

THE SIKH KIRTAN

With the dawn of the sixteenth century AD, when Guru Nanak launched his “Operation Salvage” and started his mission, he chose music and poetry as the most effective and efficient vehicle for communicating the *Shabd* and his experience. *Shabd* is the *bani* and thus the Guru. It conveys wisdom and projects the mysteries of reality. It is not always possible for words and language to rightly convey the wisdom and spiritual experiences and rapturous thoughts which are sometimes so mystical and ecstatic.

In Hindu mythology, Saraswati is said to have created music, when she could not satisfactorily communicate her spiritual experience and knowledge through words then she had to subscribe to the use of Sound Absolute (*Nad Brahm*), for this was the only most proficient form of communication left to her. Herein she conveys “experience”, pure as experience, without translating it into language. The limitation of words and language was thus surpassed. But this, however, had its own limitations. Experience communicated as nascent experience without words cannot be effective in the plane of reason. Since Sikhism depends and operates in the plane of reason, resorting to the absolute form of communication, however noble, would not have fitted into the dynamic concept of emancipation through knowledge. The tenth Satguru said :

Take the broom of Divine knowledge into thy hands, and sweep away timidity.

ਗਿਆਨਹਿ ਕੀ ਬਢਨੀ ਮਨੁ ਹਾਥ ਲੈ ਕਾਇਰਤਾ ਕੁਤਵਾਰ ਬੁਹਾਰੈ ।

In Sikhism, this obstacle is overcome when we have the

Shabd in the form of *kirtan* — words, *shabd*, set to music and rhythm, utilising the experience communicating quality of singing, objectified emotional character of *Rag*, the infinite concept of *Tal* (ਤਾਲ), and the purposeful, meaningful, rationalisable and commonly understandable character of *bani* (ਬਾਣੀ) in the form of *Shabd*. Verse and music when brought together create a beauty and sweetness and generate a wave that bypasses the critical and calculative check-barrier of the brain and intellect and reaches the mind direct and lifts it to ecstasies and raptures and fills it with profound devotion and love, and brings it into direct contact with the Lord of the Universe.

The power that music and poetry generate cuts both ways. It is like a double-edged sword, the *khanda*. It can lead to the very presence of the Lord and bestow Eternal Bliss. And it can also lead to depravity, baseness levity, immorality, and to hell and eternal ruin. That is why Emperor Aurangzeb outlawed music in his Indian Empire as a forbidden tool in Islamic worship. It is said that as a protest to this ban, the musicians of Delhi took out an effigy of music to be buried and marched in a procession through the streets of the capital and in the vicinity of the Emperor's residence in the Red Fort. When the Emperor heard their wails and bemoaning, he enquired what it was about. On being informed that the musicians, including the Royal *Kalakars*, were taking out 'music' in a coffin, to be buried, he retorted "tell them to bury it deep enough so that it may not rise again." But it depends on what the music is intended to convey. By the injunction that *Gurbani* be sung to music, this danger was warded off by the Satguru. Thus, this mighty power was tamed and diverted to a Divine purpose for the uplift and emancipation of mankind.

The Sikh *kirtan*, therefore, means singing the praises of the Lord. The conception of God and its interpretation differ according to different religions and schools of thought. In Sikh parlance the Lord, God, is Timeless and Formless, Supreme Being, the Eternal Ultimate Truth, that is both Absolute and Immanent. And the Guru is the Enlightener, the Instructor, who shows us the way and puts us in direct contact with the Supreme Being. So amongst the Sikhs

praises of the Lord are sung only in the *bani*, the *Shabd*, the Word, revealed to us by the Satguru. The Sikh Scripture imparts to us, besides spiritual enlightenment, guidance as to how this human span of life has to be fruitfully and successfully lived that it may be approved here and hereafter. The compositions of other men of God incorporated in the Holy Granth are also included in the *bani*. The injunction is :

O beloved disciples of the Satguru come and sing the True Word :

ਆਵਹੁ ਸਿਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਹੋ, ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

Yes, sing the *bani* of the Guru which is the most sublime of all;

ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਾਣੀਆ ਸਿਰਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

because

Without the *bani* of the Satguru, all others are imperfect; ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

Yes, the other *bani* is imperfect, which is not of the True Guru;

ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਕਚੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

Imperfect are those who utter, imperfect are those who listen, and also those who recite the other *bani*.

ਕਹਿਦੇ ਕਚੇ, ਸੁਣਦੇ ਕਚੇ, ਕਚੀ ਆਖਿ ਵਖਾਣੀ ॥

This stress became necessary because as early as in the period of the second and third Nanaks, *Gurbani* began to be tampered with and adulterated. Steps, therefore, had to be taken to preserve its purity and sanctity. And there has been very strict observance of these steps. Along with the *bani* in Guru Granth Sahib, however, the compositions of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal have been approved by convention and permitted for inclusion in our *kirtan*. Bhai Gurdas was a contemporary of the fifth and sixth Satgurus and Bhai Nand Lal of the tenth Master.

Sikh worship is not passive adoration. It is masculine subscription of a ਪੁਰਖ, a man, towards his Lord whom he holds in high esteem. It is the devotion of a liberated man who stands erect. His songs, thus, are not lyrical to appeal to the sensual only. His songs are no doubt sweet for they portray love. But the essence is

spiritual love, pure love, his songs have longing (ਬਿਰਹਾ) in the sense of classical music and not the bemoanings of modern light entertainment.

Good music, even without words, must have a thought content (howsoever inexpressible in words). Only then can it ennoble the spirit, tranquillize and purgate the self in Aristotelian sense. It is, therefore, essential that the composition of the song must be capable of evolving or at least communicating, chaste sensibilities. The sensibility of the composition (ਬੰਦਸ਼) and the style of singing, therefore, must be complementary to the intent (ਭਾਵ) of the words of the *bani* (ਬਾਣੀ).

The Sikh *kirtan* not only takes this aspect of art into consideration but also goes one step further. It combines *tal* (ਤਾਲ), *lae* (ਲੈਅ), poetic meter and even the structure of poetry with the structure of classical Indian music.

The *lae* (ਲੈਅ) is defined on the *Shabds*. The *Shabd* construction and the metre of the poetry is so set up that the pattern of *lae* (ਲੈਅ) does not break the sentence. It accentuates it.

The *ghar* (ਘਰ) concept goes one step further. The poetic focal point of the stanza can occur after one or more sentences. The *ghar* concept illustrates the *avartis* (ਆਵਰਤੀ) or the number of rhythmic cycles after which the *sam* (ਸਮ) or the focal point of the rhythm pattern should be highlighted.

Going one step further is the *rahaio* (ਰਹਾਉ) in the *Shabds*. The aesthetes in Indian musicology, structure a composition as consisting of *asthai* (ਅਸਥਾਈ), *antra* (ਅੰਤ੍ਰਾ), *sanchari* (ਸੰਚਾਰੀ) and *abhog* (ਅਭੋਗ), interpreted as thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis and limitation of the *ambit* of the *Rag*. This very definition lifts the art of Indian music on to the plane of the sublime. Like all great arts it becomes the evolution of the paradox. The *bani* (ਬਾਣੀ) of the Sikhs too is sublime. So the initiators of the *kirtan* concept, structured their poetry and their singing so that it could fit onto this pattern and be doubly effective.

In *kirtan* it is the sentence before the pause (ਰਹਾਉ) which is always sung as the *asthai* (ਅਸਥਾਈ). It is also a known fact that this sentence (ਤੁਕ) always has the burden of the thought content of the

Shabd. Also, the sentence after the pause (ਰਹਾਉ) elaborates, explains and puts forth the other side of the thought. Thus, the whole concept is an integrated approach.

Kirtan envelops the personality on the sensual plane with melody, on the intellectual plane with the homely rationale of the *bani* (ਬਾਣੀ), and on the emotional plane with the nobility of the Indian classical music.

This worship is, thus, to the total involvement of the human psyche. It is similar to experiencing His Creation on all planes (ਅਖੀ ਕੁਦਰਤ, ਕੰਨੀ ਬਾਣੀ). The experience of His presence thus becomes total.

Thus, when *Shabds* (ਸ਼ਬਦ) are sung to purely sensual, erotic type of tunes, not only the aesthetics but the very purpose, sanctity, and the sacrament of worship is violated in a most destructive way.

The Sikh *kirtan* is distinct and different from other devotional songs, *bhajans*, *qawalis*, and *nats* as well as from *Shastri Sangeet*. It has a tradition and structure, a background and image of its own. It has its own uniqueness and speciality. It is devotional as well as classical music. It has brought together *dhrupad* (ਧਰੁਪਦ), *partal* (ਪੜਤਾਲ), and *khayal* (ਖਿਆਲ) with *ritis* and various *dhunis* (ਧੁਨੀ) of *vars* (ਵਾਰ) (the Greek odes) and some folklores like *pade* (ਪਦੇ), *alahniyan* (ਅਲਾਹਣੀਆਂ), *ghorian* (ਘੋੜੀਆਂ), *raho* (ਰਹੋਇ), *birhare* (ਬਿਰਹੜੇ), *mangal* (ਮੰਗਲ) and *lavan* (ਲਾਵਾਂ), after recasting them into proper *Rags* and giving them a classical tinge. It is primarily *kirtan* wherein *Shabd* and their pronunciation and meaning, got predominance over other things. *Tan*, *palta*, *murki*, etc., are all brought in but as decoration, not clouding the real intent which is the *Shabd*. They form an essential part of Sikh *kirtan*. But they are meant to beautify and sweeten the *Rag* and the singing of the *Shabd* and not to subdue the Word. The Sikh *kirtan* has to be a judicious combination of all of them, with one end grounded on earth and the other soaring high up to heaven and infinity. It is the spiritual aspect which is glorified so that the mind gets attuned with the Will of the Master and reaches a state of peace and bliss.

This special type of music was introduced by Sri Guru Nanak Dev with the dawn of the sixteenth century. It developed and

progressed and was taken to soaring heights during the two hundred years of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the personal care, and patronage of the Satguru's nine successors. Bhai Mardana, Satta, and Balwand, were its well-known exponents from the first to the fifth Satguru, and had the unique honour of having their compositions included in the Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

The whole of the Sikh Scripture is poetry set to rhythm and perfect classical and devotional music. It is divided into thirty-one main *Rags*. If sub-heads of mixed *Rags* are counted, the number goes up to fifty. Besides the *bani* of the Gurus, there is the *bani* (compositions) of thirty-five other men of God who believed in the One-Formless-Timeless- God (ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ-ਅਕਾਲ) and the brotherhood of man. Where there were fifty-two poets under the service and patronage of the tenth Satguru, there were also a large number of musicians in his court at Paonta Sahib and at Anandpur Sahib. We find that in the *Dasam Granth*, there are as many as seventy-three special *chhands*, called *sangeet chhands*, set to the rhythm and beats of *mridang*. These cannot even be read and pronounced correctly unless one is conversant with the art of playing the *mridang*.

That is why this special type of music, the Sikh *kirtan*, is also known as Sikh *sangeet* and *Gurmat sangeet*. This high class music conveying the *Shabd* is also generally and correctly called *Shabd kirtan*. The fifth Satguru in *Rag Sorath* says :

The Divine Word is the *Shabd* which is the only right speech :

ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਭਾਖਿਆ ॥

Sing it, listen to it, and recite it always, and the perfect Guru will save you :

ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਪੜਹੁ ਨਿਤ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੈ ਤੂ ਰਾਖਿਆ ॥

Kirtan is, thus, the best (because, reading and hearing are also accepted) form of worship in Sikhism. After enumerating different ways and forms of worship, the fifth Nanak, Guru Arjun Dev, says in *Rag Sorath* :

The most sublime and superior way is the singing of the Lord's praises in the company of the Guru;

ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹੈ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਰਮਨ ਕੈ ਕਰਮਾ ॥

It should be noted that the words *Sadh* and *Sant* are often used in *Gurbani* for the Guru himself as in :

On meeting the Lord's *Sant*, the Guru *Sadh*, anoint the face with the dust of his feet :

ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸੰਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਾਧੁ ਲੈ ਤਿਸਕੀ ਧੂਰਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਲਾਈ ॥

The praises of the Lord cannot be sung if the mind is disrupted and is infected with duality. They can only be sung properly and profitably if the mind is at rest and attuned to the *Shabd*. Sikh *Sangeet* is a great and special contribution of the Punjab to Indian classical music.

A good *kirtankar*, *ragi* or *rababi*, who knows the tradition and *maryada* of the Sikh *kirtan*, always starts the *kirtan* with a proper *manglacharan*, vocal and, time permitting, instrumental. *Manglacharan* is to invoke the Omnipresent God and the Guru, as well as to serve the purpose of *Alap*, to define and project the correct image of the *Rag* to be sung. The first *Shabd* to be sung is invariably in pure *Khayal Rag* in the form of a *partal*, a *dhrupad*, or some traditionally set tune. Then will follow the lighter singing of the type of *Vadda* (ਵੱਡਾ) or *Chhota* (ਛੋਟਾ) *Khayal* or some other traditional tunes, later including the singer's own creation, if any. During this item *paramans* (ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ) in support and in explanation of points and subjects in the main *Shabd* being sung, are given. The durations of the first *Shabd* and the lighter item can be prolonged according to the time available. But all this is always in a proper *Rag*; may be light, difficult, mellow, or hard. When winding up the *kirtan*, such a singer will do so singing a *shlok* or a short *Shabd* followed by a *Pauri* of the *Var* of the *Rag* befitting the time of the day. When *Karah Parshad* is to be distributed, the first five and the last *Pauris* of *Anand* are also sung. When these six *Pauris* of *Anand* have been sung or recited before, as in a wedding ceremony (ਅਨੰਦ ਕਾਰਜ), the *kirtan* is wound up with a *Shlok* or *Shabd* followed by a *Pauri* of the *Var* in *Rag Bilawal*. There are twenty-two *Vars* in different *Rags* in *Guru Granth Sahib*. On some of the *Vars*, the tunes (ਧੁਨੀਆਂ) in which they are to be sung are precisely given. Singing of *Vars* began on the pattern of Greek odes with their strophes and

antistrophes when the Greeks came to India. We have also a tradition of singing particular *Rags* for different seasons and times of the day. For instance, *Asa Rag* is sung both at dawn and dusk, and *Basant* is sung from the first of the month of *Magh* (ਮਾਘ) to the beginning of *Chet* (ਚੇਤ). During this period while *Basant* holds sway, *Sarang* remains shut out. *Sarang* follows from mid *Vaisakh* (ਵੈਸਾਖ) to end of *Asar* (ਅਸਾਰੂ), when *Malhar* takes the field and reigns supreme in *Sawan* (ਸਾਵਣ) and *Bhadon* (ਭਾਦੋਂ). There is an old tradition and convention that in the morning sittings pure *Gurbani* is sung and *Permans* (ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ) from *Gurbani* alone are given, while it is in the afternoons and in evenings that *Sakhi Parmans* (ਸਾਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ) are given and instances from Sikh history are quoted and *Vars* of Sikh knights and *shaheeds* are sung.

From 1916 to 1919, I was at the Khalsa College, Amritsar, and used to go twice or thrice a week to the Golden Temple to hear the Divine music. I saw personally these traditions and *maryada* being meticulously observed. I had the good luck to hear some well-known exponents of the Sikh *Sangeet* like Bhai Moti (his son was my class fellow in College), Bhai Lal, Bhai Chand, and Sant Sham Singh of Amritsar, and Mahant Gajja Singh (I started playing on *dilruba* under his guidance), Bhai Mastan Singh, and Bhai Ghasita of Patiala (who was my teacher in vocal music and I learnt most of the *Dhunis*, *Ritis*, *Partals*, and other traditional tunes from him). During the time of His Holiness my late worshipful father, some sixty-five years ago, we had a great *Kirtankar*, Bhai Waziroo, who was an expert *mridung* player and while doing so he also led in vocal singing, which is a rare combination of the two arts. Later on, I heard the famous Bhai Bhag Singh of Faruka and the great Bhai Jwala Singh and others. I wish the tape recorder had been invented some years earlier. I remember well having heard all the twenty four *Chhaka's* sung with *Asa di Var* in twenty-four sweet different tunes and all the different *Dhunis* of the different *Vars* given in Guru Granth Sahib. But, unfortunately, all this valuable treasure is being lost. It is being eroded and elbowed out every day and is being replaced by street type of trash tunes and cinema-song notes which carry all their atmosphere of cheap frivolity and

base levity with them. About such tunes the Satguru has said :

O my Beloved ! let me not hear

ਮੇਰੇ ਮੋਹਨ ਸ੍ਰਵਣੀ ਇਹ ਨ ਸੁਣਾਏ ॥

The heretic degraded who sing tunes and songs but speak unbecoming language .

ਸਾਕਤ ਗੀਤ ਨਾਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਗਾਵਤ ਬੋਲਤ ਬੋਲ ਅਜਾਏ ॥

All these great *kalakars* of Sikh *Sangeet*, I noted, had some very common features, similar habits, and ways to keep up, develop and project their art. It will be interesting to mention a few of these.

They were all very early risers. Before dawn they devoted one to two hours daily to vocal practice and in defining their notes to minutest accuracy. By this daily practice, called *riaz*, they had cultivated, cultured, and developed sweet mellowness in their voices. They could generate such tremendous volume that no need was ever felt for an amplifier. Mahant Gajja Singh was an expert in playing on the *dilruba* and the *taoos*. He was considered to be an unparalleled instrumentalist of his time. He too used to sit up in his bed between 2:30 and 3:00 AM and bring his vocal cords into proper function. This practice (*riaz*) was his daily routine for two hours regularly. They had inexhaustible treasure of tunes and *Gurbani*, committed to memory; there being no recording or annotations. You could hear them for months and every time they would bring out new tunes and new *Shabds*. Invariably the burden of the song was the line preceding the (pause) *Rahao* in the *Shabd*. They strictly adhered to the tradition and technique and *maryada* of the Sikh *kirtan* as laid down by Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Arjun, and propounded by Bhai Mardana and others. One very distinguishing feature amongst them was that they did *kirtan* in the presence of the Satguru, to invoke His blessings; He being ever present in the Khalsa and the *sangat*.

The pity is that none of these great *kalakar* masters have been able to leave behind any one of their progeny fit enough to keep the candle of their precious art burning bright, except of course Bhai Jwala Singh whose son Bhai Avtar Singh has learnt and inherited the unique tradition and technique, *Dhunis* and *Ritis*,

Partals and compositions of the Sikh *Sangeet* from his great father. All these techniques and traditions are nowadays more flouted than observed. *Asa di Var* of Bhai Surjan Singh is a glaring example of it. The Satguru's instructions to sing this *Var* on a particular pattern (ਟੁੰਡੇ ਅਸਰਾਜੇ ਕੀ ਧੁਨੀ) are blown to the winds.

The structure of the *Var* has a significance. *Asa di Var* fits into it. No wonder this particular style was chosen for rendering one of the most essential, purposeful, and delineative expositions of the basic principles of Sikhism. This *Var* is, therefore, a special and significant item in the Sikh *kirtan*.

In method, sequence, and coherence of thought *Asa di Var* is as perfect as the *Japuji*. It gives us guidance in fulfilling our duties, both spiritual as well as worldly. It brings us into harmony with the Supreme Being and is aimed at turning men into gods. It brings home to us the presence of God sublimely diffused in the form of definite laws of nature. Everything is perishable that changes form, though His creation is a reality and not a myth because of His Presence in it. It warns us not to work in disharmony with, and antagonism to, this working of the Supreme Spirit. At this stage fear and discipline is depicted as the motive-force working everywhere, even in so-called gods. Undivided devotion and loyalty to one Supreme God is thus secured. God's service is to be done by actual practice of positive virtues like mercy and righteousness. In *Asa di Var* the Guru has taken up the actual moulding of the individual character by eradicating ego of all kinds. This is done not by killing ego or individual will, but by attuning our tiny will to the Supreme Will. By killing ego or our will outright, even virtue is made impossible as it destroys the very consciousness of the self, which is the basis of our moral nature and makes the realisation of God possible (ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਰਘ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ). Besides ego, the Satguru has warned us against the devastating effects of pride of caste, religion, riches, power, etcetera. Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtue. God is pleased with love and faith alone. Pride of gender and false ideas of impurity are then denounced. It is the mind which has to be cleared of all impurities and brought in harmony and in tune with the Supreme Master.

After fear, the stage comes when fear of God's displeasure dispels all other fears and love of God becomes the motive force.

What sort of service is that in which the fear of the Master does not depart ?

ਏਹ ਕਿਨੇਹੀ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਜਿਤੁ ਭਉ ਖਸਮ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

In this life of love and self-surrender one begins to work in complete unison, harmony and rhythm with God's Eternal Will. The Satguru's Way is not merely an intellectual way but of personal action too. In the life and working career of the Sikh, the personality of the Guru is all along operative. This personality creates cohesion and works as a force to connect humans, with humans and with God. Without it, every body would exist for himself in moral isolation. It is the Guru who removes the barriers of caste and status and gathering them all into himself unites them with God. In this way foundations are laid of a society of men-of-God, the elevated men turned into gods. This is what *Asa di Var* explains to us.

Most of our present-day *ragis* do *kirtan* with their eyes only on the pockets and purses of the listeners. They spare little time for *riaz* and further improvement. They spare no time to learn and practise. These are essential to keep up the standard. Without this, the *kalakar* cannot progress and shine. But to go up the height requires energy, struggle, and perseverance, while to slip down calls for no effort. Such *kalakars*, therefore, take to cheap street tunes in a hurry to make quick money. They, thus, make no contribution to preserve and develop the standards of music set by the Satguru.

Though Eastern and Western music are very different from each other, the West with its proper annotations has preserved to the minutest detail what their great masters composed four five centuries ago. Even in our own South, the compositions of Tyagraj are being kept untouched and sung in their original form. The Sikh *Kirtankars* should try to emulate them and not take pride in disfiguring and corrupting the compositions coming down to them from the Guru period itself. The style and standard of Sikh music and singing of *Shabds* is deteriorating day by day. Instead of

devoting themselves and putting in efforts to follow the great masters of Sikh Music and maintaining the traditional standards, our singers have taken the easier route and started to copy the singing of simple *bhajans* and *bhetan*. The Sikh leadership and keepers of our faith at the Harmandar have an obligation to Sikhism, to at least keep our mode of prayer and worship meaningful and pure. It is painful to observe that even at the Golden Temple the standard of Sikh *Sangeet* has started to fall from its lofty pedestal. Generally, our *kirtankars* argue that they do so because the audience does not appreciate the high standard of traditional music. But how can the poor listeners do so when they have never heard that type of music. This is only a lame excuse of the *Ragis* to camouflage their weakness. My personal observation is that the whole *sangat* acclaims and gets into raptures when a traditional *Riti* or *Dhuni* is sung. And it is for our *ragi kalakars* to mould the ear of the listener to it.

Fortunately, there is a silver lining on the otherwise dark horizon. Our younger *kalakars* are becoming more conscious of their duty to uphold, preserve, revive, and rejuvenate this gift of Satguru. Their desire, keenness, and enthusiasm have been personally conveyed to me by some of them. It is time that institutions like the SGPC, the DGPC, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, and our Punjabi and Guru Nanak Dev Universities appreciate the essential need of it and take this work in hand. The Universities could create Chairs and add the Sikh *Sangeet* as a special subject in their Music Examinations and offer it for research. It is also the duty of the Punjab Government to protect and develop this unique contribution of Punjab to Indian classical music.