

## Sri Guru Arjun Dev Ji and Editing of *Sri Adi Granth Sahib*

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper takes in its circumference life and contribution of Sri Guru Arjun Dev Ji. It also explores different steps and processes through which the edition of the Granth had gone through. The paper also discusses Guru Ji's idea and motive behind the editing of Sri Adi Granth Ji. The paper also explores the criteria adopted by Guru Ji in the selection of Bani, the content for the Granth. It also discusses the authenticity of the content that the Bani selected are by the Guru Ji's themselves. The paper also takes up the reasons for the choice of script for writing Sri Adi Granth Ji with reference to Sri Suraj Prakash Granth. It also counts the contribution of Sri Adi Granth Ji to Literature.

### Introduction

*Kaljug jahaj Arjun Guru.  
Moorat panch parmaan purakh gur Arjun pekhuh nayan  
(Mathra Bhatt) "  
Japeo Jin Arjun Dev Guru  
Fir sakat jon grabh na aeo.*

### Birth and life

The fifth Guru of the Sikhs, the Fifth (eternal light, the first 'great' writer, poet, editor, scholar and the first martyr of Sikh history - Guru Arjan Dev Ji was born on Tuesday, April 2, at Goindwal Sahib. There are different opinions about your date of birth. According to *Gurpranali Krit Sanayanku*, his birth is recorded as 6 *Visakha Sammat* 1610. According to *Gurpranali Krit Bhai Kesar Singh, Gurpranali Krit Gulab Singh, Pandit Tara Singh Narotam, Gur Sagar Ratan Parkash, Bhagat Singh*, his birth year is *Sammat* 1610. *Kesar Singh Chibber* has also agreed with this *Sammat*. The year 1563 (*Sammat* 1620) regarding the date of birth can be considered as correct and appropriate as Guru Ram Das Ji was married in 1553 (*Sammat* 1610) and Guru Sri Guru Arjun Dev Ji was his youngest child. So it is only proper to consider the date of Guru's pure birth as 15th April, 1556 or *Sammat* 1620. Guru Arjan Dev Ji is from *Sodhi* clan. The fourth *Patshahi* Guru Ram Das Ji had three sons, i.e., Prithi Chand, Mahadev and Guru Arjan Dev. Bhagat Lachhman Singh describes Guru Ji as the second son of Guru Ram Das, which is not correct. Bibi Bhani, the mother of Guru Arjan, was a very virtuous and religious woman, whose penance, devotion and it was the devotion of Guru Ram Das Ji that Guru Amar Das did not give the Guruship to his sons, but to his son-in-law (Guru Ram Das). All this influence of the parents inherited by Guru Arjun Dev Ji but not by Prithi Chand and Mahadev. He looked promising from his childhood and then his grandfather called Guru Ji, "*Dohita Bani da Bohtha*", meaning this grandson of ours will be a great writer. Prof. Sahib Singh has written that Guru Ji's first marriage with Bibi Gang was in Philour Pargana in 1589 AD (*Sammat* 1646). The first marriage is believed to have taken place in *Sammat* 1622 and the second in *Sammat* 1647. *Kesar Singh Chibber* considers the first marriage to have taken place in 1622 and the second in *Sammat* 1646. .

Guru Ji started and completed the project of *Sri Santokhsar Sahib*, proceeded with the construction of the

Golden Temple and completed the construction of the Golden Temple. The *sarovar* which was built by Guru Ram Das Ji was completed by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. The Guru had founded *Tarn Taran Sahib*, town at some distance from Amritsar. Six wells were dug to alleviate the water shortage which later came to be known as *Chheharta Sahib*. Every spring there is a fair on *Panchami*. *Baoli Sahib* was constructed. Apart from this, *Ramsar Sahib* was established by constructing *Ramsar Sarovar*. He also served *Pipli Sahib, Wadali and Guru ka Bagh*.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji introduced the *masand* system. Guru Arjan Dev Ji, while practicing the word of *Tera Bhana Mitha Laage*, considered it appropriate to give martyrdom instead of performing miracles because he wanted to give the message to the people to follow the will of the Lord. By his incomparable martyrdom, the world remembers him as '*Sheeda de Sartaj*', the king of martyrs. Guru Ji sacrificed His life for humanity by sitting on the hot plate. He brought many social and political changes in his lifetime.

The editing of *Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib* is his great literary contribution.

### Editing of *Sri Adi Granth*

*Adi Granth* was edited by Guru Arjan Dev Ji and the Guru Ji chose for this was the bank of *Ramsar Sarovar* as per the reference in *Sri Suraj Prakash Granth* by Bhai Santokh Singh ji. Bhai Kesar Singh Chhibber and McAuliffe also hold the same view. The motive behind the editing of *Sri Adi Granth Sahib* was to prevent confusion between the Bani by the four Gurus and Bhagats and the creation of Prithi Chand who is known as Meena in history. This Granth was edited for the purpose of giving guidance after and forever. In *Suraj Prakash Granth*, Bhai Santokh Ji writes that Guru Ji himself used to recite Bani and Bhai Gurdas Ji used to write Bani. When it came to editing the *Adi Granth*, Guru Arjan Dev Ji asked Bhai Gurdas Ji to compose the Granth which should include the Bani of Guru Sahibs as well as the Bani of *Bhatts and Bhagats*. That no one can write it in a better way than you. Guru Ji said that Guru Ji himself will do the job of reciting Bani and no one can do the work of writing Bani better than you. Writing this hymn also required a similar environment where peace and concentration could be maintained. So the Guru went to a beautiful place

called Ramsar Jungle, constructed a *sarovar* and started the work of editing the *Adi Granth* on that place.

McAuliffe, Principal Teja Singh, Giani Partap Singh and many other Sikh historians have said on the basis of Suraj Prakash Granth that Guru Arjan Dev Ji had first collected '*Bani Pothis*' from Baba Mohan Singh (Guru Amar Das Ji's son). Baba Buddha Ji and Bhai Gurdas Ji were sent to collect these '*Bani Pothis*'. But Baba Mohan Singh refused to give these '*Pothis*' to them. The Guru Ji himself went to Mohan Singh and took the Bani of the first four Gurus from Baba Mohan Singh to Sri Amritsar Sahib and included that Bani in the *Adi Granth*. Bhai Kesar Singh Chibber and McAuliffe are also of the opinion that Guru Ji collected the available Bani in one place to prevent the merger of Prithiya called Meena and to establish a permanent Granth for the Sikhs in the form of Guru. The thought of doing and this thought came in the form of *Adi Granth*. From all of this we come to the point that:

Guru Arjan Dev Ji started and completed the editing of *Adi Sri Granth Sahib* with Bhai Gurdas Ji at *Ramsar Sarovar* in a beautiful place in view of the need for proper guidance of the Sikh community. Sri Adi Granth was edited between the year 1601 and 1604. The editing was completed in August 1604. In the *Adi Granth* not only the Bani of Guru Sahibs but Guru Ji has recorded in it the Bani of eleven Bhattas and 18 Bhagats in thirty ragas also included in it.

Prof. Sahib Singh writes on page number fifty six of '*Jivan Birtant Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji*' "Number of Angs (Leaves or Pages) of Sri Adi Granth at the time of Guru Arjan Dev Ji's editing, Bhai Gurdas Ji's 'Handwritten *Beed*' has 974 *Pakke Patre* (approved leaves). There is a lot of similarity in the Bani of different Gurus, which is very difficult to separate. The reader of Bani should be able to identify which Guru's Bani it is. After writing *Mahla*, numbers are written after it. *Mahla 1* is Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Bani and *Mahla 2* is Guru Angad Dev Ji's Bani.

On the page 51 of History of Sikhs Vol. 1, Khushwant Singh writes, "The first prakash of first edition of the *Adi Granth* was at the Golden Temple on the 16th of August, 1661 AD." Baba Buddha was honored by the Guru to be the first *granthi*. When *Sri Adi Granth Sahib* was taken to Darbar Sahib, Sri Harmandir Sahib to be seated, Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji did the job of waving the *chour sahib* himself.

### Hereditary form of Bani and Contribution to literature

The hymns recorded in Sri Adi Guru Granth Sahib Ji have been inherited to Punjabi literature not only as mystical works but also in poetic form, as an immortal treasure of infinite images by Gurus and devotees who have guided writers at different times, have been and will continue to be for eternity.

Most of the hymns of the devotees (bhagats) were collected by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The hymns of Baba Farid, Bhagat Kabir, Namdev, Jaydev, Trilochan etc. were collected by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Evidence of this is found in many places in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. One of the greatest proofs is that Guru Nanak Dev Ji composed verses in response to the verses of Baba Farid Ji. Similarly Guru Amar Das Ji, Guru Ram Das Ji and Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji have composed their *Bani* with the verses of Bhagat Kabir, Baba Farid.

The combination of meaning and words in the *Bani* is a proof that this *Bani* was received from one Guru Sahib to another as a gift of Guruship. The first Patshah Guru Nanak

Dev Ji, while giving Guruship to Bhai Lehna Ji, placed *Jyot* in Bhai Lehna Ji and gave him the name of Sri Angad Dev Ji. The Bani composed by him was recorded. This method was performed by each of the Gurus while giving Guruship to the next Guru. *Suraj Parkash Granth* seals the authenticity of this. So the handwritten version of the '*Bani Pothi*' containing the *Bani* of the first Gurus continued to reach the next Gurus through this tradition of Guruship and it continued to advance in Sikhism as a proof of a written fact (written draft). So whatever *Bani* reached Guru Arjan Dev Ji in the form of *Pothi* was recorded by four Gurus before him in the form of *Pothi* and it was given by the next Guru as a blessing to the next *Jyot*. It seems that Punjabi literature has inherited a rich heritage.

It is recorded on page number 137 of the ancient *Janam Sakhi*:

*Titu Mahal Shabad Hoa So Pothi Zabani Guru Angad Jog Mili.*

According to the *Suraj Prakash Granth* composed by Bhai Santokh Ji, through Bhai Gurdas Ji and Baba Buddha Ji, Guru Arjan Dev Ji from outside Punjab called for the hymns of some devotees and recorded them in *Sri Adi Guru Granth*. Only the hymns composed by the devotees are recorded which were in accordance with the Guru's wishes and those which were unfavorable, not as per the requirements or to the mark of Sikh tradition were not given a place in this *Granth*.

Shah Hussain Chhajju, Kahna, Peelu were all famous devotees of Lahore. Chhajju took his compositions and appeared before Guru Sahib so that he could have his compositions got recorded in Sri Adi Granth. In The Sikh Religion, McAuliffe writes, "They all came to Guru Sahib with their works to be recorded in the *Adi Granth*, but they were not in accordance with Guru Asha and Prati, the Sikhs. Kahna had called herself God, Chhajju had condemned the woman, there was pessimism in the works of Peelu and Shah Hussain. "Dr. Dalbir Singh has recorded in his book '*Kalam Di Karamat*'. The devotees who were selected in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji were the great beings in the form of bliss.

In "The Sikh Religion", McAuliffe writes, "Guru Sahib's intention to include Bhagat's Bani in this Granth was to make the world aware that Sikhism is not a religion of narrow-mindedness. It respects every caste, religion." And the devotee, regardless of religion or caste, deserves respect.

Apart from his own *Bani*, Guru Sahib exalted *Sri Adi Granth Sahib* only in terms of religion by collecting the *Bani* of the four Gurus before him and the Bani of the devotees from different parts of the country and at the same time recording the *Bani* of the *Bhattas*. No, but also from the literary point of view, Punjabi literature has been given a unique and invaluable heritage. A treasure in which there is an infinite store of words, poetic forms, images which will never run out. Apart from Punjabi language, it contains Bani in Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian, Apabhramsh, Sahaskriti, Braj Bhasha, Sindhi, Arabic, Sadhukari, Typical Punjabi, Lahindi Punjabi, Pothohari languages. All this writing is in *Gurmukhi* script, which has led to the introduction and translation of other languages into *Gurmukhi* and has enriched the Punjabi language. Those who read Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji are well aware of this and understand it very well. It is also true that many of Guru Arjan Dev Ji's works has the words from other languages, that shows Guru Ji's familiarity with languages such as typical Punjabi,

Lahindi Punjabi, Hindi, Sanskrit, Apabhraṁsh, Sahaskriti, Persian, Braj language, Sindhi, Arabic, Sadhukari etc. which means that Guru Ji was a great learned poet. In *Suraj Prakash Granth* composed by Bhai Santokh Singh in Ras Chauthi (Ras Fourth) has recorded the conversation between Sri Arjan Dev Ji and Bhai Gurdas regarding the selection of appropriate script and language for the composition of Sri Adi Granth. According to this conversation, Guru Arjan Dev Ji told Bhai Gurdas Ji that Gurmukhi script would be used for the composition of *Sri Adi Granth*. Scholars of other languages like Sanskrit, Hindi etc. will be able to translate and translate it on their own.

In the light of the above facts, the fact has been reached that Guru Sahibs in Sri Adi Granth Sahib not only recorded his own *Bani* but also the *Bani* of first four Gurus which was transmitted in the form of *Pothi* from one Guru Sahib to another at the time of Guruship. And the *Bani* of the Bhagats, the *Bani* of the Bhattas was collected by the the Guruji. The Guru did not include in this collection the *Bani* of Meenas, the *Kachi Bani* which did not conform to the Guru's wishes. Guru Sahib's intention in editing this Granth was to compose a Granth for the guidance of the Sikh community which could lead the community in all aspects, spiritual, religious and secular. In addition to this, another aspect which has benefited not only the Sikh community but the entire Punjabi community in the form of Gurus by the editing of this Granth in person is the literary aspect that blessed the Sikh community, Punjabiya and Punjabi language as a gift.

## Conclusion

Professor Sita Ram Bihari has written in her book '*Guru Arjan Dev Ji Ki Bani*', "Whenever there is complete populism in India, the language that will be here will be the language of Guru Arjan Dev Ji." Dr. Sher Singh writes in *Gurmat Darshan* on page number 3, "Guru Granth Sahib is not a *Rahitnama* which gives details of marriage or betrothal, birth or death, rising or falling in the house or blatant lies etc. Nor is the Guru Granth Sahib written like a *Khat Shashtra*, refuting any sectarianism and appealing to a particular philosophy. Yes, patience, peace. "

Dr. Trump writes in his book '*Adi Granth: An Introduction*' which is the English translation of the *Adi Granth* under the duty imposed by the British government is a unique collection and hardly any of the world's religious books has the literary beauty and empirical knowledge like the *Guru Granth Sahib*. "

As a result, it comes to the fact that the subject of the *Bani* recorded in *Sri Adi Granth* is human, human life, world, humanity, God, the union of man and God, soul and the union of God, separation, union. All this has been manifested very easily through mysticism, moving from the material to the subtle. This *Bani* not only provides mental and spiritual composure, but as a great and invaluable literary writing, Punjabi literature has received a priceless gift from the Gurus as a gift. There is a treasure trove of great literature in creating a good society, which will continue to guide and guide humanity for the rest of the world. The present existence of *Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib Ji* which we know as '*Jivat Guru*' will continue to guide the literary field of Punjabi language.

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