29]

The high esteem for the *Sketch* and Malcolm's sympathetic approach has led scholars to take Malcolm's comments at face value: Colebrooke gave him access to the *Ādi Granth* and *Dasam Granth*. Based on numerous references in the *Sketch* that Malcolm had access to janamsākhīs, including a Bālā, Purātan, and Giān Ratanāvalī. However, citations from the *Ādi Granth* and *Dasam Granth* could easily have been given during discussions with Ātmā Rām.

It is likely that Colebrooke unwittingly granted Malcolm access to the B6 janamsākhī, thinking that it was the *Ādi Granth*. The B6 manuscript was likely acquired by Colebrook in the vicinity of Patnā in the late 18th century. It's use in the dialogic encounter between Ātmā Rām and John Malcolm in Calcutta in the opening decade of the 19th century backdates its importance to English language historiography on the Sikh tradition. Malcolm was able to have detailed discussions with Ātmā Rām about Gurū Nānak using the B6 alongside janamsakhi manuscripts in John Leyden's possession. These discussions account for the unique depth of insight Malcolm was able to provide about Gurū Nānak and his teachings. Colebrooke gifted the B6 manuscript to

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[29] "I understand, however, that the indefatigable research of Mr. COLEBROOKE *[sic]* has procured not only the *A'di-Grant'h [sic],* but also the *Dasima Padshah ka Grant'h [sic]'* and the consequently he is in possession of the two most sacred books of the *Sikhs*." The italics are in the original. See note in Malcolm, "Sketch of the Sikhs." pp. 197-198

the East India House Library upon returning to London in 1815.[30] The B6 surfaced Library to

Earnest Trumpp.

John Leyden and Translation of Sikh Manuscripts

Malcolm's parsing and interpretation of Sikh texts were facilitated by the polyglot

philologist Dr. John Leyden (1775-1811). Leyden and Malcolm were both Scots from the

Borderlands region. They met while Leyden was in Serigapatam, Madras, shortly after he had

arrived in 1803 to work as a physician. Leyden had spent seven years in Edinburgh studying

philosophy and was reputed to have mastered Arabic, Hebrew, and Persian. Leyden traveled

extensively and exhibited a propensity for the acquisition of language. He became a reputed

linguist, developing lexicons for numerous languages. By 1807, he taught South Asian languages

at Calcutta. Malcolm states that Leyden provided him with "several tracts written by Sikh

authors in "the Penjabi" [31] and Duggar dialects, treating of their history and religion" and that he

had tried to incorporate them when writing *SOS*.[32]

Leyden provided Malcolm with numerous translations and references to secondary Sikh

texts.[33] The British Library has two manuscripts, the Euro Mack General 40 and Add 26558, of

workbooks containing translations Leyden worked on between 1805-1811—a period overlapping

Malcolm's drafting of *SOS*. The first of these, Euro Mack General 40, contains translations of

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[30] Colebrooke donated his collection of largely Sanskrit manuscripts to the East India Company in 1818, this was likely the entirety of his remaining manuscript collection. Müller.p.263

[31] Jack Harrington, *Sir John Malcolm and the Creation of British India*, Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Malcolm, *Malcolm: Soldier, Diplomat, Ideologue of British India: The Life of Sir John Malcolm (1769-1983)*.

[32] Malcolm states that Leyden's translations verify "the different religious institutions of the Sikh nation," no mention of the translated titles exists. However, Malcolm discusses Sikh institutions in the second section of *SOS* with references to specific customs or individuals who acts as examples of Sikh belief in their instructions. These examples and references may have been part of the translations that Malcolm received from Leydon. "Sketch of the Sikhs." pp. 252-266

[33] Ibid.

Bacitara Nātak, an autobiographical text by Gurū Gobind Singh. This manuscript also contains the *Bhagat Ratnāvalī*, *sākhī*s about prominent Sikhs; *Giān Ratnāvalī*, a janamsākhī by Bhāī Manī Singh; and lesser known works about Gurū Gobind Singh, some in the Dogarī dialect. The other manuscript of Leyden's translations, Add 26558, contains two versions of the *Prem Sumarg Granth*, which is a text typically thought of as a rahitnāmā, but which contains *sākhī* narratives about Gurū Gobind Singh as well. Apart from these texts, an important manuscript in the British Library collection under the shelfmark BL Mss. Panj B41 bears a handwritten label on an unpaginated folio, which reads "Bibliotheca Leydeniana" (see Figure 3.1 below).[34] Malcolm's connection to Leyden, his access to the translations that Leyden created, and the personal stamp with Leyden's library name make the B41 a likely source for the references to Nānak that draw upon Bālā recension *sākhī*s.

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[34] Leyden had an extensive collection of manuscripts which he gifted to the India Office Library. Part of this collection is housed at the British Library currently and includes the work, *A Vocabulary of Persian and Hindoostanee*. See, Wilhelm Geiger and H. C. P. Bell, *Máldivian Linguistic Studies* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1996). p.145; James Sinton, *Leydeniana: Or Gleanings from Some Unpublished Documents Regarding Dr. Leyden* (J. Edgar Hawick, 1912).
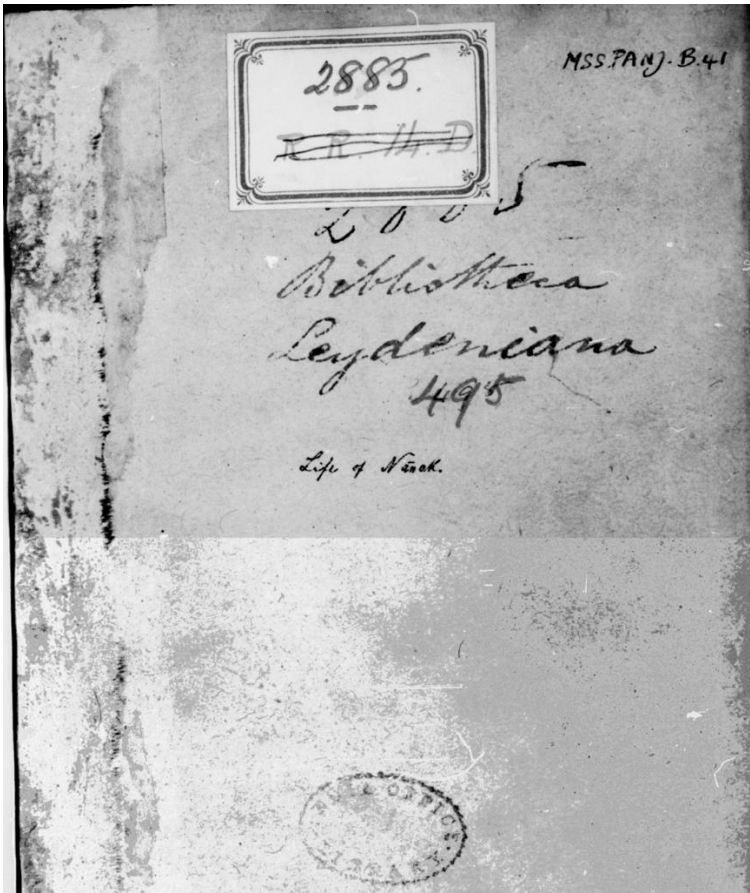
Figure 3.1 Folio of Mss. Panj. B41 Showing the phrase "Bibliotheca Leydeniana 495" with the title "Life of Nānak."

The texts accessed through Colebrooke and Leyden, coupled with Malcolm's dialogic engagement with Ātmā Ram, account for the material about Nānak and his teachings in *SOS*. Malcolm made two innovations to earlier accounts of the Sikhs. First, he suggested that Sikh sources were uniquely positioned to reflect the authentic tradition, casting doubt on all non-Sikh sources as bigoted by religious hatred that both Hindus and Muslims harbored toward Sikhs. Second, he was the first to dedicate a large portion of writing in English to a portrayal of Nānak and his teachings.

As we have seen, Henry Colebrooke and John Leyden provided Malcolm copies of the B6 Purātan janamsākhī and the B41 Bālā recension, respectively. In an unlikely manner, *Sketch*

of the Sikh has the distinction of being the first European account to incorporate *sākhī*s based on manuscripts rather than strictly via dialogue with lay Sikhs. Based on the presence of both Bālā and Purātan janamsākhīs in *SOS*, we can glean that *sākhī* popularity and transmission were not exclusively oral, but also included manuscripts that were familiar to traditional exponents. In its incorporation of Leyden's translations of janamsākhīs taken from manuscripts in the seventeenth century, a period when they are thought to have declined, Malcolm's *Sketch* shows a continuing janamsākhī manuscript tradition. It also helps establish the primacy of the B6 and the B41 as the two most important manuscript texts in the Sikh archive.

3.2 Trumpp, Macauliffe, and the Creation of Janamsākhī Traditions

In this section, I provide examples of how the archiving of various manuscript texts occurred during the colonial period, such that the distinct branches of Bālā and Purātan solidified under the aegis of the notion of "janamsākhī" as a central form of Sikh textuality. The janamsākhī archive formed serendipitously in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century in London. The head librarian at the India Office placed the manuscript Colebrooke had given in a box of manuscripts destined for Ernest Trumpp.[35] After his return from Panjāb in the early 1870s, Trumpp had requested these manuscripts to assist in his task of translating the *granth*.

In a similar way to Colebrooke and Malcolm's assumptions that this manuscript was a copy of the *Ādi Granth*. Trumpp received what is now the janamsākhī manuscript BL Mss Panjābī B6 because of the note in Devanāgrī letters saying, *nānak kā granth janamsākhī kā*, or

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[35] Trumpp was a German philologist and missionary, known for his work in publishing grammars of Sindhī and Pashto; his success in codifying and translation these vernaculars earned the notice of administrators in the East India Company, who appointed him to translate the *Ādi Granth* in 1869 after several British encounters with Sikh forces in Panjāb made a translation of this text seem diplomatically necessary.For more on Ernst Trumpp see Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1992); Trilochan Singh, *Ernest Trumpp and W.H. Mcleod as Scholars of Sikh History Religion and Culture* (Chandigarh: International Centre of Sikh Studies, 1994).

The Book of Nānak the Janamsākhī; because of this note, the head librarian mistook the contents

(see Figure 3.1 and the section above). Trumpp had viewed janamsākhī manuscript while in

Panjāb. However, from his perspective, the manuscripts that he saw in Panjāb were relatively

recent reflections of a tradition that had lost its original learning becoming instead steeped in

myth, legend, and miracle. Recognizing the B6 as a janamsākhī, Trumpp noticed that this

manuscript had fewer of the problematic elements of the versions popular in Panjāb. Its lack of

the "rubbish of miraculous and absurd stories" and the presence of idiomatic expressions that

mirrored the *Ādi Granth* led Trumpp to consider the B6 as a discovery of an early antecedent for

the manuscripts he called, "a life of Nānak." [36]

Trumpp referred to these two different versions as Janam-sākhī of Bābā Nānak (A) and

Janam-sākhī of Bābā Nānak (B). He decided to included English translations of them in *The Ādi*

Granth or The Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs Translated from the Original Gurmukhī believing

they provided a necessary context to help render an unwieldy translation. The chapter that

contains these translations is a translation of what Trumpp takes to the title of the manuscripts:

"The Life of Nānak."[37] Trumpp's translation and recognition of the unique nature of the B6

manuscript would gradually lead to increased interest in narratives about Nānak. This interest

leads to an endeavor to collect manuscripts the resembled these two versions. The Janam-sākhī

of Bābā Nānak (A) and Janam-sākhī of Bābā Nānak (B) become known as the Purātan

Janamsākhī and Bālā Janamsākhī, as a result of this interest.

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[36] Ernst Trumpp, *The Ādi Granth, or, the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs* (London: W. H. Allen & co. [etc.], 1877). p. i
[37] There are no janamsākhī amongst the manuscripts he brought back with him from Panjāb, where he was resident from 1871 until 1872, it may be that the manuscript BL Panjābi B41 was also placed in the box of materials sent to Trumpp from the India Office Library. This is a *Pairhā Mokhā* version and therefore recounts the details given to Gurū Angad by Bhāī Bālā Sandhū.

When creating a title for these works, Trumpp elided two separate terms to create a gloss of the phrase "The Life of Nānak." He misconstrues the term *janamsākhī*, found written by another hand on the second unpaginated folio (Figure 3.2), as being synonymous with the term *janampatrī*—found on the first paginated folio of BL Mss. Panjābi B41, as well as the 1871 lithograph by Malik Dīvān Būtā Singh (Figures 3.3 and 3.4).[38] The first paginated folio of the B6 only uses the term *sākhī*: "*sākhī srī babe nānak jī kī*" (Figure 3.5).
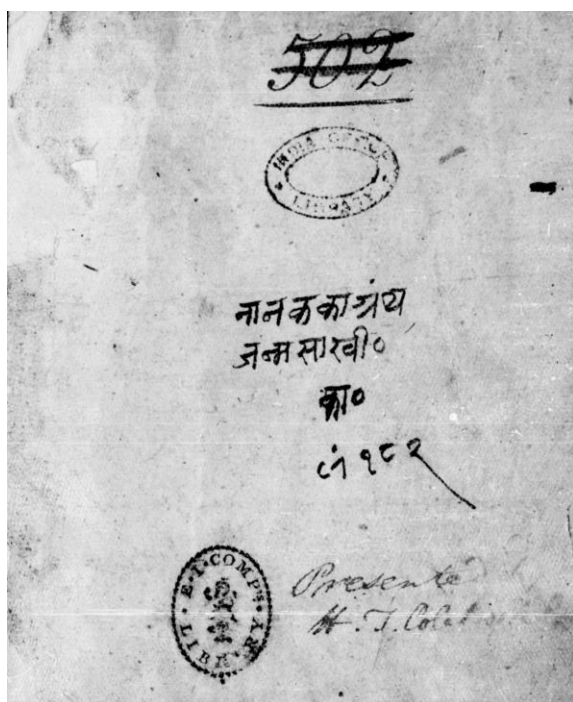

Figure 3.2 Second Folio of Mss Panjābi B6

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[38] The creation of this lithograph coincides with Trumpp's residence in Lahore in 1871 and he was scrutinized a copy alongside manuscript accounts: "During my stay at Lahore (1870-1872) a Janam-sākhī was lithographed with not unfair and in some cases very bold woodcuts. By comparing this copy with the current manuscripts, I found that everything, which appeared to throw a dubious or unfavorable light on Nānak, had been left out, whereas other things, which spoke of his deification, had been interpolated." See Trumpp. p. i

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ੴਸਤਿਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ੧

ਜਨਮਪਤ੍ਰੀ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਕੀ ॥ ॥

ਸੰਮਤੁ ੧੫ . . . . ਸਾਖੈ ਦਾ . . . . ਬੇ

ਆਸੀ ਮਿ . . ਦੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਖ . . ਰੇ ॥ ੫ ॥ . ਪ੍ਰ

ਮੀ . . ਸੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਪੋ . . ਮ੍ . ਕੇ ਸ਼ੁ . . . ਸ਼

ਰਲਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੇ ਗੁ . ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦਿ . . ਦਾ ਸੀ

ਮੇ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਲਿਖ੍ਰੀ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਤ ਬਾਬੇ ਸ਼ੁਮੇਤੇ

ਕਰੀ ਰਾਇ . ਰੇ ਏ ਤਪ ਦੇ ਹਰੀ ਆਪ ਆਇ

ਆਪ ਆਹਾ ਰ ਗੁ . ਅੰਗਦ ਗੁ ਕੁ ਤਿਨ

ਸ੍ਰ . ਆਪਾ ਆਪ . . . ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿ ਮਦੀਨ ਸ਼ਰਾ ਹਰਿ

ਭ੍ਰਤ ਲਿ ਕਰਿ ਆਪ ਖਰੋ ਆ . . ਜੋ . ਕੀ

ਕਰ ਆਪੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਜਿ ਥੋ ਫਿਰੇ ਆਪੋ ਆਹਿ

ਖੇ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰੀ ਹ ਕੀ ਕਰਤੁ ਸਹ ਜਨਾ ਲਿ ਬੁ ਸੀ

ਬਾਲੇ ਭਿ ਮੁਦ੍ਰਾ ਸੀ ਭ੍ਰ ਸੀ ਭੁਮੇ ਉਪਰਿ

ਗੁ . ਅੰਗਦ ਬਹੁਤ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਹੋ . ਆ ਭੁ

ਦੀ ਬਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ ਰਬਾਬੀ ਕਾਲੇ

ਫਿਰਦੇ ਆ ਹੇ . ਮੇ ਦੀ ਖਾਨ ਦੇ ਵ ਖਤ੍ਰ

ਭ੍ਰਾ . ਨਾਲੇ ਆਹਾ ॥

੧੬ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ

ਇਕ ਕਰਿ ਨ ਗੁ . ਅੰਗਦ ਦੇ ਜੀ ਉ ਉਪਰੀ

ਮੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਪੁਰਨ ਆਹਾ ਉਸ

ਅਤੇ ਪੁਰਮੇਸ਼੍ਵਰ ਦਿ . ਬੇਦ ਕਿ . ਨਾ

ਹਾ ਦੇ ਖਾ ਮੇ ਰੋ ਗੁ ਰੁ ਜਨਮ ਕਿ ਸਰ ਊਸ

ਚੀ ਤਾ ਆਹਾ ॥ ਏ ਹੁ ਚਿਤ ਵ ਸੀ ਹੋ ਇ ਰਹੀ

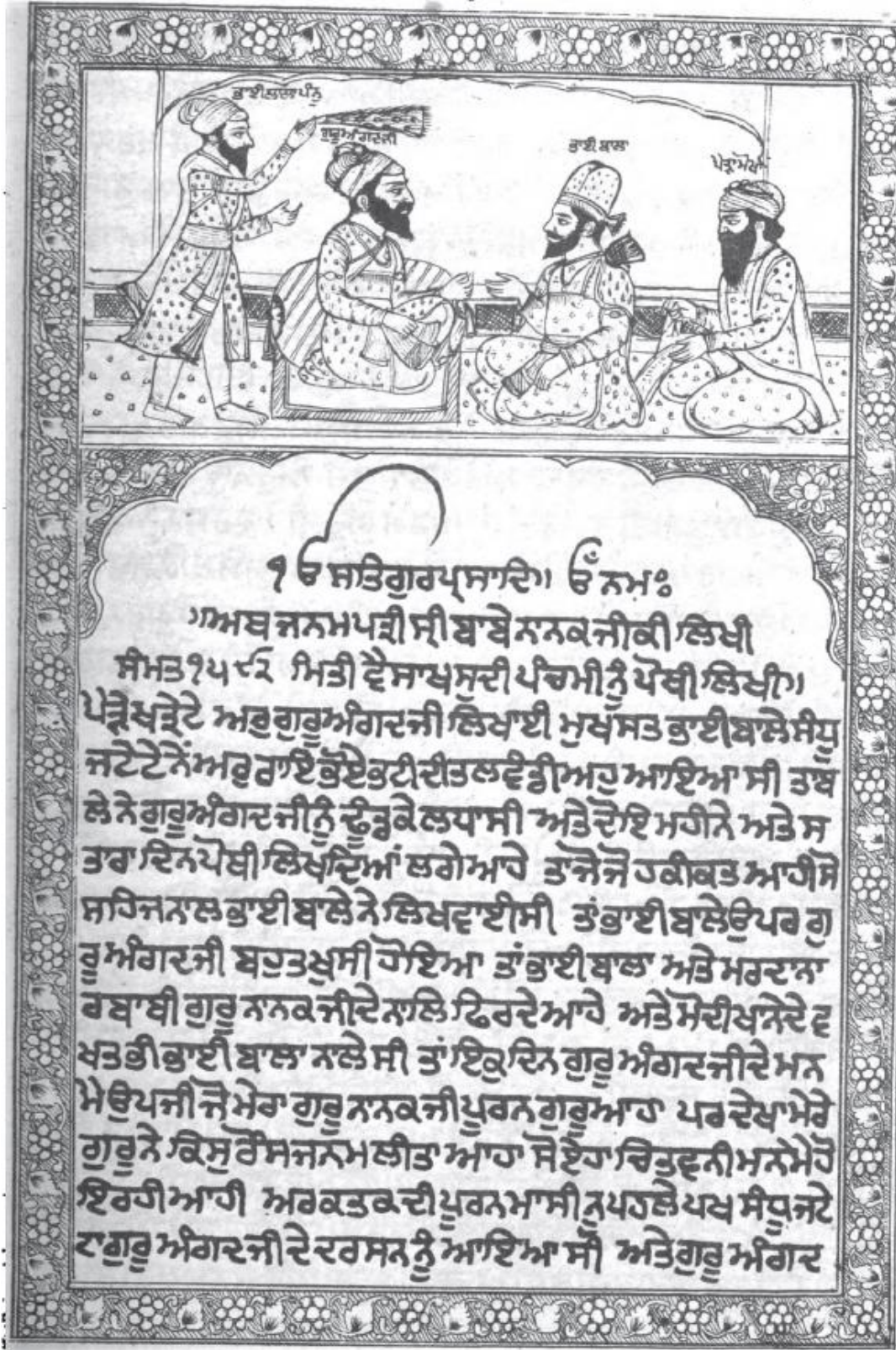**Figure 3.3 Folio 1a Ms. Panj B41 showing, "Janampatrī Bābe Nānak jī kī"**

Figure 3.4 Pairha Mokha Lithograph 1871 Showing, "Janampatrī Bābe kī"

Figure 3.5 Folio 1b of Ms. Panj. B6 showing, "sākhī srī babe nānak jī kī"

In a footnote, Trumpp translates *janamsākhī* to mean "evidence of story of the birth (or life) of a person" by replacing *patrī* with *sākhī* in the term *janampatrī* and then hyphenating the term: *janam-sākhī*.[39] In this translation, Trumpp neglects to note that the B6 manuscript does not use either term, instead announcing itself as a *sākhī* of Bābā Nānak, or *sākhī srī bābe nānak jī kī* (again, see Figure 3.5 above). Unlike Trumpp's claim that *janamsākhī* and *janampatrī* are interchangeable terms, the B6 avoids the use of the term *janampatrī* and does not narrate the episode that relates Nānak's naming to an astrological forecast or prophecy.

Trumpp's commentary regarding the differences between *Janam-sākhī of Bābā Nānak (A)* and *Janam-sākhī of Bābā Nānak (B)* establishes the contours of a debate regarding the historical biography of Nānak. By comparing the B6 manuscript with what he had seen in Panjāb, Trumpp claimed that "all external and internal marks" revealed that it belonged to the time of Gurū Arjan or Gurū Hargobind. Its sobriety, the presence of lexical elements in use during Gurū Arjan's lifetime, and a reduction of miraculous or fantastic stories allow Trumpp to conclude:

> We are enabled now, by the discovery of this old Janam-sākhī, which is now-a-days, as it appears, quite unknown to the Sikhs themselves, to distinguish the older tradition regarding Nānak from the later one, and to fix, with some degree of verisimility, the real facts of his life.

Here, Trumpp repeatedly underscores the age of the B6 by referring to it as "this old Janam-sākhī," and later as "the oldest source as to the life of Nānak."[40] In doing so, he underscores the uniqueness of this unknown source by presenting it as the best approximation of a historically accurate biography of Nānak. The phrase "this old Janam-sākhī" gets back-translated into

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[39] In the footnote 1 in the "Introductory Essays" Trumpp writes "ਜਨਮਪਤਰੀ, literally a leaf of paper, on which the birth of a child, the year, the lunar date, and the configuration of the planets at the moment of birth, are set down. Usually a horoscope, founded on those circumstances, is added. The Janam-patrī is drawn up by the family Brahman, and serves in India as a birth-certificate. ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ signifies evidence of the birth (or life) of a person. The words are frequently interchanged, though Janam-sākhī usually implies *episode or story* of the life of a person." See ibid.

[40] Such phraseology are used throughout Trumpp's introductory remarks. Ibid. pp. v-vii

Panjābi as *Purātan Janam-sākhī* and comes to signify an earlier lost tradition that included an accurate biography of Nānak. In short, the relative historical accuracy and age of the manuscript become psychologized to suggest that its author represented a more authentic Sikh tradition through it.[41]

Trumpp also uses the authenticity and accuracy of the old janamsākhī to portray more contemporary manuscripts as doubtful or corrupt; he describes later texts as full of embellishment and invention, especially regarding Nānak's period of travels. Trumpp particularly attributes the difference in travel accounts to the inclusion of Bhāī Bālā Sandhū as the narrator:

> This proves sufficiently, either that very little was known about them [Nānak's travels] or that very little could be said about them, as the old Janam-sākhī testifies. The later tradition, which pretends to have a knowledge of all the details of the life of Nānak, was therefore compelled to put forth a voucher for its sundry tales and stories. Bhāī Bālā, who is said to have been the constant companion of Nānak and a sort of mentor to him, as he appears now in the current Janam-sākhī, it would be quite incomprehensible, why never a single allusion should have been made to him in the old tradition.[42]

The authenticity of the "old janamsākhī," for which there is no concrete date, derives authority through Trumpp's aspersion of doubt upon the authenticity of the more common Bālā janamsākhī. He assumes that the additional narratives are spurious and the details provided false, suggesting even that Bālā may not have been a companion of Nānak, given that the old Janamsākhī makes no mention of him. Trumpp, therefore, delegitimizes the more common and readily available accounts of Nānak.

The interest Trumpp's translation garnered from Sikh reformers led to translating the phrase "life of Nānak" from English back to Panjābī as they began searching for more

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[41] For a description of the tendency to examine religious movements through psychohistorical assumptions and archetypal notions religious identity see, Harjot Singh Oberoi, "The 'New' Old Trope: The Application of Pyschohistory in the Study of Socio-Religious Movements in Colonial India," *Studies in History* 2, no. 2 (1986). pp. 255-273

[42] Trumpp. p. v

manuscripts. A petition for shipping the BL Mss. Panjābi B6 manuscript back to Panjab was granted by the Lieutenant Governor of Panjāb in 1883. The reformers who examined this manuscript quickly adopted the notion the janamsākhī were historical biographies of Nānak's life.[43] The manuscript arrived in autumn, Singh Sabhā reformists examined it at Lahore and Amritsar; eventually, permission was granted to create a zincograph, which was completed by 1885 under the title *Janam Sākhī or the Biography of Gurū Nānak, Founder of the Sikh Religion*.[44] Professor Gurmukh Singh of Oriental College Lahore spearheaded a search for other "old" manuscripts matching the B6 in style and content. This search led to the discovery of several manuscripts including one for sale in the bazaar at Hāfizābād, which was copied using funding from M.A. Macauliffe -the second person to translate the Ādi Granth into English. None of the manuscripts of the Purātan that Gurmukh Singh mentioned viewing has surfaced.

M.A. Macauliffe with assistance from Gurmukh Singh prepared a lithographed edition of the Hāfizābād janamsākhī manuscript was in late 1885. These edits consisted largely of "modernizing" the script by separating the words and including English punctuation marks like

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[43] For instance in the 1920s, Bhāī Vīr Singh defines the janamsākhī in the preface to his Purātan edition as, "ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਥਯਾ ਨੂੰ 'ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ' ਆਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕਦੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਗਈ, ਇਸ ਦਾ ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਠੀਕ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗਾ।" This says that accounts of the life of *srī gurū nānak dev jī* are called *janamsākhī*. He goes on in the next sentence to reflect the encroachment of historical thinking by stating that the date of the earliest accounts has not yet been determined. Approximately four decades early, in 1885 -eight years after Trumpp's translation – Gurmukh Singh's introductory essay for the lithographed copy of the Hafizābād manuscript portrays Nānak as a rationalist and religious reformer, stating that it is necessary in Gurmukh Singh time period to know the significance of such reformist Gurūs. Such knowledge (*vidyā*) is enlightening and reduces the darkness of ignorance (*avidyā*). He then defines the janamsākhi as a portrait of the life of *srī gurū jī*, "ਸੋ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਚਰਿਤ੍ਰ ਦਾ ਨਾਉ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ ਹੈ।"

Gurmukh Singh recognizes the variety in janamsākhi accounts while claiming that there can only be one historical biography for Nānak. See M. Macauliffe, ed. *The Most Ancient Biography of Baba Nanak, the Founder of the Sikh Religion, Janam Sakhi Babe Nanak Ji Ki* (Rawalpindi: Gulshan Panjab Press, 1885); Bhai Vir Singh, *Hun Tak Milian Vichon Sabh Ton Puratan Janam-Sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji* (Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 1926).

[44] Survey of India, "Janam Sakhi or the Biography of Guru Nanak, Founder of the Sikh Tradition," in *South Asia printed books and periodical*, ed. British Library (Dera Dun1885). This is housed at the British Library under shelf-mark, M. Darrol Bryant and Christopher Lamb, eds., *Religious Conversion* (London: Cassell, 1999). While the request for this edition was being approved the Singh Sabha of Lahore had transcribed a copy. The zincograph is housed at the British Library under shelf-mark Devin Deweese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tukles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, ed. Kees W. Bolle, Hermeneutics: Studies in the History of Religions (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

commas, question marks, and quotation marks. The lithograph was entitled *Janam Sākhī Bābe Nānak kī: the Most Ancient Biography of Bābā Nānak, the founder of the Sikh Religion*.[45] In the opening essay to this edition, Gurmukh Singh gives an early definition of the janamsākhī as a portrait of Nānak's life (*jīvan carittra*). He states that the janamsākhīs were thought to comprise a single tradition—a reference to the popular Bālā print recensions—but that in fact there are many different versions. Gurmukh Singh then goes on to provide the first list of extant manuscripts of janamsākhīs—a significant example of an attempt to name and categorize the Sikh archive. He enumerates ten distinct recensions, expanding the list of different recensions beyond the two distinct manuscripts Trumpp used.[46]

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[45] Macauliffe.
[46] The list is important in including a "*Lahorevālī*" recension dated to 1790; Ānandghan Ūdāsī's personal janamsākhī; *Sākhī Bhāī Manī Singh*; a Hindālī janamsākhī; and *Nānak Candrodya* by Gangā Rām Pandit. None of these find a direct equivalent in the present-day archive, but reflect an array of individuals creating janamsākhī texts.

Figure 3.6 Gurmukh Singh's list of extant janamsākhī manuscripts, from *Janam Sākhī Bābe Nānak kī: the Most Ancient Biography of Bābā Nānak, the founder of the Sikh Religion*, edited by M.A. Macauliffe (1885) - page 1

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ਸਿਖ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਪਰ ਮਸਹੂਰ ਹੈ, ਚਾਹੇ ਬਨਾਈ
ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਹੈ; ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਕੀ ਭਾਸਾ
ਅੱਜ ਕੱਲ ਕੀ ਹੈ. ਅਤੇ ਜੋ ਕਰ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ
ਸਿਖ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਸਾਖੀ ਬਨਾਈ ਹੈ, ਤੋ ਅਬ ਵੋਹ
ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਤੀ.

੭ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ.

੮ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਾਧੂ ਕੀ ਬਨਾਈ ਹੋਈ.

੯ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਵਾਲੀ; ਏਹ ਸਾਖੀ ਸੰਮਤ ੧੧੪੦
ਵਿਚ ਬਨਾਈ ਗਈ.

੧੦ ਵਲਾਇਤ ਵਾਲੀ.

ਇਨਾਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋ ਵਲਾਇਤ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਖੀ
ਪੁਰਾਨੀ ਹੈ. ਵਲਾਇਤ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਕਾ ਇਸ ਤਰਾਂ
ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਹੈ. ਇਸ ਈਸਵੀ ਉੱਨੀਸਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰ-
ਰੰਭ ਵਿਚ ਰੇਲਬੂਕ ਸਾਹਬ ਨੂੰ ਏਹ ਸਾਖੀ ਹੱਥ ਆ
ਗਈ. ਜਿਨ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਦਫ਼ਤ ਹਿੰਦ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਥ-
ਾਂ ਤੇਰਾਂ ਬਰਸਾਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ, ਜਦ ਟ੍ਰੰਪ ਸਾਹਬ ਇੱਕ
ਜਰਮਨ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਨੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਬ ਜੀ ਕੇ
ਰੰਗੋ ਕਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜੀ ਭਾਸਾ ਵਿਚ ਬਨਾ ਕਰ

Figure 3.7 Gurmukh Singh's list of extant janamsākhī manuscripts, from *Janam Sākhī Bābe Nānak kī: the Most Ancient Biography of Bābā Nānak, the founder of the Sikh Religion*, edited by M.A. Macauliffe (1885) - page 2

The lithographed edition is known as the *Hāfizābādvālī*; grouped with the B6 manuscript, it served to strengthen claims for an authentic biography of Nānak. In 1926, Bhāī Vīr Singh created an edited volume using both lithographs and the zincograph, entitling it *Hun tak milīān vichon sab ton Purātan Janamsākhī Sri Gurū Nānak Dev Jī* ("The Oldest Janamsākhī of Sri Gurū Nānak Dev Ji Yet Compiled").[47] Beginning with a note on the B6, and ending with Bhāī Vīr Singh virtually translating Macauliffe's title into Panjābi, the group of manuscripts associated with the B6 and the Hāfizābād manuscripts came to be definitively known as the Purātan Janamsākhīs.[48]

Sikh reformers sought to contest Trumpp's disparaging claims about Sikhism's return to the Hindu-fold. One way to differentiate Sikhism from Hinduism was by trying to recovering an authentic and unique tradition using the B6 manuscript.[49] They assumed that the original janamsākhī would recount the historical significance and uniqueness of Nānak by portraying him as the founder of a new religion. The shadow of Trumpp's remarks about the Bālā tradition ensured that it entered academic discourse as an inauthentic version of Nānak's biography, creating a polarizing node in attempts to reclaim the Sikh tradition between exponents of

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[47] Singh, *Hun Tak Milian Vichon Sabh Ton Puratan Janam-Sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.*

[48] The Purātan, 'older/ancient/original', tradition takes its name as a rival more authentic recension of the janamsākhī that came to be seen as a challenger to the popularity of the Bālā janamsākhī in the twentieth century. However, McLeod notes that term Purātan lends itself to the misnomer that this Purātan janamsākhī is the singular original text. McLeod claims that this misnomer is partly due to the published text, *Purātan Janamsākhī*, by Bhāī Vīr Singh which facilitates the idea of a single original (*ur-text*) because it uses janamsākhī in the singular as opposed to the plural, *janamsākhīan*. There are three extant manuscripts from this tradition, none of which are dated; these are, *The Colebrooke Janamsākhī*, *The Hafizabad Janamsākhī,* and the lesser known *Prāchīn Janamsākhī*. A private collector named, Seva Singh Sevak, of Tarn Taran near Amritsar owns the *Prachin Janamsākhī*. McLeod relates that this manuscript is likely of a later date as it is significantly expanded in comparison to the other two known manuscripts. It contains a variant version of the Mecca *sākhī*, as well as adding additional material after the conclusion of the Purātan sequence of *sākhī*s by drawing largely from the Miharban tradition and also to a lesser degree from the Bālā tradition. There are also a small number of *sākhī*s that are unique to the *Prachin Janamsākhī*. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. pp.23-27

[49] Harjot Singh Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Nānak's teachings and modern "ecumene-reformers."[50] The name "Bālā" gets applied to the

Pairā Mokhā compilation of *sākhī*s because the very existence of an individual named Bhāī Bālā

Sandhū is questioned by Karam Singh a decade before Bhāī Vīr Singh's edited janamsākhī.[51]

The Purātan and Bālā traditions signify important poles in the manuscript traditions, making

them good candidates for detailed archival and textual engagement. However, to incorporate a

greater amount of the variations within each of these versions, it is useful to avoid the notion of a

singular tradition that predates the incursion of illegitimate differences.[52]

Mohan Singh, a junior professor at Lahore College, continued Gurmukh Singh's work of

cataloging and collecting manuscripts. Mohan Singh had found another manuscript he thought

was distinct. This manuscript he called *Ādi Sākhī*, or "The first *sākhī*"; its date of completion was

said to be 1701AD (S. 1758). He was working on making a copy of it before 1947 but was

unable to complete it before being forced to flee Lahore during Partition. In 1969, he returned to

Lahore to recover the manuscripts, but the manuscripts could not be located.[53] The inability to

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[50] Janamsākhī with Bhāī Bālā are the most numerous and internally diverse making the difficult to reconcile as a single entity despite continued attempts. There are without question the greatest number of manuscripts and print editions available of the Bālā Janamsākhīs. McLeod distinguishes Recension B from Recension A manuscripts of the Bālā tradition by Recension B in which the narrative about the death of Nānak includes a question about funerary rights. This tradition is further subdivided based on how individual recensions narrate the events surrounding the death of Nānak. Where, Recension B labels texts which include the contest over Nānak's body between Muslims and Hindus in regard to funerary rites. Recension A accounts omit this debate. In one of the most comprehensive manuscript catalogues in East Panjāb, Shamsher Singh Ashok identifies twenty-two recensions of the Bālā tradition and McLeod numerates an additional seven manuscripts that are located outside of Panjāb. Shamsher Singh Ashok, *Panjabi Hatthalikhatam Di Suci* (Patiala: Bhasha Wibhaga Punjab, 1963); McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*.
[51] Karam Singh Historian, *Kattak Ki Visakh* (Ludhiana: Lahore Bookshop, 1979; repr., 1932, 1913).
[52] For scholarly attempts to remove these impurities see McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*; Harbans Singh, *Guru Nanak and Origins of the Sikh Faith* (Bombay; New York: Asia Pub. House, 1969); Kirpal Singh, *Janamsakhi Parampara* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1969); Trilochan Singh, *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism; a Biography* (Delhi: Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1969).
[53] Dr. Mohan Singh Diwānā, who succeeded Gurmukh Singh at Lahore College had discovered a manuscript containing only thirty sākhīs. He believed this to be a different recension from both the Purātan and the Bālā. He named this manuscript the Ādi Sākhī. He did not have time to make a complete copy of the manuscript before partition in 1947. Mohan Singh had located both a "life of Nanak", dated 1701 A.D. and an exegetical text of Nānak's *japjī sāhib* that was dated to 1711 A.D. Attempts to locate the manuscript in early 1969 were made after Dr. Mohan Singh suggested that these two texts should be brought from Lahore in conjunction with the quincentenary celebrations, but it appears that the manuscript was lost. Professor Piar Singh of Panjābī University discovered four

locate a manuscript that reflected twentieth-century construals of Nānak as the founder of Sikhism, Panjāb-based scholars drew from available manuscripts to reconstruct an authentic biography.[54]

3.3 Consolidating Traditions in the Post-Partition Janamsākhī Archive

Partition's violence disrupted archival work, not only with the forced relocation of the academics themselves but also because of the widespread disappearance of manuscripts within the context of looting and chaos. However, exempting a brief disruption due to Partition in the 1940s and early 1950s, manuscripts continued to be acquired by the Universities in Panjāb or found in private collections through the 1960s and 1970s. Scholars like Shamsher Singh Ashok, Kirpāl Singh, Pīar Singh, and W.H McLeod expanded the archive by searching ardently across the new Indian state for janamsākhīs. These attempts have led to a widening of the definition of the janamsākhī; whereas initially, scholars understood this genre to include texts that pertain to the life of Nānak, after Partition, "janamsākhī" began to denote virtually any text that contained *sākhī*s.

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manuscripts that resemble Mohan Singh's description of the *Ādi Sākhī* -limiting the search to manuscripts that contained the same number of sākhīs as the manuscript Mohan Singh saw in Lahore. Panjābī University, Patiala had the main manuscript used to prepare the critical edition, PUL 4141. Two other manuscripts were also found in Patiala, at the Motī Bāgh Palace and the Central Public Library (CPL mss. no. 495). The last manuscript used was in Shamsher Singh Ashok's personal collection. None of these manuscripts contain the same 30 sākhīs as the recension Mohan Singh found. Shamsher Singh's manuscript and CPL mss. no. 495 are collections [ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿ]; Shamsher Singh has most of the sākhīs but they have internal variations compared to PUL 4141 and CPL mss. no. 495 has twenty out of the thirty listed by Mohan Singh. Piar Singh published a critical edition in 1969 using these manuscripts. Although this edited version is referred to as *Ādi Sākhī*, Piar Singh retains mention of a Brahman who has signed the PUL 4141 manuscript, "Shibhu Nāth Brahmaṇ" [ਸ਼ਿਭੁ ਨਾਥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ], which Piar Singh transliterates as "Shambhu Nāth Brahmaṇ" [ਸੰਭੁ ਨਾਥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ]. PUL 4141 is also dated six month later than the manuscript Mohan Singh discovered. See McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. p.31 and Piar Singh, ed. *Shambhu Natha Wali Janamapatri Babe Nanaka Ji Ki; Prasidh Nam, Adi Sakhian* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 1969). pp. VIX - LII
[54] See Introductory chapter of dissertation for examples.

Scholars based in Panjāb and writing in Panjābī continued to think of the janamsākhī archive to represent a single tradition (*janamsākhī paramparā*) composed of diverse manuscripts; though these scholars recognized the Bālā and the Purātan as two branches, they nevertheless approached the tradition holistically.[55] However, the developing hagiographic approach to the janamsākhī divided the archive into eight distinct traditions; scholars created manuscript subcategories to categorize the growing number of janamsākhī manuscripts in the archive. These subcategories gave the appearance that janamsākhī archive well represented and contains a significant degree of difference. One of the most prominent scholars in the development of this approach, W.H. McLeod, claimed that most extant manuscripts "fall into one of a small number of recognizable traditions,"[56] and used these traditions to tautologically create a structure for the texts according to their aspects.

For instance, McLeod introduces a technical distinction between *sākhī* and anecdote—terms which were used synonymously. In McLeod's work, "*sākhī*" becomes a capacious demarcation connoting a narrative that has one or more anecdotes, or incidents. Ultimately,

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[55] Although it is never explicitly stated, scholars writing in Panjābī use the singular *paramparā* to refer to all extant janamsakhi manuscripts. Some go further and try to represent the archive more closely by using the self-references contained within individual manuscripts. For instance, Kohli attempts to disaggregate misperceptions of the janamsākhī archive by citing the Meharbān janamsākhī as separate books [*pothīs*] by separate authors: (1) *sacc kaṇḍ pothī* patronized by Manohar dās Meharbān Sodhī, son of Guru Arjan's elder brother Prithī Cand, and written by Kesho Dās Paṇḍit; (2) *hari jī pothī* patronized by the son of Meharbān, Harijī Sodhī, and written by Keshav Dās. This *pothī* focuses on discussions (*gosṭīs*) held at Kartārpur or on the banks of the river Rāvī; (3) *caturbhujj pothī* partronized by Caturbhujj Sodhī, another of Meharbān's sons, and written by Keshav Dās Paṇḍit. He also uses refers to *janamsākhī paiṛā mokhā* instead of the Bāla tradition. Lastly, he includes the "apocryphal" *prāṇ sanglī* texts as a janamsākhī describing Nānak's trip to "singhlādīp" alongside Guru Angad. This text is thought to be a yogic text, but Kohli refers to it as representing the school of breath, or soul [prāṇ dā silsilāh]. Piar Singh, Kirpal Singh, Sabara all represent the various janamsākhī recensions using the singular *paramparā* and not *paramparāvān*, which the phrase janamsākhī traditions used in *Early Sikh Tradition suggests*. See Introduction in Kohli, *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala*.

[56] McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. p.15

however, the individual anecdotes within the *sākhī* function as the organizing principles that allow readers to understand the Sikh community via the *sākhī* as a whole.[57]

Within this system, however, McLeod destabilizes the *sākhī* as an organizing principle in favor of further distinctions between "constituents" and "forms." Constituents are the elements within *sākhī*s that draw upon extant paradigms—the pre-existing cultural wealth that authors drew upon to contribute to growing and evolving the janamsākhī to meet community needs.[58] The four constituents are given in order of prominence here:

Table 3.1 The Four Constituents of a Janamsākhī from *Early Sikh Tradition*

Received Tradition	Contributing the "*Wandersagen*" elements. Includes borrowing from Purānic epics, the Ramāyana; Mahābhārta; Yoga-vasista; Nath Legends; Sufi tazkiras and malfuzāt; Buddhist Jātaka Tales
Compositions by Nānak	Consisting of sabds from the *SGGS* by Nana and his successors.
Received Ascetic Ideals	Continuance of "ancient and tenacious" belief in the supreme merit of renunciation and asceticism that Nānak opposed in his compositions.
Memory of Authentic Incidents from Nānak's Life	Oral anecdotes about Nānak that began to circulate amongst people who had contact with him during his travels as well as disciples who lived with him at Kartarpur.

An author's choice of constituent elements was predetermined by his primary purpose for writing because these elements ultimately lent *sākhī*s "their chief importance."[59]

For McLeod, janamsākhī provided a permanent guru-presence, substituting the historical person "Nānak" with a representative persona for regular *darsan*. *Darsan*, or envisioning,

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[57] "As one would expect, the fact that the janam-sākhīs evolved within a rising religious society has left a dominant impress upon the material which they offer…predictably we are treated to lengthy discourses on the way of salvation. W.H. McLeod, "The Janam-Sakhis," in *The Evolution of the Sikh Community: Five Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). p.30
[58] The definition of each constituent is drawn from the sixth chapter of *EST*, "Constituents of the Janam-sākhīs. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. pp. 63-81
[59] Ibid. p.63

sustains and directs the community's belief in Nānak as savior. A janamsākhī's function then measures the reception of its purpose, assessed by the role janamsākhīs play after Nānak's death, and quantifiable via the number of manuscripts that represent any specific tradition. Lastly, a janamsākhī's role represents a severing of soteriology from salvation via the salvific Nānak myth (see Chapter 4), not the practice or teachings of Nānak as a historical person.

The purpose, function, and role of the janamsākhī percolate through McLeod's definition of forms as well. The janamsākhī forms are "coherent statements of their [the author's] interpretations agreeable to their intended audiences."[60] McLeod outlines five janamsākhī forms:

Table 3.2 The Five Janamsākhī Forms Given in *Early Sikh Tradition*

Narrative Anecdotes	Short encounters providing scope for decisive actions, pointed epigrams, and evidence of divine approval. There are four kinds of narrative anecdotes: (a) moralistic anecdotes (b) chimeric fairytales (c) devotional legends (d) aetiological legends
Narrative Discourses	Imaginative narratives directly based upon Nānak's compositions inserted within a contrived conversation or discourse
Didactic Discourses	A narrative discourse with the inclusion of lengthy exegetical supplements
Heterodox Discourses	A narrative discourse with a marked divergence from the intent of Nānak's teachings
Codes of Discipline	A narrative discourse with rudimentary examples of disciplinary codes which eventually are embellished in Rahitnamahs

Through the janamsākhī forms, the reader's shared belief in Nānak as savior limits the author's mimetic activity; within this system, the sole concern of janamsākhī literature consists in its

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[60] Ibid. p.82. The form bears some similarity to Bhadour's account of the individuality of the author and/or interpreter of the janamsākhī, but here McLeod introduces the constraint of audience reception to the texts while denying that readers gained or deployed any learning or knowledge, instead focusing on the structure of mimesis as the sole method of readerly engagement with the janamsākhī.

reflection of the salvific Nānak myth for its readers. Janamsākhī forms work alongside the constituent elements to form the representational structure within which the salvific myth conducts its functional utility. These forms inextricably link the janamsākhī to a salvific myth theorized as pervading all *sākhīs*. McLeod suggests that unearthing this topography helps us understand how the Sikh community develops through the referential structure of the janamsākhī—where the eternal referent is communal and individual identity. This approach also delimits comparisons of ideas, motifs, and miraculous element within the confines of this myth.

During the decade separating *GNSR* and *EST*, McLeod worked extensively on developing the above structure for understanding the janamsākhī.[61] During this period scholars in Panjāb were also publishing critical editions of janamsākhīs.[62] In *GNSR*, McLeod first introduces the idea of separate janamsākhī manuscript traditions alongside his assertions of

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[61] He also translated a unknown janamsākhī, BL Mss. Panjābi B40, into English. This manuscript is unique in that its illustrations are largely intact. There is a clear date and author provided in that colophon. See *The B40 Janam-Sakhi* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1980).

[62] The creation of edited volumes of janamsākhī manuscripts continues to be pursued by scholars in Panjāb. However, interest in these editions and the janamsākhī archive abated after McLeod's early monograph with only a few papers being published that follow the trajectory of McLeod's arguments. Kohli, *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala*; Bhāī Bālā, Surindar Singh Kohli, and Siṅgha Jagajīta, *Janamasākhī Bhāī Bālā* (Caṇḍīgaṛha: Pabalīkeshana Biuro, Pañjāba Yūnīwarasiṭī, 1990); Singh, *Guru Nanak and Origins of the Sikh Faith*; Singh, *Janamsakhi Parampara*; Singh; Parkash Singh, ed. *Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji*, vol. II (Amritsar: Khalsa College, 1969); Piar Singh, "Janamsakhian Ate Avdan Parampara," in *Guru Nanaka Sanbandhi Tinna Khoja Pattara*, ed. Annonymous (Patiala: Punjab University, 1970); *Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji [Mul Path India Office (London) Di Hath-Likhat Panj. B40 Ton India Office Library Ate Records De Director Di Agiya Nal Chapiya Gaiya]* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak University, 1974); Singh, *Guru Nanak: Founder of Sikhism; a Biography*. Studies and critically edited manuscripts published after *EST* include Jaswindar Kaur, *Janamasākhī Sāhita: Caritara Niramāṇa Jugat* (Paṭiālā: Amarajīta Sāhita Prakāshana, 2006); Jagajita Singha Khanpuri, *Sakhiam Da Sacca Te Wikasa* (Delhi: Wellwish Publications, 1994); Jagajit Singh Khanpuri, *Pran Sangli* (Patiala: Publication Bureau Punjabi University, 1999); Jasabīr Singh Sābara, *Giāna Ratanāwalī: Janamasākhī Srī Gurū Nānaka Dewa Jī: Sampādana Ate Pāṭha-Ālocana* (Amritsar: Gurū Nānaka Adhiaina Wibhāga, Gurū Nānaka Dewa Yūnīwarasiṭī, 1993); Sabinderjit Singh Sagar, "A Study of Janamsakhi Scholarship," *Journal of Sikh History* IV, no. 2 (1987); "An Analytical Study of Janamsakhi Genre," in *Guru Nanak and His Teachings*, ed. Madanjit Kaur (Amritsar: Departement of Guru Nanak Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, 1989); *Janamsakhi: Samwada Te Mulankana* (Amritsar: Waris Shah Foundation, 2001); Gursharanjit Singh, ed. *Ldp-194 Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji* (Amritsar: Gur Chetna Prakashak, 1995); Sant Das Chibar and Gurdev Singh ed., *Janamsakhi Sri Gur Nanak Shah Ki* (Patiala: Publication Bureau Panjabi University, 1985).

breaking from the biographic perspective. Ten years later, with the publication of *EST*, McLeod revised and expanded these traditions from four to eight (see Table 3.3). However, McLeod's contemporaries working on the janamsākhīs continued to see it as one tradition (*paramparā*).

Table 3.3: List of Janamsākhī Traditions used by McLeod in *GNSR* and *EST*

GNSR (1968)	*EST (1980)*
Purātan Janamsākhīs	Purātan Janamsākhīs
Bālā Janamsākhīs	Ādi Sākhīs
Miharbān Tradition	Bālā Janamsākhīs
Gyān Ratnāvalī	Miharbān Tradition
	Gyān Ratnāvalī
	Mahimā Prakāsh
	Individual Janamsākhīs
	Miscellaneous Related Works

Panjāb-based scholar Pīār Singh entered into a heated scholarly debate with McLeod regarding whether the *Ādi Sākhī*s, a cluster of manuscripts for which Pīār Singh prepared a critical edition, were a unique tradition. Given that differ slightly from the *BL Mss Panjābi B6* janamsākhī, Singh maintained that the *Ādi Sākhī* is a Purātan janamsākhī. A similar debate occurred regarding the B40 and LDP-194, where Singh maintained that the very minute differences between the two did not merit separating them from the Purātan set of manuscripts.[63]

A critical edition of the Bālā Janamsākhī also resists grouping into unique manuscript traditions. Surinder Singh Kohlī goes further than many scholars by disaggregating the Miharbān Janamsākhī, seeing it as three distinct janamsākhīs: *sacc khand pothī, hari jī pothī,*

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[63] These arguments can be found in the introduction to their respective critical editions of the janamsākhī. McLeod, *The B40 Janam-Sakhi*; Singh, *Shambhu Natha Wali Janamapatri Babe Nanaka Ji Ki; Prasidh Nam, Adi Sakhian*; *Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji [Mul Path India Office (London) Di Hath-Likhat Panj. B40 Ton India Office Library Ate Records De Director Di Agiya Nal Chapiya Gaiya]*. A critical edition of the LDP-194 manuscript was published in the mid-1990s. As the manuscript is damaged and incomplete the editor makes productive use of Purātan sources to complete some of the illegible parts of the manuscript. Gursharanjit Singh claims that the simplicity of the prose, the lack of miracles, and relative brevity make the LDP-194 a good candidate for an early source despite it being undated. This suggestion is based on the LDP-194's brevity and "factual" narration of events. See Singh.

and *caturbhuj pothī*.[64] McLeod also relies to a large extent upon manuscripts housed outside of

Panjāb for his expanded schematic (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Manuscripts from *EST* used to build Janamsākhī Traditions

Janamsākhī Tradition	Extant Manuscripts		Date	
Purātan Janamsākhīs	(a)	BL Mss. Panjābi B6	(a)	undated
	(b)	Hafizabādwālī	(b)	undated
	(c)	Pracīn Janamsākhīs	(c)	undated
Ādi Sākhīs	(a)	SRL Ms No. S462	(a)	undated
	(b)	MBPL (no Shelfmark)	(b)	S. 1758/1701 A.D.
	(c)	SSAL (no Shelfmark)	(c)	undated
	(d)	CPL, Patiālā Ms. 495	(d)	S. 1813/1756 A.D.
Bālā Janamsākhīs				
Recension A	(a)	PNKHQ	(a)	S. 1715/1658 A.D.
	(b)	BL Mss. Panjābī 41	(b)	S.1832/1775 A.D.
	(c)	BL Or. 2754	(c)	undated
Recension B	(a)	SOAS Ms. 104975	(a)	S.1912/1855 A.D.
	(b)	Cambridge Add. 921	(b)	S.1922/1865 A.D.
Miharbān Tradition	(a)	SHR 427	(a)	S. 1885/1828 A.D.
	(b)	SHR 2190	(b)	unspecified
Gyān Ratnāvalī	(a)	SHR 2300C	(a)	S. 1892/1834 A.D.
	(b)	SHR 1440		

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[64] Kirpal Singh found a compendium associated with the Miharbaniyya schismatic sect in the 1960s. It is unique in providing elaborate details from the life of Gurū Nānak which are not available in other manuscripts. Furthermore, the style is interesting in that it includes the author's own poetry as a refrain ending each *sākhī* episode as well as it provides more commentary (*sabd artha*) than is typical in other manuscripts. This compendium refers to there the existence of six volumes of pothis of which only three are known. However, each volume (*pothī*) is a self-contained version of a Nānak's life narrative, none use the term janamsākhī preferring *pothī* and are distinguished more by differences in commentary. Kohli chooses to refer to the *pothīs* individually and reverts to the actual title for the Bālā manuscripts by calling them *Janam-patrī Pairhe Mokhā*. Lastly, while enumerating the Ādi Sakhi, he goes on to concur with Piar Singh that while it has some elements from the Miharban's Janamsākhī (*sac khand pothi*) and it could be thought of as a bridge between the two, it is a version of the Purātan. The direct quote is as follows: "ਆਦਿ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਮਿਹਰਬਾਨ ਰਚਿਤ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ ਅਤੇ 'ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ' ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਕਾਰਲੀ ਕੜੀ ਕਹੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਕਸਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। 'ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ' ਅਤੇ ਆਦਿ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ੈਲੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ ਗਿਣਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ" (Kohli, 14) Kohlī makes no changes to his manuscript list of *janamsākhī parampara* in the second edition of his critical text published after McLeod's debate with Piar Singh. See Singh, *Janamsakhi Shiri Guru Nanak Dev Ji*; Singh; Kohli, *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala*; Bālā, Kohli, and Jagajīta.

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			(b)	S. 1894/1838 A.D.
Mahimā Prakāsh Vārtak	(a)	BVSL (nsf)	(a)	S. 1798/1741 A.D. or S.1830/1773 A.D.
	(b)	SHR 2308	(b)	1923 A.D.
Kavitā	(a)	LDP 176	(a)	S. 1857/1800 A.D.
	(b)	SHR 2300A		
	(c)	PSAL 792	(b)	unspecified
	(d)	PA 792	(c)	unspecified
	(e)	SRL 1151	(d)	unspecified
	(f)	GPSSC	(e)	unspecified
	(g)	PPLL	(f)	unspecified
			(g)	unspecified
Individual Janamsākhīs	(a)	LDP 194		
	(b)	BL Ms Panj B40		

Why didn't other scholars follow McLeod in either his use of traditions or his incorporation of historiography as a singular optic for historical analysis? As mentioned above, McLeod de-emphasizes the numerous manuscripts in Panjāb in favor of exemplary ones in colonial archives or personal libraries. He, therefore, bases his expansion of the janamsākhī traditions on primary reference to and emphasis on manuscripts outside of Panjāb, with many of the manuscripts used housed in London or Delhi.[65] Access to archives located outside Panjāb as well as the ability to easily view manuscripts raises the question of McLeod's privilege as a *gorā* Western scholar. Many contemporaries working from Panjāb lacked resources or faced bureaucratic delays in accessing such archives; choosing sources that in many ways were beyond the reach of a key set of interlocutors made true dialogue difficult.[66]

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[65] Access to the private recensions are mired by mistrust of intellectuals who historically have viewed what is considered a material relic with skepticism that threatens the social and monetary capital acquired through retaining of relics. McLeod has used an anthropological voice to narrate how his privilege as a *gorā* (fair-skinned person) or *angrez* (British) was able to get him access to resources in Panjāb. See: "Sant in Sikh Usage" in The Sant Tradition. Schomer. pp. 251-279

[66] I am indebited to discussions about the archive with Professor Harbans Singh Dhillon and Mohinder Singh, Director of Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan in Delhī for the insight regarding difficulties and delays many Panjāb scholars faced in accessing archives located in other parts of India. Many scholars used personal funds to travel and

In the fragmentary early Sikh archive there are very few manuscripts with definitive dates, authorship, and location. The presence of multiple dialects and languages within a single manuscript, as well as the propensity for incorporating new material, create difficulties for using linguistic analysis to help provide a concrete date.[67] There is a dearth of knowledge about when, where, or how manuscript janamsākhīs were produced.[68] This gap in our knowledge extends to questions about how and from whom manuscripts were acquired: there is virtually no information regarding the geographical and sacral location of manuscripts before their acquisition by colonial administrators, booksellers, or Panjāb-based scholars. We also do not know how, where, when, or how often manuscripts were used.

The eight janamsākhī traditions are enumerated using a total of twenty-seven manuscripts, only ten of which have conclusive dates delineated in *Early Sikh Tradition*. One manuscript, the *BVSL*, has two different dates, and *SHR 2308* is a copy of *BVSL*, giving a total of twelve dated manuscripts —less than half the original sample size. The earliest dated manuscript McLeod uses is a *Pairhā Mokhā* manuscript from 1658 A.D., housed in a personal collection in Delhi. Almost fifty years separate it from the next dated manuscript, an *Ādi Sākhī* recension at the Motī Bāgh Palace Library, Patiālā. This manuscript has of date of 1701 A.D. Between 1740

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were often tied up in beauracracy for the entire length of their sojourn. This made it difficult to view any manuscript without successive and expensive trips to these archives.

[67] These aspects in the B40 are part of why McLeod retains the B40's uniqueness by placing it as an "independent source." The B40 also is unique because there is a definitive date of completion, author, and location given in the manuscript. It is also one of the few remaining manuscripts where the miniature paintings that were created as part of the manuscript remain intact. Since the colonial period removing the miniatures and selling them separately to collectors has been a common practice leading to the destruction of many illustrated janamsākhī manuscripts. See McLeod, *The B40 Janam-Sakhi*; *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*.

[68] Piar Singh and McLeod also entered a debate about the Lahore-Gujranwala area of Panjāb being a site for the manuscript production. *The B40 Janam-Sakhi*; Singh, *Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji [Mul Path India Office (London) Di Hath-Likhat Panj. B40 Ton India Office Library Ate Records De Director Di Agiya Nal Chapiya Gaiya]*.

and 1799, there are three manuscripts—one *Ādi Sākhī*, one *Pairhā Mokhā*, and a copy of the

Mahihmā Prakās Vārtak—none from the same "tradition."

There are six manuscripts dated within the nineteenth century: four from the first half of

the nineteenth century (the two *Giān Ratnāvalī* manuscripts, a *Mahimā Prakās Kavitā*, and an

incomplete three-volume *Miharbān* compendium), and two from the mid-nineteenth century

(both *Pairhā Mokhā* recensions, dated 1855 A.D. and 1865 A.D.). There is nothing conclusive

that we can determine about these manuscripts based upon date. It is noteworthy that about

twenty-two percent of the total sample is written during the nineteenth century, after the rise of

the Khālsā confederation that comprised to the subject of Malcolm's 1812 study. However, even

this percentage does not give a sound empirical conclusion given paucity of data.

McLeod's increased number of traditions in *EST* provides an imaginal framework

through which the movement from one janamsākhī tradition to another serves to realign the

Nānak myth with the community's changing needs regarding cohesion. McLeod describes the

evolution of the janamsākhīs in this manner:

> These [janamsākhīs] had their beginnings in the late sixteenth century, flourished during the
> seventeenth century, then decreased as other concerns increasingly dominated the Panth's
> interest. The decline has, however, never been total. Janam-sākhīs are still extensively read
> today."[69]

This developmental trajectory, however, does not align with the data McLeod presents. The

earliest manuscript mentioned by McLeod is dated to the mid-sixteenth century, with very little

production in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries, follow by heightened production in the

nineteenth-century—coinciding with the establishment of printing presses and the British

annexation of the Lahore Kingdom beginning in the mid-1830s.

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[69] McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. p. 7. Stronger connections between the community
evolution and janamsākhī traditions can be seen in *The Evolution of the Sikh Community: Five Essays* (Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1976); *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*.

The peculiar conjunction of colonial and reformist interests focusing on the idea of Sikh nation or community through Sikh literature and its supposed golden age has antecedents during the nineteenth century. During this period, the community featured a diversity in Sikh identity and a nascent public sphere around the idea of a Panjābi Language Formation.[70] It is difficult at this time to know the provenance of extant manuscripts, preventing any knowledge of the spaces in which manuscripts circulated. In light of the above issues, McLeod's theoretical structure of the evolution of the janamsākhī does not appear to be strongly supported by the manuscript archive. However, McLeod puts forth a sequence of events that does not coincide with his empirical data as a means of consolidating the growing archive of Sikh texts and containing these texts within the now expansive term "janamsākhī."

For instance, Pīār Singh prepared an edited edition of the *Ādi Sākhi* in 1969 using the Motī Bāgh, Patiālā manuscript as a foundation, supplementing the text wherever needed with the Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar version. However, he argued that it was essentially a manuscript along the Purātan pattern.[71] Kirpāl Singh discovered the Miharbān janamsākhīs,

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[70] Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*; Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab*, South Asia across the Disciplines ;2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

[71] These four manuscripts are all located in Indian Panjāb and McLeod lists them as being in the following collections: (1) Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar. MS no. S462; (2) Library of the Maharaja of Patiala in Moti Bagh Palace, Patiala that is dated S. 1758 (1701 A.D.); (3) Private collection of Shamsher Singh Ashok of Amritsar; (4) Central Public Library, Patiala. MS no. 495, completed in S. 1813 (1756 AD). Thus, not only are the Sikh Reference Library and the Lahore copy closest in date, with the Sikh Reference Library having been complete six months earlier, but both contain the same thirty *sākhī* with the order and numbering being identical to the extent that they both overlook a *sākhī* at different places. The Moti Bagh Palace recension also closely mirrors the janamsākhī found in Lahore by Mohan Singh Dewana. The manuscript in the private collection of Ashok Singh has twenty-five of the thirty *sākhī*s found in the Lahore manuscript, and CPL MS no. 495 records the Ādi Sakhi anecdotes but is part of a much larger sequence. The variant readings between these two recensions are indicated in the footnotes of the text using both the Sikh Reference Library and Shamsher Singh Ashok's recensions. Singh, *Shambhu Natha Wali Janamapatri Babe Nanaka Ji Ki; Prasidh Nam, Adi Sakhian*. Mcleod suggests that based on the Ādi Sakhis having a composite *sākhī* sequence and that the author can "fashion a coherent travel itinerary" the early date may be misleading. This also makes it difficult to place the Ādi Sakhis in any reconstructed sequence of the evolution of the janamsākhī genre. McLeod shows this by discussing Piar Singh's suggestion that the Ādi Sakhis predate the Miharbān tradition. McLeod opposes this suggestion by stating that in both traditions the extant manuscript do not reflect the 'original' text that was written down from the received oral memory about Gurū Nānak but are indeed

which was connected to a schismatic group dating back to Gurū Arjan's lifetime. At the same time, McLeod and Pīar Singh together published English and Panjābi critical editions of the B40 janamsākhī.

The growth of the genre continued with the inclusion of works that mention Nānak but focus primarily on other topics, such as Bhāī Santokh Singh's massive compendium, entitled *Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth*, which he presented to fellow intellectuals of his order at Harmandar Sāhib in Amritsar before his death in 1853.[72] Bhāī Vīr Singh edited *Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth* in the twentieth-century, along with a separate volume, *Nānak Prakās*, which shares similarities with his own *Srī Gurū Nānak Camatkār*. Strictly speaking, it is not clear whether *Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth* was a stand-alone volume. Both Bhāī Santokh Singh's and Bhāī Vīr Singh's texts remove problematic passages from the Bālā tradition to preserve its centrality to the tradition. This relation to the Bālā points to the recurring idiosyncrasies in McLeod's selection, however, as these volumes could easily remain within the Bālā set of manuscripts—much like the B40, LDP-194, and *Ādi Sākhī* are part of the Purātan group. While I recognize the ambiguity caused by expanding the genre beyond a strict focus on Nānak —and therefore am sympathetic to the scholars in the post-Partition generation, who were concerned with simultaneously recovering, expanding, consolidating, and categorizing the archive —recognizing *sākhī* as a more general

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reflective of some later point in the evolution of each respective tradition, "on the one hand there can be no doubt that the extant *Miharbān Janam-sākhī* embodies borrowings from the *Ādi Sākhis*, on the other there seems to be little question that the extant *Ādi Sākhis* [*sic.*] includes reciprocal borrowing from the *Miharbān* tradition." McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis*. pp. 31-32

[72] As my oral history interviews showed in the previous chapter, this text is still an important text for traditional exponents today although its contents are expanded. The edited print editions were created in the nineteenth century by traditional exponents. For example Bhāī Santokh Singh created an collection of sākhīs beginning with Nānak and ending with examples of prominent Sikhs that is central to performance of kathā. Santokh Singh, *Sri Gur Pratap Suraj Granth*, ed. Vir Singh, 14 vols. (Jalandhar: Bhasha Vibhag Panjab, 1934).

category (as opposed to creating more specific and exclusionary categories) may assist us in ordering the growing archive.

3.4 Conclusion: Weaving the Threads Anew

In this chapter, I have critically examined the historical development of the Sikh archive, with particular attention to key manuscripts, like the B6 (Purātan) and the B41 (Bālā) janamsākhīs, as they provide the basis for the categories that come to dominate scholarly approaches to this proliferating archive of texts. As I have shown above, the scholarly impulse to contain this expanding archive via the creation of sub-categories for the wide variety of texts reflects the increasing vagueness of the very term "janamsākhī." By generalizing the diversity of texts in the archive—including *janampatrī* texts, *prakās* literature, *cammatkār*, or simply *sākhī*s—to the super-genre of janamsākhī, scholars have blurred important distinctions between texts that provide clues as to possible interpretive strategies.

Rather than viewing these manuscripts with an eye to identifying and categorizing them via recourse to distinct "traditions" on the basis of shared narrative features in the texts, I propose that we see the individual differences between texts as significant moments of meaning-making that we can read in order to access unique interpretations of a form of non-oppositional thinking put forward in the SGGS. For instance, rather than simply noting the presence or non-presence of Bālā Sandhū as a means to effectively grouping texts by certain similarities in the anecdotes presented, we could pay careful attention to the specific variations in the anecdotes in which Bālā appears as a means of approaching varying understandings of *bānī*.

As we saw in the previous chapter with the explanation of *kathā* and the relationship of *sākhī* to *kathā*, I argue that individual *sākhī*s perform important interpretive work that requires

activation through the active transformation of the reader/listener through narrative time. To read the *sākhī*s in this way, we must engage them via an inquiry that takes a careful interpretive stance toward each work, viewing each manuscript as an author-exponent's singular intellectual engagement with *bānī*, rather than as an instance of a repeated and infinitely replicable "tradition." In this sense, we would not necessarily read the B6 as an instance of a "Purātan janamsākhī" or the B41 as an instance of a "Bālā janamsākhī"—rather, we would look to specific narrative elements in the individual *sākhī*s collected into these manuscripts in order to access a form of non-oppositional thinking meant to transform the reader.

I will perform such readings in the final chapter of this dissertation; first, however, I turn to the translation strategies employed by scholars of the janamsākhī tradition to show how their varying methodologies have impacted the existing trajectory of interpretation of the Sikh archive.

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Chapter IV

Translating the Janamsākhī

This chapter examines significant instances of translating janamsākhīs. Early

approaches employed a combination of limited individual engagement with the texts alongside

interlocution with traditional exponents who were familiar with the janamsākhī manuscripts. In

doing so, my inquiry into non-oppositional networks of interpretation turns reading the task of

translation against itself. Most translations sought to provide unfamiliar European readers with

information about the Sikh religion and people. Drawing upon the association of janamsākhī

with performances of *kathā* by exponents of Nānak's teachings, this chapter will consider the

instance of dialogue as one where the exponent assumed that their role was to explain verses

from the Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib through *sākhīs*.

This recognition allows for the colonial engagements to be productively used as

remnants of *kathā* performed by exponents. Secondly, *kathā* is seen as not only an artful

interpretive strategy but is also an act of translation. The native informant's interaction with

colonists moved between registers of language like Persian, and forms of Hinduī but did not

include Panjābī.[1] *Kathā* serves as a sort of translation for the *sabd*s of the SGGS; furthermore, the type of *kathā* that traditional exponents would have utilized to translate ontological *bāṇī* mirrored its ability to speak itself.

To begin, I turn again to John Malcolm's *Sketch of the Sikhs* (1812), which we encountered in the previous chapter.[2] Malcolm's text remains highly influential and generally well regarded as sound scholarship on Sikhs even today; my engagement with this text will show how dialogue with a key native informant pervades this text as an implied translation strategy and methodology for interpretation; reading between the lines of this text to surmise which *sākhī*s this native informant would have told as a form of translative, explanatory *kathā* helps contextualize the conclusions about Sikh dogma, praxis, and belief that Malcolm puts forth in this work.

Ernest Trumpp's translation of the *Ādi Granth* shows how his use of native informants evolved from Malcolm's straightforward process of dialogue to actual commissioning of tertiary texts on Sikh tradition and language (such as lexicographies) that Trumpp expected to find but ultimately could not. Trumpp's commissioning of lexicographies as a means to assert his view of language as inert and therefore infinitely fungible perhaps best encapsulates the gap between his own assumptions about language and textuality (which are the assumptions that we in the Western academy typically share today) and those of the *granthī*s under his employ as informants, scribes, and authors.

In the last two sections, I turn to examine translations of the *Ādi Sākhī's* colophon and

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[1] Colonial administrators were disinterested in the Panjābī language by and large. This unfamiliarity and disease with the language continued after annexation of the Lahore Kingdom. See Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab*, South Asia across the Disciplines ;2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

[2] John Malcolm, "Sketch of the Sikhs," *Asiatic Reseaches,or transactions of the society instituted in Bengal for inquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia* 11 (1812).

the "Vaīn Parvesh" sākhī from Bhāī Vīr Singh's *Puratan Janamsākhī*.[3] Both uses of translation

to define the janamsākhī adopt religious epistemes to render meaning. I return to the sections of

the janamsākhī that the two translations draw up. By looking at a larger section of the text and

translating it again, I attempt to consider other epistemic options within English that can be

productively used to reopen the network of interpretation that is written into the manuscripts.

4.1 Malcolm's Dialogues with a Nirmalā Priest: Translation in *The Sketch of the Sikhs*

European accounts about the Sikhs from the period of Company Rule regularly featured

an implicit reference to *sākhī*s about Nānak gleaned through dialogue with native informants. In

particular, John Malcolm's parsing and interpretation of Sikh texts in *The Sketch of the Sikhs* was

facilitated by a dialogue with a Nirmalā priest in Calcutta and the collected manuscript

translations of his colleague and friend, John Leyden and Henry Colebrooke. The widely

accepted narrative of the accuracy of Malcolm's account is surprising considering that Malcolm

was never admitted into Khālsa territories apart from his role in adjudicating a conflict between

Maratha chiefs and the EIC; furthermore, Malcolm had studied Persian, was familiar with the

dialect of Madras where he was stationed and may have had some ability in Hinduī—but he was

also not familiar with Panjābi or the Gurmukhī script, which makes ascriptions of him having

contributed to the knowledge of the Sikh religion by referencing Sikh texts seems remiss. The

accuracy of *SOS* and its apparent reference to Sikh texts is more likely the product of the

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[3] Bhai Vir Singh, *Puratan Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji* (New Delhi: Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan, 2004); Piar Singh, ed. *Shambhu Natha Wali Janamapatri Babe Nanaka Ji Ki; Prasidh Nam, Adi Sakhian* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 1969).

composite nature of the text, Malcolm's reliance on a network of invested collaborators, and the

dialogic method he used to find out names of source texts.[4]

During a short period in 1808 when Malcolm returned to Calcutta before setting out for

Persia, Colebrooke encouraged him to complete the draft of *SOS*, and this stay may have

facilitated further discussions with his Sikh informant, Ātmā Rām. Indeed, Colebrooke likely

facilitated Malcolm's access to this "Sikh priest" from the Nirmalā order. Malcolm's description

of the Nirmalās suggests their knowledge of English when compared to Dal Khālsa Sikhs;[5] he

states that the priest was thought to be "equally intelligent and communicative, and who spoke of

the religion and ceremonies of his sect with *less restraint than any of his brethren whom I had*

met with in Penjab."[6] The Sikhs of Calcutta were largely a merchant community, and the British

had dealings with prominent members amongst them such as Amīr Chand before the Battle of

Plassey. Thus, Ātmā Rām, having witnessed the British closely, may have been a reluctant

informant known to Colebrooke.[7]

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[4] Kaye remarks how the information in Malcolm's *SOS* was proven to be generally accurate after the Sikh had become subjects of the British and also the anecdotes Malcolm used serve to illustrate the regular intercourse he had with the Sikh during his brief sojourn. John William Kaye, *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B., Late Envoy to Persia, and Governor of Bombay* (London: Smith, Elder, and co.; [etc., etc.], 1856). p. 369

[5] The Nirmalā order was created when Gurū Gobind Singh sent five trusted adherents to masquerade as Brahmins to gain hallowed access to the heart of Brahmanism in Benares just a decade prior to the creation of the Khālsa in 1699. The Nirmalās subsequently entered the fold of the Khālsa and therefore claim direct linkage to both the last Gurū and the Khālsa. Ātmā Rām's interaction with Malcolm likely occurred through conversational Hindustani or Persian facilitated by the presence of a munshī to assist Malcolm with more difficult aspects of the conversation.

[6] emphasis mine. Malcolm. p.198

[7] Some degree of familiarity with the English and their contrivances in Bengal is suggested in *SOS* when Malcolm discusses the Khālsa administration of justice. In a footnote, after giving account of the Khālsa system of adjudicating justice, Malcolm states the following: "A Sikh priest, who has been several years in Calcutta, gave this outline of the administration of justice among his countrymen. He spoke of it with rapture; and insisted, with true patriotic prejudice, on its great superiority over the vexatious system of the English government, which was, he said, tedious, vexatious, and expensive, and advantageous only to clever rogues." Tacitly calling the EIC merchants clever rogues, and expressing his opposition to the English sense of justice not only suggests some familiarity with British thinking but suggests a hostility to such perspectives. This lends support to the possibility that Ātmā Rām was a reluctant interlocutor who had witnessed British methods of attaining dominance of the region. Ibid. pp.258-259

The biographical sections of *SOS* have received little attention given the historiographic predilection for correcting historical account of Sikhism. However, moments where the biography of Nānak or Gobind Singh surface in Malcolm's history reveals an added layer to the earlier dialogic references to *sākhī*s. While *sākhī* anecdotes are found throughout *SOS*, Malcolm translates portions of janamsākhī narratives to describe the life of Gurū Nānak mainly in Section I and draws upon the theme of reconciling antagonism between Hindus and Muslims while describing the tenets of Nānak's doctrine in Section III.[8]

Given the types of anecdotes provided in *SOS* and the vein of interpretation that Malcolm follows, we can see traces of both the B6 manuscript provided by Colebrooke and the B41 manuscript provided by John Leyden (1775-1811), both of which provided opportunities for Malcolm to prompt Ātmā Rām to expand upon Sikh doctrine and history through their probing dialogue.[9] Malcolm could, therefore, go beyond other colonial accounts by incorporating his conversations with Sikhs alongside dialogues with a Sikh intellectual premised upon textual sources. In its incorporation of Leyden's translations of *sākhī*s taken from manuscripts in the seventeenth century and an ongoing dialogue with Ātmā Rām, Malcolm's work reveals a continuing engagement and popularity of janamsākhī and level of engagement with *sākhī* tales expounded during *kathā* by exponents of the tradition. In this section, I turn to the traces of Malcolm's dialogue with Ātmā Rām, from which we gain a fuller picture of the translation strategies underlying the historical ambitions of *Sketch of the Sikhs*.

Section I of *SOS* is a straightforward historical account of the Sikhs; it provides a familiar narrative of the Gurū Period beginning with the most clearly ascertainable aspects of Nānak's

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[8] Ibid. pp. 200-208 and 266-281
[9] See Chapter 3 of this dissertation for a more detailed discussion of how central janamsākhī manuscripts like BL.Mss.Panjābī.B6 and BL.Mss.Panjābī.B41

life, a shift in the tradition following Arjan's death and Hargobind's maintenance of a militia, Tegh Bahādur's martyrdom, and the innovations made by Gobind Singh. Malcolm then provides a military and political history of the Khālsā, including recent battles, style of military engagement, and tactics. Here, Malcolm bases his narrative of development on the rise to prominence after being unified through the experience of violent oppression at the hands of the Mughals. Section III deals with the religious principles articulated by Gurū Nānak to the Sikhs. For Malcolm, these Sikh religious principles consisted of a purely deistic creed "grounded on the most sublime general truths," but blended with a belief in "all the absurdities" of Hindu mythology and Islamic fables.[10] Malcolm states that no other part of his work is "more curious and important, or that offers more difficulties to the inquirer than the religion of the Sikhs."[11]

Throughout *SOS*, then, Malcolm includes a leitmotif in which Gurū Nānak seeks to reconcile the animosity between Hindus and Muslims and amalgamate the two opposed faiths by focusing on the reality of Oneness (what Malcolm refers to as "unity") and a set of shared obligations to one another. This perspective partly stems from the inheritance of colonial works already existing on the Sikh tradition and Nānak. However, Malcolm uniquely describes this conciliatory perspective in Nānak's character as part of what enabled the rise of the Sikh nation.[12]

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[10] Malcolm. p.266

[11] Ibid.

[12] Malcolm writes: "It would be difficult to give the character of Nanac on the authority of any account we yet possess. His writings, especially the first chapters of the *Ādi-Granth*, will, if ever translated, be perhaps a criterion by which he may be fairly judged; but the great eminence which he obtained, and the success with which he combated the opposition which he met, afford ample reason to conclude that he was a man of more than common genius: and this favourable impression of his character will be confirmed by a consideration of the object of his life, and the means he took to accomplish it. Born in a province on the extreme verge of India, at the very point where the religion of Muhammed and the idolatrous worship of the Hindús appeared to touch, and at a moment when both these tribes cherished the most violent rancor and animosity towards each other, his great aim was to blend those jarring elements in peaceful union, and he only endeavored to affect this purpose through the means of mild persuasion. His wish was to recall both Muhammedans and Hindus to an exclusive attention to that sublimest of all principles, which inculcates devotion to God, and peace towards man. He had to combat the furious bigotry of the

Malcolm familiarizes Sikhs' seemingly strange combination of sublime truth with mythology and fable via Nānak's attempt to reconcile through reform. Both Hindus and Muslims concede to Nānak's doctrine by rejecting aspects of doctrinal belief in preference for a shared worship of God as unity. Malcolm recognizes that Nānak respected the truth contained in both Hinduism and Islam while rejecting the closing of messianic time through nations of origin and foundation.

Malcolm's historical and theological focus on Gurū Nānak, which pervades *SOS*, shows how the janamsākhī become a natural backdrop for the dialogue between Malcolm and Ātmā Rām. As mentioned in Chapter 3, it is likely that Malcolm is the first colonial author to directly reference janamsākhī manuscripts—although this referencing occurs indirectly through translations provided by Leyden and the dialogue with Ātmā Rām. For instance, Malcolm recognizes Bālā Sandhū and Mardānā as Nānak's companions during the travel sequences.[13] The Bālā manuscript recensions were the most popular rendition of janamsākhī compendiums during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, likely forming the dominant truths which informed both intellectual and lay understanding of Nānak's life and teachings—such that the incorporation of *sākhī*s from the Bālā tradition reflects Malcolm's reliance on both textual and oral sources.

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one, and the deep-rooted superstition of the other; but he attempted to overcome all obstacles by the force of reason and humanity."

     The "character of Nanac" is meant to reflect an idealized form of Sikh comportment, by proxy meant to reflect historically what led to the Sikh political success and dominance of the Lahore Kingdom. Building upon *sākhī* narrative and his discussions with Ātmā Rām, moments such as this in *SOS* reveal an admixture of colonial presuppositions about Nānak as historiographically situated within the age of enlightened reason and critique of religious absolutism. Malcolm's assertions return us to the problem of language, translation and dialogue which must be struggled with to understand how the contemporary use of *Sākhī*s supports a meta-discursive construal of Sikhism. Ibid. p.207 and 208

[13] Malcolm recognizes that travel *sākhī*s narrated by Bālā account for most of the miracles and wonders from his journeys. Ibid. p. 201 and 205. During the period of colonial reform, this tradition became scrutinized heavily for its "miraculous" components. Amongst colonialists and their ecumenical Sikh counterparts, it became largely discredited in favor of the simpler and shorter Purātan manuscripts -amongst which Colebrooke's Mss Panj. B6 is the oldest extant example. Surindar Singh Kohli, ed. *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala* (Chandigar: Punjab University Publication Bureau, 1975); Singh.

One of the earliest *sākhī*s encountered in *SOS* is the one known popularly today as *Sachā Saudā*, wherein Nānak is given funds to purchase salt from one village so that he might sell it for profit at another village. Bālā accompanies Nānak on this journey. When they come across a group of hungry mendicants—alternately described as *faqīr*s or *sādhū*s in janamsākhī manuscripts—Nānak decides to use the money to provide them with food and clothing. Secondly, Malcolm includes an amalgamated account from two *sākhī*s, *Khet Hariā* and *Sarp ki Chān*, wherein Nānak was sent to tend his family's cattle and fell asleep under a tree. As the sun came to shine directly upon the youth's face, a black cobra opens its hood to give him shade. The village chief, Rāī Bullar, witnesses this event and recognizes Nānak's extraordinary nature. These accounts and the character of Bālā Sandhu are unique to Bālā manuscript recensions; given the popularity of Bālā janamsākhīs, however, it is likely that Ātmā Rām would have been able to explain such accounts had Malcolm enquired after them.

Nānak's life in Sultānpur is marked in *SOS* in Sections I and III through different manuscript recensions. In these accounts, a Muslim *faqīr* visits Nānak and mildly chastises him for becoming immersed in the acquisition of worldly wealth, forgetting to practice the attainment for the "inheritance of eternal wealth."[14] Nānak falls into a trance at this reminder and runs into a pool of water, remaining submerged there for three days. He emerges only to give away all his personal belongings and is called to render his accounts before the ruler of Sultānpur, Daulat Khān. These events begin a brief period at Sultānpur in which Nānak engages in severe austerities, or *tapasyā*, before embarking on his travels.[15] Malcolm goes on to describe how some

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[14] Malcolm. p. 203
[15] Malcolm mentions Nānak's practice of tapasyā in Section III and defines it as a practice requiring the mind to be totally absorbed in the divinity, abstracted away from worldly thought for as long as could be sustained by the individual. These practices are described later as included subsisting upon sand and sleeping upon sharp pebbles. Malcolm understands this as a method to gain reputation amongst the laity, after which Nānak began his sojourns. The textual source for the practice of tapasyā is given as Bhāī Gurdas, but there is little mention of austerities in the

authors depict Nānak's submersion in water as an interview with the Prophet Elias, popularly

known as Khwājā Khidr, who proceeded to teach Nānak all the worldly sciences.[16] Khidr is

referred to as "*gobind lok*" in Bālā recensions.[17]

In Section III, Malcolm refers to two other instances in which Nānak hears a Divine

voice. During his interview with the Nāth Siddhās at Mount Sumerū, Nānak is told to go forth

and establish his distinct sect so that his name could be proclaimed joyfully. Secondly, Nānak

has an "interview with God" in an account Malcolm describes as providing the divine origin of

the Sikh faith as a religion of peace.[18] In this interview, God articulates three lessons that

Nānak's followers should uphold: worship of his name, charity, and ablutions. Furthermore, they

must abandon the world and harm no being out of recognition that all creation has been infused

with the breath of God. In this interview, God tells Nānak: "Whatever I am, thou art, for betwixt

us there is no difference." Tracing the potential sources of this *sākhī*, we find that mention of the

Prophet Elias occurs in both the Purātan and Bālā janamsākhī manuscripts while the doxa of *nām*

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vārs. However, the B41 manuscript describes the very same austerities as Nānak and also regularly employs the refrain "Nānak Tapā" as a moniker referring to Nānak as one who practices austerities. Ibid. 203-204; 267; and 273.

[16] Ghulam Hussain give a similar account of an encounter between Nānak and Khwājā Khidr. Khān Ghulām Husain, John Briggs, and Ḥājī Muṣṭafā, *The Siyar-Ul-Mutakherin: A History of the Mahomedan Power in India During the Last Century*, Siyar-Ul-Mutakherin (London: Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1832).

[17] In the B41, this episode occurs in Sultānpur following Nānak's wedding, when he was 32 years old and his eldest son, Srī Cand, was four years old. The B41 states that Nānak was visited by a "*gobind lok*" who appeared in "*a torkī jāmā*". Bhāī Kahn Singh Nābhā defines "gobind lok" as an ascetic or servant of the Creator and the reference to *torkī jāmā* means that this servant appeared before Nānak embodied as a Turk, where jāmā means body (*deh*) or being (*bhāv*).

ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਇਕ ਗੁਬਿੰਦ ਲੋਕ ਆਇ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿਤੀ॥ ਤੋਰਕੀ ਜਾਮੇ ਵਿਚਿ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਵੇਦੀ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਕਹਿਓਸੁ ਮੀਆ ਜੀ ਬੈਠੋ॥ ਤਾ ਉਹ ਗੋਰਿੰਦ ਲੋਕੁ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਏ ਬੰਦੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਦੇ ਤੈਨੁ ਕਿਆ ਵੇਦਨ ਹੈ॥ ਤਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੋ ਕਹਿਆ ਮੀਆ ਜੀ ਮੈਨੂ ਵੇਦਨ ਕਾਈ ਨਾਹੀ॥

ik din ik gubind lok āe dikhāī ditī. torkī jāme vici. nānak vedī boliā kahaiosu mīā jī baiṭho. tā govind loku boliā e bande khudāe de tainū kiā vedan hai. tā nānak ago kahaiā mīā jī mainū vedan kāī nāhī.

One day a gobind lok came and revealed itself as a Turk. Nānak Vedī addressed him saying, "mīanjī, please sit." The gobind lok said, "Bondsman of khudā, what is it that afflicts (*vedan*) you?" Nanak responded, "mīanjī, I am not afflicted (*vedan*) by anything."

"Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe," (British Library, London). f. 35b

[18] During this interview, Nānak hears "*Wa!*" proclaimed five time and then, "*Wa Gurūjī.*" God tell Nānak that he was sent to the world to give the name of God to the people. God says, "I will be thy Gurū and thou shalt be a Gurū to all mankind." John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs; a Singular Nation, Who Inhabit the Provinces of the Penjab, Situated between the Rivers Jumna and Indus* (London: [J.] Murray, 1812).p. 274-276

(name), *dān* (charity), and *isnān* (ablution), as well as the principle of exemplarity, are found in the *Giān-Ratnāvalī*.

Malcolm's *SOS* asserts that the life and teachings of Gurū Nānak create a framework for the Sikh religion through the idea of reconciling the conflict between Hindu and Muslim. This framework arises partly because of Malcolm's interpretation of his dialogue with Ātmā Rām, using the janamsākhīs and SGGS as a backdrop to populate Nānak with meaning. Malcolm's narration of Nānak's journey to Mecca shows the colonial process of interpolation and embellishment, which, I argue, acts as a principle in translating the Sikh tradition into Sikhism.

He begins this episode by stating that, "the courageous independence with which Nānak announced his religion to the Muhammedans, is a favorite topic with his biographers."[19] This sentence effectively, if subtly, achieves two of the goals described: 1) it states to the reader that Nānak was avowedly or self-consciously travelling to announce a religion he had created, therefore establishing Sikhism as the religion of Gurū Nānak; and 2) that this is the topic that "his biographers" favored. By this point in the work, this sentence reminds the reader that the Sikhs are an independent nation whose origin is in the *person* of Gurū Nānak and that the narrative we are reading is the one which Nānak's people, *his Sikhs*, have created. Nānak states that without the practice of true piety, the faiths of Hindus and Muslims are erroneous.

Statements from janamsākhīs ground anecdotes in epistemic notions developed to orient paradigms for knowledge production around Sikh practice concerning Nānak's teaching of Oneness. However, in Malcolm's narrative, they are used to highlight the devotional aspect of Sikhism grounded upon a pious belief and faith in an embodied Gurū. Within the discourse of "Sikhism," then, piety also serves to move beyond the distinctions and antagonisms between

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[19] "Sketch of the Sikhs." p. 274

Hindus and Muslims by representing universal notions. By promoting this universal piety, Nānak is clothed as a savior and mediator between Muslims and Hindus.[20]

In Nānak's discourse to the "Muhammedans" of Mecca, he describes the effects of the violence with which they have afflicted Hindus, such as destroying temples and burning their sacred books: Hindus have learned to "equally hate you and your mosques." Furthermore, he chastises Muslims that they hypocritically dress in the blue garb of representatives of God, and have their praises sung for inflicting this violence, as opposed to praising God. He continues, "I am sent to reconcile your jarring faiths…implore you to read their scriptures, as well as your own..." Malcolm describes Nānak as being "abused, and even struck" by a *mullah* because he lay with his feet toward Mecca. Malcolm continues to describe how "Nānak did not deny the mission of Muhammad," and accepted that the prophet was sent "to this world, to do good, and to disseminate knowledge of the one God through the means of the Koran."[21] However, according to Malcolm's representation of Nānak's beliefs, the Prophet Muhammad acted on "the principle of free-will, which all human beings exercise" to introduce oppression and cruelty.

Using such *sākhī*s, Malcolm connects pious belief to peaceable actions. These facets become important in Nānak's shared dispensation to "Hindus and Muhammedans," showing them that "those violent and continued disputes, which subsist between the Hindus and Moslemans, are impious as they are unjust." A true Hindu is one whose "heart is just" and a good Muhammedan one whose "life is pure."[22] This idea of respecting the limits of mutually

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[20] In section III, Malcolm states that people have come to consider Nānak as a "instrument of God, to make known the true faith to fallen men; and, as such, they give him divine honors; not only performing pilgrimage to his tomb, but addressing him, in their prayers, as their savior and mediator." Ibid. p.280

[21] Ibid. p.275

[22] Malcolm claims to be quoting Bhāī Gurdās when stating, "He alone is a true Hindú whose heart is just; and he only is a good Muhammedan whose life is pure." However, it is likely that this is from his dialogue with Ātmā Rām during a discussion about *Gīān Ratanāvalī*, a compilation of sākhīs about Nānak that is also a commentary on *Vārān Bhāī Gurdās*. Malcolm is aware of this work and mentions it in other parts of the *Sketch*. See, ibid.

opposed religions is culled from the *Giān-Ratnāvalī* version of the janamsākhīs, and became

central to the construal of Sikhism as a distinct religion during the Singh Sabhā period, when

reformers continued to develop a version of the Sikh tradition that was both faithful to a vision of

the Khālsa and serviceable to the British colonizers.

In Malcolm's presentation of the above anecdotes, especially in his presentation of

Sikhism as a syncretic religion that seeks to peaceably reconcile the faiths of Hindus and

Muslims, we can see traces of Ātmā Rām's dialogic interpretations of janamsākhī texts—

particularly those from the Bālā tradition. As we will see with the further examples provided

below, Malcolm's implicit dialogue with Ātmā Rām, which suffuses his text, reflects the use of

native informants to provide, create, and themselves act as dictionaries for the difficult language

of the janamsākhīs. The use of the native translator/informant, then, reflects several further

implicit acts of translation: the translation of the ontologically living language of the janamsākhīs

into an inert, passive language that allows for the text to be studied as object, and—through this

very shift in understanding of the nature of language—the translation of Sikh tradition into

"Sikhism" as a world religion. In the next section, I will show a further example of these

interrelated acts of translation through Ernest Trumpp's quest to produce a definitive translation

of the *Ādi Granth*.

4.2 Translating the *Ādi Granth* through *Sākhī*s: Trumpp and his Sikh Interlocutors

This section turns to examine a set of manuscripts that Ernest Trumpp brought back

with him from Panjāb in 1872, today housed at Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. These

unrecognized sources have heretofore escaped serious discussion; however, as I will show,

they provide vital clues about conflicting approaches to textual interpretation. Without

grasping the limits of this conflict, early Sikh texts will continue to evade meaningful

expression and analysis.

Trumpp translates two janamsākhīs alongside the *Ādi Granth* and then suggests that the

one later known as the Purātan Janamsākhī was more authentic than the Bālā. This assertion

sparks a debate about the literature itself by Sikh reformers and raised concerns about

maintaining historical accuracy in how Sikhs presented themselves to their British rulers. The

corrective reaction Trumpp sparked continued to be worked out through the twentieth-century.

Trumpp's sojourn to Panjāb in 1870 added to his frustrations regarding the difficulty of

accessing, let alone translating, the *Ādi Granth*. In the preface of his translation, he describes a

conversation with two *granthī*s (Sikh priests) that he had employed upon arriving in Lahore in

1870. He describes his exchange in the following way:

> But after I had succeeded in engaging two Sikh Granthīs at Lahore, I was not a little surprised,
> when they declared to me, that the Granth could not be translated in the literal, grammatical way
> I desired. I soon convinced myself, that though they professed to understand the Granth, they
> had no knowledge either of the old grammatical forms or the obsolete words; they could only
> give me some traditional explanations, which frequently proved wrong, as I found them
> contradicted by other passages, and now and then they could give me no explanation whatever;
> they had not even a clear insight into the real doctrines of the Granth.[23]

After other learned individuals recommended to Trumpp proved similarly ill-informed about

the *Granth*, he concludes that Sikhs had lost all their former learning due to the violence of the

eighteenth-century and their "warlike manner."[24] Sitting with the *granthī*s under his employ,

Trumpp attempted to translate the text as they read the *Ādi Granth* together. He soon came to

see this exercise as futile, however, and expressed frustration at the process, stating, "I

frequently perceived that I had been misled by them." Nonetheless, he writes, "they were still

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[23] See Preface, Ernst Trumpp, *The Ādi Granth, or, the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs* (London: W. H. Allen & co. [etc.], 1877). v-vi
[24] "Finally I gave up all hope of finding what I wanted, as I clearly saw, that the Sikhs, in consequence of their former warlike manner of life and the troblous times, had lost all learning…" ibid.

of great use to me, as they indirectly helped me to find out the right track." Although Trumpp does not directly say so, the manuscripts he brought back show that the track he ultimately discovered was that of reading *sākhī*s.

Trumpp arrived in Panjāb certain that he would acquire lexicographies to bring back with him. Once more his assumption proved wrong, as the *granthī*s "positively told [him] that there was no such thing in existence."[25] Characteristically undeterred by such assertions, Trumpp was convinced that since the language of the *Ādi Granth* was obsolete, there must have been attempts made to create a lexicography prior to the onset of violence. He eventually uncovered three commentaries that included partial lexicographies. The first two were of "Hinduī and *dēshī* (provincial) words"; the third contained clues about "the mutilated form" in which Arabic and Persian words were incorporated into the *Granth*.[26]

While attempting to locate these lexicographies, and left with no other recourse, Trumpp deployed the Protestant logic of *sola scriptura*—unmediated engagement with revelation—and *prima scriptura*—the unparalleled nature of scripture and its understandability for the reasoning mind. He "read the whole Granth through, in order to make myself conversant with its contents and style," noting grammatical forms and obsolete words in notebooks.[27] He made copies of existing commentaries and manuscripts, as the custodians of these texts were unwilling to sell them to Trumpp. Having made his own grammar and dictionary and acquired those commentaries, Trumpp returned to England. Once in London, he requested additional materials

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[25] Trumpp states that though he was "able to make out many obscure words by dint of careful comparison with modern idioms and the Prākrit, yet there remained a considerable residuum of words and grammatical forms to which I could get no clue, being destitute of all literary means." Ibid.

[26] I was sure in my own mind that, as the language of the Granth had become already obsolete to a great extent, some attempts at some sort of lexicography must have been made in preceding times, and I inquired therefore carefully after commentaries on the Granth…in progress of time I succeeded in detecting three commentaries, two of which explained in a rough way a number of obsolete Hinduī and dēshī (provincial) words, and the other a number of Arabic and Persian words, which were received into the Granth in a very mutilated" ibid.

[27] Ibid. vii

from the India Office library and set about translating the *Granth*, having confessed it was "next to impossible to make a trustworthy translation" based upon his knowledge of the Northern vernaculars, Prakrit, and Sanskrit.

This raises two questions about the exchange between Trumpp and the Sikh *granthī*s; How did Sikh *granthī*s write, think, and speak an explanation of the *Granth* during their exchanges with Trumpp in 1870-1872? Secondly, what was the content of the manuscript commentaries Trumpp brought with him from Panjāb? The current historiographic tendency in criticism of European works on Sikhs predominantly features factual corrections of these colonial accounts. While this is an important task, it risks construing entire texts like Trumpp's as insincere or determined by deep prejudice, ultimately disregarding comments about engagement with Sikhs on this basis. By engaging solely in a corrective analytic, then, important aspects of the colonial disjunction in communication escaped attention.

Trumpp's remarks about the *granthī*s form part of his apology for producing an incomplete translation after seven years of working with the *Ādi Granth*. As such, despite predominant interpretation conducted within the framework of assumed prejudice outlined above, they do not announce a theological or political antagonism toward Sikhs. The preface explains away the delay in creating a translation by suggesting that the Sikh *granthī*s were uncooperative. However, through his brief description of their exchanges, Trumpp reveals the *granthī*s' inability to communicate in a manner that satisfied him; the *granthī*s responded in a manner they thought appropriate, but which nevertheless confounds Trumpp, revealing an aporetic dissonance in their assumptions as to how best to approach the hermeneutics of the *Granth*. Trumpp's desire for a literal, grammatical translation, or interpretation, of the *Ādi Granth,* was not mirrored by his interlocutors—yet, as per their intimations to him, they did

profess to know and understand the meaning of the *Ādi Granth*.

When Trumpp states that the *granthī*s only gave "the traditional explanations," he may be suggesting their usage of *sākhī*s as interpretation. He also reveals a gap in his understanding of language as a transparent object of study that can be approached straightforwardly via tools such as dictionaries of lexicographies, versus the *granthī*s' view of the language of the *Granth* as ontologically living, and therefore impossible to "translate" line-by-line. The *granthī*s' turn to *sākhī*s suggests an alternate translation strategy for the *Granth* that reflects the nature of *kathā* as decentered speech.

Recent scholarship suggests that the creation of 'theological' and grammatical commentaries on the SGGS in the early twentieth-century came about in direct response to Trumpp's supposedly disparaging comments about Sikhs having lost all knowledge about the granth. By responding to Trumpp through grammar, Sikhs are brought into a metaphysical order of representation: they become identifiable.[28] However, the refusal of Trumpp's *granthī*s to elaborate a lexicography or produce commentaries may also reveal something about how Sikh intellectuals approached the SGGS, raising the question of how Sikhs commented upon or interpreted the SGGS before the colonial encounter. Produced at the instant of a putative hermeneutic shift, the commentaries written between 1870 and 1872 contain clues regarding this question, as they were created in response to Trumpp's request for literal, grammatical explanations of the verses of the SGGS; thus, the manuscripts reflect the *granthī*s' fulfillment of this request.

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[28] Arvind-pal S. Mandair, *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality, and the Politics of Translation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Arvind Singh Mandair, "The Emergence of Modern 'Sikh Theology': Reassessing the Passage of Ideas from Trumpp to Bhai Vir Singh," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 68, no. 2 (2005); "The Politics of Nondualilty: Reassessing the Work of Transendence in Modern Sikh Theology," *Journal of American Academy of Religion* 74, no. 3 (2006).

Knowing details about how the *granthī*s' traditional explanations were deemed deficient would provide a valuable foothold in determining how Sikh intellectuals engaged in interpretations of the SGGS before the colonial encounter. Examining the "deficient" commentaries, however, sheds light on what transpired in their exchange; having both Trumpp's translation and the *granthī*s' commentaries presents a way to mutually refract their encounter.

As I have mentioned earlier, Trumpp's studies on the Sikhs are prefigured by janamsākhīs. Trumpp's translation incorporates the janamsākhīs, followed by *sākhī*s about each guru as narrative histories of their lives. He provides these narratives as introductory contextual material preceding the translation itself. Here, the inclusion of the *sākhī*s and janamsākhīs represents a trace of the dialogue between Trumpp and the *granthī*s. In answering Trumpp's request for a literal, grammatical explanation of the *Ādi Granth* through (janam)sākhīs, the *granthī*s likely responded through *sākhī*s. This response shows that *sākhī*s were neither used as life narratives nor as salvific narratives; *sākhī*s were a way to comment about the *Ādi Granth* in a non-grammatical manner.

However, Trumpp's imposition of an alternate ordering of the texts—the janamsākhīs, followed by narrative histories of the Gurūs' lives, followed by the SGGS—changes the mechanisms for deriving meaning from them. By examining the table of contents for his translation of the SGGS, we can see how Trumpp schizogenically severed the dialogic moments where *sākhī*s were used, much to his consternation, to 'translate' a *sabd*. This may then show that the trained *granthī*s both textually and enunciatively expanded upon the SGGS through *sākhī*s.

Figure 4.1 Table of Contents showing Lives of the Sikh Gurūs, Ernest Trumpp, 1877

Trumpp credits his *granthī*s with putting him on the right track. His decision to

provide the janamsākhīs, followed by the *sākhī*s of Gurū lineage, followed by the *Ādi Granth*

reflects the topographical layers used by the Sikh *granthī*s to explain the SGGS in a way that

frustrated Trumpp's desire for literal interpretation and translation. At the same time, Trumpp

creates a seemingly straightforward chronology for the *sākhī*s he had heard—moving in a

teleological progression from janamsākhīs about Nānak to *sākhī*s about the other nine gurūs,

to the SGGS itself.

4.3 Trumpp's Translation Tools: the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Collection

Until recently it has proven difficult to locate either the commentaries or the exercise

books that Trumpp created.[29] Nonetheless, there are indications in Trumpp's description of employing the *granthī*s that suggest they were, in the end, cooperative and facilitated his work indirectly. During my archival research, I discovered manuscripts currently housed at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, Germany with Trumpp's hand writing and signature. I examined a total of ten Gurmukhī manuscripts in the collection, three of which are all dated between the years 1870-1872 (see Table 4.1 below). The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek collection of manuscripts makes it possible to have a clearer idea of the texts Trumpp used to create his translation, *The Ādi Granth*. It also provides us with the name of one of his *granthī* interlocutors. These texts can be read alongside Trumpp's translation to situate his process of frustrated attempts at engaging Sikh *granthī*s.

Reading the works that assisted in Trumpp's task of translation reveals aspects of the disjunction between the janamsākhī texts themselves and predominant approaches to their textuality. Furthermore, beyond simply elucidating Trumpp's translation method, as the manuscripts include three dated commentaries of the SGGS written by a single author.

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[29] Most scholars have focused their attention to the collections housed in London, where Trumpp resided periodically. There have been suggestions that the commentaries Trumpp sourced belonged to Bhāī Chanda Singh, a prominent nineteenth-century intellectual. However, the British Library's collection appears to hold printed copies of Bhāī Chanda Singh's works and no analysis or comparison of these commentaries with Trumpp's work have been done.

Trilochan Singh describes trying to find them unsuccessfully, leaving the read with the conjecture that Trumpp interacted with Bhāī Chanda Singh Gyani, "a well-known theologian of the eighteenth century." Trilochan Singh, *Ernest Trumpp and W.H. Mcleod as Scholars of Sikh History Religion and Culture* (Chandigarh: International Centre of Sikh Studies, 1994). p. 52. Chanda Singh was the author of *Pryae Sri Gurū Granth Sahib (Panjābi and Hindi and Desi words)* and *Sikh Gurū Granth ji ke math se Pryae farse pad ke*. Trilochan Singh copied both manuscripts on a 1976 visit to the British Library. Ibid. p. 64. While conducting my own archival research in 2010 and 2014, I was unable to locate them. However, the *Encyclopedia of Indian Literature* corroborates the Giani Bhāī Chanda Singh's *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhibjī-ke madh se paryāye Fārsī padan de jo ati kathan the* (Amritsar, 1894) was one of the three commentaries Trumpp mentions. Amaresh Datta and Lal Mohan, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1987). p. 1033.

In any case, it is inconclusive whether these works are indeed the ones which Trumpp discovered. It is difficult to go further than the suggestions Trumpp makes in his own introduction which I have indicated can be read as a Schizogenic apologetic to his British employers -thus, making it hard to sever the rhetorical antagonism and deception he faced from unlearned *granthī*s from what may have been an impossible moment of interlocution produced by radical epistemological difference.

Trumpp seems to have patronized these commentaries, as he required tools for approaching the *Granth*. Beginning with the production and discussion of *sākhī*s, a year-long dialogic encounter occurring between March of 1871 and March 1872 appears to have eventually given Trumpp the rudimentary tools for a more literal, grammatical textual hermeneutic. The archive of this encounter shows early shifts in the textual structure by Sikhs through the inclusion of titles and tables of contents more typical of European expectations of a book.

Table 4.1 BSB Munich Manuscripts Earnest Trumpp Returned with from Panjāb

Shelf-mark	Title	Content	Folios	Date/Place
BSB Cod.panj.2	Untitled	Saloks	Unpaginated	Undated
BSB Cod.panj.3	Grammar to the Ādi Granth			Undated
		Nouns	1a-48a	
		Pronouns	49a-76b	
		Verbs	77a-137a	
BSB Cod.panj.4	Commentar an dem Ādi Grantha			21 March, 1871
		Japjī Artha: Siddh Gosti	1a-37a	
		Japjī Artha: Sākhīs	1a-64b	
		Ratanmāla Mahallā 1	1a-23a	
BSB Cod.panj.5	Ādi Grantha – Grammar		1a-66b	28 April, 1871
BSB Cod.panj.6	Commentary to the Ādi Grantha		1a-763b	29 February, 1872
BSB Cod.panj.10	The Granth of Gobind Singh			6 February, 1872
		Jāpjī	1a-18b	
		Akāl Ustat	18b-74b	
		Vichitra Nātak	75a-148a	
		Chāndnī Charitra	148a-237a	
		Vār Bhagautī	237a-254a	
		Giān Prabodh	254a-310b	
BSB Cod.panj.11	Sākhīs of the Ten Gurūs			28 February, 1872
		Praise of the Ten Gurūs	2a-5a	
		Sākhīs	5a-254b	
		Prem Sumār Granth - Rahitnāmā	255a-294b	
BSB Cod.panj.12		Sākhīs of the Sikhs	1a-291b	28 February, 1872
BSB Cod.panj.13		Rahitnāmā	1a-6a	25 February, 1872
BSB Cod.panj.17		Untitled Pothī Rāgu Āsā Mahall 4	1a-23a	Undated

The BSB collection represents most of the works that Trumpp mentions he acquired in the prefatory essays of his translation, excluding the janamsākhīs he referenced. Most significant of these are the commentaries and his exercise books. Under the shelf-mark BSB Cod.panj.3, "Grammar to the Ādi Granth," there are three workbooks included in this manuscript: nouns, pronouns, and verbs. The three commentaries he mentions are under the following shelf-marks: (1) BSB Cod.panj.4, (2) BSB Cod.panj.5, and (3) BSB Cod.panj.6.

Based upon the descriptions in his prefatory remarks, Trumpp had expected that these commentaries would include reference material, like grammar, definitions, and exegesis on the *Ādi Granth*.

In the earliest commentary, BSB Cod.panj.4, *sākhī*s are used like the *Gyān-Ratnāvalī* to intertwine anecdotes with brief references to sabds--this structure requires a familiarity with *sabd* that Trumpp did not possess. After Trumpp had procured BSB Cod.panj.5, he removed the *sākhī*s, leaving the verses followed by a series of synonyms for words and a brief explanation. However, BSB Cod.panj.6, the last commentary produced, begins to approximate the kinds of references that Trumpp assumed would exist. Using the dates given in Table 4.1 to compare with the other manuscripts and Trumpp's description of working in Panjāb, we can build a timeline for how the *sākhī*s became perceived as distinct from *sabd*. This distinction appears to have been expressed as the commentaries were produced.
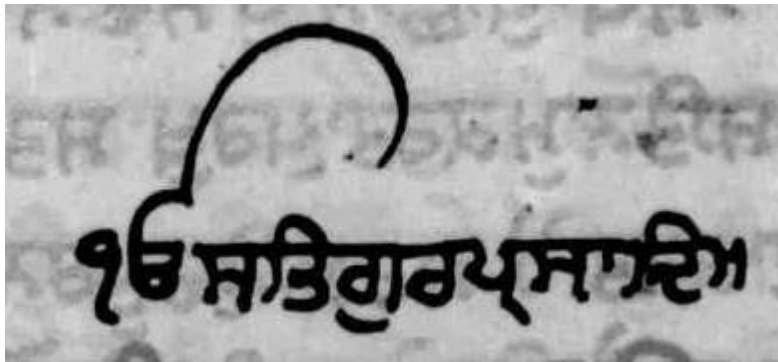

Figure 4.2 Writing Sample, "Ik angkār satigurprasādi" from BSB Cod.panj.4
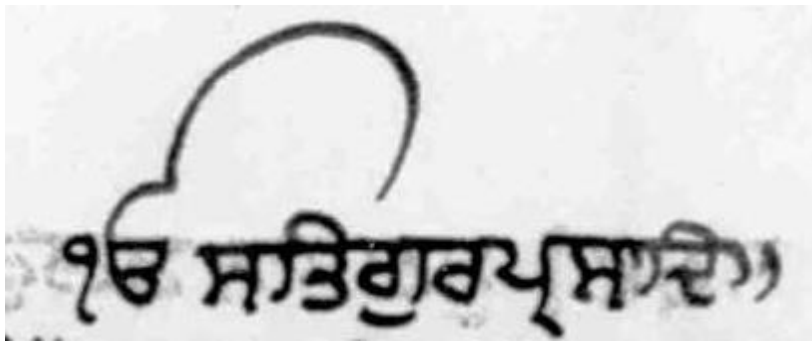
Figure 4.3 Writing Sample, "Ik angkar satigurprasadi" from Bsb.Cod.Panj.5

Figure 4.4 Writing Sample, "Ik angkar satigurprasadi" from BSB Cod.panj.6

The commentaries are ideal for such an analysis as they were written within a year of one another by the same individual. Examining the penmanship of the three commentaries--show above--reveals that the same hand likely wrote them. They are also dated and show Lahore as the location in Trumpp's handwriting.[30] All three of the commentaries are written by Bhāī Hīrā Singh, who gives his name on the last folio of the final work Trumpp commissioned:

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[30] The research of both Piar Singh and W.H. McLeod show that that the outskirts of the Lahore principality and Gurdaspur were likely hubs for Sikh textual production and scribal copying from at least the eighteenth-century. Working between Lahore and Amritsar, Trumpp would have been ideally situated for collecting manuscripts and conversing with the most influential trained exponents available at the time. The historical significance of the area and a high concentration of Sikh sangats, institutions, and intellectuals since Nānak's lifetime make this area a likely candidate for manuscript production. W. H. McLeod, ed. *The B40 Janam-Sakhi* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1980); Singh.(Piar Singh & McLeod, B40 JS)
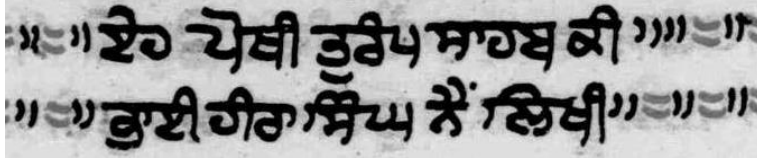
Figure 4.5 Colophon, BSB Cod.panj.6 f. 163b

ih pothī turamp [Trumpp] sāhib kī. bhāī hīrā singh nain likhi.
This is the pothi of Trumpp Sahib, written by Bhāī Hīrā Singh.[31]

We can conclusively state, then, that a *granthī* named Hīrā Singh was employed by Trumpp

during this period, although we do not know any more about him presently.[32] Leaving

London in late 1870, Trumpp would have arrived in December of that year or January 1871.

The first commentary was produced within three or four months of his arrival, followed by

the second on April 28, 1871. While only a month separates these two commentaries, it took

Hīrā Singh another nine months to produce the last commentary, which was ultimately

completed on February 29, 1871. This delay may reflect an incubation period where

Trumpp's expectations were more clearly received.

One of the most distinct manuscripts in this group occurs simply in the catalog

description as *Texts der Sikh-Religion*. BSB Cod.panj.2 is an incomplete *pothī* containing

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[31] As mentioned earlier, Trilochan Singh has suggested at least one of the commentaries was produced by Bhāī Candā, this may be a result of misattribution given that Bhāī Hīrā has signed the manuscripts colophon. Trumpp does not refer to any manuscripts using the titles *Pryāe Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib (Panjābi and Hindi Desi Words)* or *Srī Gurū Granth jī ke math se Pryāe fārsī pad ke*. Nor is there any mention of Bhāī Chanda in the commentaries patronized by Trumpp and house at Bayerische Staats Bibliothek. In one of the final refrains Hīrā Singh states that the *srī priyā gurū granth sāhib* is complete, "*it srī priyā gurū granth sāhib sampūran subh mastu."* Hirā's *priyā* has a similar title to Bhāī Candā Singh's, leading to misattributing Bhāī Hīrā's work to Bhāī Candā. On the other hand, the use of *priyā* may reflect a general title like *sākhī, bilās, parīchā,* or *prakāsh* used by exponent to reflect the content and type of work. Thus, it may not entail an exact copy or even existence of a singular narrative version but an individual reference work that explains, or gives a kathā on difficult words. A comparison of the British Library copy with this manuscript would be helpful in determining whether this was the case. See "Bsb Cod.Panj.6, Commentary to the Adi Granth," in *Münchener Digitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, 1872). f. 163b. and Singh. p. 52.

[32] There are several individual named Hīrā Singh that had an important role in modern Sikh history. Raja Hīrā Singh of Nabha, Hīrā Singh Dard, Hīrā Singh Rāgī to name but a few. However, the dates for these individuals do not correspond with Trumpp's visit to Lahore. See Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurushabada Ratanākara Mahan Kosh* (1960); Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1992).

hymns from Rāg Gaurhī. Written on a darkened paper with white ink, the manuscript

presents an unusual appearance, with inconsistent, and at times illegible, penmanship.

There is no pagination and the folios are disordered. None of the folios have a

discernible beginning inscription or the typical colophon marking completion. The

earliest of the remaining folios starts in the middle of the eighth *astpadī* of the ninth

salok in *gaurhī sukhmanī mahalā 5*, one of the Gurū Arjan's seminal writings. Where

this composition ends, the bottom third of the page is left blank. On a different folio, the

title *thittī gaurhī mahalā 5* marks the beginning of another composition by Gurū Arjan.

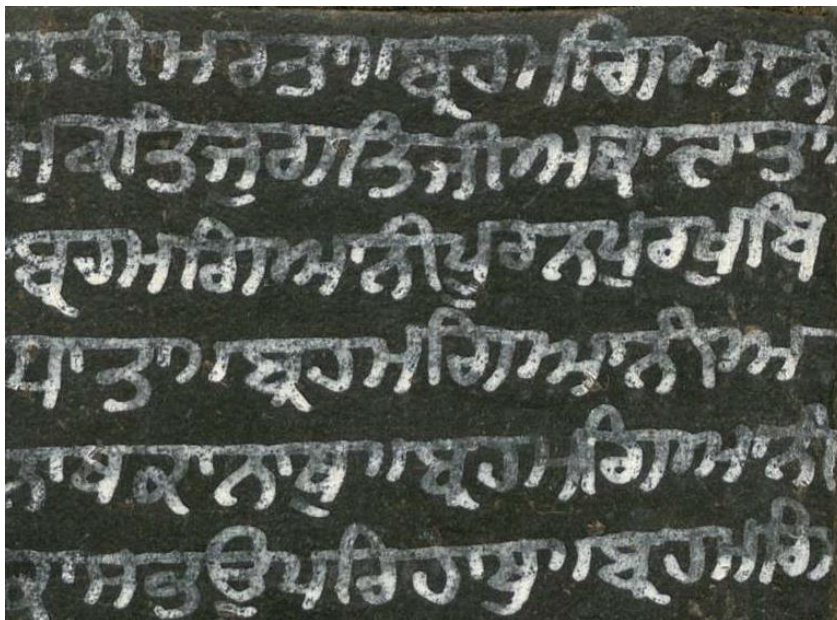This composition, however, ends abruptly before the fifth *salok* begins.[33]

Figure 4.6 BSB Cod.panj.2 Earliest portion of *gaurhi sukhmanī mahalā* 5, the third stanza of section 9:8

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[33] The sabd *thittī gaurhī mahalā 5* uses the theme of lunar dates to expound upon cosmologic Oneness. The abrupt end of the sabd in the manuscript coincides with the page 297 of the modern standardized version of SGGS. However, *thittī gaurhī mahalā 5*, is complete after seventeen saloks and each salok is followed by a corresponding *paurhī*. The entire section covering both sabds in the standardized SGGS covers pages 262-300. While *gaurhi sukhmanī mahalā 5* is commonly recited and can be found in smaller prayer books, it is unusual to have *thittī gaurhī mahalā 5* together with it in a typical *pothī*. The poor penmanship and disordered incomplete state of the manuscript make it difficult to know conclusively whether this was part of a larger compendium. Such compendiums, like the *panj granthī* or *das granthī*, were used as a primer to memorize sabds and training of giānī exponents. One of these gutkās may have been copied for Trumpp or this may have been part of the *Ādi Granth* Trumpp's claims to have had copied.
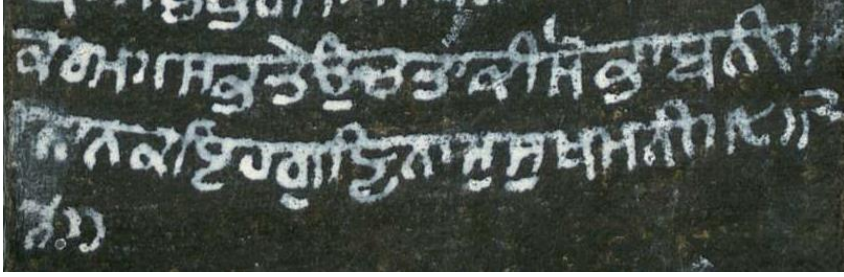
Figure 4.7 BSB Cod.panj.2 Conclusion of *gaurhi sukhmanī mahalā* 5, final stanza of section 24:8

Figure 4.8 BSB Cod.panj.2 Beginning of *thittī gaurhī mahalā* 5

Figure 4.9 BSB Cod.panj.2 Last copied *paurhī* of *thittī gaurhī mahalā* 5, section 4:4

The four remaining manuscripts at the BSB Trumpp collection all have Trumpp's

marginalia, name, and date on them. BSB Cod.panj.10 contains eight sections from the

Dasam Granth[34]--however, the empty folios at the beginning show that Trumpp was

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[34] The opening folios have a note written by Trumpp, "*Gobind Singh, Granth die ersten funf Bucher*" or "The first Five Books of the *Granth* of Gobind Singh". This text may be an example of a *gutkā*, or book of invocations, called

only aware of the first five. Based on the marginalia, he read the manuscript's contents up to Gurū Gobind Singh's autobiographical work, *Bacitra Nātak*, which provided him significant detail about the Gurū's life.[35] BSB Cod.panj.11 is a compilation of *sākhī*s and a *rahitnāmā* entitled, *Prem Sumār*, acquired by Trumpp at Lahore on February 28, 1872.[36] Manuscript BSB Cod.panj.12 was acquired on the same dates as above; it features an account of important Sikhs based upon the eleventh *vār* by Bhāī Gurdas.[37] Shelf-mark BSB Cod.panj.13 is a rahitnama recorded by Bhāī Prahlād, who was with Gurū Gobind Singh at Abachal Nagar, Nanded where the Gurū recited it.[38] On the last folio, the date for text's completion is given as "*sammat* 1928 *mittī palgun dī* 15, or December 25, 1872." Here, Trumpp has crossed out December and replaced it with February 25, 1872. Lastly, we are given another name for Trumpp's interlocutors, Bāvā Cetan Dās Sādhū.[39]

Trumpp acquired all four of these manuscripts in February 1872 while awaiting

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Das Granthī. These works are not standardized but typically contain sabds from the *Dasam Granth Sāhib* found in BSB Cod.panj.10. A comparison to other manuscripts in the archives housed in Panjāb would assist in such a determination. Louis E. Fenech, *The Sikh Ẓafar-Nāmah of Guru Gobind Singh: A Discursive Blade in the Heart of the Mughal Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Dasama Grantha Dā Paurāṇika Adhiaina* (1965); Robin Rinehart, *Debating the Dasam Granth*, Aar Religion in Translation (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). For a recent introduction to the extant manuscripts, structure, and debates surrounding the Dasam Granth see, Gurinder Singh Mann and Kamalroop Singh, *Srī Dasam Granth Sāhib: Questions and Answers* (London: Archimedes Press, 2011); *The Granth of Guru Gobind Singh: Essays, Lectures, and Translations* (Oxford Oxford University Press, 2015).

[35] This work mentions all the Sikh Gurūs but is not meant to be comprehensive. It emphasizes events pertaining to the last five Gurūs but particularly Tegh Bahādur and Gobind Singh. The narrative is mean to relate the mission Gobind Singh had been ordained to complete.

[36] BSB Cod.panj.11, on the same opening unpaginated folios where the date is in black ink in the top right had in the uppermost point of left corner the *ekangkār* insignia, ੧ੳ, written in blue ink by another hand. This same blue insignia is also on the uppermost left corner of the BSB Cod.panj.12 and BSB Cod.panj.10 where the date and Trumpp's name are given. On BSB Cod.panj.13 manuscript, the ੧ੳ, is on the first folio ff. 1a.

[37] In an open unpaginated folio Trumpp has written, *Sākhīs of the Sikhs*, as a title and on the first folio we can identify the Gurmukhi title, "*sākhī bhai gurdas ji ki var yarvin sikhan ki bhagĀtmāla*". "Bsb Cod.Panj.12, Sākhīs of the Sikhs," in *Münchener Digitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, 1865).

[38] "Bsb Cod.Panj.13, Kurzer Text in Gurmukhi-Schrift (Rahit-Nāmā)," in *Münchener Digitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, 1872).

[39] Ibid. f. 6a

the third commentary, BSB Cod.panj.6, to be completed. Marginal notes in these manuscripts reflect Trumpp's early attempts at translating by sitting with Hīrā Singh, Bāvā Cetan Dās Sādhū, and other *granthī*s to work through what he thought were literal, grammatical explanations of the *Ādi Granth*. A third name given on folio 254 a of BSB Cod.panj.11 states that Sevā Rām Udāsī has completed the work: "*Sevā Rām Udāsī kīnī parcarī.*" These latter two names may have been the copyists that Trumpp used for extant works with which the owners would not part.

Marginal notes in Trumpp's manuscripts from the BSB Collection reflect his early attempts at translating by sitting with Hīrā Singh, Bāvā Cetan Dās Sādhū, and other *granthī*s to work through what he thought were literal, grammatical explanations of the *Ādi Granth*. A third name is given on folio 254 of BSB Cod.panj.11 states that Sevā Rām Udāsī has completed the work: "*Sevā Rām Udāsī kīnī parcarī.*" These latter two names may have been the copyists that Trumpp used for extant works with which the owners would not part.

Examining the translation, Trumpp eventually produced shows that in addition to manuscripts of the *Ādi Granth*, there were four groups of other texts that Trumpp consulted. The way that Trumpp presents information to contextualize Sikh scripture provides clues as to how to access this manuscript archive. These groupings help us understand how the content in the archives gets reordered as a categorical bridge to mediate knowledge about the Sikhs during the British Raj. Through this commissioning, Trumpp produces constructs of Sikh texts— such as lexicons, grammars, folklore, and exegetical, theological works—by the task of translation. This endeavor frustrates and challenges his assumptions when such works are not presented for him to view. Rather than considering that they do not exist, he comes to

distrust his Sikh interlocutors because of his assumption that these texts are necessities that naturally arise as a religious community loses its ability to understand its core texts over time.

The four groupings help Trumpp to create a familiar context for his reader: 1) stories (*parcīān* and *sākhīān*) of the lives of the Gurūs and early Sikhs; 2) religious treatises and codices; 3) the three commentaries that Trumpp had commissioned, analyzed earlier; and 4) two miscellaneous works (See Table 4.2 below). Examining these groups of manuscripts reveals how they assisted Trumpp in making his exercise books and structuring his translation.

The table also shows the kinds of texts presented to Trumpp by Sikh *granthī*s as lexicographies and grammars. Trumpp describes seeking out "the current manuscripts" and the lithographed janamsākhī to compare them to one another. He also directs the value of the janamsākhī toward historical purposes despite recognizing the presence of "miraculous and often absurd stories." He resurrects Nānak of the *Granth*, calling him to witness for the reader that "the man, as I had him before me in his own words and sayings, as contained in the *Granth*, would by no means agree with what the miraculous stories had made of him."[40] Trumpp describes attempting to acquire "older and more trustworthy traditions," as he had been informed of several unnamed individuals who had such manuscripts in their possession. His efforts revealed, however, "none but the usual compilation being forthcoming."[41] There was no appreciable difference in historical or biographical content between the antiquated manuscripts and the current ones. It would remain so until the Colebrooke janamsākhī was placed in a box of *Ādi Granth* manuscript on their way to Trumpp from the India Office Library.

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[40] Trumpp. p. i
[41] Ibid. ii

Table 4.2 Comparison of Manuscript Grouping, their Content, and the Table of Contents (TOC) of Trumpp's 1877 translation of the *Ādī Granth*

Mss Group	Ādi Granth 1877, TOC	Shelf-mark	In text Reference	Folios
Life Stories				
	Janamsākhī (A)	BL Ms.panj.B6	Sākhī sri Bābe Nānak jī kī	1b-231b
	Janamsākhī (B)	BL Ms.panj.B41	Janampatrī Bābe Nānak jī kī	1a-345b
		Bālā Lithograph	Atha Janampatrī Bābe Nānak jī kī	Pages 1-589
	Janamsākhī, Or The Life of Gurū Nānak	Cod.panj.4	Gosti Siddhā nāl	1a-37a
		Cod.panj.4	Ab Sākhī callī	1a-64a
	Life of Sikh Gurūs	Cod.panj.10	Vichitra Nātak	75a-148a
		Cod.panj.11	Praise of the Ten Gurūs	2a-5a
		Cod.panj.11	Sākhīs	5a-254b
		Cod.panj.12	Sākhīs of the Sikhs	1a-291b
Religious Treatises				
	Religion of the Sikhs	Cod.panj.4	Ratanmāla Mahallā 1	1a-23a
		Cod.panj.10	Jāpjī	1a-18b
		Cod.panj.10	Akāl Ustat	18b-74b
		Cod.panj.11	Prem Sumār Granth	255a-294b
		Cod.panj.13	Rahitnāmā	1a-291b
Commentary				
	Language, Composition, and Meter	Cod.panj.5	Ādi Granth – Grammar	1a-66b
	Used In the Granth	Cod.panj.6	Commentary to the Ādi Granth	1a-763b
Miscellaneous				
		Cod.panj.2	Untitled Saloks	Unpaginated
		Cod.panj.17	Rāgu Āsā Mahallā 4	1a-23a

The grouping of 'life stories' in Table 4.2 above includes the janamsākhīs in

recognition of their importance to Trumpp's translation. During his time in Panjāb, Trumpp

came to sense that the lives of Gurū Nānak and subsequent Gurūs were central to how Sikh

intellectuals approached texts such as the *Ādi Granth*. The *sākhī*s likely formed much of the dialogic response to Trumpp's quest for the literal, grammatical understanding of the language of the *Ādi Granth*—or what he called "the traditional explanations" to lines from the *Granth* given to him by the *granthī*s.[42]

BSB Cod.panj.11 reveals changes to the structure of Sikh texts, like the janamsākhīs after Trumpp's visit. Below the date, Trumpp has titled the work *Sākhīs of the 10 Gurūs, Rahit-nāmā (Prem Shumār)*.[43] Seven pages further on in the unnumbered early folios, Trumpp writes "*parcī = sākhī*/story." Much like McLeod assumed the equivalence between janamsākhī and janampatrī, Trumpp assumes the equivalence or interchangeability of *parcī* and *sākhī*.
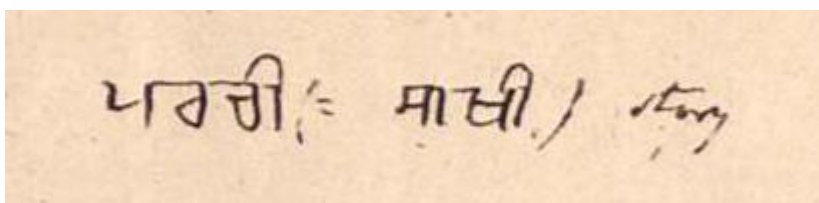

Figure 4.10 BSB Cod.panj.11 Unpaginated folio showing a translation of '*sākhī*'

The BSB Cod.panj.11 manuscript also features atypical incorporation of frontmatter, such as a title and rudimentary table of contents. Traditionally, the colophon was reserved for statements of a work's title and contents: the author would state that he had completed a given work, and then might give his name and/or the date. As we have seen with the *Ādi Sākhī* colophon, authors also commonly stated the benefits accrued by reading, hearing, and studying the text. The colophon in this manuscript continues to provide that function; it states:

ਸੇਵਾਦਾਸ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਕੀਨੀ ਪਰਚਰੀ॥ ਗੁਰ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਕੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੇ ਸਰ ਚਰ ਚਰੀ॥
ਗੁਰ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਬਿਅੰਤ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰ ਜੀ॥ ਕੁਛ ਅਪਨੇ ਭਲੇ ਕਉ ਕੀਨਾ ਛਦੂ ਉਚਾਰ ਜੀ॥

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[42] Ibid. p. vi

[43] The writing in black matches the Trumpp's handwriting in the other manuscripts but the blue ink is in a different hand as it does not match the Trumpp's gurmukhi writing found in "Bsb Cod.Panj.3, Grammar to the Adi Granth," in *Münchener Digitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek).

sevādās udāsī kīnī parcarī. gur ustati kī pothī prem ke sar car carī.
gur ustati biant agam apār jī. kuch apne bhale kau kīnā chadr ucār jī.

Sevādās Udāsī has created this account. The book reaches the height of praise for the guru. This praise is without end, unfathomable, and boundless. Recite this so that you may derive small benefit from it.[44]

In addition to the colophon, however, information has been added to the beginning after the invocation (*ekangkār satigur prasādi*) dedicating the work to the true guru. The title, *Parcī Pātishāh Dasvīn Kī Mahallā 10*, immediately follows. It reads in the following manner:

ath parcī patisahī dasvī kī mahalla10. Prithame dasā mahallā ke nām likhe.
Phiri dasāmahallā kī ustati ke salok likhe. Phiri dasā mahallā kiā sākhiā
prithame nām eh līkhe. GurNānakji.1…

A Parcī/Stories of the Ten Pātishāhs, or those who abide together, 10. Firstly, the names of the ten abodes are given. After which *salok*s in praise of them are written. Lastly, the *sākhī*s relating to the ten abodes is given. Now, the names of the ten abodes are given: Gur Nānak ji.1…[45]

As one section closes and another begins, although there is no distinction by ink color or spacing, the name of the subsection is stated before the actual text.[46] This is a particularly unusual structure for a *gurmukhī* manuscript of the period, where it was more common to indicate narrative movement within a text, using phrases like "the *sākhī* is complete, another *sākhī*"; "speak, *vāhegurū*"; or "they continued forward." [47] The BSB Cod.panj.11, however, was amongst the last batch of manuscripts Trumpp received on February 28, 1871, and reflected the changed context of Trumpp's presence and immediate needs, his awareness of being unfamiliar with the narrative style, and perhaps even his own explicit prompting toward textual structure and content.

Another instance of the inclusion of a table of contents occurs in the 1871

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[44] "Bsb Cod.Panj.11, Sākhīs (Geschichten) of the Ten Gurus – Rahit-Nāmā (Prema Sumār)," ibid. (1872). f. 254a
[45] Ibid. ff. 1a/b
[46] Ibid. ff. 2a, and 5a
[47] This refrain is not specific to Purātan or Bālā manuscripts, the B6, B40, LDP-194, and B41 all use such motifs.

lithographed *Pothījanamsākhī*, printed by Malik Diwān Buttā Singh at Lahore.[48] This manuscript is the earliest known Bālā recension to be printed. At that time, Trumpp was in Lahore looking for reference works, and he expresses awareness of this manuscript being printed when he discusses acquiring numerous janamsākhīs recension for comparative purposes. In *Pothījanamsākhī*, the table of contents is called a *tatkārā*, as in modern standard print books. It includes a full chart, starting with numbering each *sākhī* from 1 to 301, giving a title to each *sākhī* followed by the page number. Within the text, sentences are much longer than had previously been typical. The use of a *daṇḍ* to mark the end of a sentence occurs regularly when a *sākhī* ends, framing a phrase such as "*sākhī pūrī hoī*" ("The *sākhī* is complete") so that the *ḍaṇḍ* appears on both sides of it.[49] This practice significantly aids in visually scanning the text for the uninitiated reader.

We can see the significance of such innovations by comparing it to Gurmukh Singh's preface to Macauliffe's edited janamsākhī. In 1885, Professor Gurmukh Singh praises "Macauliffe Sāhib", as an "*ustād*" of book formatting amongst many other qualities enumerated.[50] Macauliffe recognized how Sikhs were unfamiliar with their books and called for restructuring the janamsākhī to remove some of the aspects that made them difficult to read—which coincidently made it easier for Western trained colonizers as well. These innovations included numbering the *sākhī*s, adding grammatical marks, and separating the words. However, it was not until Bhāī Vīr Singh's 1931 printed edition that the *sākhī*s were given subtitles (*sirnāven*) and a table of contents (*tatkarā*).

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[48] Malik Diwan Butta Singh, ed. *Pothi Janamsakhi* (Lahore: Matbai Aftab Panjab, 1871).
[49] The ḍaṇḍ is also used to frame the occurrence of a sabd, like *sri rag mahall 1,* as well as instances when an explanation is given. Ibid. pp. 5, 13, 15, and 16
[50] M. Macauliffe, ed. *The Most Ancient Biography of Baba Nanak, the Founder of the Sikh Religion, Janam Sakhi Babe Nanak Ji Ki* (Rawalpindi: Gulshan Panjab Press, 1885). p. 9

Interestingly, in an 1890 reprint of *Pothījanamsākhī* by Malik Diwān Buttā Singh, all the earlier structuring elements have been largely removed. The table of contents, any numbering, and even phraseology to mark the end of the *sākhī* are no longer present. In instances of marking a *sabd*, such as *srī rāg mahallā 1*, they are present within the *sabd* in the traditional manner of the SGGS. They remain to mark the *parmarth*, or explanation. On the other hand, following Trumpp's claim, the 1890 edition removes the name of "*Pairhā Mokhā*" on the cover page and replaces it with *Janamsākhī Bhāī Balājī kī*. Both Gurmukhī and Arabic-Indic numerals are found on each page. The topical shift from one *sākhī* to another is also resurrected and given new life: when a significant *sākhī* begins, we see the *dand* marking the phrase, such as ("The *sākhī* of Gurū Nānak's birth proceeds from here forward.")[51] The 1890 reprint of the *Pairhā Mokhā*'s text marks the ongoing shift in the structure of these texts, which occurs decades prior to the changes Bhāī Vīr Singh made in his Purātan Janamsākhī in the 1920s and 1930s.

Despite trying to restructure the *sākhī*s more familiarly, however, the *granthī*s did not ultimately assist Trumpp in translating beyond providing what he understood as the historical context through the Gurū's life narratives. Rather than finding extant manuscripts that explained the *Ādi Granth*, Trumpp turned to focus on the commentaries Hīrā Singh produced for him as an alternate route where he could exert greater influence. We can see this shift in the changes from the first commentary, BSB Cod.panj.4, which opens by saying that the text will explain Gurū Nānak's magnum opus, *japjī sāhib*, but apparently contradicts itself in the next sentence by starting the Siddh Gosti *sākhī*.[52] For instance, BSB Cod.panj.4 states the

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[51] "*age sākhī gurū Nānak jī ke janam kī callī*." Refer to Singh. 1890 edition pp. 5,13,15, and 16
[52] "Bsb Cod.Panj.4, Commentary to the Adi Granth," in *MünchenerDigitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, 1871).

following:

ਸਾਦ ਸਤ ਅਸਤ ਦਾ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਕਰਿ ਗਾਵਦੇ ਹੈਨਿ ਜਤੀ ਜਤ ਕਰ ਗਾਵਦੇ ਹੈਨਿ ਸਤੀ ਸਤ ਕਰ ਗਾਵਦੇ ਹੈਨਿ ਸੰਤੋਖੀ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਕਰਿ ਗਾਵਦੇ ਹੈਨ॥

sād sat asat dā vicār kari gāvde haini jatī jat ker gāvde haini satī sat kar gāve hain santokhī santokh kari gāvde hain.

The *sād* sings, having thought about true non-truth. The *jatī* sings, having become celibate. The *satī* sings, having embraced *sattva* (benefaction). The *santokhī* sings, having renounced.[53]

This is a restated expansion of part of verse 27 from the *japjī sāhib*:

ਸੋ ਦਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੋ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ...ਗਾਵਹਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ...ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸਾਧ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ॥ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਸੰਤੋਖੀ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਵੀਰ ਕਰਾਰੇ

so daru kehā so gharu kehā jitu bai sarab smāle...gave citu guptu likhi jānai likhi dharamu vīcāre...gāvani sādh vīcāre. gāvani jati satī santokhī gave vīr karāre.

Wherein all things have gathered which door is it? Which home? ... If one sings, knowing writing through a veiled consciousness, they repeatedly write about established paths. Thinking in this manner the sadh, jatī, satī, santokhī, and the vīr sing accordingly.

Although there are no direct references, the reader familiar with these texts knows via the allusions and metaphors that this particular *Siddh Gosti* has been tailored to explain *japjī sāhib*. The stanza of *japjī* coincides with questions that the Siddhās ask Gurū Nānak. For the question setting up verse 27, the Siddhās ask, "In which house is it that the Gurū gathers all things together?"

The Gurū's answer leads into the above verse by stating that the Gurū manifests to enable understandings of the Word through the example of their actions. He states that the Gurū's form is that house wherein where infinitely multiple sounds are sounded through the resonance of numerous things. The commentary, therefore, begins with a question about how to conceive of a form wherein there is infinite resonance. Hīrā Singh lends his *Siddh Gosti* a stronger contextual framework, including leading questions, a reference to which *sabd* is being

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[53] Ibid. f. 26b

discussed, and paralleling the numbering to match *japjī sāhib*. Nonetheless, a literal, grammatical translation cannot occur without a coinciding interpretation. The *sākhī*s remain at the forefront of this text with the 'translation' often needing to be disinterred.

BSB Cod.panj.5 sheds light on the *sākhī* structure, presenting a more definitive route to the words, or *artha*, in a *sabd*. Once again, the author assumes the reader's familiarity with the *sabd*, since the text of *japjī sāhib* is not given. The manuscript begins with an annotation to *japjī sāhib*, where reference is made to a section, or *pauṛī*, by number, and then followed by strings of synonyms or comments meant to constrain interpretation.[54] Following the invocation, for instance, Hīrā Singh begins providing definitions for word *sheikh*, which appears in *Pauṛī* 11: "Sheikh, wise, elder, gurūs, *mahant*s, high-*zāt* individuals." This set of associations is followed by another using the word *pīr*: "gurūs, elders, emperors (*pātisāh*), kings (*bhūpati*)."[55]

The futility of the strings of synonyms listed in the above paragraph can be seen when using them to attempt a translation of *pauṛī* 11 of *japjī* as Trumpp required. *Pauṛī* 11 begins in this way:

> *Suniyai surā gunā ke gāh/suniyai sekh pīr patishāh/*
> *Suniyai andhe pāvai rāh/suniyai hāth hovai asgāhu/*
> *Nānak bhagtā sādā vigāsu/suniyai dukh pāp kā nās/*
>
> By listening, enter the shelter abode of attributes
> By hearing, the Sheikhs, *pīr*s, and *pātishāh*s.
> By listening, the blind are placed on the way By
> hearing, the boundless is in hand
> Nānak, the one who does *bhaktī* is in a perpetual state of rising By
> hearing the destruction of pain and evil.

There is virtually no benefit or hindrance in translation based upon the kind of associations

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[54] "Bsb Cod.Panj.5, Commentary to the Adi Granth," in *MünchenerDigitalisierungs Zentrum Digitale Bibliothek* (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek, 1871). f. 24b
[55] Bsb Cod.Panj.5 . f. 1a

developed by the string of synonyms provided above. In the end, and once more, Hīrā Singh's text requires either a degree of familiarity with either the *sabd* or the *sākhī*s.

These commentaries help determine the meaning of sabds in janamsākhī manuscripts written around the same period to the *giānī*s or *granthī*s who wrote, taught, and performed them. They help trace the process of translation engaged in by Trumpp through his *granthī*s. The pervasiveness of the *sākhī*s are not only suggested by Trumpp's statements about the *granthī*'s proffering "traditional explanations," but are also seen directly in the commentaries produced by Hīrā Singh.

Trumpp states that he eventually discovered, or "detected," the existence of commentaries and had them copied, but the lack of a stronger narrative element typical of such manuscripts suggests that the commentaries were produced specifically for him. They approximate lexicographies and grammars by including simple definitions of words through synonyms, with more elaborate explanations under the heading "*artha*." However, the traditional incorporation of references to other works like *sākhī*s continues. These commentaries represent a yearlong effort by Trumpp to explain to a Sikh *granthī* of Lahore his desire for a literal, grammatical explanation of the *Granth* as well as the difficulty the *granthī* faced in meeting this desire.

The marginalia of each commentary further attests to the cross-referencing Trumpp had to do to try and make sense of these commentaries. The gap in time between Cod.panj.5 and Cod.panj.6 was likely due to the time Trumpp took to work through the earlier manuscripts, realizing their faults, as well as his trip to Amritsar to see if the priests there were more amicably conversant. The structure of the janamsākhī was modified through the course of a period during which colonizers were increasingly more invested in manufacturing Sikhism,

from post-rebellion 1870s through to the pre-partition rise in communalism of the 1930s. During this period, older references like "*Paiṛe Mokhe kī sākhī*" or simply "*sākhī sampuran hoī*" were being increasingly replaced with "janamsākhī"—which was rarely used in the manuscript tradition over and against the more popular "*janampatrī.*" Both phrases mark the birth sequence and two different versions and dates are given for Nānak's birth and the spiritual break. It seems possible that Trumpp may have facilitated the use of the table of contents while he was in Lahore, for his benefit and that these "strange" aspects of the texts were quickly discarded and modified.

The reductive translation of all Sikh texts into varieties of janamsākhī, the imposition of chronology via paratextual like the Table of Contents, and the recourse to commissioning lexicographies via native informants collectively speak to how Trumpp's appropriative translation strategies have influenced the way we think of Sikhism and Sikh texts even today. One hundred years later, we will see this same logic of infinite fungibility in W.H. McLeod's translation of the janamsākhīs as a genre of hagiography.

4.4 Translating the Janamsākhī as Hagiography

As we have already seen above with the examples of Malcolm and Trumpp, focusing on the various translation strategies that scholars have used to approach these texts affords us a greater awareness of the limits of existing approaches in unveiling the multiple valences of janamsākhī texts. I turn briefly now to the work of W.H. McLeod, which has been foundational for Sikh Studies as a Western academic discipline, to show how his translation of janamsākhī into the Western category of hagiography limits our ability to access the janamsākhī texts on their terms. Specifically, the history of hagiography as a genre related to the reverence of Christian saints hints at the various ways in which McLeod's translation of Sikh texts occurs via

implicit recourse to a Christian frame that does not fully capture the essence of Sikh thought—

especially with regard to non-oppositional and non-identity based forms of thought and

language.

These translations are meant to reflect the authentic quietist model of inner religiosity

that believers in Nānak adhered to. McLeod turns to contemporary political history to argue that

the janamsākhī as hagiography helps to establish a unitary foundation for the Sikh religion. This

in turn gives the sense that Sikh identity is singular and connected exclusively to that founding

moment, which is represented in the janamsākhīs. Despite declaring his project's failure to

change the Sikh community's perception of its early literature, McLeod redoubles his efforts to

the show a need for the hagiographical approach to the janamsākhī archive. McLeod returns to

the foundations of the tradition to interdict the notion of a central myth about Nānak as a savior,

this representation of Nānak as a personal savior is central to McLeod's mechanism of

translation.

McLeod gives three reasons that the modern global Sikh community should share his

concern about the so-called "traditional" biographical perspective. The first of these concerns is

potential for misinterpretation created by literal readings of the janamsākhī, which would prevent

correct understanding of Nānak's actual life—and yet, without this historical information, the

interpretation of the SGGS can never be satisfactory. Without first firmly setting Nānak's life

within its historical context, no systematization of Nānak's teaching can occur. Secondly,

because the janamsākhīs are misrepresented as biography, their true value as sources for the later

panth's answers to identity cannot be grasped. Lastly, in contemporary Sikh society and the Sikh

diaspora, literally reading the janamsākhī as biographic or as "seemingly harmless stories can be

lethal to one's faith." The miracle stories of the janamsākhī, for instance, would be met with

skepticism by modern Sikhs normalized to Western normative values, leading them to turn away from Sikhism. This literal reading could also lead to the association of Sikhism exclusively with the miraculous aspects of the janamsākhī, and therefore further the potential for misconstruing the entire tradition and its tenets.[56]

McLeod's theory about hagiography, the salvific Nānak myth, and the formation of religious identity begs the question about how he supports these ideas via his translations of janamsākhī accounts. At one point, for instance, McLeod notes that the "nature of the janam-sākhī is indicated" in the colophon of a janamsākhī:

> He who reads or hears this sākhī shall attain to the supreme rapture. He who hears, sings or reads this sākhī shall find his highest desire fulfilled, for through it he shall meet Gurū Bābā Nānak. He who with love sings of the glory of Bābā Nānak or gives ear to it shall obtain joy ineffable in all that he does in this life, and in the life to come salvation.[57]

However, the colophon of this text does not contain a *sākhī*, so that its use as the sole support for the salvific myth seems suspect. However, McLeod is positing a single myth about salvation pervading every *sākhī* that attests to Sikhs' beliefs and formation of a communal religious identity partially does away with the need for textual support—since myth does not operate at the

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[56] A legitimate concern about Sikhs experiencing repeated cycles of violence, coupled with caring for the continuity of the Sikh community, places McLeod's scholarship as a political engagement seeking to re-orient Sikh temporality and affectively graft a form of historical consciousness which connects identity to its foundation. McLeod suggests that only by adopting a representative, or mediatory, understanding of literature and language can Sikhs guarantee the future limits of their identity and peaceful integration into global systems of exchange; his translations reflect this understanding of language. Although written a decade after *EST* was published, the enumeration of these threats relates to arguments made in both *GNSR* and *EST*. They play upon anxieties about the future of the Sikh community both in India and in the diaspora by suggesting other normative values would usurp the affiliations of young Sikhs and threaten the authenticity, continuity, and affectivity of Nānak's teachings in a contemporary community. McLeod hopes to return the community to a moment in its history that would beneficially address its contemporary crisis of identity. However, he does so using a technique that colonial scholars such as Malcolm, Trumpp, and Macauliffe all used in different ways—that of disintegration and descent into the dominant religious culture. In doing so, he adopts political strategies used by the Akālī Dal and SGPC for creating a cohesive identity through inflammatory rhetoric about defending an originary form of Sikh identity against an outside threat. W. H. McLeod, "The Origins of the Sikh Tradition," in *The Sikhs: History, Religion, and Society* (New York: Columbia Univesity Press, 1989). pp. 21-23 McLeod continues to write about the janamsākhī as hagiography despite acknowledging its failings. W.H. McLeod, "The Hagiography of the Sikhs," in *According to Tradition: Hagiographical Writing in India*, ed. Winand M. Callewaert and Rupert Snell (Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz, 1994).
[57] W. H. McLeod, *Early Sikh Tradition: A Study of the Janamsakhis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). p.11

level of content but inheres in the symbols and significations the content enables. However, I argue that the incorporation of salvific language through translation facilitates even the use of the colophon to support the idea of a salvific myth.

A comparison to the original text shows that McLeod's liberal glosses and convenient omission of the last lines of the colophon help align the above translation with a soteriological view of Nānak. The *Ādi Sākhī* text is as follows:

ਜੋ ਇਹ ਸਾਖੀ ਕੋਈ ਪੜੈ ਸੁਣੈ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਪਰਮਗਤਿ ਹੋਵੈਗੀ॥ ਜੋ ਏਹੁ ਸਾਖੀ ਸੁਣੈ ਗਾਵੈ ਪੜੈਗਾ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਭਾਵਨੀ ਥਾਇ ਪੜੈਗੀ॥ ਅਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਾਬੇ ਸਾਥਿ ਜਾਇ ਮਿਲੈਗਾ॥ ਜੋ ਬਾਬੇ ਕਾ ਜਸੁ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਨਾਲਿ ਗਾਵੈਗਾ ਸੁਣੈਗਾ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਈਹਾ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਸਗਲੇ ਰਾਸਿ ਹੋਹਿਗੇ॥ ਅਰੁ ਆਗੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਾਵੈਗਾ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਬਖਸੈ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਲਾਹ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ॥ ਜਿਸ ਕੇ ਕਰਮ ਹੋਹਿਗੇ ਸੋ ਏਹ ਬਾਬੇ ਕੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਪੜੈ ਸੁਣੈਗਾ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਓੜਕੁ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹੀ॥

jo ih sākhī koī paṛhai sunai tis kī paramgati hovaigī. jo ih sākhī sunai gāvai paṛhaigā tis kī bhāvanī thāe paṛhaigī. aru guru babe sāth jāe milaigā. jo bābe kā jasu prīt nāl gāvaigā sunaigā tin kai īhā ke kāraj sagale rāsi hohaige. aru āge mukti pāvaigā. jis no bakhsai siphati salāh. Nānak pātisāhī pātisāh. jis ke karam hohaige so ih babe kī siphati paṛhai sunaigā. parmesar kī kudrati oṛaku koī nāhī.

Whosoever reads or hears this sākhī will attain the highest state. Whosoever hears, sings, reads this sākhī, this will occur through their is-ness. And they will be taken to the presence of gurū bābā for the meeting. Whoever sings or hears the praises of bābā intimately, their acts committed here shall all be overlooked. In so doing, they will don [adopt] *muktī*. Nānak, whomsoever gave over to saying and performing attributive invocations, they are given sovereignty and the presence of the Sovereign. Whomsoever will be given over to the Sovereign's generosity, in that manner they will hear and study Baba's [Nānak's] attributions. However, to no one is the [knowledge of] the full nature of the Creator.[58]

McLeod's translation of the colophon omits these last four phrases from the colophon, which is important to the colophon's meaning. Furthermore, his translation lends importance to Guru Nānak as a focal point for a Sikh's "highest desire"; fulfilling this desire means attaining "supreme rapture" by meeting Nānak, while this meeting is enabled by lovingly singing "the

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[58] Singh. p. 101

glory of Bābā Nānak." Having attained such height, a joyful affect pervades all subsequent actions.

Finally, McLeod refers to the cycle of rebirth and inserts the notion of karma by suggesting that the joyful actions in this life will lead to salvation in the "life to come." Stopping at the word *muktī*, or salvation, the portion that he does translate incorporates an experiential religious language drawn from Christian soteriology while retaining what McLeod understands as central Hindu philosophic principles. This translation resonates with McLeod's suggestions that Nānak inherited a school of thought called *nirguna bhaktī*, which was propounded by members of the Sant Tradition. This understanding of Nānak's theological inheritance suggests that Nānak did not contribute South Asian canons of thought, that Sikh texts adulterated forms of Hindu epistemology, and that no specific epistemological invention occurred with the Sikh tradition.[59]

However, a leading Singh Sabhā reformer, Bhāī Vīr Singh, discusses *muktī* in detail, and attributes its primary meaning to the Arabic root, (kh-l-s) خلص, or being free from the admixture.[60] Rather than attaining salvation after a later rebirth, *muktī* describes a state of complete being or خلاصى (*khallāsī*). He describes the nuances of the meaning of *muktī* as relating to the afflictions (*dukh*) of being embodied, referencing the *mimāmsa, nyāya, visheshika, sānkha, yoga, vedānta, cārvākiyya*, and *bodhī* perspectives.[61] He goes on to briefly discuss Judaic, Christian, and Islamic associations of *muktī* (salvation) with going to heaven. Lastly, he discusses the Western philosophical perspectives of Plato, Kant, and Schopenhauer by stating that in their works, *muktī* closely approximates vedāntic and *udāsī* notions of total renunciation

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[59]. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).pp.151-158
[60] This is a long entry in Bhai Vir Singh, ed. *Shri Guru Granth Kosh Volume 3* (Amritsar: Khalsa Tract Society, 1955). pp. 997-999
[61] With this reference to the classical schools of Hindu/Indic thought, I am transliterating Bhāī Vīr Singh's spellings.

or abnegating self-denial (*pūran tiāg*). These types of *muktī* are not propitious and should be avoided.[62]

Instead, the idea of freedom, escape, or breaking out from being *mukat* (or complete) constitutes a cognitive focus that propels one into the presence of the All, or God. *Muktī* represents the cognitive unfolding of that presence and perception. This understanding is a movement away from the cognitive structure based upon negation, and striving to attain this type of *muktī* is beneficial.[63] According to this understanding, the janamsākhī, rather than conveying a soteriology through the Nānak myth, shows Nānak's actions and speech, which disclose this alternate ontology. Furthermore, Nānak's actions and speech can guide those who practice his way.

The lines omitted from the colophon by McLeod also take away from his idea of a Sikh soteriology based upon the salvific Nānak myth presiding in the janamsākhī. These lines reference the closing lines of the twenty-fifth stanza Nānak's *japjī sāhib*, the most central formation of this writing, and offer a way to explain Nānak and the janamsākhī. These lines follow immediately after the mention of *muktī*:

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[62] Bhāī Vīr Singh quotes a line from the SGGS for support of this claim: ਮੁਕਤਿ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਭੀ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਿਆਗੇ

This is understood by Bhāī Vīr Singh as referencing the forms of mukti he mentions, saying that there is no recourse in such mukti, the wise should avoid them. Singh, *Shri Guru Granth Kosh Volume 3*. p.998

[63] Again, Bhāī Vīr Singh provides examples from the *SGGS*: (1) ਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲਾਰੇ, and (2) ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਜਿਸੁ ਏਕੁ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਲੇ

These two verses can be taken together to describe how the Guru's thought mukti. It states that rather than being desirous for political authority or salvation (*mukti*) one should desire the felicitousness (*prīti*) of mind which brings one before the lotus feet (kneeling before God). Having less to do with love, this verse speaks of a change in cogitation, a suitability or felicity of mind (*man prīti*) which brings the lotus feet to presence. I have avoided the more rote translation of *prīti* as love, *man prīti* is a gift bestowed upon an individual by *Prītam*, the one with prīt. I take the usage of *prīti* here to be closer to *sa'da*, a state of felicity, as it retains a relationship with being in the presence of God and results in an attitude of helpfulness (or aiding others/*sevā*). The second verse states, "That person is complete who, having placed their focus upon Oneness (*eku*), remains with the All (*hari*). Mukti is remaining with the All, abiding in that presence, though a change in cognition which appropriates perception through the attainment of that presence. It is not oriented toward death but to completion or living completely by fixing the mind on Oneness (*ektā*) to perceive the All (*hari*). Ibid.

ਅਰੁ ਆਗੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਾਵੈਗਾ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਬਖਸੈ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਲਾਹ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ॥ ਜਿਸ ਕੇ ਕਰਮ ਹੋਹਿਗੇ ਸੋ ਏਹ ਬਾਬੇ ਕੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਪੜੈ ਸੁਣੈਗਾ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਓੜਕੁ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹੀ॥

...aru āge mukti pāvaigā. jis no bakhsai siphati salāh. Nānak pātisāhī pātisāh. jis ke karam hohaige so ih babe kī siphati paṛhai sunaigā. parmesar kī kudrati oṛaku koī nāhī

…In so doing, they will don [adopt] *muktī*. Nānak, whomsoever gave over to saying and performing attributive invocations, they are given sovereignty and the presence of the Sovereign. Whomsoever will be given over to the Sovereign's generosity, in that manner they will hear and study Baba's [Nānak's] attributions. However, to no one is the [knowledge of] the full nature of the Sovereign.[64]

In the reference given to Nānak's *japjī sahib*, as well as the closing two sentences, there are clear indications about what will or might be heard (*sunaigā*) and studied (*paraigā*) if an individual is granted generosity. The *sākhī* enacts, or puts into play, the attributes of Nānak; these attributes are not to be thought as those of the Sovereign Lord's because no one can completely attain that full nature. Here, McLeod does not stress the relevance of Nānak's embodiment—he focuses instead on Nānak's attributes since a myth of Nānak as savior cannot function without a focus on his personal embodied charisma and character.

If we turn the reader to the entire twenty-fifth stanza alongside the colophon, the strength of the soteriological myth further weakens.[65] The stanza states that the generosity, quality, and form of the Sovereign cannot be accounted for; attempts to do so lead to disagreement and altercation. This inability, however, is also to be understood as a gift from the Giver. Release from a constrained existence (*bandi khallāsī*) is given to us by the Known-to-itself and the Given-to-itself; accepting this truth is the beginning.

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[64] Singh.
[65] The entire stanza reads as follows:
ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਰਮੁ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ॥ ਵਡਾ ਦਾਤਾ ਤਿਲੁ ਨ ਤਮਾਇ॥ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਜੋਧ ਅਪਾਰ॥ ਕੇਤਿਆ ਗਣਤ ਨਹੀ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥ ਕੇਤੇ ਖਪਿ ਤੁਟਹਿ ਵੇਕਾਰ॥ ਕੇਤੇ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਮੁਕਰੁ ਪਾਹਿ॥ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੂਰਖ ਖਾਹੀ ਖਾਹਿ॥ ਕੇਤਿ ਦੂਖ ਭੂਖ ਸਦ ਮਾਰ॥ ਏਹਿ ਭਿ ਦਾਤਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਦਾਤਾਰ॥ ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੀ ਭਾਣੈ ਹੋਇ॥ ਓੁਹੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਤਿਆ ਮੁਹਿ ਖਾਇ॥ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੇ ਦੇਇ॥ ਆਖਹਿ ਸਿ ਭਿ ਕੇਈ ਕੇਇ॥ ਜਿਸਨੋ ਬਖਸੇ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਲਾਹ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ॥੨੫॥

The twenty-fifth stanza, then, not only speaks to man's inability to account for the Sovereign but also states that becoming accepting of this reality prepares an individual for release from constraints that prevent cognition through sovereignty. If we read further up, stanzas three and eleven speak of singing, reading, and hearing—all of which are mentioned in the colophon. The hearer who listens to reading (*kathā*) and studies it prepares the mind for receptivity by attaining a state of attentive equipoise.[66] Stanza three describes a process through which the singer is given to witness the arrival of the Sovereign: this does not occur through belief in a person but by engaging in lingual uses or practices.

The colophons use similar phrasing about the *sākhī*s—such as the statement that reading, singing, or hearing allows one to attain a higher state (*paramgati*). The importance of enacting such change is central to engaging in the practice of singing, hearing, and studying because, through our way of thinking, our reading can be aligned with the thinking present in the *sākhī* (*tis kī bhāvanī thāe paṛhaigī*). This is preparatory work toward a felicity that alters all future actions (*kāraj*) so that they are acceptable (*rāsi hohaige*). If an individual does this, they are walking alongside Nānak on the way to meeting the Sovereign (*gurū bābe sāth jāe milaigā*).

The colophon, then, does not simply address Nānak's salvific prowess, but rather focuses on his writing and other lingual acts so that others can follow this way of thinking. Rather than being a savior, Nānak is an appropriate protagonist for his writing. By reading the colophon in this way, we can begin shifting the analytic focus on janamsākhī away from Nānak, community, and identity—instead realigning our thought to consider the janamsakhi as neither biography nor hagiography but as a reflection of Nānak's way of thinking (*Nānak panth*). By construing

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[66] ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮਾਨੁ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ॥ ...ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ॥੧੧॥ See *japji sahib*. Manmohan Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib: English and Panjabi Translation* (Amritsar: Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1964).

Nānak's establishment of a *panth* as a pathway through thought, we can move away from translation strategies that aim to reinforce religious identity, and toward an honoring of the janamsākhīs' propagation of non-oppositional thought and language.

4.5 Translation of Nānak's Original Mystical Experience

A decade after McLeod's works, Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh, a scholar of religious literature of the Panjāb, takes up the shortcomings of the hagiographic perspective in an essay entitled, "The Myth of the Founder: The Janamsakhis and the Sikh Tradition" (1992).[67] She recognizes that the hagiographic approach has not facilitated greater access to the sociocultural history of the Sikh tradition. In contrast to McLeod, then, Guninder-Kaur reads the mythic elements of Nanak's experience of God at Sultānpur as found in Bhāī Vīr Singh's edited version of the Purātan janamsākhī using a metahistorical phenomenological approach. To facilitate her analysis, she puts forth a concept called the "aestheticontologic" experience of God.

Aestheticontology refers to a personal temporal experience of Ultimate Reality. It combines aesthetics, which gives intimacy and directness to the vision of God, with ontological "*is- ness,"* or substance of that vision. This is meant to separate the Sikh tradition from issues that plague Western philosophical divisions that contrast beauty, the object of aesthetics, and truth, the object of logic.[68] Echoing the hagiographic perspective, aestheticontology claims to provide a mechanism to account for the janamsākhī totally by relinking or unifying legendary and mythic aspects with historical fact. The neologism "aestheticontology," then, focuses the

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[67] Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh, "The Myth of the Founder: The Janamsakhi and Sikh Tradition," *History of Religions: An International Journal for Comparative Studies* 31, no. 4 (1992). pp. 329-343
[68] The guru's experience or vision of Ultimate Reality depicts "the coexistence of sensuous knowledge…and absolute Truth. Ethics would be its natural co-product." Ibid. p. 336-337

janamsākhī toward an affective history of being to vouchsafe the uniqueness and independence of Sikh identity through living experience.

Much like McLeod presupposes his thesis regarding the centrality of the salvific Nānak myth when translating the colophon of the *Ādi Sakhi* I discussed above, Nikki Guninder Kaur Singh makes certain glosses in translation to align the account with her thesis. For example, a conceptually and stylistically dense passage from the MSS Panjabi B6 janamsākhī gets simplified in this account through her translation.[69] Some of the difficult aspects of this passage include stylistic shifts between two locations: The True Court/Shrine (*saccī dargah* or *dargah parmesar kī*) and the ongoing search for Nānak at Sultanpur at Daulat Khan's court. The movement between these two loci is marked by the phrase, "by the sanction of the highest-lord it happened" (*āgiā parmesar kī hoī*). This phrase plays upon the temporal disjunction between events in Daulat Khan's court and Parmesar's (God's) court about Nānak's presence, deliberately obscuring Nānak's physical location.

Furthermore, ideas like *nadr* (consideration), *karam* (generosity), *salama* (prostration), *hukam* (restraint), and *sifat* (attributes) disappear from the translation. Before drinking the cup of *amrit*—or, in the B6, "*mere nām kā piālā*"—Nānak performs *tasleem* and then drinks from the chalice. The term "*taslīm*" can simply refer to accepting an offering, but it also refers to the Arabic statement, "May the peace and blessings of God be upon you" (السلام عليكم ورحمة الله). The ingesting of names (*nām*) mirros a ritual practiced in Islamic silsilahs. As part of intiation into knowledge practices, a murīd makes *bay'ah* to a pīr, this signifies willingness to align with the pīr's method of teaching. In return, the pīr initiates the murīd by giving *'ahd* which can involve

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[69] MSS Panjabi B6 is the shelfmark for a manuscript at the British Library, London. It is the manuscript which was given to the India Office Library by Henry Colebrooke, used by Trumpp in his translation of the *Adi Granth*, and copied by Singh Sabha reformers following Trumpp's translation of it. See Chapter two of this dissertation for a discussion.

ingestion (taking into the body) the names of the One from the Qur'an written in black ink by the pīr. This process of taking the names into the body literally signifies beginning the process of becoming aware of One through proximity with the One.

Following this moment in the janamsakhi, the (unnamed) speaker says to Nānak, "I am with you, and I do bless and exalt you. Whoever remembers you will have my favor."[70] However, the manuscript states that through Nānak's *nām* the unnamed speaker will enact upliftment and that those who recite Nānak's *nām* will attain the same state of upliftment.[71]

These obscurities in the B6 manuscript lead to relatively basic questions: Where did Nānak go? Did he go anywhere? What does this passage express? However, when the difficult and ambiguous parts of this anecdote are removed, these important questions disappear in favor of the simplistic connection made between events in Nānak's life and a singular Sikh tradition or identity. However, ignoring these questions also means that despite suggestions to the contrary the "mythic dimensions" of the sākhīs are not engaged through aestheticontology.

Despite being consistent with assumptions about Nānak as a devotee (*bhaktā*) of God, Guninder Kaur's reference to Nānak as a devotee in the translation of Vaīn Pravesh presents certain inconsistencies with the way Nānak is presented in the Sultānpur sequence. Nānak has established a following for his teachings and praxis by the time he enters the Vaīn. By this time in the narrative arc of the B6, from which the Purātan Janamsakhi is primarily based, Nānak has established a following with whom he regularly engaged in practices of singing (*gāvai*); he

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[70] Singh. p. 332
[71] This account is given in the B6 between folios 33a and 35b
ਨਾਨਕ ਮੈ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਲਿ ਹਾ॥ ਮੈ ਤੇਰੇ ਤਾਈ ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ਕੀਆ ਹੈ॥ ਅਰੁ ਜੋ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ ਲੇਵੈਗਾ ਸੋ ਸਭ ਮੈ ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ਕੀਤੈ ਹੇਨਿ॥
nānak mai tere nāli hā. mai tere tāī nihālu kīā hai. aru ho terā nāo levaigā so sabh mai nihālu kītai heni.
Nānak, I am at your side. Through you, I uplift. All those who take your *nam* are uplifted.

explained the Supreme Lord (*parmesar*) to them (*sunai*), they ate communally (*langar*), and together engaged in beneficent acts (*sevā*).[72]

When translating the moment that Nānak enters the Divine Court, Guninder Kaur writes: "*As the Primal Being willed, Nānak the devotee, was ushered into the Divine Presence.*"[73] However, in depicting this same moment, the B6 states "*jo nānaku bhagatu hā hājaru hoā.*"[74]

The term *bhagatu* is open to two interpretations here: (1) Nānak is a holy-man, and (2) he is a devotee. Examining the Panjābī phrase more in depth show that there is little content supporting Nānak being a devotee in the typical sense of being a disciple of a person or a devotee of a specific deity (*swarūp*).

While in the Divine Court, Nānak is told to stay untouched by the world and remain in the name (*nām*), charity (*dān*), ablutions (*isnān*), beneficent acts (*sevā*), and to recite (*simran*).[75] Nānak also encouraged his disciples to perform ablutions and *nām-simran*. Beyond the establishment of a community of followers, there have been other indications to suggest that he was considered a holy-man or intimate of God. Rāe Bhau Bhaṭṭī, who was the chief of Nānak's hometown, Talwandī, repeatedly recognized Nānak's proximity to God; his teachers recognized a penchant for expounding upon Ultimate Reality; and other terms signaled his intimacy with the divine, such as *faqīr*, *dīvānā*, and *majdūm*. Furthermore, when referring to a devotee engaged in *bhagtī*, it was more common to use a verbal construction like *bhagtī kare*. Being a *bhagat*

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[72] Ibid. ff. 31a-32a
[73] Singh. 332
[74] ਨਾਨਕ ਜੋ ਭਗਤ ਹਾ ਹਾਜਰ ਹੋਆ॥ "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī," (British Library, London). f. 36a
[75] Ibid. ff. 33a/b

connoted someone who had completely released himself to *parmesar*, whereas doing *bhagtī* meant being engaged in a practice that might enable an individual to become a *bhagat*.[76]

With its recourse to affect and "is-ness", aestheticontology furthers McLeod's systematization of Sikh theology through an evental reading of Nānak's inner experience of Divine Voice. However, it radicalizes the approach to the origin for creating a religious identity by suggesting the event itself is the source of Sikh exemplarity. Here, Nānak is imagined as the first Sikh; the first "devotee" of Sikhism; and the original form, source, substance, and circumscription of all Sikh-ness. In doing so, Sikhs locate a moment in the janamsākhī wherefrom their claim of the originality of Nānak's experience can be linked to the univocity of their identity. Nānak's entry into the presence of the Ultimate Reality makes him the first Sikh: he is made a Sikh by this experience, and it excludes all other identities.

Guninder Kaur uses an aestheticontologic interpretation of Nānak's experience to further claims about the exemplary nature of Sikh identity. McLeod's attempt to reunify moves beyond the crisis of Sikh identity through expressions of care applied to the janamsakhi are usurped: the interiority meant to represent a peaceable, quietist practice of the true religion gets radicalized through the notion of an origin to represent an exemplary moment of difference or distantiation. In this way, Guru Nānak comes to be located through a hermeneutical project which eventually sought to conduct a psychological reading of both the janamsakhi and the SGGS to reveal the personality that purportedly lay at the heart of both. Guninder Kaur effectively locates the crystallization of core codified legal principles and community through Nānak's experience.

Nānak's experience of the Divine Voice, if taken as an origin, appropriates affectivity while making an expression of true religious experience impossible. This is because true

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[76] Bhāī Vīr Singh maintains this distinction in his entries on ਭਗਤ (*bhagat*) and ਭਗਤਿ (*bhagati*). See Singh, *Shri Guru Granth Kosh Volume 3*. pp.948-949

experience replicates Nānak's supposedly interior communication with the Divine Voice. While the interior experience legitimizes a distinct separate community of believers, the Sikhs, these believers sanctify the embodied experience of Nānak during his lifetime as found in the janamsākhī. In aestheticontology, the singular conception of Sikh identity derives its authority from the evocative or evangelical effects of Sikh practices like *kīrtan* or *nām-simran* which bear witness to Nānak's originality. This understanding makes studies of Sikhs reliant upon meta-discursive categories to care for and perpetuate the materialization of a Sikh-egoity.

4.5 Conclusion

Though roughly two hundred years have passed since Malcolm's *Sketch of the Sikhs*, the translation strategies that he used in creating this work have persisted in myriad ways since then—including his recourse to the use of native informants to elaborate upon the manuscripts of Sikh texts and his supposedly "sympathetic approach" toward Sikhs that manifested in his attempt to define—and perhaps create—a unique identity for the community. Malcolm's dialogue with native informants is echoed in Trumpp's methodology for translating, although Trumpp's dissatisfaction with the responses of his native informants led to his outright commissioning of lexicographies that could help him translate the janamsākhis and the *Ādi Granth* via a straightforwardly representational understanding of language, in which translation acts as a series of word-for-word substitutions ideally represented—as we can see from his marginal comments—by an equal sign.

Furthermore, Malcolm's "sympathy" for the Sikh community appears in McLeod's careful approach to translating the janamsākhī as a genre of hagiography, which he hopes will move the community away from violence via the salvific Nānak myth. Similarly, Nikki Guninder Kaur Singh's aestheticontology posits a unique Sikh identity that finds its origins in Nānak's

experience with the Divine Voice, which modern Sikh practice sanctifies, approximates and repeats. However, her notion of aestheticontology rests on a translation of Nānak as a "devotee" of a tradition of *bhaktī* whose existence she presupposes.

The above survey of previous scholars' translation methods is not meant to privilege the construction of my approach to Sikh textuality, however, but to recognize that one legitimate form of thinking about texts like the janamsākhī can begin by engaging the routes of thinking established by the texts themselves. In other words, by beginning with the janamsākhīs, we can consider the types of referential preconditions and varieties of referential systems that janamsākhīs contain. The existing approaches to janamsākhī have not accessed these referential systems because of the very assumptions with which scholar-translators have approached these texts: that "Sikh" refers to a unique identity and community, and that language is purely representational and translation ideally transparent. In contrast, I propose that we think of "Sikh" as a dynamic process of becoming, rather than a static identity and that we approach this non-oppositional understanding of existence via an ontological understanding of language, in which language is a living Gurū.

I argue that by realigning our approach to these texts with these interrelated understandings of identity and language in mind, we are better situated to understand (janam)sākhīs as a form of *kathā* that the traditional Sikh exponents have used throughout history to translate the Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib. In the next and final chapter, I demonstrate the interpretive possibilities opened up by this shift in approaching Sikh texts by turning to my translations and interpretations of anecdotes from janamsākhīs that enact a reading practice that honors language as being and existence as non-oppositional.

CHAPTER V

Interpreting Janamsākhī through the System of *Kathā*

This chapter explores different avenues for interpreting a selection of *sākhīs* from major janamsākhī manuscripts. By reading *sākhīs* like this, I turn my inquiry regarding non-oppositionality and performance of living texts through *kathā dī parpāṭī* to possible avenues of interpreting janamsākhī manuscripts for continuity between different nodes.[1] I suggest that attention to literary devices used by authors of major recensions, stylistic techniques for moving the narrative and marking changes in time, as well as the various mechanisms for epistemic engagement using a creative literary medium assist in highlighting humanistic concerns in janamsākhī literature. To articulate this gesture, I rely on thinking of the janamsākhī as a specific instance of compiling sākhī literature. Sākhīs are a broader form of testimonial writing that act as witnesses to the efficacy of *bāṇī* as used by Nānak to express his ideas about Oneness. *Sākhīs* can exemplify any individual who embodies and acts upon the priniciple of non-oppositional living taught by Nānak. What I have referred to as a network of interpretations that includes exponents, practitioners, and modern scholars writing primarily in Panjābī or English are created by the extent to which a notion of *sākhī* used within a singular node of interpretation draws upon sacred geography, temporality, or the artful imaginative work of expositing upon *bāṇī*.

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[1] For a detailed discussion of *kathā dī parpātī* and its use by exponents of Nanak's philosophy of Oneness see Chapter 2 in this dissertation.

A recent example of the use of *sakhīs* in calendrical art illustrates the relations between *sākhī* and *bāṇī* as well as showing other possible nodes that arise through such testimonies.[2] The *sākhī* about Gurū Gobind Singh as a child at Patna shows how focusing on the geographical or temporal location of its "occurrence" predisposes a historical account or *itihāsak kathā*. A literal, grammatical, or syntactic interpretation of the story favors a theological missionizing form of pracār. By thinking the *sākhī* as akatha-kathā and beginning with *bāṇī* from the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* demonstrates interpretive possibilities opened by moving between ephemeral poiesis and seemingly stable prose.

A *gurdwārā* along the River Gangā named Kangan Ghāt Sāhib marks the setting for a *sākhī* about Gurū Gobind Singh, the last living Sikh Gurū. As a young child, Gobind Rāe was gifted two gold bracelets by pious Sikhs in deference toward his father, Gurū Tegh Bahādur, who was the reigning Sikh Gurū. While Gobind Rāī was playing along with the banks of the Ganga, one of the gold bracelets fell into the river. Gobind Rāī's parents brought divers to the banks of the Ganga to search for the lost bracelet. They searched the river and its banks but were unable to recover the lost gold. In dismay, they turned to Gobind asking him if he recalled approximately where the bracelet had fallen. The child gave his response by taking off the remaining bracelet and throwing it in the river to indicate where the first bracelet had sunk into the current. The gathering crowd of onlookers was shocked by his disregard for such valuables given as expressions of pious devotion to the lineage of Sikh-Gurūs.

*Sākhī*s are typically analyzed historically for what they say about the Gurūs' lives or how they reflect the community's understanding of itself through it representations of the Gurūs. There are several ways that one might wade into this anecdotal *sākhī* about Gurū Gobind Singh.

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[2] For a discussion of how sākhīs are integral to popular Sikh art, portraiture, and calendars see W. H. McLeod, *Popular Sikh Art* (Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Firstly, one might begin by acknowledging the potential historicity of this *sākhī* to proceed with a rationalizing schematic to assess where it encodes an actual event. Such a reading would follow the dominant mode of approaching *sākhī*s for factual, historical content.

One might also read the *sākhī* using cues from purānic myth cycles to determine the moral or pedagogical content—a process in which traditional exegetes and Sikh scholars engage when populating the *sākhī* with meaning. In this reading, lessons about charity, gift giving, intent, and attachment could be pinpointed, and the *sākhī* made to represent a demonstration by the child Gobind about the inconsequentiality of worldly goods and attachment to them.[3] Furthermore, one might read this *sākhī* to suggest a moral about detachment from the external world in preference for an inward meditative outlook. Moreover, we could find support for these speculations through conversations with Sikhs about what the *sākhī* means. This method derives authority from an authentic native voice that testifies to the *sākhī's* moral truth.

However, both these perspectives legitimize speculation about the *sākhī's* truth conditions by finding rationalizations that are brought to bear upon the story. Both readings contour the contents to a perspective that exists outside the confines of the story. However, what of the contents and their interpretive depths? Is it possible to begin by a reading of sākhī by entering through the content of its testimony? What does sākhī attest to?

This form of argumentation is not limited to academic studies but is pervasive in Sikh lived experience. An example of a moralistic reading of this specific *sākhī* hung in my family home for decades in the form of a calendar painting. In 1979, the Panjāb and Singh Bank Ltd. issued their annual calendar in commemoration of the five-hundredth birth anniversary of the third Gurū, Amar Dās. The bank's chairman, Inderjīt Singh, mentions in his *dhoā*, or homage,

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[3] Such a reading would constitute *pracār*, or a theological missionizing form of *kathā* explored in Chapter 2.

that 1979 had also been designated globally as "Year of the Children," or *bāl varhā*. The bank

had therefore selected paintings that spoke to both occasions by including a mix of paintings

depicting episodes from both Gurū Amar Dās's life and the childhoods of Gurū Hargobind and

Gurū Gobind Singh.

One painting shows the child Gurū Gobind Singh pointing at a bracelet that had fallen

into the Gangā River. The child's parents are looking upon their child; there are three distinctly

clad men behind them whose gaze is upon the bracelet, and two men wearing nothing but

loincloths flank Gobind on the stepped bank of the river. A young girl standing beside Gobind's

mother stares out from the scene to meet the viewer's gaze. The caption gives the title,

"*nihkāmī*" and it reads:

> ਬਾਲਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸੋਨੇ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੜਾ ਵੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਵਗਾਹ ਮਾਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ 'ਸਦਾ ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਦੀ ਰਛਾ' ਰਖਣੀ। ਚੋਭੇ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਛਣ ਤੇ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸੋਨੇ ਦਾ ਕੜਾ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਗਿਰਿਆ, ਦਸਮੇਸ਼ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੜਾ ਵੀ ਸੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਆਕ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ: 'ਉਥੇ'।
>
> As a child Gurū Gobind Singh threw into the Ganges the gold bangle. On an inquiry by the diver as to where the gold bangle had dropped, the Gurū flung into the river the second one at the same spot saying, "There!" Steel is most sacred, was the Gurū's edict.[4]

The moral instruction is marked in the above quote by the phrase "*updesh dittā*." This popular

version of this *sākhī* from Gurū Gobind Singh's life is given a common didactic purpose

mentioned above as one possible reading—extolling the virtues of renouncing materialism,

worldliness, and attachment. It also speaks to the ardor with which the child spoke about steel,

which signifies the growing militant nature of the Sikh religion following innovations made by

grandfather, Gurū Hargobind. This latter reading speaks to the issues of community and identity

formation signified by the *Khālsā-panth* aspect of modern Sikh identity in dominant readings of

*sākhī*s.

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[4] My personal collection.

These *sākhī*s get delimited through modern renderings such as those given above. Instead, I argue that we read this *sākhī* through its allegorical structure, which produces a tensional apparatus for interpretation rooted in references to the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. In this model, historical accuracy was given less credence than the imaginative expansion of the verse from the SGGS that the *sākhī* often allegorically references. Furthermore, *sākhī*s frequently allude to a *sabd* without stating it, using this hidden verse to contextualize another. For instance, in a subsection of *Srī rāg, bānī Bhagat Benī* from the SGGS, we find the same metaphoric signature in the opening verse:

ਤੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਤੋਹੀ ਅੰਤਰ ਕੈਸਾ॥ ਕਨਕ ਕਟਿਕ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਜੈਸਾ॥੧॥

tohī mohī mohī tohī antar kaisā// kanak katik jal tarang jaisā

You me, me you, what is the condition for the appearance of distance? It is just like gold to a bracelet, and ripples to water.[5]

Considering this *sabd* alongside its testifying *sākhī* alters the inherent meanings away from simplistic moralizing refrains. Gurū Gobind's act of tossing the bracelets into the river would have made ripples in the water as they entered and were submerged by the turbulent waters. The ephemerality of the ripples about the vast current of the murky Gangā would most certainly have made locating the first bracelet difficult. Thus, the repetition or second act by the Gurū serves to demonstrate the same effect. If we bracket questions of whether the story is an actual description of events from the Gurū's life, we can focus on the language of metaphor and allegory to reveal a structural tension between the prosaic and the poetic—such that the prose may stand in for the poetic. Such an avenue of exploration requires a bimodal approach that analyzes both the *sākhī* and the potential sabds that relate to it.

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[5] Manmohan Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib: English and Panjabi Translation* (Amritsar: Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1964). p.94

The movement of this story takes on a dialogic aspect through the formulation of question and answer as well as the existential oblique *mohī* (me) and *tohī* (you)—it is tempting to remove the veil of verbal ellipsis that has surrounded the objective sense of these pronouns to translate the *sabd* thus: *Surely, you are and surely, I am. I am certainly as you are. How can there be any distancing [opposition]?* The answer comes in the form of a metaphor: the bracelet is made of gold, but gold in its elemental sense precedes it's becoming a bracelet. If the gold and the bracelet are now fused, is it possible to maintain their difference? Tossing the bracelet into the water creates the second movement; the ripples in the water might change the surface of the water, but these ripples are temporary, and they cannot penetrate the depths of the current. Using the *sākhī* as a springboard, we can leap into the poetics of a philosophical question that relates to the issue of naming: the gold forms a kind of bracelet through its associated essence, much as the ripple is a kind of movement amidst the water. These metaphors challenge the idea of difference, distancing, or oppositionality.[6]

Examining the *sākhī*s as texts written for use as *kathā* performed during gatherings (*sangat*) allows me to analyze janamsākhī's use of narrative to create a non-oppositional form of time and being. This approach prefigures the translation of *sākhī* through the notion of testimony or witness to the *bāṇī* -a living, artful, creative language of expositing and applying Nānak's teaching. The janamsākhī incorporation of sabd into the structure and, at times, beneath the narrative itself reveals that exponents incorporated a stylized use of allegory to create aporetic tension which was resolved dialogically within the sangat but outside the bounds of the text itself. [7]

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[6] This challenge is emphasized at the end of the rāg, when the last verse suddenly transforms the *sākhī* through its relation to the *sabd* when Ravidās asks someone to explain *samdal* to him (*ravidas samdal samajhāve kou*).
[7] Historians are beginning to recognize that writing practices and the forms of knowledge that existed in the past differ from contemporary norms; this acknowledgment has prompted analyses of the roles of writing and textuality

I enter my discussion of exploring humanitarian interpretations that can be culled from motifs placed within janamsākhī recensions and individual anecdotes through the Sultānpur narrative sequence. This sequence includes the series of events following Nānak's departure from Rāe Bhao kī Talwaṇḍī the lead up to Nānak's submersion into the Vaīn River. I also consider the aftermath of Nānak's re-emergence, his exhortation that *Hindū* and *Mussalmān* have no existential references, his interrogation by Daulat Khān's Qāzī, and his exile -which one of the multivalent uses of *udāsī* in the travel narrative sequence. In doing so, I highlight a critique of religious identity that situates itself through existential categories of Hindu and Muslim. This critique allows us to focus on questions about the nature of Nānak's embodiment to reveal that janamsākhī texts orient Nānak's existence through the ontology of language: disembodied writing, and the name, and its attributes are the basis of Human being.

The Sultānpur sequence can, therefore, be read as the climax of the narrative arc. From this point, the janamsākhī's dissonant tensional structure can be read through other focal points in the network of sabd and *sākhīs* created when compiling a recension of *sākhīs* for use as *kathā*. The creation of allegorical tension is emplotted within sākhīs through dialogues and marked by a feeling of *hairānī*, or cognitive struggle, on the part of Nānak's interlocutors. This is meant also

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in the past, such that scholars studying South Asia have analyzed the role of writing and literature in producing, maintaining, and/or commenting on social life. A recent study recognizes that writing texts in early modern South Asia did not occur strictly in accordance with modern notions of genre. Instead, textuality functioned according to tastes and proclivities of cultural and epistemic assumptions that differ from those that prevail today. Writing employed a structure of co-existence using a palimpsest of genres, styles, and frames that today are strictly distinct; these co-existing elements are called textures of writing. Textural writing refutes the notion of history as alien to the subcontinent, while recognizing that history was not an exclusive narrative pursuit but rather "manifold temporalities" co-exist within early modern texts. Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab*, South Asia across the Disciplines ;2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). Sheldon Pollock, ed. *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Muzaffar Alam, *Languages of Political Islam: India - 1200-1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). Velacheru Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800* (Other Press, 2003).

to mark a similar difficulty faced by the exponent and the gathered audience when thinking through *bāṇī*.

Within the janamsākhīs, then, we can recognize history as one of the creative textures within janamsākhīs used to write a textual formation that testifies to *bāṇī* from the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. To better appreciate this form of textuality as a living non-oppositional language it is necessary to acknowledge the intellectual training, knowledge practices, and epistemological developments used by Nānak's exponents beginning in the early modern period. This shows that reading the janamsākhī requires engagement, reference, and foreknowledge of the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. The embedding of references to *bāṇī* within janamsākhīs makes it possible to analyze the relationship between writing and thinking through the non-oppositional lingual conditions established by the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*.

From here, I analyze specific anecdotes within various janamsākhī recensions. First, I analyze the Sultānpur narrative sequence in which Nānak critiques religious identity following his immersion in the Vaīn River. Next, I examine the nature of Nānak's embodiment as Nānak Nirankārī via an analysis of references to Nānak's birth in the janampatrī sequence. I then turn to the elephant sequence that precedes Nānak's departure on his travels. Moreover, finally, I consider the death *sākhī*s to suggest that these texts engage with Nānak's critique of religious identity to allow for a productive opening of ontological and existential questions via a tropological concern with the body.

5.1 Dialogue with Sheikh Ibrāhīm: Slate, pen, and writing are One

The intertextual network of reference between verses from the *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* and the narrative portions of janamsākhī within individual anecdotes is revealed by analyzing

instances where Bābā Nānak expresses a *sabd* from the SGGS in a temporal frame created by an exponent deploying the method of *kathā dī parpāṭī*. Nānak and Mardānā sat in a desolate place outside of Paṭṭaṇ Des. The pīr of this town was Sheikh Farīd, and at the time of Nānak's arrival, Sheikh Ibrāhīm sat upon the *takht*, or seat, of Bābā Farīd. Early one morning, a disciple (*murīd*) named Sheikh Kamāl came to the jungle where Nānak was sitting to gather lumber for his pīr's abode (*khānā*). Spying Nānak and Mardānā, Kamāl moved toward them. At that moment Mardānā strummed his *rabāb* and sang a *salok*, or couplet, of Nānak's in *rāga āsā*:

॥ਆਪੇ ਪਟੀ ਕਲਮ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਰਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਭਿ ਤੂ॥ ਏਕੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਕਾਹੇ ਕੂ॥

āpe pattī kalam āpi upari lekhu bhi tū// iko kahīai nānakā dūjā kāhe kū//

You are the slate yourself; yourself, the pen; you are also the writing upon it.
Say, there is only One, Nānak, for who can be the other?[8]

Upon hearing this verse, Kamāl dropped the wood he had collected. He sat with Nānak, requesting that the *salok* be played once more so that he could memorize it. Returning to his *pīr*'s *khānā*, Kamāl told Sheikh Brāhm (*sic*) that he had met a *pīr* of *Khudā*, who composes his own *salok*s. When he heard Kamāl recite Nānak's *salok*, Sheikh Brahm asked if he had understood the meaning of the statement. Kamāl said Nānak was speaking about *Khudā*, but he could not say more. They decided to have a discourse (*gosti*) with Nānak. The discourse begins with Sheikh Brāhm asking Nānak whether his statement about Oneness can be maintained in consideration of there being two different limits, Hindu and Muslim. Which of these, he asks, should be rejected?

This discussion about Oneness connects at a different level to issues of succession by using intertextual references to Bhāī Gurdās's "*Pehlī Vār*" and "*Rāmkalī kī Vār Rāe Balwand Sattā Dum*." In the anecdote, the *salok* sung by Mardānā comes at the end of the composition

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[8] *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*

known as "*Malār kī vār*,"[9] a panegyric based upon the rainy season (*malār*) believed to be written by Gurū Nānak shortly after Bābur attacked Sāīdpur, or present day Emīnābād. It contains twenty-eight *paurhī*s and fifty-eight *salok*s; each *paurhī* is preceded by two *salok*s. The two *salok*s and *paurhī* referred to in the *sākhī* are as follows:

॥ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧॥ ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਕਾਗਦੁ ਕਲਮ ਧੰਨੁ ਧੰਨੁ ਭਾਡਾ ਧੰਨ ਮਸੁ॥ਧਨ ਲੇਖਾਰੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜਿਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਲਿਖਾਇਆ ਸਚੁ॥੧॥ ਮਹਲ ੧॥ ਆਪੇ ਪਟੀ ਕਲਮ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਰਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਭਿ ਤੂ॥ ਏਕੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਕਾਹੇ ਕੁ॥੨॥ ਪਾਉੜੀ॥ ਤੂ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਆਪਿ ਬਣਤ ਬਣਾਈ॥ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੋ ਨਹੀ ਤੂ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ॥ ਤੇਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੂਹੈ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਕੀ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਈ॥ ਤੂ ਅਲਖ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਗਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਿਖਾਈ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨਿ ਗਵਾਈ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹਿ ਤਿਸੁ ਮੇਲਿ ਲੈਹਿ ਸੋ ਨਾਮ ਧਿਆਈ॥ ਤੂ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਗੰਮ ਹੈ ਰਵਿਆ ਸਭ ਠਾਈ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਤੂ ਲਾਇਹਿ ਸਚਿਆ ਤਿਤੁ ਕੋ ਲਗੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਈ॥੨੮॥੧॥ਸੁਧੁ॥

salok mallā 1. dhannu su kāgadu kalam dhannu dhannu bhādā dhann massu. dhannu lekhārī nānakā jin nāmu likhāeā sacu.1. mahal 1. āpe pattī kalam āpi upari lekhu bhi tū. iko kahīai nānakā dūjā kāhe kū.2. paurhī. tū āpe āpi varatdā āpi banat banāī. tudhu binu dūjā ko nahī tū rahiā samāī. terī gati miti tūhai jāndā tudhu kimati pāī. tū alakh agocaru agam hai gurmati dikhāī. antari agiānu dukhu bharamu hai gur giānī gavāī. jisu kripā karai tisu meli laihai so nām dhiāī. tū kartā purakhu agammu hai raviā sabh thāī. jitu tū lāeai saciā titu ko lagai nānak gun gāī.28.1. sudhu./

Salok: Praiseworthy is that pen and paper, praiseworthy the pot and ink. Nānak, praiseworthy is the author through whom the true name is written. **Yourself the slate, the paper yourself, you are also the writing atop it.** Say they are one, Nānak, and for what can there be another.

Pauṛī: Having created creation of yourself, you yourself spread it. There is no one apart from you, you remain the summa. You alone are the measure of your essence, you are the self-appraiser. Gurmat states that you cannot be perceived, apprehended, or understood. Through the knowledge of light, shed the ignorance, pain, and doubt harbored within ignorance. Whosoever is merciful attains an audience by thinking about that name. Pervading all things, you, the Creator, are unattainable through self-expression (*man-bānī*). Nānak, whomsoever is to be connected, connects by expressing truthful attributions. (28.1)[10]

The *pauṛī* gives an expansion of the two *salok*s by connecting the writing materials, writing itself, and the author of truth with the self-formed Creator. This entity gives rise to creation and expands it—it can only be known through a mimesis of truthful expression, writing, or language. This writing of the truth, by being connected to it, is the writing of the One.

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[9] Ibid. pp.1278-1291
[10] Ibid.

The very last hemistich provides a connection to matters of succession by expressing truthful attributions. In Bhāī Gurdās's "*Pehlī Vār*," the twenty-second *pauṛī* directly precedes the first mention of Bābā Nānak's birth in the Dark Age of *Kali Yuga*:

ਚਾਰੇ ਜਾਗੇ ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗੀ ਪੰਚਾਇਣ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੋਇਆ॥ ਆਪੇ ਪਟੀ ਕਲਮਿ ਆਪਿ ਆਪੇ ਲਿਖਣਿਹਾਰਾ ਹੋਆ॥ ਬਾਝੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਧੇਰੁ ਹੈ ਖਹਿ ਖਹਿ ਮਰਦੇ ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਲੋਆ॥ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਪਾਪੁ ਜਗਤ੍ਰਿ ਤੇ ਧਉਲੁ ਉਡੀਣਾ ਨਿਸਿਦਿਨਿ ਰੋਆ॥ ਬਾਝੁ ਦਇਆ ਬਲਹੀਣ ਹੋਉ ਨਿਘਰੁ ਚਲੋ ਰਸਾਤਲਿ ਟੋਆ॥ ਖੜਾ ਇਕਤੇ ਪੈਰਿ ਤੇ ਪਾਪ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਰਾ ਹੋਆ॥ ਥੰਮੇ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਸਾਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਧੁ ਨ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਗਿ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਆ॥ ਧਰਮ ਧਉਲੁ ਪੁਕਾਰੈ ਤਲੈ ਖੜੋਆ॥੨੨॥

cāre jāge cahu jugī pancāen prabhu āpe hoeā// āpe pattī kalami āpi āpe likhanhārā hoā// bājhu gurū andheru hai khai khai marade bahu bidhi loā// vartiā pāpu jagatri te dhaulu udīnā nisidini roā// bājhu deā balhīn hoau nigharu calau rasātali toā// kharhā ikate pairi te pāp sangi bahu bārā hoā// thamme koe na sādhu binu sādhu na dissai jagi vic koā// dharam dhaulu pukārai talai kharhoā//22//

Lighting the four, they dwell in the four *yuga*s; the subtle mind arises through the Master itself. **You are the slate yourself; yourself, the pen; yourself entering writing**. There is darkness without the Gurū, followers of different paths and gods die after ceaseless arguments. Malfeasance spreads across the world, the righteous cry perpetually. Without compassion, the weak become homeless. Wandering, they get carried off to hell by demonic beings. Standing upon one foot, the weight of sin is onerous. Without a method, they cannot be restrained, no one to provide a method could be seen in the world. Standing in the netherworlds, the bull of righteousness screams.[11]

This stanza contains the original half of the hemistich that Mardānā sings to Sheikh Kamāl, "*āpe pattī kalami āpi…*"[12] However, the latter half is altered so that the new line states that the pen and paper were made useable for writing without external impetus. This writing emptied of a self is the writing that connects via truthful attribution—it is the writing that mimics Creative writing. Gurū Nānak was sent to the world as an answer to the screams; he enabled a way to Oneness by accessing and repeating the true name.[13]

The second indirect reference cites "*Vār Rāmkalī Rāe Balwand Sattā Dum*."[14] This composition is attributed to the two men mentioned in the title. Rāe Balwand and Sattā Dum

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[11] Bhai Gurdas, ed. *Varan Gian Ratanavali* (Amritsar: Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, 1998). p.11
[12] Singh. p. 968
[13] See Gurdas. p. 12
[14] *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. Singh. pp.966-968

sang *kīrtan* at the *darbār* of Gurū Arjan and were also contemporaries of Bhāī Gurdās. They created the *jorī* drums by splitting a *pakhāwaj*, or barrel-type drum. The *jorī* was used in *kīrtan* until the colonial period when it was slowly replaced by the *tablā*. It is unclear how long the two performed *kīrtan* at the *darbār* of the Sikh-Gurūs, but tradition suggests they joined Gurū Angad to sing *kīrtan* shortly after he succeeded Gurū Nānak. The reference comes near the end of the *vār* and pertains to Gurū Arjan's succession and exactly replicates Bhāī Gurdās's hemistich:

> ਧੰਨ ਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਥਾਨ ਹੈ ਸਚੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਪੈਸਕਾਰਿਆ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੂ ਲਹਣਾ ਤੂ ਤੂਹੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਮਰੁ ਤੂ ਵੀਚਾਰਿਆ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਡਿਠਾ ਤਾ ਮਨੁ ਸਾਧਾਰਿਆ॥੭॥ ਚਾਰੇ ਜਾਗੇ ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗੀ ਪੰਚਾਇਣੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੋਆ॥ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓਨੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਥੰਮਿ ਖਲੋਆ॥ ਆਪੇ ਪਟੀ ਕਲਮ ਆਪਿ ਆਪਿ ਲਿਖਣਹਾਰ ਹੋਆ॥ ਸਭ ਉਮਤਿ ਆਵਣਜਾਵਣੀ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਨਵਾ ਨਿਰੋਆ॥ ਤਖਤ ਬੈਠਾ ਅਰਜਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਖਿਵੈ ਚੰਦੋਆ॥…ਚਾਰੇ ਜਾਗੇ ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗੀ ਪੰਚਾਇਣੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੋਆ॥੮॥੧॥

> *dhan su terā thān hai sacu terā paiskāriā// nānak tū lahnā tū tūhai Gurū amaru tū vicāriā// gurū dithā tā manu sādhāriā//7// cāre jāge cahu jugī pancāenu āpe hoā// āpīnai sājionu āpe hī thami khaloā// āpe pattī kalami āpi āpe likhanhārā hoā// sabh umatti āvanjāvanī āpe hī navā naroā// takhat baithā arjan gurū satigur kā khivai candoā//… cāre jāge cahu jugī pancāenu āpe hoā//8//1//*

> That configuration of the self which is representative of your truth is worthy of description. You, Nānak, Lahnā, you, Amar, you, you through total mind affirmation. Seeing the light, the mind was refined. (1.7) Lighting the four, they dwell in the four yugas; the subtle mind arises by itself.[15] The self establishes itself of its own accord, the pillar is raised on its own. **You are the slate yourself; yourself, the pen; yourself entering writing.** The entire ummat [congregation] comes and goes, only you are renewed and strong. Gurū Arjan sits atop the seat, radiating the true-mind's light… Lighting the four, they dwell in the four yugas; the subtle mind arises by itself. (1.9)[16]

This last reference connects the metaphor of the slate and pen being enabled to write of their own accord to the issue of ongoing contestations of the Gurū lineage during Arjan's lifetime. The word "place" (*thān*) can refer to Gurū Nānak's seat, and the itineration of the five Gurūs as the legitimate self-attained representatives of Nānak (*paiskāriā*) occurs because they write not only using his nom de plume but also using the same decentered language.

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[15] The four represents caste division, religious (*mazhabs*) division, and aspects of the mind. The four castes are Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. The four mazhabs are Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbalī. However, they are listed as Shi'a, Sunni, Rafazī, and Imam Shafi'i in Gurdas. p.11
[16] *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. Singh. p.968

The dialogic encounter between Gurū Nānak and Sheikh Ibrāhīm, when reading through these references, becomes a subtle challenge to the continuity of thought between Sheikh Ibrāhīm, who is popularly known as The Second Farīd, and Bābā Farīduddīn Masūd Ganj-e-Shakkar. As the successor of Farīd, Sheikh Ibrāhīm is shown maintaining the difference between Hindus and Muslims by posing a question to Nānak about which of the two ways can point to the One. Nānak's respectful refusal to engage in the duality posed by his peer when responding reveals continuity between Farīd and Nānak, but a break between Farīd and Ibrāhīim. This suggestion coincides with the position given to Bābā Farīd's writing in the SGGS. The ability to access this inter-textual network creates a level of meaning connected to the question of Hindu-Muslim identity while touching upon legitimation of the teaching of Oneness.

Allegorical structure places language or *sabd* as an operation of standing behind the story. The aporia or tensional function of allegory becomes a phenomenal space within a text where two things can abide in one. A structure of appearance, or becoming through appearance, occurs from the process of grappling with this structure of allegory.[17] The tension in the process of interpretation that this creates enables the appearance of Oneness through a submissive stance about identity: a granting-gifting of identity to the radical opposition of Oneness as an aspect of submission. It is at this point that the unified human can ethically engage with a conception of a society predicated upon the function of the commons.

5.2 The Sultānpur Sequence: Hindū, Muslim, and Non-oppositionality

The sequence of anecdotes from when Nānak was residing at Sultānpur Lodī establishes the basis for modern understandings of Sikhism. While the precise details are not agreed upon,

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[17] Brenda Machosky, *Structures of Appearing: Allegory and the Work of Literature* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

the dominant narrative suggests that Nānak had a religious experience or cognitive disturbance on the banks of the Vaīn rivulet. The *sākhī*s express this experience stylistically by stating that Nānak dived into the Vaīn and did not re-emerge. Either one or three days later, he was found returned to the bank of the Vaīn, where he regularly went to perform his morning ablution and meditation and entered a period of silence. At this time, Nānak sat in the company of *faqīr*s (or *sādhū*s) at the outskirts of Sultānpur; although they asked him numerous questions about where he had been, he did not speak. His silence was a cause for consternation and concern, sending unsettling ripples through the fabric of the town.

The silence was broken when Nānak finally responded to a question with an abrupt, forceful exhortation, *nā koī hindū hai nā ko [sic] musalmān*—there is neither Hindu nor Muslim. Nānak repeatedly shouted this exhortation whenever the townsfolk addressed him, serving only to further unsettle the atmosphere in Sultānpur. Eventually, a complaint was lodged with the local leader, Daulat Khān Lodī, that Nānak continued his refrain of *nā koī hindu hai nā ko musalmān*. Daulat Khān reassured them that no significance should be put to such statements; Nānak must have become a *dīwānā*, or holyman touched by divine inspiration. However, Daulat Khān continued, the regular folk should not be concerned with the expressions of a *faqīr*.

One of the court Qāzīs overhears the account given by the people and cautions, "Khān, this is a strange statement. Why would anyone say *nā koī hindū hai nā koī musalmān hai*?" Gesturing to one of his attendants the Khān says, "Go call upon Nānak." After that, the Qāzī interrogates Nānak, while Daulat Khān witnesses the exchange.

Figure 5.1 The Walls of the Fort at Sultānpur Lodī

During this dialogue, Nānak explains his expression through reference to verses from the SGGS. Eventually, the Khān is satisfied and stops the Qāzī by saying that it is pointless to question Nānak further. Having discussed his statement in some detail with the Khān and the Qāzī, Nānak eventually leaves Sultānpur to embark upon his first period of wandering. Nānak puts upon himself the appearance of a *faqīr*, including clothing made of coarse material and another white cloth, a funerary shroud wrapped around his neck, and a *qalandarī topī* on his head. He carried a rosary made from bones and adorned his forehead with a saffron mark, or *tilak*, and left the town with a companion from his hometown named Mardānā. During their

travels, Nānak engaged in regular discussions with religious, political, and lay figures about philosophical Oneness (*ektā* or *wahādā*).[18]

This dialogue imaginatively occurred between Nānak and the Prophet Elias, or Khwājā Khidr, but by the twentieth-century historical writing transformed this moment to depict a meeting with God where Nānak hears the Divine Voice. However, the occurrence of this encounter on the banks of a waterway and the regular depictions of Nānak riding a fish in miniature illustrations often taken from janamsākhī manuscripts is consistent with the earlier understanding. Moreover, the recent uses of janamsākhīs as historical sources has lead scholars to virtually ignoring how the so-called miraculous moment establishes a context for the later dialogue through the statement *nā koī hindū hai nā ko [sic] musalmān*.

In a similar manner to the *sākhī* about Gurū Gobind Singh, scholars either ignore the verses from the SGGS in the Sultānpur sequence or use them only to support a historical reading of the texts. However, taken as a longer narrative sequence, Nānak's immersion into the Vaīn followed by his interrogation by the Qāzī is an example of how Sikh exponents embed verses from SGGS into *sākhī*s. For instance, there are verses from "*Mājh kī Vār*" that engage in the kind of apophatic denial of religious identities while referencing submersion ablutions:

ਨਾ ਓਇ ਜੋਗੀ ਨਾ ਓਇ ਜੰਗਮ ਨਾ ਓਇ ਕਾਜੀ ਮੁਲਾ॥...ਗੁਰੁ ਸਮੁੰਦੁ ਨਦੀ ਸਭਿ ਸਿਖੀ ਨਾਤੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਵਡਿਆਈ॥

nā oe jogī nā oe jangam nā oe kājī mullā//...gurū samundu nadī sabhi sikhī jitu vadiāī//

Neither are they *yogī*s nor Shaivite recluses nor *qāzī*s nor *mullah*s…The Gurū is like an ocean from which the rivers of teachings derive their benefits.[19]

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[18] Janamsākhī manuscript recensions vary in their representations of this anecdote—from a single sentence acknowledging that Nānak disappeared into the Vaīn to ornate descriptions of him entering a court to dialogue with an undisclosed interlocutor.

[19] Pritam Singh Chahil, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (New Delhi, India: Pritam Singh Chahil, 1992). pp.149-150

Moreover,

॥ਭੈਰਉ ਮਹਲਾ ੫॥ ਏਕੁ ਗੁਸਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ॥ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਦੁਹਾ ਨੇਬੇਰਾ॥੧॥ …ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ॥ ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਪਰਾਨ॥੪॥ ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਇਹੁ ਕੀਆ ਵਖਾਨਾ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਖੁਦਿ ਖਸਮੁ ਪਛਾਨਾ॥੫॥੩॥

bhairo Mahalla 5// eku gusāī allahu merā// hindu turak duhā neberā//1//... nā ham hindū mussalmān allah// allah rām ke pind parān// 4// kahu kabīr ehu kīā vakhānā// gur-pīr mili khudi khasam pachānā//

Bhairo Mahalla 5. The One is my creator, Allah. The destroyer-determiner of both Hindu and Turk. For the body receives life through kinship with Allah. Kabīr said that the one who enacts these statements, mingling with the teacher, becomes a master himself.[20]

The numerous forms of religious identifications—Yogīs, Jangams, Qāzīs, Mullah, Hindus, and Muslims—are apophatically negated in the above verses.[21] Their negation in the above verses disencloses a humanistic view of Oneness.[22] These verses do not appear at the surface of the textual content nonetheless form the narrative core for the account. They require an immersive knowledge of and ability to recall the SGGS, while neither facilitating nor debilitating a putative historical ground for the *sākhī*.

I recognize two allegorical forms within *sākhī*s: the first is an embedding of poetical verses within the prose; the second is a stylistic juxtaposition of verse from the SGGS and

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[20] Ibid. p.1136

[21] During his travels, Gurū Nānak is depicted as encountering people who represent these identities, amongst others.

[22] Disenclosure addresses the return to religion and secular criticism of religious violence instituted through differentiating theological and philosophical discourse. The term disenclosure attempts to remove or lift a barrier and signifies an opening or conflagration of enclosures. It refers to a range of domains in which history closes in upon itself through an encumbering assignment of meanings, marking the cancellation of sociological, or functionalist perspectives in favor of opening reason to the limitlessness of its truth. Disenclosure facilitates engagement in questions of knowing by taking new risks to articulate an answer to what being human can mean or how it can be thought today. Such felicitous thinking occurs by holding open an unfractured space that has no inheritors (yet). It remains open to suggestions that creativity and artful production are not bereft of reason or necessarily irrational lower forms of cognition. In doing so, the articulation of a disenclosure attempts a hyper-religious upheaval of ratiocinating, syllogistic accounting of religious phenomenon in order show a remainder beyond accounting for -the surreligious aspect of religious phenomenon, representing a necessity of interpreting religion rather than opposing it. Disenclosing recognizes that any attempt to foreclose one space necessitates the theorization or opening of an alternative interpretive space. I use this term to refer to endeavors to lift barriers preventing engaging Sikh literature like the janamsākhī integrally and without recourse to mutually opposed sets of religious identity. See Jean-Luc Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*, Déclosion.English (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007). pp. 1-7, and 161.

prosaic speech, in both senses related to prose.[23] I argue that the *sākhī*s create actual dissonance around religious identity through phenomenological uses of allegory to keep questions of ontology open while building upon an epistemology put forth in the SGGS.

Despite attempts in European literature on the Sikhs and Sikhism to read these texts as pure informatics, a discernable tension arises within the narrative of origins, where the inevitable focus on Bābā Nānak and the reliance upon dialogic native informancy destabilize or make questionable a supposedly stable religious subjectivity—or subjectivity in general. Therefore, despite attempts to create a scholarly meta-narrative that stabilizes and predicts Sikh identity using the janamsākhī, we must return to central questions that pervade the texts themselves using the motif of a critical stance toward religious identities, like Hindu and Muslim, and an ontological engagement through playful tropes about Nānak's shifting embodiment. Through such an analysis, the centrality of the intertextual network between the SGGS and the janamsākhīs is revealed as central to a developing Sikh epistemology and interpretation theory that is disrupted by communal violence after the 1920s.

In short, the story of Nānak's emergence from the Vaīn rivulet is a central component to reading the janamsākhī on its terms. During Nānak's time there, Sultānpur was not only a bustling center of trade but had developed as a center of Islamic learning before Nānak's residence.[24] As *modī,* Nānak would meet numerous people from all swaths of society including *faqīr*s who would frequent the granary for donations of food. The local people liked Nānak as he was respectful, honest, and diligent in his responsibilities but was also thoughtful, kind, and

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[23] For a description of these allegorical forms see Machosky.

[24] By the fifteenth century many prominent cities and towns of Panjāb were Islamic centre of culture and learning as well as economic centres. Drawing upon the *Tabaqāt-I Akbari, Muttakhab ut-Tawārīkh,* and *Ā'in-I Akbari,* Grewal names several such centre including Multan, Tulamba, Sarhind, Jallandhar, Sultānpur, Ajodhan, Thanesar, Samana, and Narnaul. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History* (Chandigarh: Publication Bureau Panjab University, 1969). pp.41-43; and Kirpal Singh, *Janamsakhi Parampara* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1969).

generous—qualities that were rare amongst *modī*s.[25] The B6 manuscript recounts this perception of Nānak after assuming responsibility for the *modīkhānā* in the following way:

> *aisī kammu karni jo sabhu koī khushi hovai sabhlok ākhani jo wāhuwāhu koī bhalā hai…khān bahutu khusi hoā*[26]

Indeed, the recognition of Nānak as a remarkable person using the word *bhalā* occurs frequently and notably within the beginning of the Sultānpur sequence before Nānak's disappearance at the banks of the Vaīn rivulet.

For instance, in the B6 manuscript, upon arriving and meeting his brother-in-law (*bahanoyā*), Jai Rām, we read that, "Jai Rām was very happy and thought to himself, 'My brother, Nānak! He is remarkably good –there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with him.'" ("*jairām bahut khusi hoā ākhiosu bhāī vai nānak changā bhalā hai*").[27] Nānak's family had been concerned that Nānak was suffering from an unknown ailment. When the townspeople feared that Nānak might have met with a terrible fate after his disappearance into the river, Daulat Khān comes upon the scene with a search party, but they are unable to find any clue regarding his whereabouts. Daulat Khān mounts his horse, and, becoming quite remorseful, he says, "Nānak was a remarkable advisor" ("*nānak bhalā vazīr thā*").[28]

After having stated that there is neither *Hindū* nor *Musulmān*, Nānak entertains both the Khān and his Qāzī in a dialogue. After they are satisfied that they could gain nothing from

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[25] For a description of the characterization of modis see Grewal; Singh.

[26] "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī," (British Library, London). f. 22a

[27] Ibid. f. 21b. This same account is somewhat expanded in Piar Singh's edited B40 manuscript. As the B40 is missing the folios where Nānak come to Sultānpur at his brother-in-law's behest, Piar Singh uses a manuscript entitled, *Sākhī te Goshti Sangrah,* which he states is housed in the Central Public Library in Patiala under shelfmark *hathlikhat 198* to reconstruct the narrative. In *hathlikhat 198,* the narrative directly connects Jai Ram's motivation for inviting Nānak to Sultānpur to his concern about Nānak's ongoing mysterious ailment. While the B6 leaves this at the level of suggestion, in *hathlikhat 198* it states, *" us [jairām] suniyā ju nānaku hairān rahda hai kammu kāju kachu na'ai kardā…jā [Nānak] Sultānpur gayā tā jairām bahut khusI hoeyā] bhāi nānakji change bhalle ho]"* See: Piar Singh, ed. *Janamsākhī Srī Gurū Nānak Dev Ji [Mul Path India Office (London) Di Hath-Likhat Panj. B40 Ton India Office Library Ate Records De Director Di Agiya Nal Chapiya Gaiya]* (Amritsar: Gurū Nānak University, 1974). pp. 40-41

[28] Ibid. f. 24a

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questioning Nānak about his strange remark, Nānak is invited to perform *namāz* with them at the mosque. After the prayer, the Qāzī turns to the Khān to mock him for his admiration of Nānak, saying, "You say that this Hindu, Nānak, has attained wisdom, but he watches us do *namāz* and laughs" ("*hindū dekhi dekhi hasdā hai tū jo ākhdā hai jo Nānak bhalā hai*"). Nānak's laughter provokes another dialogue, which ends in the Qāzī's skepticism toward Nānak's assertions, as he speaks through *gurbānī*; Daulat Khān reminds the Qāzī that such questioning is fruitless. The sequence concludes with Daulat Khān's acquiescing to Nānak's teachings ("*tab khān pairī paiyā*").

Nānak tells the Khān of his intent to leave Sultānpur and states, "Khuda will grant you beneficence" ("*khudāe terā bhalā karegā*"). It is tempting to locate this statement historically as the janamsākhī's author suggesting that Daulat Khān is granted a boon, enabling his ascension to Nizām, or ruler, of Panjāb in 1504.[29] Thus, we can read the latter portion of the Sultānpur sequence as suggestive of Nānak's charismatic authority—and through this, we can locate the authority of the janamsākhī author. However, this reading about charisma and authority must occur through the entrance of historical fact into the analysis; however, such reference to the Khān's ascension to Nizām is not directly or indirectly mentioned in the anecdote, nor can it be found referenced by Sikh writers before the twentieth century, at which point Sikhs had already become invested in the ideas of nation and religion.

However, Bhāī Gurdās (1551-1636), the amanuensis for the SGGS and an early exegete of *gurbānī*, mentions Daulat Khān in *vār 11 paurhī 13* as a different sort of ruler: "*daulat khān lodī bhalā hoā jind pīru abināsī...gurmati bhāo bhagati pargāsī.*" This vaar becomes incorporated into a janamsākhī recension known as *Bhāī Manī Singhvālī Janamsākhī*, which was

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[29] Kirpal Singh, *Janamsākhī Parampara* (Patiala: Panjābi University, 1969). p. 13

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prevalent in the mid-eighteenth century. The thirteenth *paurhī* of the eleventh *vār* gives the names of individuals affected (*bhāo*) by Nānak teaching through *bānī*. While the affect varies according to each listed, the last line of the *paurhī* declares that individual devotional practice was brought forth or unfolded to the limits of its fullness (*bhagti pargāsi*).[30]

Regarding Daulat Khān specifically, the *vār* states that he attains the fullness of the suggestion or implication in what Nānak says at the close of the Sultānpur sequence; the futural or subjunctive "*khudāe terā bhalā karegā*" enables a becoming: "*bhalā hoā jind pīru abināsī*." Daulat Khān's remarkability consists in his mastering of oneness through melding with his subtle life force, *jind abināsī*.

These references in Bhāī Gurdās and Bhāī Manī Singh's janamsākhī reveal the importance of reading not only the Sultānpur sequence, but any janamsākhī recension, intertextually—for such intertextuality is a vital part of elucidating key conceptual notions such as that which expressed through Nānak's denial of the existential relevance of subjective categories like hindu and mussulman. To assert that this refrain is simply meant to create a position for the creation of the Sikh community as a third entity or *tisarpanth*, serves to further the paradox: if neither Hindu nor Muslim *are*, then how can such a statement enable the existence of a third entity called Sikh? How can a Sikh *be* if a Sikh is only meant to triangulate Hindu and Muslim?

By re-emerging from the Vaīn, Nānak embarks on a process of denying differentiation based upon archetypal notions of identity through religion such as Hindu and Muslim. The

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[30] Similarly, the fourteenth paurhi of the eleventh vaar points toward the relationship between transformation, attainment, and the iconicity of language/writing: "the gurmukh, attaining equipoise, writes (sees) what cannot be written (seen)" ("*Gurmukhi sukhphalu alakh lakhāvai*"). The relation of language and iconicity are signaled as significant aspects that structure interpellations of subjectivity. Thus, we must unravel the janamsākhī narratives to delve more deeply into the intertextual thinking of this genre through language. Gurdas.

negation of the possibility of being a perfected or complete Muslim can be seen through Nānak's discourse with the Qāzī, including the moment of Nānak's refusal to participate in *namāz* with the Qāzī and the Khān. However, denying the possibility of being fully *muslim*—in the literal sense of full submission to God—also negates the category of Hindu, where "Hindu" refers simply to an identity configured as the diametric opposite of being Muslim. In other words, "Hindu" is defined through negation: by not being Muslim, one is Hindu.

In short, if being Muslim is impossible, then Hindu also becomes a problematic category. Recognizing this allows us to return to the beginning of the janamsākhī with an awareness of how this question gets articulated. This reading strategy also requires attentiveness to the emphasis given to the name and attribution through ideas of *nām* and *sabd*. In focusing on these parallels, we can resist archetypal notions of identity and humanity.

5.3 Birth Sequence: Naming Nānak, Oneness, and a Common Teaching

In the B41 manuscript, the narrative following the frame story is called "*janampatrī Nānak vedī dī.*"[31] *Janampatrī* refers specifically to the astrological and oracular section of the janamsākhī; the anecdote in this section relates the events surrounding Nānak's birth and naming when a child born to Kālū Bedī gets named Nānak Nirankārī. Kālū goes to his Purohit, Hardayāl Brahman, shortly after the birth of his son. The birth occurred after midnight, so Kālū is sent home, and Hardayāl says he will leave home after completing his *sevā-pūjā*. Hardayāl arrives, and paper is brought to write out the *janampatrī*. At this point, Hardayāl tells Kālū, "Tell me

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[31] The *janampatrī* is a significant part of the Bālā tradition as it functions to suture the frame story of a meeting between Bālā and the second Sikh Gurū, Angad. They meet because of desires which the other can fulfill. Angad desires to know more about Nānak's early life and Bālā is looking for the sangat that Nānak established. Getting the janampatri from Nānak's family at Talwandi is what give rise to the writing of this janamsākhī. The first lines of the manuscript clearly use janampatri, "janampatrī bābe nānak jī kī". Rattan Singh Jaggi, *Dasama Grantha Dā Paurāṇika Adhiaina* (1965). f. 1a However, the janampatrī begins after the framestory, ibid. ff. 4b-6a.

which *sabd* was stated as the child was born?" Kālū gives the time of birth as the first hour of the

second watch of the night but states that he knows nothing about a *sabd* being stated by the

infant during birth. In this section, I explore the connection between the *sabd*, naming this

newborn, and the oracular nature of *sākhī*s.

The pandit states that the birth occurred at an auspicious hour; he is taken to see the child

and pay obeisance (*namaskār*). Hardayāl asks the *dāī* (midwife) whether she knows what *sabd*

was given during the birth. She responds by saying that having assisted with many births, she has

never witnessed such a newborn. She says that despite being a newborn, the child's voice

sounded like a wise elder greeting her with a laugh. The Brahman then informs Kālū that he will

need to reflect (*vicār*) before deciding upon a name for the child; thirteen days pass before the

Brahman returns with the name Nānak Nirankārī.

Kālū is displeased with this name and requests that the name is reconsidered: "Do not

give the child this name; it is common to both Hindu and Turk."[32] Hardayāl explains his

decision, stating that an avatar has been born, the likes of which have not been known before.

Rām Chandar and Krishan were significant avatars, but only Hindus offer prayers to them, he

explains—Nānak's significance will be recognized by Hindus and Muslims. His name will

resound forever from the sky and upon the earth, and from populated and desolate places, the cry

"Nānak, Nānak" will be heard. Oceans dividing people will give way to him because he will be

known only as the Unmanifest.[33]

The equation of Nānak and the Unmanifest (*nirankār*) during the birth sequence is unique

to Bālā recensions. This version of the *janampatrī* ends with this oracular statement—a

prediction for Nānak's life and the significance of his teachings for a shared, non-oppositional

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[32] *ih nāo tusī nāha rakhnā. Ih nāo hindū turk duhā dā sānjhā hai* ibid. f. 6a
[33] *ih nirankār hī japegā. ate vadā isnānī hovaigā…Hor kisse nū vī parmesar jānegā. nāhīn.* Ibid.

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future for Hindu and Muslim. The strange grammar of the final statement is purposeful rather than quixotic, requiring multiple readings. For instance, the phrase *Ih nirankār hī japegā* can be translated or interpreted in numerous ways. By translating *nirankar* as "god" and *japegā* as the verb "to appear," this final statement can be straightforwardly read to mean, "Truly, he will appear as god." Bālā recensions create a motif from this oracular statement having Nānak repeatedly give his name as Nānak Nirankārī in the travel sequence when encountering prominent individuals like the Nāth Siddhās.

In Chapter Four, I described how there were two themes in colonial accounts of Sikhs: firstly, that Nānak's teachings applied to both Hindus and Muslims, and secondly, a common belief amongst Sikhs was that Nānak was a deity.[34] These two themes can be seen within the *janampatrī* and lend itself to the salvific myth of Nānak. This motif lends itself to reducing *eh nirankār hī japega* to "Nānak is God," which was recognized by missionaries as a lay understanding of Nānak. Secondly, colonial accounts understood that the reason for giving the newborn child a name used by both Turks and Hindus stemmed from the recognition that his teachings would be relevant to both groups of people. Because many colonial accounts occurred through dialogue with Sikh native informants, the frequency of these motifs necessitates considering that a more rote meaning of Nānak as a deity may have been prevalent amongst Sikhs who regularly heard janamsākhī accounts.

Elements within this *janampatrī*, such as the mention of oceans giving way for Nānak, easily lend themselves to comparison with accounts of the parting of the Red Sea in the versions

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[34] According to Trumpp's comparative reading of the manuscript to the 1871 lithographed edition, the mythologization through *sākhī* culminates in the deification of Nānak. He suggests that the deification process was a recent phenomenon, overlapping with this time in Panjāb. Ernst Trumpp, *The Ādi Granth, or, the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs* (London: W. H. Allen & co. [etc.], 1877).

of Exodus found in both the Bible and the Qur'an.[35] Considering both my interviews with

traditional exponents and the broader cultural contexts of the Northwestern subcontinent, it is not

unlikely that some familiarity with Qur'anic passages was possible during the seventeenth

century when the Bālā recension was popularized.[36] European familiarity with exodus accounts

and common understandings of the divine body of Christ lend themselves to familiarizing Nānak

as a divine religious founder in colonial understandings of Sikh texts. In this sense, neither the

salvific Nānak myth nor the monophysitism/dyophysitism considerations about Nānak as the

divine incarnate should be surprising.

It remains difficult to determine the exact dialogic exchange that results in the

familiarization of some elements from the *janampatrī*. I suggest considering the *janampatrī*

account alongside a similar set of Sultānpur narrative sequences where Nānak's disappearance is

followed shortly after that by a discourse with Daulat Khān and his Qāzī. In attempting to link

the two textual sequences, rather than a telos of historical events, we can examine the janampatrī

to consider how Nānak's disappearance is contextualized, identifying the narrative antecedents

for his exhortation, "No one is Hindu, nor are they Muslim." Doing so also allows for reading

between Purātan recensions, containing the Divine court anecdote, and Bala recensions,

containing the *janampatrī*.

The Pandit tells Kālū that his son will know nothing and know no one other than the self-

created Creator. However, the given name also means that Nānak's practice of *nām-simranā* and

nām-japanā suggests that he is self-created. This construal of Nānak reigniting the *joti* in himself

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[35] Exodus 13:17-14:29; Qur'an surah Al-Shu'ara verses 60-67.
[36] Claims that Nānak's teachings were followed by both Hindus and Muslims enhance the likelihood of this familiarity. Therefore, the possibility of an individual trained in Nānak's system of thought from a Muslim background contributing to anecdotes in the janamsākhī needs to be taken seriously.

and then passing this flame to disciples is central to the process of succession as well as the early

understanding on non-opposition between Nānak and early Sikhs like Bhāī Bālā and Mardānā.[37]

Recognizing the miraculous aspect of the *janampatrī*, or the birth sequence assists in

situating the prophecy about Nānak that states, "*Ih nirankār hī japega. Ate vadā esnānī hovaigā.

Hor kisse nū vī parmesar jānegā. Nāhin.*" According to the Pandit, Nānak's birth was the birth of

a great avatar (*vadā avtār*). In the Purātan recension, the birth sequence begins with the striking

of the limitless word (*anahad sabd*) at the Divine Court. This prompts numerous celestial beings

to attend to the court, where they are told to pay obeisance to the birth of a prominent bhaktā

(*vadā bhagat*) who would carry the world forward (*nistāran*).[38] The Miharbān recension and Ādi

Sākhīān also begin in the Divine court, where Nānak speaks to the Divine about what his birth

will signify. Therefore, all accounts of the birth move between an ethereal realm and the

temporal world where Nānak is born. This movement between realms and times is marked

periodically in janamsākhi recensions using literary devices to signify the change—but they can

easily escape the notice of readers who approach the text through historical, rather than human,

time.

When the Pandit asks the *dāī* about what "*sabd*" the newborn spoke at birth, she says that

she heard the child laughing, instead of crying, as he was born. The dissonance that is created by

the newborn's laughter leads her also to tell the Pandit that she experienced *hairāngī*, a sense of

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[37] See Chapter 2 and Appendices B, C, and D of this dissertation for an explanation of the process of succession using the notion of *jotijoti-samaonā*.

[38] It is commonplace to interpret this narrative in Biblical terms, where the celestial beings attend to the birth of a saviour. The use of the word, *nistāran*, as salvation or deliverance assists in focussing on the scene of the physical birth. However, the ringing of the limitless word occurs in the Divine court and it is this court that the celestial beings attend to. They arrive in the order which they are listed and each is shown to greet the Divine, *namaskār kiā*. Once they are in attendance, they are commanded by the Divine to pay obeisance to the newborn child. ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਵਾਜੇ॥ ਤੇਤੀਸ ਕਰੋੜੀ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਆ ਚਉਸਠ ਜੋਗਣੀ ਬਵਜਾਹ ਬੀਰ, ਛਿਆ ਜਤੀਆ, ਚੌਰਾਸੀਆ ਸਿਧਾ, ਨਵਾ ਨਾਥਾ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਆ, ਜੋ ਵਡਾ ਭਗਤ ਜਗਤ ਨਿਤਾਰਣ ਕਉ ਆਇਆ ਇਸ ਕਉ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਜੀਐ ਜੀ॥

See "Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe," (British Library, London). ff. 1 a/b

surprise or wonder, due to the laughter. *Hairah* describes a precognitive moment before a break in understanding when the mind is forced to think within an aporetic nexus. This dissonance is believed to be a permanent condition in the attempt to understand the rational outcomes of deliberating on the nature of Oneness. Working through this aporia enables a walī to bring the Divine to presence.

In the travel sequences, *hairah* (*hairānī*) is used at times to describe the perplexity experienced by some of Nānak's interlocutors. This is typically followed by a cognitive break, described as *kapāt khulnā*—the opening of a cognitive space.[39] The use of *hairah* in the opening salvoes of the B6 manuscript discursively marks Nānak and prepares the audience for later attributions like *qutab*, *gawth*, *kamal faqīr*, *khudā kā chākar*, and *nirankār dā bhagat* following Nānak's immersion in the Vaīn River at Sultānpur.

The *janampatrī* or birth sequence can be read as the astrological prophecy of Nānak's coming non-oppositional formation. The embedding of these significations within the everyday speech and typical events surround the naming of a child during the fifteenth-century assists in interpreting the astrological prophecy by Pandit Hardayāl to Pitā Kālu:

> ਏਹ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੀ ਜਪੇਗਾ॥ ਅਤੇ ਵਡਾ ਇਸਨਾਨੀ ਹੋਵੈਗਾ॥ ਅਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੀ ਜਾਣੇਗਾ॥ ਹੋਰੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਣ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਜਾਣੈਗਾ॥ ਨਾਹੀ॥

> *ih nirankār hī japegā. ate vaḍā isnānī hovaigā. ate kīte nū kītā hī jānegā. hor kisse nū viṇ parmesar jāṇegā. nāhin.*

> He will only do *japp* to the unmanifest and will be a great cleanser. Moreover, through the act itself, he will know the actor. Apart from *parmesar*, he will know none other. Not.[40]

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[39] One of the anecdotes where this can be seen in the dialogue between Babur and Nānak in Mss Panj B41. At the completion of the dialogue we read that the dialogue had lead an experience of kapat khune by Babur. Through experience, Babur recognized Nānak was a Kāmal Faqīr (full attained faqīr) and gave obeisance (salāmat) to him. I have described this experience in my M.A. thesis as part of a paradigm of conversion or transformation that followed from an encounter with Nānak. Harjeet Singh Grewal, "Guru Nanak, a Light Brighter Than a Thousand Suns: The Sikh Tradition and Narratives of Conversion in South Asia" (University of British Columbia, 2005).
[40] "Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe." f. 6a
Surindar Kohli's edited volume has a slightly altered and more grammatical construction of the final sentence in this quote:

The above interpretation/translation of the prophecy states that Nānak will advocate for the practice of *nām-simarnā*, name-hearing, and *nām-japnā*, name-recitation. The name given to recitation will be *nirankār*, and it will be a hallmark of Nānak's praxis. Nānak Nirankārī is the name given because his use of this practice allowed him to reignite the *joti* within him.

As I discussed in Chapter Two, this *joti* is thought to have been placed in all creation before the differentiation of created beings. The *joti* lays dormant with the human, snuffed out by self-consciousness, but can be reignited through purposeful exertion. Recitation of *nirankār* awakens the *joti* and makes Nānak of Nirankār—Nānak Nirankārī. This re-emerging through *joti* gives Nānak the ability to teach his method or way. The teachability of this practice lends another significance to Nānak Nirankārī: as a *nirankārī,* he makes the unmanifest manifest in others. Reigniting the light of consciousness in mind darkened by self-consciousness is one of the meanings of *gurū* and *satgurū* in Sikh texts. Nānak is also an absolver or cleanser: he unbinds disciples from the dominance of the self-conscious mind.

The meaning of Nānak's name can also be derived from a simplistic reference to birth at his mother's village, which is commonly referred to as the *nānake*. Janamsākhīs are not consistent when providing Nānak's place of birth, but most suggest that it was at Rāe Bhau kī Talwandī. However, the convention of using Nānak or Nānakī to name the eldest child describes a practice of a mother returning home for the birth of her first child. Therefore, this naming would be consistent with the naming of Nānak's elder sister as Nānakī.[41]

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ate hor kisse nū jāṇegā nāhī binā parmesar
And, apart from parmesar he will not know any other.
Surindar Singh Kohli, ed. *Janamsakhi Bhai Bala* (Chandigar: Punjab University Publication Bureau, 1975). p. 51
[41] This explanation is a modern explanation which is not found in archival manuscripts. Its absence is likely because the authors appear to play upon the commonplace usage of Nānak in the janampatrī to begin the experience of *hairāngī*. For modern explanations see, Harbans Singh, *Guru Nanak and Origins of the Sikh Faith* (Bombay; New York: Asia Pub. House, 1969); Singh; W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

The last phrase in the prophecy in Nānak's name is "*Hor kisse nū parmesar jānegā. Nāhīn.*" Using an atypical form of grammatical negation, the phrase states that Nānak will know the lord as the other and not as the other.[42] Nānak Nirankārī advocated the practices of *nām-simarnā* and *nām-japnā* as a way to reignite the *joti* within all humanity; this practice restores equanimity to a mind dominated by self-conscious awareness.

However, part of the complexity and mystery of this prophetic naming is that when Nānak first engages in these practices to enact the reignition for himself, he does so by reciting the name and attributions of Nirankār. However, this practice entails the recitation of his name and its attributes.[43] Nirankār has been parsed by Sikh exponents as *nir-ankār*—meaning "formless" or "unmanifest." Some exponents also parse it as *nirā-kār*, or a total event of appearance or enactment. Nānak also bears the mark of a double reading through different parsings of the name: *nā-a-nek* and *nā-an-ek*. The first parsing means "the not not-virtuous," whereas the second parsing gives the meaning "the not not-one" or "not-multiple." The apophatic productivity of negation signifies Nānak Nirankāri as essence (*wajūd*) without an appearance (*akār*), or the subject or appearance without an object or essence.

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[42] Parmesar, the far removed and yet first created (*sresht*) is not known by Nānak through Nānak but something else, someone other, Nirankārī. The sign points to a knowledge of parmesar, the firstly created (*pehlā hon vālā*) but outside creation, that can not ever be direct nor mediated but is attributive knowing of otherness (*hor kisse nū jāṇanā*). In "Āsā kī Vār" the connection between "the self-created," creation, naming, and knowing is expressed in the following way:
Paurhī. āpīnai āpu sājio āpīnai rachio nāo. duī kudrat sājio. kari āsan ditho cāo.
dātā kartā āpu tū tusi devai karai pasāo. tū jānoī sabhsai de laisai jindu kavāo. kar āsan ditho cāo.
Paurhi. Through you, you establish you. Through you, the names are imbued. The two natures are established. Having shaped, watch intently.
You yourself are the giver-doer, through you giving doing. Those who know you give and take the living word. Having shaped, watch intently.
Singh. p. 463
[43] In Mss Panj. B6, when Nānak enters the Divine court he is given a chalice of ambrosial water, or *amrit*. He is told to drink the amrit of "my name". After mingling with the ordinance, which is simultaneously ordinator, Nānak is told, "*jo terā nāo lavegā so sabh main nihāl kīte hain*/ whomsoever takes your name to those I have given rapture." This aspect of Nānak's name, it co-mingled or disappearance into the amrit leads to the fruition of the janampatri through this event. It therefore reenacts the absent janamapatri through an analogous imaginal effect. "Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe." ff. 24a

In short, Nānak is of Nirankār; he recites Nirankār to know Nirankār. However, this practice entails knowledge of the other and the self-occurring in the same instance. This form of knowing through attributive naming is also indicated in many *sabd*s from SGGS. The very inworking of sundering the name is part of the quizzical production of *hairānī*—which I understand as being akin to an allegorical structure of appearing.

5.4 A Dying Elephant and *Sabd* as Salvation

In the B6 manuscript, a *sākhī* about a living-dying elephant occurs between two major events in Gurū Nānak's life—between his years working as the *modī* for Daulat Khān Lodī at Sultānpur and the beginning of his first *udāsī*s, or protracted journeys.[44] Its biographic and historical content is poor at best, with there being no way to verify whether a meeting occurred between Ibrāhīm Lodī and Nānak, or between the elephant-drivers and Nānak. They then depart on their first journey, marked in the text with the statement, "The initial journey was embarked upon, of the East. Mardānā, the rabab player, was a companion upon this journey" ("*prithmai udāsī kītī pūrab kī. Tītu udāsī nāl Mardānā rabābī thā*").[45]

I provide a translation of this fourth *sākhī*—the encounter with the elephant—here:

> After engaging in a *gosti* with Sheikh Sharaf of Panipat, Gurū Nānak and his companion, Mardānā, enter the precincts of Delhi. The *patisāh* of Delhi at that time was Sultān Brāhmu Begu [Ibrāhīm Lodī]. They spent the night in the city. While in Delhi they would attend to the concerns of the *mahāvats*. At that time, an elephant lay dying in their vicinity. The people of the neighborhood had gathered and were crying hysterically. Gurū Nānak asked, "Why are you all

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[44] Four *sākhī*s arise in the course of this interstitial space or teleological gap occuring over fourteen folios of the B6. "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī." ff.34a to 46a. The sākhīs contained within the interstices are: 1) Mardānā encounters the generosity of the Uppal Khatrī clan; 2) Nānak and Mardānā have a short stay with Sheikh Sajjan Thagg, a dacoit who parades as a holyman in order to rob his unsuspecting guests while they sleep; 3) Baba Nānak engages in his first *gosti*, or dialogic discourse, with a major Qalandariyya holyman known as Sheikh Sharafuddin Abu Ali Qalandar; 4) Mardānā and Baba Nānak enter Delhi to revive an elephant. In the *sākhī* about Sheikh Sharafuddin Abu Ali Qalandar he is referred to as Sheikh Sharaf; "*gosti sekh saraf kai parthai*" ibid. f. 40a. The sheikh's *mazār* is still located in Panipath for more on the Ali Qalandar see Horace Arthur Rose. *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Panjāb*, 619-620.
[45] Ibid. f. 46a

crying?" They replied, "We are crying because of the elephant." Gurū Nānak asked, "Who was the elephant's owner?" They replied, "The elephant belonged to the *patisāh*; the one, *khudā*."

Gurū Nānak asked them once again, "Why are you crying?" Moreover, they said, "The elephant was the source of our income." Nānak said, "Take up some other form of work." To which they said, "*Jī*, we had set up everything for ourselves and the entire family was able to sustain itself easily."

Upon hearing this, Gurū Nānak showed them kindness and said, "If this elephant were to live then you would have no reason to cry?" The *mahāvat*s responded, "*Jī*, how can the dying live?" To which Gurū Nānak said, "Go to the elephant and run your hand over its mouth. As you do so, say *vāhegurū*."

Having thought over what they had just heard, the *mahāvat* went over to the elephant and ran his hand over its mouth. Suddenly, the elephant rose and stood there before them.

The news of the elephant made its way to the *patisāh*. Sultān Brahmbegu requested that the elephant is brought, and, rising, he then went to have a look at it. Arriving at the *mahāvat* quarter, he sat down and spoke. "*eh*, *Darves*. Was it you who made this dying elephant live?" Baba responded, "*Khudā* is the one who kills and gives life, and the pleas of the *Faqīr*s are left upon *rahamuallāh*."

The *patisāh* then said, "Show me. Make it die."

Baba spoke, *salok*:

māre jivāle soi. Nānak ekasu binu avaru nā koī.
[The One, Nānak, without there is no thing other.
To be made to die, to be made to live, it does that.]

The elephant died.

The *patisāh* spoke up again, "Make it living."

Baba replied, "*Hazrāt*, metal when placed in a fire becomes red hot, but it cannot be placed in the hand of anyone for even an instant; it stays heated like this for but an instant. So too is it for the *faqīr* who becomes red in *khudā* and is thus able to raise a portion of *khudā*. They are merely raising a portion of what is *khudā*."

The *patisāh* gained benefaction by gaining understanding about life and death. At that moment, he requested an avowal saying, *kuch kabūl kar*.

Baba spoke, *salok*:

Nānak bhukh khudāe kī biā beparvāhī, asān talab dīdār kī biā talab nā kaī.
[Nānak, the hunger for *khudā* annihilates lack of care. We desire a vision; no one is without the cause of this desire.]

Having understood, the patishah stood up to take his leave. Baba continued wandering. *srī satigurprasādi*.[46]

This *sākhī* has been ignored in Sikh Studies discourse because its Apocrypha, miraculous and legendary material, and improbability give it little to contribute to biographic or

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[46] See Appendix G for Panjabī text. Ibid. ff. 44a-46a

hagiographic analysis. I suggest that analyzing sākhī narrative time reveals a position of dominance over the political sphere and the body by giving khudā alone the power to save living beings. There is never any resolution regarding the livelihood of the *mahavat*s; we are never told what the Sultān has understood, nor are we enabled in any way to parse the analogy of metal made red hot in the context of having the power to revive the elephant. The *sākhī*'s only positive content would point us to prejudicial statements regarding the predilection of the mind for fancy and romanticism, which effectively results in the *sākhī*'s negation or obscurity under the aegis of the label "legend" or "wonder story." If we were to simplify this *sākhī* to its barest bones, we could say that Gurū Nānak brings an elephant back from the dead only to kill it again—hence the "miraculous" quality of the anecdote.

The poetic elements in this *sākhī* are not from the SGGS, and therefore, under contemporary understandings, would constitute "the apocryphal" parts of the *sākhī*s. As such, the only method of vouchsafing its content would be through hagiography and the Nānak myth. However, as I will turn to discuss now, this *sākhī* also fails this litmus text and therefore has little value in explaining Sikhs or Sikhism.

The verses attributed to Nānak in this *sākhī* are not from the SGGS, making it difficult to directly connect it to any *sabd*.[47] However, there are references to elephants in the SGGS that suggest that the Gurū is capable of controlling and training an elephant—that the Gurū is a *fīlbān* or *hāthīvān*. Both terms can be used synonymously with mahāvat. The first example comes in "vār gūjarī" and is written by the third Gurū, Amardās:

ਮਨੁ ਕੁੰਚਰੁ ਪੀਲਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਕੰਡਾ ਜਹ ਖਿਚੈ ਤਹ ਜਾਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਕੁੰਡੇ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਉਝੜਿ ਪਾਇ॥

manu kuncaru pīlaku gurū giānu kandā jah khicai tah jāe. nānak hastī kunde bāhrā phiri phiri ujharhi pāe.

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[47] Bhai Vir Singh, *Puratan Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji* (New Delhi: Bhai Vir Singh Sahit Sadan, 2004).pp.57-58

The mind is an elephant, gurū is the trainer [pīlaku], the bullhook is knowledge. Howsoever one prods determines the course. Nānak, poking the elephant [one's being] over and over only leads to destruction.[48]

We also find this *salok* by Kabīr:

ਕਾਇਆ ਕਜਲੀਬਨੁ ਭਇਆ ਮਨੁ ਕੁੰਚਰ ਮਧਮੰਤ॥ ਅੰਕਸੁ ਗੁਾਨ ਰਤਨ ਹੈ ਖੇਵਟ ਬਿਰਲਾ ਸੰਤੁ॥

kāeā kajalīban bheā manu kuncar mayamant. ankasu ghān hai khevat birlā sant.

The body is a jungle for elephant; the mind, an intoxicated elephant. The bullhorn, a bejeweled necklace worn by the exceptional sant.[49]

The elephant represents the determined or reified mind. The gurū is one who can effectively train the mind out of its intoxication by repeatedly prodding it. The bullhorn worn like a ruby is the *sabd*. Nānak's revival of the elephant marks his achievement and the efficacy of his path. However, this *sabd*, like the discourse with Sheikh Ibrāhīm described above, can also be interpreted as a challenge to the rule of Ibrāhīm Beg, given that the Sultān commanded Nānak to kill the elephant that he had revived.

Before Ibrāhīm Lodī's entrance, we might be inclined to interpret the miracle of the elephant's revivification as a sign of Nānak's salvific prowess. By taking the elephant to represent its drivers, the *mahavat*s, we could strengthen such an interpretation: there stands Nānak, with his companion Mardānā, amongst his flock of sheep; the meek, disenfranchised mahavants ask, "How can the dying be made to live?" To which Nānak replies with an incantation and a method: run your hand over its mouth and recite *vāhegurū*.

By starting with the preconstructed Nānak myth and applying it to the *sākhī*, we can easily discover a structure ensuring Sikh identity. For instance, an alternate translation of this

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[48] Kanh Singh Nabha, *Gurumata Māratanḍa* (1962). 449
[49] Ibid.

sākhī might include the phrase "praise the Gurū" for *vāhegurū*, and subtly add Nānak, such that Nānak's reply to the drivers would read: "Run your hand over its mouth and praise me, Nānak (*vāhegurū*)." With a reading of this translation, one might suggest that the mouth in conjunction to a mantra (*vāhegurū*) can refer to Nānak's instilling breath (*prāna*) back into the elephant. One might also proceed from here to assert that this anecdote builds upon Nath yogic symbology in conjunction with a metaphor for breath control as part of hatha yoga practice. Thus, the *jīvan muktī* (salvation) is a product of attaining the *dasam dwār* (tenth door) awakening *kundalīnī*. Nānak gives *nam simran*, meditation of the name, which is often done by repeating *vāhegurū*, as a means to salvation; here, the word *mukatī* can be defined as removing the bonds of superstition, ignorance, and fancy. Reflecting upon the teachings of the Gurū assists in attaining such freedom in the knowledge of truth.[50] With this reading, the myth is fulfilled—a quasi-utopia attained through cohesion, and identity through introspection.

Something changes, though, with the arrival of the Sultān upon the scene, and the revived elephant gets taken away (*jīvan muktī*) again. Having arrived in the mahāvats' quarters, Ibrāhīm Lodī says, "Hey, Darvesh!" ("*veh, darves*") to which Nānak responds. The Sultān's address is marked with disrespect and contrasts the chastisement that Daulat Khān Lodī received when sending his retainers to Nānak after his emergence from the Vaīn rivulet; Nānak tells Daulat Khān's men to return with the retort, "Your Khān is nothing to me." However, in Delhi, Nānak responds to the question about the revived elephant with a turn of phrase to give the power over life and death to Khudā, or the self-created (God). This is a way of simultaneously deferring the

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[50] ਭ੍ਰਮ ਮੂਲਕ ਰਸਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅਗਯਾਨ ਕਲਪਿਤ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਛੁਟਕਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਨਾਉਂ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਉਪਦੇਸ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਸਤਯ ਗਯਾਨ ਦਵਾਰਾ ਹੋਂਦੀ ਹੈ॥ ibid. 776

ascription to Nānak over life and death, while also saying that such power belongs to god and the self-created.

Earlier, while the elephant was dying, Nānak asked the *mahavat* to whom the elephant belonged. The *mahavat* had replied, "The elephant belonged to the Pātishāh; the one, Khudā" (*hāthī pātishāh kā thā ek khudāe kā thā*). Thus, within the frame of the story, Nānak indicates that the Pātishāh, Khudā, or the self-created, thinks it has such power while also pointing a challenge toward the Sultān. *Faqīr*s, on the other hand, supplicate for the compassion of Allah, where "*faqīr*" here could apply equally to Nānak or the *mahavat*s.

Nānak, strictly speaking, did not revive the elephant: he gave the means to supplicate for its revival, and it was revived (*jivāyā*). The *mahavat* also enacted the supplication—again disavowing Nānak's power over life and death. Upon the Sultān's command, Nānak recites a *salok* for elephant's death to occur—again, in the form of supplication to *ekasu*, the One, without which nothing else can be; this One is self-created.

The analogy about the metal in the flame also functions through this meaning: the faqīr can be tempered through proximity to the flame and made malleable. However, as the metal cannot be handled, it instantaneously returns to its rigid form. Becoming red hot in *khudā* involves raising a portion of Khudā, but such a raising is instantaneous and followed by return. This notion of tempering metal is sometimes referred to in *sākhīs* that give Nānak the epithet "*tappā*"; here, Nānak appears as "Nānak *tappā*" in some *sākhīs* because he underwent *tappa* or tempering. *Tappa* returns the metal to a state before it was differentiated without altering its differentiated state. The *faqīr* is impoverished through differentiation but can be brought to Khudā through temperance. There is an analogical reference to two of the stages (*maqāmāt*) of

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ma'arfat—the knowledge practiced by *'ārafīn* (the wise): *fanā* (annihilation, extinguishing) and *baqā* (return, essence).

Further nuances behind this analogical tale can be produced by turning to consider a question about the *maqāmāt* that Abū Saīd Hujwīrī asked his fellow townsman, Dātā Ganj Baksh Alī Hujwīrī (d. 1077). His mausoleum in Lahore is a well-established center in the sacral space of Panjāb, and he is the author of a seminal treatise on Sufi thought, *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, or *The Unveiling of Secrets*.[51] Abū Saīd's question prompts this work, as he inquires into "the true meaning of the path of Sufism and the nature of the stations (*maqāmāt*)."[52] In the chapter on poverty (*al-faqr*), Dātā Ganj Baksh states, "Poverty has been given a high rank in the Way of Truth"; poverty is a state of the poor who renounce external and internal things to turn to the "Causer."[53]

Al-faqr means to have one's nature empty of desires. Desire enables a sense of being, which is a veil between the self and the other, similar to the notion of apperception in phenomenology. Hujwīrī quotes a contemporary saying: Poverty is existence in the absence (*'adam*) outside true essence (*al-faqr 'adam bilā wujūd*). Terms like *'adam* (nonbeing) and *fanā* (annihilation) are commonly misapprehended in scholarship on Sufism to refer to a nihilism of essence, but Hujwīrī suggests they describe the nonbeing of that which contaminates the essence and annihilation of attributes (*fani yi-sifat*), or the instrument through which he attains or fails to attain his object.[54] Nonbeing is the positivity of impoverishment—the manifestation as inability to manifest through poverty (*al-faqr*) whose locus is the *faqīr*. Human aspirations for summa or

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[51] 'Alī ibn 'Usmān Hujvīrī, *Kashf Al-Mahjūb* (1957); 'Alī ibn 'Usmān Hujvīrī and Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, *The Kashf Al-Mahjub: The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sufiism*, Kashf Al-Mahjūb.English (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1976).
[52] Ibid. p.6
[53] Ibid. p.18
[54] Ibid.p.28

kulliyāt (totality) require a categorical homogeneity for manifestability of any entity of this world. Thus, our aspiration toward attaining attributes can never be non-existent—which, following Hujwīrī, suggests that attributation cannot attain to the positivity of non-existence because of its need to attain an object through sameness.

In the *sākhī*, the play of Khudā, Sultān Ibrāhīm, and the self-created is tossed into the movement of telling (*kathā*) as a question about the desire toward attribution for attaining an object. This play has already been foreshadowed in the closing of the discourse with Sheikh Sharaf, when the Sheikh states, "What can be corrected [in the expressions] of the corrector of self-creation?" (*vāh vāh khudāe diyā sahī karan wāliyā dā kyā sahī kichāī*). When the Pātishāh says "Make something manifest," (*kuch kabūl kar*), he initiates a request for *karāmat*.

The *salok* given here, *Nānak bhukh khudāe kī biā beparvāhī*, speaks to the desire (*bhukh*) of the Sultān for witnessing *and* self-creation through attributes given to objects. This desire annihilates the positivity of non-existent Oneness by disrupting indifference (*beparvāhī*) or equipoise (*sahaj*)—it destroys the possibility of being outside subjectal/objectal essence. As Hujwīrī states, such an object is given attributed positivity through our desire but meets a limit with an encounter of Oneness that exists without any other thing. This notion is expressed in Nānak's supplication, *ekas bin avar nā kaī*, after Sultān Ibrāhīm's imperative toward testimony or witness through action (indicated by the phrase *mar dikhāl* —"show me, make it die") and through Nānak's *salok*.

"Eh, Darwes. Was it you that made this dying elephant live?" Nānak's *salok* marks the testimony, *mari jivāle soi*. Hujwīrī quotes 'Abdallāh Ansārī: "The dead (*fānī*) never become living (*baqī*), to be united with Him, the living never become dead, to approach his presence."[55]

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[55] Ibid. p. 26

The presence of red-hot metal can never be touched—it is unattainable unless cooled; similarly, the wayfaring between living-dying of the elephant's body attains no presence in the *sākhī*. The darvesh enacts a metaphorical poverty, *faqīrī*, which makes him "the Way" and not the wayfarer. Here we see a metaphoricity of the nonexistent body, a body that desires communion or communal cohesion, and the language of embodiment—the language through which homogeneity occurs, through which a telling attains completion. The *darvesh* is "a place over which something is passing, not a wayfarer following his own will." To be the Way, the *dervesh* frees himself from *kasb*, the bonds (*bandan*, in Panjābī) of acquisition, such that his actions are not attributed to himself. The only trace that is therefore left to him belongs to the essence, which is not essence but traces of essence, and not himself.[56]

Nānak, the *darvesh* or the metaphor, tells the Sultān, Khudā or self-created, *asān talab dīdār kī biā talab nā kaī*—signaling the disembarking from metaphoricity to observe by saying, "We have demanded/searched for sight/vision; without demand no thing/nobody can be."[57] The sultān rises in silence—he has understood, and leaves (*utth gayā*). Silence marks *hairāh* or *hairān honā* or the onset of bewilderment due to the cessation of conscious self-defining through an encounter with absolute arrivant, the dis-identified.[58] The *sākhī* ends with the phrase *Nānak*

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[56] Ibid. p. 29

[57] "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī." f. 46a

[58] Mandair defines dis-identification as a "critical space that allows one to think at the limits of established pedagogical disciplines, as well as to a critical subjectivity that is more attuned to the task of creating a postcolonial and postnationalist global diasporic Sikh imaginary." For Mandair a gesture of dis-identification "reopens the trauma of encounter…to enact, via retranslation, *a different kind of repetition*." This repetition cannot rely on master signifiers from "the dominant symbolic order" but proceeds by acknowledging that "lack" is internal "to the subject and to the political process as such." Dis-identification allows for a reinterpretative process of signification to unfold that allows "oppressed particulars to stand in for the universal". Arvind-pal S. Mandair, *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality, and the Politics of Translation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). pp.207 and 359. I refer to the dis-identified here to think about the role that *hairānī* plays in the process of non-oppositional networks where the space opened is not an opening of traumatic encounter but one that holds open human being as a perpetual question through an encounter with the impossibility of knowing the limits of the self. In the janamsākhīs, *hairānī* acts as a pathway to living without having a differentiated sense of selfhood. The dis-identified arrives through hairānī by imparting an indifference regarding the problem of identity. In this way, the use of *hairānī* may reflect one approach to what Abeysekara refers to as a need to live with identities that are "no longer

ravdā rahiyā, a trope to signal Nānak's movement during the period of *udāsī*s.[59] This tropical continuity acquires deeper meaning through associations of Nānak as *Shāh, Faqīr, Darvesh*. By enacting metaphorical poverty, *faqīrī*, Nānak is "the Way" and not the wayfarer—it is Nānak, the Way, that is continuing.

To return to the Nānak myth, focusing on Nānak as the way to salvation creates a disconnect with the content of the above *sākhī*, where Nānak defers acting in favor of supplication; witnessing is not given to Nānak as the intermediary between a person (*mahavat* or Sultān) and God, but rather results from Nānak supplicating. Similarly, the story of Sheikh Sajjan Thag ends with Sajjan Thag begging to have Nānak's benevolence in rendering his malicious actions inconsequential: "*Jī, mere gunāh fadl kar*." In response, Nānak defers any possible intercession, stating, "In the court of Khudā, full account is taken" (*khudāe kī dargāh duhu gallī gunāh honde nahīn*). Sajjan, displeased with the response, requests Nānak to tell him some way to make his request possible. Nānak responds by telling him to do three things: (1) speak the truth, (2) give away what he stole as alms, and (3) recite "*gurūgurū*."

These directives do not, however, resolve the possibility of intercession. Firstly, Nānak's advice suggests that to balance the accounts, Sajjan must act in a manner that credits him against his malefactions. Secondly, Nānak does not give any prescription. Thirdly, Nānak does not act on Sajjan's behalf for salvation: Sajjan must act alone, and Nānak gives no indication of a guarantee of saving grace; at best, Nānak gives Sajjan a way to mitigate (*fadl kar*) his bad deeds before appearing before Khudā.

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a problem," or a tactical humanism that is commited neither to identity nor difference. Ananda Abeysekara, *The Politics of Postsecular Religion : Mourning Secular Futures*, ed. Slavoj Zizek, et al., Insurrections : Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). pp. 65 & 112

[59] ॥ਤਬਿ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਮਝਿ ਕਰਿ ਉਠਿ ਗਾਇਆ॥ ਬਾਬਾ ਰਵਦਾ ਰਹਿਆ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥ ਪ੍ਰਥਮੈ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਪੂਰਬ ਕੀ॥ "Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī." f. 46a

When Nānak disappears into the Vaīn rivulet and enters the dargāh, he is told in the Divine Court that he should "Be in the world, but remain unfettered" (*sansār thīn nirlep rahu*).[60] Here, Nānak's body inheres as a non-existence existant, outside essence and foundation, and therefore unable to intermediate, as intermediation would require situatedness. Nānak, in short, has no way to intercede. The elephant *sākhī* exemplifies the impossibility that Nānak could act on anyone's behalf. Through the wondrous nature of the anecdote, we cannot find a historical event to correlate with the events of the *sākhī*; nothing can be said to have "happened," except at the level of language as such. In short, no "proof" is possible; only interpretation can be proferred.

As mentioned above, this *sākhī* precedes the beginning of the first *udāsī* in both the B6 and Hāfizābād manuscripts. This placement marks a chronology of metaphoricity, an untimely movement, that brings us to the question of dying, the body, and embodiment in the death sequence. Nānak has received permission to start his *panth.* It is typical today to gloss *panth* to mean religion, sect, or cult; in the context of the janamsākhīs and the SGGS, however, *panth* is simply a way (*rāh*), with the secondary association of *mazhab*—the place or time through which one goes along a way. In the next section, I will show that by taking Nānak's practice of faqīrī seriously—the practice of *al-faqr*—we can reassess the disappearance of his body in the death sequence.

5.5 Death Sequence: Funerary Rites and Nānak as Corporeal *Sabd*

The contest between Muslims and Hindus over Nānak's corpse is a point where the voice of the native informant breaks through the factual/informational imperative of early colonial

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[60] Ibid. f. 24a

descriptions of the Sikhs; it gets written in as a point of curiosity. Furthermore, the representation of Nānak as an intermediary relies upon questions about the nature of divine embodiment. Both colonial and post-colonial discursive frames of Sikhism rely on notions of Nānak and his body—the colonial, as the factual movement in time from Nānak to the Khālsa; and the post-colonial, as the de-historicization of Nānak's life in preference for a life-giving act of representation in the janamsākhī's provision of communal identity through a salvific myth.

The death sequence has some degree of variation, but the essential contestation over Nānak's corpse by Hindus and Muslims is consistent. The colonial accounts focus on the disappearance of the body as a miraculous fable, and they often do not engage with this anecdote beyond the interpretation of it as signaling Sikh tradition and identity contra Hindus and Muslims. This moment can also be read as the hagiographic moment par excellence within the text of the janamsākhī: the disappearance of the body signifies its representational activity, its intermediation to peaceful identity.

There are greater consistency and connection to the signals we have about Nānak nonexistentialization of the body through *faqīrī*, that metaphorize Nānak as "the Way" to disinter the identifiability of bodies that is an essential to *sansārī*. After his emergence from the Vaīn, the order that Nānak remains in the world but unfettered by being in the world becomes actualized in the *sākhī*s through the representation of Nānak's deferring action. We have seen some examples of this already. However, to show the immediacy of this actualization, just before Nānak departs from Sultānpur, Daulat Khān requests that the *baraqāt* (spiritual force or energy) accrued from Nānak's presence ensure that his city (*merī nagarī*) be felicitous. To which Nānak responds that the *gur* is already doing this (*gur...kar rahiyā hai*).[61] The usage here of *gurū* is ambiguous,

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[61] Ibid. f. 24b

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however, given that there is very little internal reference to Nānak as a *gur* in the janamsākhīs; furthermore, the ascription of *gur* by Nānak to himself would contradict the narrative of remaining unfettered in the world, such that it is likely this word indicates an abstraction that defers action outside of Nānak's body.

There is an echo of the abstracted *gurū* in the B6 manuscript as a dying Nānak attempts to assuage the concerns of his sons as to their posterity considering Angad being given sanction to lead the *sangat*/gathering. Nānak assures them saying that they and their descendants will live bountiful lives (*rotīyān kaparhe bahut hovānge*). He then adds that by reciting *gurū-gurū* their lives/birth will be correctly oriented (*gurū gurū japonge tān janam savregā*).[62]

The debate about the bodies begins at this point: the Hindus and Muslims who walked the Nānak Way argued over whether the body should be cremated or interred. The question of funerary rites imbricates salvation or attainment of heaven, paradise, rebirth, and transmigration. Through the codification of religious doxa, the funerary rites bear heavily upon such issues about the treatment of the corpse. Whether to burn or bury the body is not unrelated to the issue of salvation—however, in either case, the intercession of the funerary rights occurs via the actions of the living on behalf of the dead.

Bābā Nānak tells the Hindus to place flowers on the left of his body and the Muslims to place flowers on the right. He directs them that whichever group has flowers still in bloom on their side should perform the funerary rites as they deem appropriate. Bābā Nānak then requests the *sangat* to sing a series of *sabd*s beginning with *kirat [sic] sohīlā, dhanasārī rāg, ārtī*, and a *salok*. After the singing is complete, the *sākhī* describes the disappearance of the body:

> *jab salok parhiyā tab bābe chādar uppar lai kar suttā. Sangat mathā tekiyā. Jab chādar uthāvān tān kuch nahīn. Tadho phul duhan ke hare rahai. Hindū apne lai gae ate musalmān apne lai gae. Sarbat sangat parī pāyī.*

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[62] Ibid.

As the *salok* was sung, Nānak placed a *chādar* over his body. The *sangat* bowed. When they lifted the sheet, there was nothing underneath. Only the flowers remained. The sangat returned to their homes with the flowers—the Hindus with theirs, and the Muslims with theirs. The entire *sangat* prostrated before leaving.[63]

Before the dispute over the body occurs, the *Gyān Ratanāvalī* version states, "Bābā goes to the place of indestructibility" (*bābā baikunth nū gae*).[64] On his way to *baikunth*, about two *kos* from Kartārpur, he meets a man and requests that the man pass on a message to the squabbling *sangat*: "I have never taken the form of a corporeal body (*panj bhutān dā sarīr*); the body you saw was a product of your will to experience through sight." He continues, "Upon my seat are two lengths of cloth [*due pattān dī chādar*]: one is for the Hindus to cremate, and the other one is for the Muslims to inter."[65]

The B41 narrates a similar death sequence, except in this recension, Gurū Nānak requests that no funerary rites be conducted—to which the Chaudhary protests that something has to be done. Otherwise the people would be upset. Nānak leaves it up the discretion of the Chaudhary, who decides to cremate Nānak's body. As the altercation ensues, the Chaudhary sees Nānak departing in a palanquin. When they look under the sheet to find the body has disappeared, another heated altercation occurs between the Turks and Hindus. At several points, the narrative suggests that Nānak is watching these events transpire—seated cross-legged on a small stool, watching the heated atmosphere after his death. He rises and bows to the four cardinal directions, and then, mounting a horse, he rides to the dargah.

The *Adi Sākhī*s also describe a battle but also involves Pathāns as a group distinct from the Muslims and Hindus. In this version, the groups do not share flowers—rather, the narrative

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[63] "Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe."
[64] Jasabīr Singh Sābara, *Giāna Ratanāwalī: Janamasākhī Srī Gurū Nānaka Dewa Jī: Sampādana Ate Pāṭha-Ālocana* (Amritsar: Gurū Nānaka Adhiaina Wibhāga, Gurū Nānaka Dewa Yūnīwarasiṭī, 1993).p. 626
[65] Ibid.

moves from the contest over the body, where the Pathāns would not let any Hindu near the corpse. At this point, Mardānā arrives, and Nānak revives himself to console his bard and travel companion, referring to him as a son. When everyone looks at the pyre, he or she sees only Nānak's clothes and no body. The text notes that Baba had gone to *sach khand*, the true abode, placed atop a blue jay (*gararh*). The narrative also suggests that Nānak is being moved, not moving, to *sachckhand*: "Having taken the uninhabited abode of the light, the one capable of action and its cause, they departed" (*niranjan joti sarūp karan kāran samrath bābā Nānak kau lai rahe*).[66] None of the above accounts represent an intermediated route to salvation through Nānak, but instead, describe a problematic about representation and thinking through a tropological engagement with the dying body.

The Bālā B41 manuscript does not have a death sequence. However, instead, we find another discourse between Bābā Nānak and Sheikh Ibrāhīm, the descendent of Bābā Farīd. Again, this dialogue features an abiding concern regarding the nature of the body, but more specifically about Nānak's body, about the self-created, Khudā. In the course of their discourse, Sheikh Ibrāhīm asks the following question:

> *Nānak pīr jī tū batā khudāe dīyān kardā hai. So khudāe tai vich baithā batā kartā hai. Kī tū khudāe hai. Kī khudāe tai vich baithā batā kartā hai. Dikhā eh bāt tūn main ku dass.*
>
> Nānak pīr jī, you are speaking of the self-created, Khudā. Does this mean that Khudā resident in you is speaking? Alternatively, that you are Khudā? Or that Khudā has been placed on your speech?[67]

Sheikh Ibrāhīm asks this question after Nānak has recited a *sabd* about longing for union. Thus, the question at once addresses issues of speech and Nānak as well as about *sabd* and Nānak—to what extent can we take Nānak to be an embodied personality or self? Sheikh Ibrāhīm also asks

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[66] Piar Singh, ed. *Shambhu Natha Wali Janamapatri Babe Nanaka Ji Ki; Prasidh Nam, Adi Sakhian* (Ludhiana: Lahore Book Shop, 1969). pp. 99-101
[67] "Mss Panjābī B41, Janamsākhī Pancami Pothi Likhi Pairhe Mokhe."

who Nānak is when Nānak speaks a *sabd*. This question hinges on ideas of the body, intercession, and language itself that were brought out through the *hāthī* anecdote. We have since seen that the disappearing body sequence also suggests that Nānak was not embodied—indeed, the *Giān Ratnāvalī* states this directly. In the B6 recension, Nānak answers Sheikh Ibrāhīm in this way:

> *Tān Gurū Nānak kahiyā sheikh jī eh bandā hai. Es bande nū mahalā khudāe dā karam hai. Tān picche sabd hai. Sheikh jī sūrat hai. Tān phiri loe hai. Etu loe khudāe vichāvane vichaendā hai. Tān sheikh jī esu vich baithā sūrati de ghar bātan kardā hai...*

> Gurū Nānak addressed the Sheikh jī: This is an acquisition. Apposite to this acquisitiveness is the generosity of the self-created. Then, behind this is the *sabd*. Sheikh jī, there is consciousness, so there must be a power of vision/observation. This light, self-created, is spreadingly spread. In this way, Sheikh jī, seated in this place at the abode of consciousness is enacted speech...[68]

This discourse evades mention of intercession and salvation. Instead, Nānak speaks about the self-created, Khudā, which is created yet remains outside creation. The question posed by Sheikh Ibrāhīm relates to one's ability to know this truth from having been created: either Nānak is Khudā, or Khudā is in Nānak. By beginning with either of these, the question of how knowledge of something outside of consciousness (*sūratī*) comes to be known. The answer Nānak gives to do with avoiding relating or attributing creation to something already created. Acquisition and generosity stand in relation with one another; generosity enables and exceeds acquisition; the *sabd* is behind or veiled from these. Vision and consciousness are given. Orienting vision through the abode of consciousness makes it possible to speak about the self-created. Behind all of this, remains the question of the *sabd* in orienting a way to knowing.

5.6 Conclusion

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[68]"Mss Panjābī B6, Janamsākhī." ff. 246 a/b

Although I have focused here on several different *sākhī* anecdotes, I return in this conclusion to insist that in almost all accounts, both manuscript and print, the Sultānpur *sākhī* sequence is perhaps an essential moment in representations of Nānak's life—one that presents an important key to how janamsākhīs construct alternate portraits of Nānak vis-à-vis *gurbāni*. The *sākhī*s attest to the collective recognition by people in Sultānpur of Nānak's work and generosity through his actions (*kamm karnī*). However, rather than interpreting these actions as statements about how Nānak was a remarkable, unique, conscientious, or ethical person, we can Instead link them to understandings of the referentiality of language—the way language reaches outside itself into the world in a transformative manner.

The janamsākhīs speak of how Nānak participated in the intellectual environment Sultānpur provided by feeding and hosting *faqīr*s, *sant*s, and *sādhū*s in his home alongside their disciples. Thus, the period in Sultānpur was likely important for the development of Nānak's acumen for thinking the truth through language. They also thematically focus on the deep period of silence that Nānak entered after his disappearance into the river; here, the anecdotes often note that *bānī* speaks through Nānak or Nānak speaks to explain *bānī*. This movement between silence, being spoken/written and having to explain, integral to the Sultānpur sequence assist in unraveling the underpinnings of the manuscript tradition.

By beginning with language, the intertextual constellations and networks employed, and the conceptual frameworks that inhere in the texts themselves, we can ask questions about the creation and deployment of texts by traditional exponents. This helps recognize the invention of method and epistemology for enacting Nānak's teachings. Exponent used sākhī to creatively focus on a central egalitarian ethos and sense of justice that Nānak propounded. The critique of religious identity within janamsākhī recensions problematizes comparative modes of

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distantiation, or difference, which were prevalent in the early modern period and still form the basis of contemporary models of multiculturalism and plurality. The non-oppositional mode of human being in Nānak's understanding of Oneness of language, therefore, provides an alternate basis for equality and diversity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Overview of Sikh Gurū Lineage and SGGS

Table A.1 Lineage of Sikh Gurus Including Birth, Death, Date of Guruship, and Number of Compositions in SGGS

#	Name of Guru	Date of birth	Date of guruship	Date of death	Number of Compositions in SGGS
1	Nanak	April 15, 1469		September 22, 1539	974
2	Angad	March 31, 1504	September 7, 1539	March 29, 1552	62
3	Amar Das	May 5, 1479	March 26, 1552	September 1, 1574	907
4	Ram Das	September 24, 1534	September 1, 1574	September 1, 1581	679
5	Arjan	April 15, 1563	September 1, 1581	May 30, 1606	2218
6	Hargobind	June 19, 1595	May 25, 1606	February 28, 1644	0
7	Har Rai	January 16, 1630	March 3, 1644	October 6, 1661	0
8	Harkrishan	July 7, 1656	October 6, 1661	March 30, 1664	0
9	Tegh Bahadur	April 1, 1621	March 20, 1665	November 11, 1675	115
10	Gobind Singh	December 22, 1666	November 11, 1675	October 7, 1708	1

Table A.2 Number of Sabds and Saloks by Composed by Individual Bhagats and Faqirs in SGGS

Name of Bhagat/Faqir	Number of Sabds	Number of Saloks	Total Number of Compositions
Kabir	292	249	541
Farid	4	130	134
Namdev	60	0	60
Ravidas	41	0	41
Dhanna	4	0	4
Trilocan	4	0	4
Beni	3	0	3
Jaideva	2	0	2
Ramananda	1	0	1
Parmananda	1	0	1
Sadhana	1	0	1
Pipa	1	0	1
Sain	1	0	1
Bhikhan	1	0	1

Table A.3 List of Rāgas used in the SGGS

Rāga	Initial Page in Gurū Granth	Final Page in Sri Gurū Granth	Total Number of Pages
Srī Rāga	14	94	80
Mājh	94	151	57
Gaurhī	151	347	196
Āsā	347	489	142
Gujrī	489	527	38
Devgandharī	527	537	10
Bihāgrhā	537	557	20
Vadhans	557	595	38
Sorath	595	660	65
Dhanāsarī	660	696	36
Jaitsarī	696	711	15
Todī	711	719	8
Bairārī	719	721	2
Tilang	721	728	7
Sūhī	728	795	67
Bilāwal	795	859	64
Gond	859	876	17
Rāmkalī	876	975	99
Natnarain	975	984	9
Mālī Gaurhā	984	989	5
Mārū	989	1107	118
Tukhārī	1107	1118	11
Kedārā	1118	1125	7
Bhairo	1125	1168	43
Basant	1168	1197	29
Sārang	1197	1254	57
Malār	1254	1294	50
Kānrhā	1294	1319	25
Kaliān	1319	1327	8
Prabhātī	1327	1352	25
Jaijāvantī	1352	1353	1

APPENDIX B

Bhāi Gurdās Vārān Selections: Gurū Lineage & Succession

Panjābī Text

ਵਾਰ ਪਹਿਲੀ

ਜਾਰਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਲਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ ਪੁਰੇ ਨੋ ਆਇਆ॥
ਚੜੇ ਸਵਾਈ ਦਿਹਿ ਦਿਹੀ ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ॥
ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਹੋਰ ਮੰਗਣਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਦੁਖਾ ਦੇ ਦੁਖ ਸਬਾਇਆ॥
ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸਿਕਾ ਜਗਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੰਥ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥
ਥਾਪਿਆ ਲਹਿਣਾ ਜੀਂਵਦੇ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਸਿਰਿ ਛਤੁ ਫਿਰਾਇਆ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਕੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਟਾਇਆ॥
ਲਖਿ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਸਕਈ ਆਚਰਜੇ ਆਚਰਜੁ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ॥
ਕਾਇਆ ਪਲਟਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਣਾਇਆ॥੪੫॥

ਸੋ ਟਿਕਾ ਸੋ ਛਤੁ ਸਿਰਿ ਸੋਈ ਸਚਾ ਤਖਤ ਟਿਕਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੰਦੀ ਮੁਹਰਿ ਹਥਿ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦ ਦੀ ਦੋਹੀ ਫਿਰਾਈ॥
ਦਿਤਾ ਛੋੜਿ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਪੁਰੁ ਬੈਠਿ ਖਡੂਰੇ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਈ॥
ਜੰਮੇ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਬੀਜਿਆ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਹੋਰੁ ਕੂੜੀ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ॥
ਲਹਣੇ ਪਾਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਣੀ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਘਰਿ ਆਈ॥
ਗੁਰ ਬੈਠਾ ਅਮਰ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੋਇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਈ ਦਾਦਿ ਇਲਾਹੀ॥ ...
ਦਾਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਖਸਮੈ ਵਡਿਆਈ॥੪੬॥

ਦਿਚੈ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਦੇਵਣਾ ਜਿਸ ਵਸਤਾ ਤਿਸੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਵੈ॥
ਬੈਠਾ ਸੋਢੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥
ਪੂਰਨ ਤਾਲੁ ਖਟਾਇਆ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਵੈ॥ ...
ਫਿਰਿ ਆਈ ਘਰਿ ਅਰਜਨੇ ਪੁਤੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥

ਜਾਣਿ ਨ ਦੇਸਾਂ ਸੋਢੀਓ ਹੋਰਸਿ ਅਜਰੁ ਨ ਜਰਿਆ ਜਾਵੈ॥
ਘਰਿ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਵਥੁ ਘਰੇ ਰਹਾਵੈ॥੪੭॥

ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਲੇ ਪੰਜ ਪੀਰ ਛਠਮ ਪੀਰੁ ਬੈਠੋ ਗੁਰੁ ਭਾਰੀ॥
ਅਰਜਨ ਕਾਇ ਪਲਟਿ ਕੈ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਵਾਰੀ॥
ਚਲੀ ਪੀੜੀ ਸੋਢੀਆ ਰੂਪ ਦਿਖਾਵਣਿ ਵਾਰੋ ਵਾਰੀ॥
ਦਲਿ ਭੰਜਨ ਗੁਰ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਵਡ ਜੋਧਾ ਬਹੁ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ॥...
ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬੋਲੇ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ॥
ਕਲਜੁਗੁ ਪੀੜੀ ਸੋਢੀਆ ਨਿਹਚਲ ਨੀਂਵ ਉਸਾਰਿ ਖਲਾਰੀ॥
ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਧਰੇ ਅਵਤਾਰੀ॥੪੮॥

ਵਾਰ ਤੇਰੁਵੀਂ

ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪੂਰਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ॥
ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗ ਤੇ ਸਚ ਸਬਦ ਸਮੇਉ॥
ਅਮਰਾ ਪਦਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਗਤਿ ਅਛਲ ਅਛੇਉ॥
ਰਾਮ ਰਸਕ ਅਰਜਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਬਿਚਲ ਅਰਖੇਉ॥
ਹਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਾਰਣ ਕਰਣੇਉ॥੨੫॥੧੩॥ਤੇਰਾਂ॥

ਵਾਰ ਚੌਵੀਵੀਂ
ਅੰਗਹੁ ਅੰਗੁ ਉਪਾਇਓਨੁ ਗੰਗਹੁ ਜਾਣੁ ਤਰੰਗ ਉਠਾਇਆ॥
ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰੁ ਗਹੀਰੁ ਗੁਣ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਦਾਇਆ॥...
ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਚਾ ਪਰਚਾਇਆ॥
ਬਿਰਖਹੁ ਫਲੁ ਫਲ ਤੇ ਬਿਰਖੁ ਪਿਉ ਪੁਤਹੁ ਪਤੁ ਪਿਉ ਪਤੀਆਇਆ॥
ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵ ਅਲਖ ਲਖਾਇਆ॥
ਬਾਬਾਣੇ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਆਇਆ॥੫॥

ਪਾਰਸ ਹੋਆ ਪਾਰਸਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਰਚੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਹਣਾ॥
ਚੰਦਨੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਚੰਦਨਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸ ਰਹਤ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਹਣਾ॥
ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੁਖ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੁਖ ਦਹਣਾ॥
ਅਚਰਜ ਨੋ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਮਹਣਾ॥...
ਸਚੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ ਸਚੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਗਾਡੀ ਰਾਹੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਵਹਣਾ॥
ਬਾਬਾਣੈ ਘਰਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਲਹਣਾ॥੬॥

...ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਰਖ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਫਲ ਫਲਿਆ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਇਅਨੁ ਦੀਵੇ ਤੇ ਜਿਉ ਦੀਵਾ ਬਲਿਆ॥...॥੮॥

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...ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੁਖਫਲੁ ਅਮਰਪਦੁ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਰਖਿ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਫਲ ਲਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖਹੁ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਮਾਇਆ॥...॥੯॥

...ਗੁਰ ਅਮਰਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਇ ਜੁਹਾਰਾ॥
ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖ ਹੋਇ ਅਨਹਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਝਰ ਧਾਰਾ॥।...॥੧੪॥

ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਪੇ ਆਪੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਇਕ ਦੁਇ ਨਾਵ ਧਰਾਇਆ॥...
ਨਦੀ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਪੁਛੇ ਪਾਰਵਾਰੁ ਨਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥
ਹੋਰਨਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਲਖੀਐ ਗੁਰੁ ਚੇਲੇ ਮਿਲਿ ਅਲਖ ਲਖਾਇਆ॥...॥੨੪॥

ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਆਕਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗ ਤੇ ਗੰਗਹੁ ਜਾਣੁ ਤਰੰਗ ਉਠਾਇਆ॥
ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦਹੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਚਲਤੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਅਮਰਹੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੁ ਅਨਹਦ ਨਾਦਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ॥
ਰਾਮਦਾਸਹੁ ਸਹੁ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦਰਪਨਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ॥
ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਅਰਜਨਹੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨਾਉ ਸਦਵਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਹੈ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਰਗਟੀ ਆਇਆ॥
ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇ ਸਭ ਜਗਤੁ ਤਰਾਇਆ॥੨੫॥੨੪॥ ਚਉਵੀਹ॥

ਵਾਰ ਛੱਬੀਵੀਂ
ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਕਰਿ ਬਹੀਦਾ ਇਕਤ ਥਾਉ ਨ ਟਿਕੈ ਟਿਕਾਇਆ॥
ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਘਰਿ ਆਵਦੇ ਗੜਿ ਚੜਿਆ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਚੜਾਇਆ॥
ਉਮਤਿ ਮਹਲੁ ਨ ਪਾਵਦੀ ਨਠਾ ਫਿਰੈ ਨ ਡਰੈ ਡਰਾਇਆ॥
ਮੰਜੀ ਮਹਿ ਸੰਤੋਖਦਾ ਕੁਤੇ ਰਖ ਸਿਕਾਰੁ ਖਿਲਾਇਆ॥
ਬਾਣੀ ਕਰਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਗਾਵਦਾ ਕਥੈ ਨ ਸੁਣੈ ਨ ਗਾਵਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ॥
ਸੇਵਕ ਪਾਸ ਨ ਰਖੀਅਨਿ ਦੋਖੀ ਦੁਸਟ ਆਗੂ ਮੁਹਿ ਲਾਇਆ॥
ਸਚ ਨ ਲੁਕੈ ਲੁਕਾਇਆ ਚਰਨ ਕਵਲ ਸਿਖ ਭਵਰ ਲੁਭਾਇਆ॥
ਅਜਰ ਜਰ ਨ ਆਪ ਜਣਾਇਆ॥੨੪॥

ਬਾਲ ਜਤੀ ਹੈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦੁ ਬਾਬਾਣਾ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ॥
ਲਖਮੀਦਾਸਹੁ ਧਰਮਚੰਦ ਪੋਤਾ ਹੁਇ ਕੈ ਆਪੁ ਗਣਾਇਆ॥
ਮੰਜੀ ਦਾਸ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ਦਾਤਾ ਸਿਧਾਸਣੁ ਸਿਖਿ ਆਇਆ॥
ਮੋਹਣੁ ਕਮਲਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਚਉਬਾਰਾ ਮੋਹਰੀ ਮਨਾਇਆ॥
ਮੀਣਾ ਹੋਆ ਪਿਰਥੀਆ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਤੋਡਕ ਬਰਲ ਚਲਾਇਆ॥
ਮਹਾਦੇਉ ਅਹੰਮੇਉ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਬੇਮੁਖ ਪੁਤਾ ਭਉਕਾਇਆ॥
ਚੰਦਨ ਵਾਸੁ ਨ ਵਾਸ ਬੋਹਾਇਆ॥੩੩॥

ਬਾਬਾਣੀ ਪੀੜੀ ਚਲੀ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਚਾ ਪਰਚਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗੁ ਤੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰ ਭਾਇਆ॥
ਅਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦਹੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਦਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਅਮਰਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੁ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਗੁਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਮਾਇਆ॥
ਰਾਮਦਾਸਹੁ ਅਰਜਣੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਰਖਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਫਲ ਲਾਇਆ॥
ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਅਰਜਨਹੁ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਦੇਸੁ ਕਰਾਇਆ॥
ਸੁਝੈ ਸੁਝ ਨ ਲੁਕੈ ਲੁਕਾਇਆ॥੩੪॥

ਵਾਰ ਅਠਤੀਵੀਂ
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ ਹੈ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਸੋਈ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗ ਤੇ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੋਈ॥
ਅਮਰਾਪਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਗਦਹੁ ਹੁਇ ਜਾਣੁ ਜਣੋਈ॥
ਗੁਰ ਅਮਰਹੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸੁ ਭੋਈ॥
ਰਾਮਦਾਸਹੁ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਸਥੋਈ॥
ਹਰਿਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਰਜਨਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਨਿਵੰਦੁ ਹੋਈ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੁਖ ਫਲ ਪਿਰਮ ਰਸੁ ਸੁਤਸੰਗ ਅਲੋਈ॥
ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦਹੁ ਬਾਹਿਰਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਈ॥੨੦॥

ਵਾਰ ਉਣਤਾਲੀਵੀਂ

ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਾਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ਅਪਾਰ ਸਦਾਇਆ॥
ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਅਕਾਰੁ ਇਕੁ ਇਕੁ ਕਵਾਉ ਪਸਾਉ ਕਰਾਇਆ॥
ਪੰਜ ਤਤ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ਕਰਿ ਪੰਜ ਮਿਤੁ ਪੰਜ ਸਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ॥
ਪੰਜੇ ਤਿਨਿ ਅਸਾਧ ਸਾਧਿ ਸਾਧ ਸਦਾਇਆ ਸਾਧੁ ਬਿਰਦਾਇਆ॥
ਪੰਜੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਲਿਖਿ ਅਗੋਂ ਪਿਛੀ ਸਹਸ ਫਲਾਇਆ॥
ਪੰਜੇ ਅਖਰ ਪਰਧਾਨ ਕਰਿ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਹੋਇ ਨਾਉ ਧਰਾਇਆ॥
ਅੰਗਦ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਮਰਪਦ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਗੁਰ ਭਾਇਆ॥
ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਗੁਰ ਅਰਜਨ ਛਾਇਆ॥੨॥

ਦਸਤਗੀਰ ਹੁਇ ਪੰਜ ਪੀਰ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਹਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਅਤੋਲਾ॥
ਦੀਨ ਦੁਨੀ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਅਡੋਲਾ॥
ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਲੇ ਅਜਰੁ ਜਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਮਸਤਾਨ ਸੁਜਾਣ ਵਿਚੋਲਾ॥
ਤੁਰੀਆ ਚੜਿ ਜਿਣਿ ਪਰਮਤਤੁ ਛਿਅ ਵਰਤਾਰੇ ਕੋਲੋ ਕੋਲਾ॥
ਛਿਆ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਛਿਅ ਪੀੜੀਆ ਇਕਸੁ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਗੋਲਾ॥...॥੩॥

ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਪੀਰ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰ ਹੋਆ॥
ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਆਕਾਰ ਕਰਿ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਾਰੁ ਪਲੋਆ॥...

ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਦੇਸੁ ਅਲੋਆ॥
ਹਰਿਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਛਤੁ ਚੰਦੋਆ॥੪॥

ਸੂਰਜ ਦੈ ਘਰਿ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ ਵੈਰੁ ਵਿਰੋਧੁ ਉਠਾਵੈ ਕੇਤੈ॥
ਸੂਰਜ ਆਵੈ ਚੰਦੁ ਘਰਿ ਵੈਰੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਸਮਾਲੈ ਹੇਤੈ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤ ਸਮਾਇ ਕੈ ਪੂਰਨ ਪਰਮ ਜੋਤਿ ਚਿਤਿ ਚੇਤੈ॥
ਲੋਕ ਭੇਦ ਗੁਣ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਿਲਿ ਪਿਰਮ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਮਜਲਸ ਭੇਤੈ॥
ਛਿਅ ਰੁਤੀ ਛਿਅ ਦਰਸਨਾਂ ਇਕੁ ਸੂਰਜ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਮੇਤੈ॥
ਮਜਹਬ ਵਰਨ ਸਪਰਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਅਸਟ ਧਾਤ ਇਕੁ ਧਾਤੁ ਸੁ ਖੇਤੈ॥...॥੫॥

Transliteration and Translation

Vār 1

jārati kari multān dī phiri kartāri pure no āeā
charhe svāī diai dihī kalijugi nanak nām dhiāeā
vinu nāvai hor manganā siri dukhā de dukh sabāeā.
māriā sika jagati vici nanak nirmal panth calāeā.
thāpiā lainā jīnvade guriāī siri chatra phirāeā.
jotī joti milāe kai satigur nanak rūp vatāeā.
lakhi na koī sakaī ācaraju dikhāeā.
kāeā palati sarūp banāeā.45.

From the mausoleums at Multān, returning to Kartārpur
From villages in all directions a fourth was donated, in the Age of Darkness Nānak studied the name.
Without the name, all other desires amount to the summation of sorrow upon sorrow.
Having gained repute throughout the land, Nānak started an untainted community.
Appointing Lehnā, while living, as the successor-Gurū, he unfurled the ornamented canopy atop the head [of Lehnā].
Having made light mingle with light Nānak and *satigurū* intertwined their form.
That invisible mark was suddenly recognized,
Overcoming the bodily form, the exalted form was attained.

so tikā so chatra siri soī sacā takht tikāeā.
gur nānak handī muhri hathi gur Angad dī dohī phirāī.
dittā chorhi kartāpur baithi khadūre joti jagāī.
jamme pūrabi bījeā vici vici horu kūrhī caturāī
lehne pāī nanak denī amardās ghari āī.
gur baithā amar sarūp hoe gurmukhi pāī dādi ilāhi.
pheri vasāeā goindwālu acaraju khelu ue lakheā na jāī
dāti joti khasmai vadiāī. 46.

That saffron mark, that canopy, that Throne of Truth, was established
The authority of Nanak's hand, overturned the duality in Gurū Angad.
Leaving Kartārpur, he established a seat in Khādur, giving rise to the light there.
The seed, attaining to its fullest potential, whereas from others was revealed an adeptness with falsehood.
Lehnā took on Nānak's gift, which later passed on to Amardās's abode.
Becoming the immortal essence, he sat as Gurū, the Gurmukh took up the Divine gift.
The wondrous play spread to Goindwāl but could not be recognized.
The gift of *joti*, expanded through the master.

dicai pūrabi devanā jis vastā tisai ghari āvai.
baithā sodhī patisāo rāmdāsu satigurū kahāvai.
pūranu tālu khatāeā Amritsari vici joti jagāvai...
Phiri āī ghari ajane putu sansarī guru kahāvai.
jāni na desān sodhīon horas ajar na jariā jānai.
ghari hī kī vathu ghare rahāvai. 47.

The Giver will give fullness to whomsoever comes to its abode.
The Sodhī King, Rāmdās, sits and is called the true gurū.
The true seeker [*tālab*] was given Amritsar, wherein the light rose.
The *joti* arrived, then, at Arjan's abode, the son who answered to "Worldly Gurū."
From the Sodhī lineage, it [*joti*] did not depart, all others were unable to support it.
Nurtured by this house, the school of thought would remain led by them.

panji piāle panji pīr chatam pīru baithā guru bharī.
arjan kāe palati kai mūrati hari gobind swārī.
calī pīrhī sodhīā rūp diwāwani wāro wārī.
dali bhanjan gur sūrmā vad jodhā bhao paraupkārī...
agam agocar satigurū bole mukh te sunao sansārī.
kaljugu pīrhī sodhīā nehcal nīnw usāri khalārī.
jugi jugi satigur dhāre awtārī.48.

Five chalices, five *pīr*s, the sixth *pīr* sits as a great gurū.
Arjan, overcoming the body brought Hargobind to full presence of being.
The Sodhī lineage continued, the form reignited successively.
Breaker of partisanship, the courageous Gurū, great warrior,
Speaking about things beyond rational knowledge in the face of the worldly.
In Kaliyug, the lineage of Sodhīs raised an unmoveable foundation and expanded upon it.
In each and every age, the true Gurū puts saintly people on the earth.

Vār 13

pārbrhamu pūran brham gur nanak deao.
gur angadu gur ang te sac sabd sameao.

amarā padaon gur rām nāmu gati Achal acheao.
rām rasak arjan guru abical arakheao.
hari gobindu gowinde guru kāran karbeao. 25.13. terān.

The eternal essence, the full form irradiated Nānak.
Gurū Angad, the mingling of Gurū's limb and true word.
Amarāpad [Amardās] attained through Angad the Invisible and Indivisible
From Amarāpad Gur Rām received the Incorruptible, the Untainted teaching of the *nām*-path.
From Rām's essence, Arjan Gurū attained the unmediated gnostic way.
Hargovind, the Gurū who attained the creator through Gurbānī, the cause and the enactor. 13.25.

Vār 24

angaon angu upāeonu gangaon jānu tarang uthāeā.
gair gambhīru gahīru gunu gurmukhi guru gobindu sadāeā…
gur celā celā guru guru cele parcā parcāeā.
birkhaon phalu phal te birakhu piao patu piao patīāeā.
pārbrhamu pūran brhamu sabd surati liw alakh lakhāeā.
bābāne gur angadu āeā.5.

From one portion, another formed, like a wave forming from the Gangā's current.
The dark and deep ocean of attributes was called upon by the Gurmukh to attain and know the language of mindfulness.
The student passed the test of egoity, student and guru became bonded
Like the tree and flower, which rely on one another for fecundity, or as father from son
By focussing the consciousness on sabd (word) the distant Creator, in its entirety, was comprehended.
Angad's thinking arose from Bābā [Nānak's]. 24.5

…gur angadu gur angate amrit birakh amrit phal phaliā.
jotī joti jagāeanu dive ye jion dīvā baliā…24.8.

The immortal mind and body of Gurū Angad fructifying from the tree immortality
As a *dīvā* from the flame of another *dīvā*, the eternal light (*jotī*) manifest in Angad is reillumined.

…gurmukhi sukhphalu amarpadu amrit birakh phal lāeā.
gur celā celā guru purakhaon upāe samāeā…24.9.

Amarpadu, the Gurmukhī, was granted the fruit of equipoise from the immortal tree.
master-student, student-master, rising and returning from person to person.

…gur amaraon gur rāmdās jotī joti jagāe juhārā.
sabd surati gur sikh hoe anhad bānī nijhar dhārā…14.

Through the universal ethics of Gurū Amar, the eternal light reillumined Gurū Rāmdās's light
They become *gursikh*s from an uninterrupted flow of *sabd*-consciousness derived from the
boundless *bānī* [artful writing]. 24.14

pārbrham pūran brhami satigur āpe āpu upāeā.
guru gobindu govind guru joti ik due nāv dharāeā…
nadī kināre ākhīani puche pārvāru nā pāeā.
horani alakhu na lakhīai guru cele mili alakh lakhāeā
Harigovind Gurū gur bhāeā. 24.24.

The primordial creator, the fully formed *satigur*, arose through itself.
The consciousness of *bānī* [artful writing] and the conscious realization of paradise, one light
[essence] assuming two names…
Just like standing at the bank of river and asking *pār* (there) or *urār* (here), is perspectival
Others are unable to envision the invisible, from the merging of master and student the invisible
comes to sight.
Hargovind accepted Gurū [Nānak's] mindfulness

nirankār nanak deo nirankār ākār banāeā.
guru angadu guru angte gangaon jānu tarang uthāeā.
amardās guru angadaon joti sarūp calatu varatāeā.
guru amaraon guru rāmdāsu anahd nādaon sabd sunāeā.
rāmdāsao arjanu guru darsanu darpani vici dikhāeā.
harigobind gur arjanaon guru gobind nāon sadvāeā.
gur mūrati gur sabd hai sadhsangati vici pargatī āeā.
pairī pāe sabh jagatu tarāeā.25.24. cauvīn

Nirankār Nānak Deo, unembodied-existence was given to embodiment.
Gurū Angad, from a portion of Gurū [Nānak], a wave rising from the Gangā's current.
Amardās from Gurū Angad, the fading of True light was given continuance.
From Gurū Amar, Gurū Rāmdās, the unstruck sound was made heard through *sabd* (the word)
From Rāmdās, Gurū Arjan, showed the philosophy of Gurū [Nānak] by example.
The Gurū's existence is the Gurū's *sabd*, which becomes manifest in the congregated.
Lying at the feet [of the *sabd*], they cross the ocean of the world. 24.25

Vār 26

bābānī pīrhī calī gur chele parcā parcāeā.
guru angadu guru angu te guru celā gur bhāeā.

amardāsu gur angadaon satiguru te satigurū sadāeā.
guru amaraon gur rāmdāsu gur sevā gur hoe smāeā.
rāmdāsaon arjun guru amrit birakhi amrit phal lāeā.
harigobindu guru arjanaon ādi purakh ādesu karāeā.
sūjhai sujh na lukai lukāeā. 26.34.

The Bābānī [Gurū Nānak's] lineage continued through master testing student attainment.
Gurū Angad, from a portion of the Gurū, the student transformed into Gurū.
Amardās, from Angad, the True Gurū brought forth the True Gurū.
Through Gurū Amar, Gurū Rāmdās mingled with the Gurū by active service.
Through Rāmdās, Arjan Gurū, the immortal tree's immortal fruit was planted.
Harigobind, because of Gurū Arjan, was made to submit before the earliest form.
Even when hiding discerning gnosis that has come to mind, it can not be hidden.

Vār 38
satiguru nanak deao hai paramesaru soī.
guru angadu gur ang te jotī joti samoī.
amrāpadu gur angadaon hue jānu janoī.
gur amarao gur rāmdās amrit rasu bhoī.
rāmdāsaon arjanu guru guru sabd sathoī.
harigovind guru arjanaon gur govindu hoī.
gurmukhi sukh phal piram rasu sutsangh aloī.
gur govindaon bāairā dūjā nahī koī. 38.20.

The true gurū, Nanak, is himself the light of the Creator.
Gurū Angad, through the Gurū's portion merged his light with the eternal light.
Amarpad, because of Gurū Angad knew its essence.
From Gurū Amar Gur Rāmdās tasted immortality.
Through Rāmdās, Gurū Arjan became a companion of *sabdgurū*
Hargovind, because of Gurū Arjan, brought forth the artful writing (*bānī*)
The *satisang* attains the unthinkable fruit of equipoise and expressions of love with the Gurmukh.
The others are ineffectual as they have not attained the mindful presence of artful writing.

Vār 39

dastgīr hue panj pīr hari gur hari gobindu atolā.
dīn dunī dā pātisāaon pātisāhā pātisāaon adolā.
panj piāle ajaru jari hue mastān sujan vicolā.
turīā carhi jini param tattu chia vartāre kolo kolā.
chiā darsanu chia pīrhīā ikasu darsanu andari golā…39.3.

Through the support of the five masters, Gurū Hargobind was incomparable.

The supreme ruler of heaven and earth, the immoveable king.
Inheriting the five eternal chalices, he is the highly adept match-maker.
Climbing to the consciousness of Oneness, whomsoever attains the primary essence is at the side of the six.
The six philosophical schools, and the six branches, are indebted the philosophy of Oneness…39.3

gur govindu khudāe pīr guru celā celā guru hoā.
nirankār ākār kari ikangkāru akār paloā…
pārbrahmu pūran brahm ādi purakh ādes aloā.
harigobindā gur chatra candoā.4.

Mindfully aware of *bānī*, the self-realized master, becoming master-student and student-master.
Beginning with embodying unembodied-existence, giving shape to the state of indifferent Oneness
Submitting to the eternal essence, the full form, the primal being was visualized.
Gurū Hargobind bears the canopy of kings. 39.4

sūraj dai ghari candramā vairu virodhu uthāvai ketai.
sūraj āvai candri ghari vairu visāri smālai hetai.
jotī jot samāe kai pūran param joti citi cete.
lok bhed gun giān mili piram piālā majlas bhetai.
chia rutī chia darsanān iku sūraj gur giān sametai.
majhab varan saparasu kari asat dhat iku dhatu su khetai…5.

At the sun's house, the moon creates hate and antagonism.
The sun comes to the moon's house, putting aside the hatred and attempting to be conciliatory.
Having mingled light with the eternal light, keeping the mind fixed upon full primordial light.
In the gatherings, the distantiated peoples are met with the virtuous knowledge and secrets about the chalice of love are disclosed.

APPENDIX C

***Dasam Granth Bachitra Nātak*: Gurū Lineage and Succession**

Section IV

ਜਿਨੈ ਬੇਦ ਪਠਿਓ ਸੁ ਬੇਦੀ ਕਹਾਏ॥ ਤਿਨੈ ਧਰਮ ਕੈ ਕਰਮ ਨੀਕੇ ਚਲਾਏ॥…ਜਬ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਲਿ ਮੈ ਹਮ ਆਨ ਕਹਾਇਹੈ॥ਹੋ ਜਗਤ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਿ ਤੋਹਿ ਪਰਮ ਪਦ ਪਾਇਹੈ॥੭॥

Section V

॥ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ਤਿਨ ਬੇਦੀਅਨ ਕੀ ਕੁਲ ਬਿਧੈ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਇ॥ ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੁਖ ਦਏ ਜਹ ਤਹ ਭਏ ਸਹਾਇ॥੪॥

॥ਚੌਪਈ॥ ਤਿਨ ਇਹ ਕਲ ਮੋ ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਯੋ॥ ਸਭ ਸਾਧਨ ਕੋ ਰਾਹ ਬਤਾਯੋ॥ ਜੋ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਏ॥ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਪ ਸੰਤਾਏ॥੫॥

ਜੇ ਜੇ ਪੰਥ ਤਵਨ ਕੇ ਪਰੇ॥ ਪਾਪ ਤਾਪ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹਰੇ॥ਦੁਖ ਭੂਖ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਸੰਤਾਏ॥ਜਾਲ ਕਾਲ ਕੇ ਬੀਚ ਨ ਆਏ॥੬॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਗਦ ਕੋ ਬਪੁ ਧਰਾ॥ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਚੁਰ ਇਹ ਜਗ ਮੋ ਕਰਾ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਪੁਨਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਹਾਯੋ॥ ਜਨ ਦੀ ਪਕ ਤੇ ਦੀਪ ਜਗਾਯੋ॥੭॥

ਜਬ ਬਰਦਾਨ ਸਮੈ ਵਹੁ ਆਵਾ॥ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਤਬ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹਾਵਾ॥ ਤਿਹ ਬਰਦਾਨ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਦੀਆ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਸੁਰ ਪੁਰਿ ਮਗੁ ਲੀਆ॥੮॥

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਗਦ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨਾ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਅੰਗਦ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਾ॥ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਕਹਾਯੋ॥ ਸਾਧਨ ਲਖਾ ਮੂੜ੍ਹ ਨਹਿ ਪਾਯੋ॥੯॥

ਭਿੰਨ ਭਿੰਨ ਸਭਹੂੰ ਕਰ ਜਾਨਾ॥ ਏਕ ਰੂਪ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਾ॥ ਜਿਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਸਿਧ ਪਾਈ॥ ਬਿਨ ਸਮਝੇ ਸਿਧ ਹਾਥ ਨ ਆਈ॥੧੦॥

ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਹਰਿ ਮੋ ਮਿਲ ਗਏ॥ ਗੁਰਤਾ ਦੇਤ ਅਰਜਨਹਿ ਭਏ॥ ਜਬ ਅਰਜਨ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਲੋਕ ਸਿਧਾਏ॥ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਤਿਹ ਠਾ ਠਹਿਰਾਏ॥੧੧॥

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ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਪੂਭ ਲੋਕ ਸਿਧਾਰੇ॥ਹਰੀ ਰਾਇ ਤਿਹ ਠਾ ਬੈਠਾਰੇ॥ ਹਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨ ਕੇ ਸੁਤ ਵਏ॥ਤਿਨ ਤੇ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਭਏ॥੧੨॥…

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਕੇ ਚਲਤ ਭਯੋ ਜਗਤ ਕੋ ਸੋਕ॥ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਭਯੋ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਸੁਰ ਲੋਕ॥੧੬॥

Lavī Rājā of Madra Des (Panjāb), a Sodhī King, requested Bedī attend his court. Bedīs came from Kāshī and explained the four Vedās to the assembled court. They acted upon the teachings and the realm benefited. Lavī Rājā so effected by the teachings that he gave over control of the kingdom to the Bedīs and became forest dwelling *rishī* (*banbās*) - *rikham bhes kīyam*. Lavī Rājā practiced austerities while the Bedīs became absorbed in pleasure of the royal court. They eventually squandered their wealth being reduced to control of only a few villages while having recourse to agriculture to sustain themselves.

Section IV
jinai bed pathio su bedī kahāe. tinai dharam ke karam nīk calāe…jab nānak kali mai ham ān kahāai. ho jagat pūj kari toai param pad pāeai.7.

Those who study the Vedās are called Bedī, they established ethical codices…When I summoned Nānak to enter *kali*, attaining the height of knowledge he became acceptable and esteemed in the eyes of the world.

Section V

dohra. tin bedīan kī kul bikhai pragate nanak rāe. sabh sikhan ko sukh dae jah tah bhae sahāe.4.

Into the [faltering] Bedī lineage King Nānak was manifested, easing the anxieties of all disciples by dissipating their passions. 4.4

caupaī. tin ih kal mo dharam calāyo. sabh sādhan ko rāh batāyo. jo tā ke mārag mai āe. te kabūn nahīn pāp santāe.5.

chaupai. In this era, he established a moral code and explained this path to all gnostic sects so that they might come join him on his way, never feeling the pain of sin. 4.5

nanak angad ko bapu dharā. dharam prachur ih jag mo karā. amardās puni nāmu kahāyo. jan dī pak te dīp jagāyo.7.

Lighting a flame upon the disciple's *dīvā*, Angad assumed the form of Nānak, and spread the code [of Nānak] in the world. Amardās taught about the benefits of nām [the name]. 4.7

jab bar dān samai vo āvā. rāmdās tab guru kahāvā. tia bar dān purātan dīā. amardās surpuri magu liā.8.

When it was his [Amardās] time to pass it on, Rāmdās was then called upon to receive that ancient light. Amardās then took to heaven. 4.8

srī nanak angad kari mānā. amardās angad paicānā. amardās rāmdās kahāyo. sādhan lakhā mūrh nai pāyo.9.

Sri Nānak held Angad in esteem. Amardās was recognised by Angad, Amardās called upon Rāmdās. The technique of visualization is not acquired by the ignorant. 4.9

bhin bhin sabhahūn kar jānā. ik rūp kinahūn paicānā. jin jānā tin hī sidh pāī. bin samajhe sidh hāth na āī.10.

Anyone can attain knowledge through distantiation, but existence in Oneness is had infrequently. Whomsoever experiences it [living Oneness], provides for its proof. Without first understanding this proof Oneness will not come to hand. 4.10

APPENDIX D

Bhattān dī Bānī (1369-1409): Gurū Lineage and Succession

ਸਵਈਏ ਮਹਲੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਕੇ ੧॥...
ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਅਮਰੁ ਕਹਾਇਓ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਾਜੁ ਅਬਿਚਲੁ ਅਟਲੁ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਿ
ਫੁਰਮਾਇਓ॥...॥੧੦॥ (ਅ: ੧੩੯੦)

ਸਵਈਏ ਮਹਲੇ ਤੀਜੇ ਕੇ ੩॥
ਸੋਈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸਿਵਰਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਚਲੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੇ॥ ਜਿਨ ਭਗਤ ਭਵਜਲ ਤਾਰੇ ਸਿਮਰਹੁ ਸੋਈ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ॥ ਤਿਤ
ਨਾਮਿ ਰਸਿਕੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਹਣਾ ਥਪਿਓ ਜੇਨ ਸ੍ਰਬ ਸਿਧੀ॥ ਕਵਿ ਜਨ ਕਲ ਸਬੁਧੀ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਜਨ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਬਿਸਰੀਯਾ॥ ਹਰਿਨਾਮੁ
ਰਸਨਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬਰਦਾਯਉ ਉਲਟਿ ਗੰਗਾ ਪਸਚਮ ਧੀਆ॥ ਸੋਈ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਛਲੁ ਭਗਤਹ ਭਵ ਤਾਰਣ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਰ ਕਉ
ਫੁਰਿਆ॥ (ਅ: ੧੩੯੨)

॥੪॥੭੪॥ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਦਿ੍ਰੜ ਨਾਨਕਿ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿਅਉ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਲਹਣਾ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿ ਤਾ ਸੁ ਚਰਣਹ ਲਿਵ ਰਹਿਅਉ॥
(ਅ:੧੩੯੫)

ਸਵਈਏ ਮਹਲੇ ... ਕੇ ੪॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਅੰਗਦ ਸੁਮਤਿ ਗੁਰਿ ਅਮਰਿ ਅਮਰੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਓ॥ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਕਲ੍ ਚਰੈ ਤੌ ਅਟਲ ਅਮਰ ਪਦ
ਪਾਇਓ॥...(ਅ:੧੩੯੨)

॥੩॥੧੨॥ ਜੋਤਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹਾਯਉ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਭਯਉ ਤਤ ਸਿਉ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਯਉ॥...॥੧॥ ਸਤਿ
ਰੂਪੁ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਧਰਿਓ ਉਰਿ॥ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਿ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਲਿਖਯਉ ਅਛਲੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਧੁਰਿ॥ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਮਗ
ਤੇਜੁ ਭੂਅ ਮੰਡਲਿ ਛਾਯਉ॥ (ਅ:੧੪੦੮)

ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਵਤ ਦੇਵ ਸਬੈ ਮੁਨਿ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਮਹਾ ਸਿਵ ਜੋਗ ਕਰੀ॥ ਫੁਨਿ ਬੇਦ ਬਿਰੰਚਿ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਪੁ ਨ ਛਾਡਿਯਉ ਏਕ
ਘਰੀ॥ ਮਥੁਰਾ ਜਨ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਦੀਨ ਦਯਾਲ ਹੈ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ਕਰੀ॥ ਰਾਮਦਾਸਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਜਗ ਤਾਰਨ ਕਉ ਗੁਰ ਜੋਤਿ
ਅਰਜੁਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਧਰੀ॥੪॥ (ਅ: ੧੪੦੯)

savaīe mahale pahele ke 1…
kalijugi pramān nanak guru angad amaru kahāeo. srī guru raju abichal atalu ādi purakhi
phurmāeo… 10. (p.1390)

In kaliyuga Gurū Angad, and Amar give testimony to Nānak, who established an immoveable and immutable kingdom as he was commanded to do by the primordial being. (p.1390)

savaīe mahale tīje ke 3.
soī purakhu sivari sācā jā kā eku nāmu acalu sansāre. jin bhagat bhavjal tare simaro soī nāmu
pardhanu. tita nāmi rasiku nanak lahnā thapio srab sidhī. kavi jan kal sabudhī kīrati jan
amardās bisrīyā. harināmu rasani gurmukhi bardāyo ulati gangā pascam dhīā. soī nāmu achalu
bhagata bhav tāran amardās gur ko phuriā

Focus upon the person who state that the One Name pervades the world. Hold the remembrance of that Bhaktā's name primary who traversed the ocean of creation. That name was spoken by Nānak, who granted complete knowledge of it to Lehnā. Reciting the All-name as their daily practice, the Gurmukh overturns the Ganga's current westward. Devotion to that immoveable name blossomed in Amardās's mind.

4.14. sachu nāmu kartār sadrirh nānaki sangraio. tā te angadu lehnā pragati tā su carana liv
raio. (p. 1395)

The teachings of the creator's true name are in Nānak's collection. Angad was revealed in Lehnā when he attentively remained [studying] at the feet… (p.1395)

savaīe mahale … ke 4.
nanak prasādi angad sumati guri amari amaru vartāeo. gur rāmdās kal care tain atal amar pad
pāeo…(p.1397)

Because of Nānak, Angad attained that same thinking and passed its eternal essence to Amar. Next Gurū Rāmdās spoke after donning the immortal and immutable essence. (1397)

3.12. joti rūpi hari āpi guru nānak kahāyo. tān te angadu bhayo tat sio tat milāyo…sati rūpu sati
nāmu satu santokhu dhario auri. ādi purakhi partakhi likhayo achalu mastaki dhuri. pragati joti
jagmag teju bhūa mandali chāyau…(p.1408)

Know that Gurū Nānak was the essential form of the All. From him, Angad was able to merge essence with essence…sacrificing to the true form, the true name, one is taken across. Beginning by manifesting the primordial being writing without deceitful thoughts. The *joti* [light] became clear and resplendent; it was glorified through entering the gathering. (1408)

APPENDIX E

Truth (*sac*), *Kathā*, and *Sākhī* in the SGGS and *Dasam Granth*

॥ਸਚ ਬਿਨ ਸਾਖੀ ਮੂਲ ਨ ਬਾਕੀ॥
(ਸਚੀ ਗੱਲ ਜਾਣੇ ਬਿਨਾ ਸ਼ਾਹਦੀ ਭਰਨੀ ਯਾ ਉਗਾਹੀ ਦੇਣੀ)

sac bin sākhī mūl na bākī.
(sacī gall jaṇe binā shādī bharnī yā ugāhī deṇī)

Truth without *sākhī* lacks expansive value.

ਸੇਸ ਰਸਨ ਸਾਰਦ ਸੀ ਬੁਧਿ॥ ਤਦਪ ਨ ਉਪਮਾ ਬਰਨਤ ਸੁਧ॥
ਯਾ ਮੈ ਰੰਚ ਨ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਭਾਖੀ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਖੀ॥

sesa rasan sārad sī budhi. tadapa na upmā baranat sudh.
yā mai ranc na mithai bhākhī. pārbrhamu gur nānak sākhī.

The Saraswatī like language of reasoning is polluted unless its
letters are emptied of comparison.
Through Nānak *sākhī*s, the "I" begins merging with the sayings about a
reality outside of objective conditions [*pārbrahm*].

॥ਮਾਝ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ॥ ਸਚੈ ਦੈ ਦਰਿ ਜਾਇ ਸਚ ਚਵਾਈਐ॥
ਸਚੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਮਹਲ ਸਚਿ ਬੁਲਾਈਐ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚ ਸਦਾ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਈਐ॥੧੫॥
॥ਪਉੜੀ॥ …ਜਿਨੀ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ॥
ਓਨਾ ਖਸਮੈ ਕੈ ਦਰਿ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਸਚੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਇਆ॥

sacai dai dari jāe sac cavāīai[1]. sacai andari mahail saci bulāīai. nānak saca sadā saciār saci samāīai. (15) jinī vicaho āpu gavāeā. onā khasme kai dari much ujale sacai sabdi suhāeā.

To cross the threshold of True Being have the truth taken.
From within the palace of True Being, call upon truth.
Nānak, the truthful are always true may we be mingled with truth.
paurhī. Whosoever experiences self-loss, become resplendent through the True's words
their faces radiate upon the master's threshold

॥ਪਉੜੀ॥ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਤ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਜਨ ਭਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਇਕ ਸਾਖੀ॥
ਜਿਸ ਧੁਰਿ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਨ ਲੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਰਾਖੀ॥
ਹਰਿ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਥਾ ਸਰੇਸਟ ਉਤਮ ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨੀ ਸਹਜੇ ਚਾਖੀ॥
ਤਹ ਭਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਿ ਮਿਟਿਆ ਅੰਧਿਆਰਾ ਜਿਉ ਸੂਰਜ ਸਿਰਾਖੀ
ਅਦਿਸਟ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਅਲਖ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ॥੨॥

*Paurhī. hari ke sant sunho jan bhāī hari satigur kī ik sākhī.
jis dhuri mastaki tini jan lai hirdai rākhī. hari amrit kathā sresṭ
ūtam gur bacanī sahaje cākhī. tah bhaeā pragāsi miṭiā andhiārā
jiu sūraj sirākhī. adisṭ agocar alakh niranjan so dekhiā gurmukhi ākhī. (2)*

Sants of the One, fellow disciples, listen to a *sākhī* the One's true-brilliance.
That disciple attaining the furthest point and placing it upon their heart,
creates an ambrosial *kathā* of the One using significant enlightening
statements through ruminative equipoise Like the sun at its zenith, being is
pragās and darkness is extinguished. The unthinkable, unbreachable,
invisible, unadorned seeing that through statements from an illumined mouth. (2)

॥ਪਉੜੀ॥ ਕੀਤਾ ਲੋੜੀਐ ਕੰਮ ਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿ ਆਖੀਐ॥
ਕਾਰਜ ਦੇਏ ਸਵਾਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਖੀਐ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਅਲਖ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਲਾਖੀਐ॥

*paurhī. kītā loṛīai kamm su hari pahai ākhīai
kāraj de'e svāri satigur sac sākhīai
nānak hari guṇ gāe alakh praph lākhīai*

Through extraordinary exertions, that One can be spoken.
Arranging the effects, give truthful sākhī of true-brilliance.
Nānak, sing the One's attributes see the unseen prabhu.

---

[1] The verb, *cavar*, is equivalent to the modern word for stealing or taking someone's thing without their knowledge (cor or caurh).

ਜੋ ਇਹ ਕਥਾ ਸੁਨੈ ਅਰੁ ਗਾਵੈ॥ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਤਿਹ ਨਿਕਟ ਨ ਆਵੈ॥

jo eh kathā sunai aru gāvai. dūkh pāp tiha nikaṭ na āvai.

Whoever listens and sings this *kathā*,
pain from negative acts cannot come near

॥ਮਾਝ ਮਹਲਾ ੪॥ ਹਰਿਗੁਣ ਪੜੀਐ ਹਰਿਗੁਣ ਗੁਣੀਐ॥
ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿਨਾਮ ਕਥਾ ਨਿਤ ਸੁਣੀਐ॥ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਤ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਏ॥
ਜਗੁ ਭਉਜਲੁ ਦੁਤਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਜੀਉ॥

mājh mahalā 4. hariguṇ paṛīai hariguṇ guṇīai. hari harināam kathā nit suṇīai.
mili sat sangati hari guṇ gāe. jag bhaojalu dutaru tarīai jīo.

Read the One's attributes, attribute the One's attributes.
At every instance listen to *kathā* of the One and the One's attributes.
Crossing this impassable world-ocean, live.

॥ਮਾਝ ਮਹਲਾ ੫॥ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਤ ਮਨੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਹੋਵੈ॥ ਕਥਾ ਸੁਣਤ ਮਲ ਸਗਲੀ ਖੋਵੈ॥

mājh mahalā 5. guṇ gāvat manu hariā hovai.
kathā suṇat mal sagalī khovai.

Consciousness blooms by singing the attributes.
Listening to *kathā* removes all dust.

॥ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫॥ ਸੁਣਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਥਾ ਉਤਾਰੀ ਮੈਲ॥ ਮਹਾ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਭਏ ਸੁਖ ਸੈਲ॥

gaurhī mahala 5. suṇi hari kathā utārī mail. mahā punīt bhae sukh sail.

The dust was taken away by listening to *kathā* of the One.
Attaining great clarity, endlessly at peace.

॥ਅਨੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ॥ ਆਵਤੁ ਸੰਤ ਪਿਆਰਿਹੋ ਅਕਥ ਕੀ ਕਰੋ ਕਹਾਣੀ॥
ਕਰਹੁ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਅਕਥ ਕੇਰੀ ਕਿਤ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਪਾਈਐ॥
ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸਭ ਸਉਪਿਗੁਰ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਪਾਈਐ॥
ਹੁਕਮ ਮੰਨਿਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਕੇਰਾ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ॥

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਤ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਕਥਿਹੁ ਕਥਿਹੁ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ॥੯॥

*anand sahib. āvat sant piāriho akath kī karo kahānī. karhao kahānī akath kerī kit duārai pāīai.
tanu manu dhanu sabh saopi gur kao hukami maniai pāīai. human mannihau gur kerā gāvhau
sacī baṇī. kahai nānaku suṇat santhau kathihau kathihau akath kahānī. (9)*

Come, beloved *sant*s let's write a story about the unsayable. When writing the
unsayable story, which threshold should be emplaced? Leave aside body,
mind, and value emplace by thinking of light as order. Thinking this order
elaborate upon light, sing the truly artful language. Tell them Nānak, "listen
sants, enrich and embellish the unsayable story [*akath kahānī*].

॥ਅੰਨਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਕਥਾ ਸੁਣਾਇਹਿ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਿ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਵਹੇ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜਿਉ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਿਵੈ ਚਲਾਵਹੇ॥੧੫॥

*anand sahib. jis no kathā suṇāeai āpṇī si gurduāre sukh pāvhe.
kahai nānak sace sahib jio bhāvai tivai calāvai. (15)*

Whoever is made to hear your *kathā*, they pass the threshold of light and have
peace upon them. Tell them Nānak, whoever has the becoming of the true
master upon them they are driven in this manner. (15)

ਰਾਗ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ॥ ਮਹਲ ੧॥ ਚਉਪਦੇ ਘਰ ੧॥
ਜੋ ਕਿਛ ਹੋਆ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛ ਤੁਝ ਤੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਭ ਅਸਨਾਈ॥
ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮੈ ਅੰਧਲ ਕਿਆ ਚੁਤਰਾਈ॥੨॥
ਕਿਆ ਹਉ ਕਥੀ ਕਥੇ ਕਥਿ ਮੈ ਅਕਥ ਨ ਕਥਨਾ ਜਾਈ॥
ਜੇ ਤੁਧ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਆਖਾ ਤਿਲੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ॥

*rāg bilāvalu. mahal 1. chaupade ghar 1. jo kich hoā sabhu tujhu
te terī sabh asanāī. terā ant na jāṇā mere sahib mai andhal kiā
caturāī. (2) kiā hao kathī kathe kathi mai akath na kathanā jāī. je
tudh bhāvai soī ākhā tilu terī vaḍiāī.*

All that occurs, all of it is upon you, it is all yours my all-knowing
friend. Not knowing your limits, my master, I am blind with what
awareness. (2) With which speech might I say when by saying "me"
the unsayable can not be elaborated? Whoever becomes yours,
say to them, extract oil from the seed for your expansion.

APPENDIX F

1809 Letter from John Malcolm to Henry Colebrooke

Bombay
12th July

My Dear Colebrooke—

[…]. I have endeavored to make this paper as worthy as I could of the collection for which it is intended. […] peruse it with great attention and […] make any alterations or amendments you like. I have left a vacancy at the beginning of each division of the subject to be filled up by you. I think you will insert the contents of each chapter as it is usual to have chapters in papers published by your society. […]

I should be anxious for your opinion. I will not conceal my expectations that you will on the whole be pleased with my production--which at all events must be entitled to indulgence as having been brought forth in troubled times--when it was difficult to give it that attention which its novelty of interest merited. It will I conclude be called a *Sketch of the Sikh Nation* by Sir John Malcolm--that title is modest and when I consider that it has no pretensions and comes faceward under your protection I will not fear its fate. Believe me, my dear Colebrooke.

Yours ever
Most sincerely
John Malcolm

(John Malcolm
Bombay 12th July 1809)

(With a 'Sketch of
the Sikh Nation')

Figure F.1 Page 1 of manuscript of letter from Malcolm to Colebrooke

by you, I think you will insert
the Contents of each Chapter as
it is usual where Chapters
in Papers published by you
Jointly. — I particularly call
your attention to the names
of Places &c. &c. — as Corrections
in these will be required.

I shall be anxious for
your opinion & I will not
conceal my expectations
that you will own
The

Figure F.2 Page 2 of manuscript of letter from Malcolm to Colebrooke

Figure F.3 Page 3 of manuscript of letter from Malcolm to Colebrooke

who whole be pleased with
my production – which at
all events mine to be entitled
to Indulgence as being been
brought forth in troubled
times – when it was difficult
to give it that attention
which its Novelty of Interest
merited. — It with I conclude
be entire a *Sketch of The
Sikh Nation By B. Genl Malcolm*
– That title is modest &
when I consider it

Figure F.4 Page 4 of manuscript of letter from Malcolm to Colebrooke

Figure F.5 Page 5 of manuscript of letter from Malcolm to Colebrooke

APPENDIX G

Panjābī Text of the Elephant *Sākhī* from Two Manuscripts

Dillī Hāthī Moeā Jivāeā: Mss Panjabi B6, ff. 44a to 46a

ਬਾਬੇ ਤੇ ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਰਵਦੇ ਰਹੈ॥ ਆਏ ਦਿਲੀ ਨਿਕਲੇ॥ ਤਬਿ ਦਿਲੀ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸੁਲਤਾਨੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬੇਗ ਥਾ॥ ਉਹਾ ਜਾਇ ਰਾਤਿ ਰਹੈ॥ ਮਹਾਵੰਤਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਉਨਿ ਖਿਜਮਤਿ (ਖਿਜਾਮਤਿ) ਬਹੁਤੁ ਕੀਤੀ॥ ਤਬਿ ਇਕੁ ਹਾਥੀ ਪਾਸਿ ਮੁਆ ਪਇਆ ਥਾ॥ ਲੋਕ ਪਿਟਦੇ ਰੋਦੇ ਆਹੈ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬਾ ਪੁਛਿਆ ਤੁਸੀ ਕਿਉ ਰੋਦੇ ਹੋ॥ ਤਾ ਉਨਾ ਅਰਜ ਕੀਤਾ ਜੀ ਅਸੀ ਹਾਥੀ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੈ ਰੋਦੇ ਹਾ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੇ ਆਖਿਆ ਹਾਥੀ ਕਿਸ ਦਾ ਥਾ॥ ਤਬਿ ਮਹਾਵਤਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਹਾਥੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਦਾ ਥਾ॥ ਇਕੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਦਾ ਥਾ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਤੁਸੀ ਕਿਉ ਰੋਦੇ ਹਉ॥ ਤਾ ਉਨਾ ਆਖਿਆ ਜੀ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਰੁਜਗਾਰੁ ਥਾ॥ ਤਾ ਬਾਬੈ ਆਖਿਆ ਹੋਰ ਰੁਜਗਾਰੁ ਕਰਹੁ॥ ਤਬਿ ਉਨਾ ਕਹਿਆ ਜੀ ਬਣੀ ਥੀ ਟਬਰ ਸੁਖਾਲੇ ਪਇ (ਪਏ) ਖਾਦੇ ਸੇ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੇ ਮਿਹਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਆਖਿਓਸੁ ਜੋ ਏਹੁ ਹਾਥੀ ਜੀਵੈ ਤਾ ਰੋਵਹੁ ਨਾਹੀ॥ ਤਬਿ ਉਨਾ ਆਖਿਆ॥ ਜੀ ਮੁਏ ਕਿਥਹੁ ਜੀਵ ਹੈਨਿ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੇ ਅਖਿਆ ਜਾਇ ਕਰਿ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਮੁਹ ਉਪਰਿ ਹਥੁ ਫੇਰਹੁ॥ ਵਾਹਗੁਰੁ ਆਖਹੁ॥ ਤਬਿ ਉਆਗਿਆ ਮਾਨੀ ਜਾਹਿ ਹਥੁ ਫੇਰਿਆ॥ ਤਾ ਹਾਥੀ ਉਠਿ ਖੜਾ ਹੋਆ॥ ਤਬਿ ਅਰਜ ਪਤਿਸਾਹ ਕਉ ਪਹੁਚਾਈ॥ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਈ॥ ਤਬਿ ਸੁਤਾਨੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬੇਗੁ ਹਾਥੀ ਮੰਗਾਇਆ॥ ਚੜਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਨੂ ਆਇਆ॥ ਆਇ ਬੈਠਾ॥ ਆਖਿਓਸੁ ਏ ਦਰਵੇਸ ਏਹੁ ਹਾਥੀ ਤੁਸਾ ਜੀਵਾਇਆ ਹੈ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੇ ਆਖਿਆ॥ ਮਾਰਨਿ ਜੀਵਾਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਹੈ॥ ਅਤੈ ਦੁਆਇ ਫਕੀਰਾ ਰਹਮ ਅਲਾਹ ਹੈ॥ ਤਉ ਫਿਰਿ ਪਤਿਸਾਹ ਆਖਿਆ॥ ਮਾਰਿ ਦਿਖਾਲੁ॥ ਤਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲਿਆ॥ ਸਲੋਕ॥ ਮਾਰੈ ਜੀਵਾਲੈ ਸੋਈ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ॥੧॥ ਤਬਿ ਹਾਥੀ ਮਰਿ ਗਇਆ॥ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹਿ ਆਖਿਆ॥ ਜੀਵਾਲੁ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬੇ ਕਹਿਆ॥ ਹਜਰਤਿ ਲੋਹਾ ਆਗਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਤਪਿ ਲਾਲੁ ਹੋਦਾ ਹੈ॥ ਪਰ ਓਹੁ ਰਤੀ ਹਥ ਉਪਰਿ ਟਿਕੈ ਨਾਹੀ॥ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਗਿਆਰੁ ਕੋਈ ਰਤੀ ਰਹੈ॥ ਤਿਵੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਫਕੀਰ ਲਾਲੁ ਹੋਏ ਹੈਨਿ॥ ਅਤੈ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕੀ ਮਟੀ ਓਹੁ ਉਠਾਇ ਲੈਇਨਿ॥ ਪਰ ਉਨਿ ਕੀ ਮਟੀ ਉਠਣ ਰਹੀ॥ ਤਬਿ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਮਝਿ ਕਰਿ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਖੁਸੀ ਹੋਆ॥ ਤਬਿ ਆਖਿਓਸੁ ਜੀ ਕੁਛੁ ਕਬੂਲ ਕਰੁ॥ ਤਬਿ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲਿਆ॥ ਸਲੋਕੁ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੁਖ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕੀ ਬਿਆ ਬੇ ਪਰਵਾਹੀ॥ ਆਸਾ ਤਲਬ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਕੀ ਬਿਆ ਤਲਬ ਨ ਕਾਈ॥ ਤਬਿ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਮਝਿ ਕਰਿ ਉਠ ਗਇਆ॥ ਬਾਬਾ ਰਵਦਾ ਰਹਿਆ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਦਿ॥

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ਜਾਇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਨਿਕਲੇ. ਤਬ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਇਬਰਾਹੀਮ ਬੇਗ ਥਾ. ਉਹਾ ਜਾਇ ਰਾਤ ਰਹਿਆ ਮਹਾਵਤਾ ਵਿਚ; ਉਨਾਂ ਖਿਜਮਤ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੀਤੀ. ਤਬ ਇੱਕ ਹਾਥੀ ਉਨ ਕਾ ਮੂਆ ਥਾ; ਓਹ ਰੋਂਦੇ ਪਿਟਦੇ ਆਹੇ. ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ, "ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਉ ਰੋਂਦੇ ਪਿਟਦੇ ਹੋਂ?" ਤਬ ਉਨਾਂ ਕਹਿਆ, "ਜੀ, ਹਾਥੀ ਦੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਰੋਂਦੇ ਆਹੇ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਆਖਿਆ, ਹਾਥੀ ਕਿਸਕਾ ਥਾ?" ਤਬ ਮਹਾਵਤਾਂ ਕਹਿਆ, "ਜੀ, ਹਾਥੀ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਦਾ ਥਾ, ਅਕੈ ਖੁਦਾਇਦਾ ਥਾ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਕਹਿਆ, "ਤੁਸੀ ਰੋਂਦੇ ਕਿਉ ਹੋਂ?" ਤਬ ਉਨਾਂ ਆਖਿਆ, "ਜੀ, ਅਸਾਡਾ ਰੁਜਗਾਰ ਥਾ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਅਖਿਆ, "ਹੋਰ ਰੁਜਗਾਰ ਕਰਹੁ." ਤਬ ਉਨੀਂ ਕਹਿਆ, "ਜੀ, ਬਡੀ ਥੀ, ਟੱਬਰ ਸੁਖਾਲੇ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਥੇ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨ ਹੋਇਆ, ਆਖਿਓਸ, "ਜੋ ਇਹ ਹਾਥੀ ਜੀਵੈ, ਤਾਂ ਰੋਵਹੁ ਨਾਹੀਂ?" ਤਬ ਉਨਾਂ ਆਖਿਆ, "ਜੀ, ਮੋਏ ਕਿਥਹੁ ਜੀਵਨ?" ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਆਖਿਆ, "ਜਾਇਕੈ ਇਸਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਉੱਪਰ ਹੱਥ ਫੇਰਹੁ, ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ ਆਖਕੈ." ਤਬ ਉਨਾਂ ਆਗਿਆ ਮੰਨੀ, ਜਾਇਕਰ ਹੱਥ ਫੇਰਿਆ ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ ਆਖਕਰ, ਹਾਥੀ ਉੱਠ ਖੜਾ ਹੋਇਆ!

ਤਬ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਕਉ ਖਬਰ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ, ਆਖ ਸੁਣਾਈਆ. ਤਬ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਇਬਰਾਹੀਮ ਬੇਗ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਉਸ ਹਾਥੀ ਉੱਪਰ ਚੜਕਰ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਕਉ ਆਇਆ; ਆਇ ਬੈਠਾ. ਆਖਿਓ, "ਏ ਦਰਵੇਸ! ਇਹ ਹਾਥੀ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਜੀਵਾਇਆ ਹੈ?" ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਆਖਿਆ, "ਮਾਰਣ ਜੀਵਾਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਦੁਆਇ ਫਕੀਰਾਂ, ਰਹਿਮ ਅੱਲਾਹ ਹੈ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਸਲੋਕ:

ਮਾਰੇ, ਮਾਰ ਜੀਵਾਲੇ ਸੋਈ;
ਨਾਨਕ, ਏਕਸ ਬਿਨ ਅਵਰ ਨ ਕੋਈ.

ਤਬ ਹਾਥੀ ਮਰ ਗਇਆ. ਬਹੁਤ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਆਖਿਆ, "ਫੇਰ ਜੀਵਾਲ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬੇ ਕਹਿਆ, "ਹਜਰਤ ਸਲਾਮਤ! ਲੋਹਾ ਅੱਗੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਪ ਕੇ ਲਾਲ ਹੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਉਹ ਰੱਤਕ ਹੱਥ ਉੱਪਰ ਟਿਕਦਾ ਨਾਹੀਂ. ਤਿਉਂ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਕੀਰ ਲਾਲ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਹੈਂਨ, ਅਤੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਦੀ ਸੁੱਟੀ ਏਹ ਉਠਾਇ ਲੈਂਨ, ਪਰ ਓਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁੱਟੀ ਉਠਨਹੁ ਰਹੀ." ਤਬ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਸਮਝ ਕਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਖੁਸੀ ਹੋਇਆ, ਆਖਿਓਸ, "ਜੀ, ਕੁਛ ਕਬੂਲ ਕਰਹੁ." ਤਬ ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਸਲੋਕ:

ਨਾਨਕ ਭੁੱਖ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕੀ, ਬਿਆ ਬੇ ਪਰਵਾਹੀ;
ਅਸਾਂ ਤਲਬ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕੀ, ਬਿਆ ਤਲਬ ਨ ਕਾਈ.

ਤਬ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਸਮਝ ਕਰ ਉੱਠ ਗਇਆ. ਬਾਬਾ ਓਥਹੁ ਰਉਂਦਾ ਰਹਿਆ. ਬੋਲੋ ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ!

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