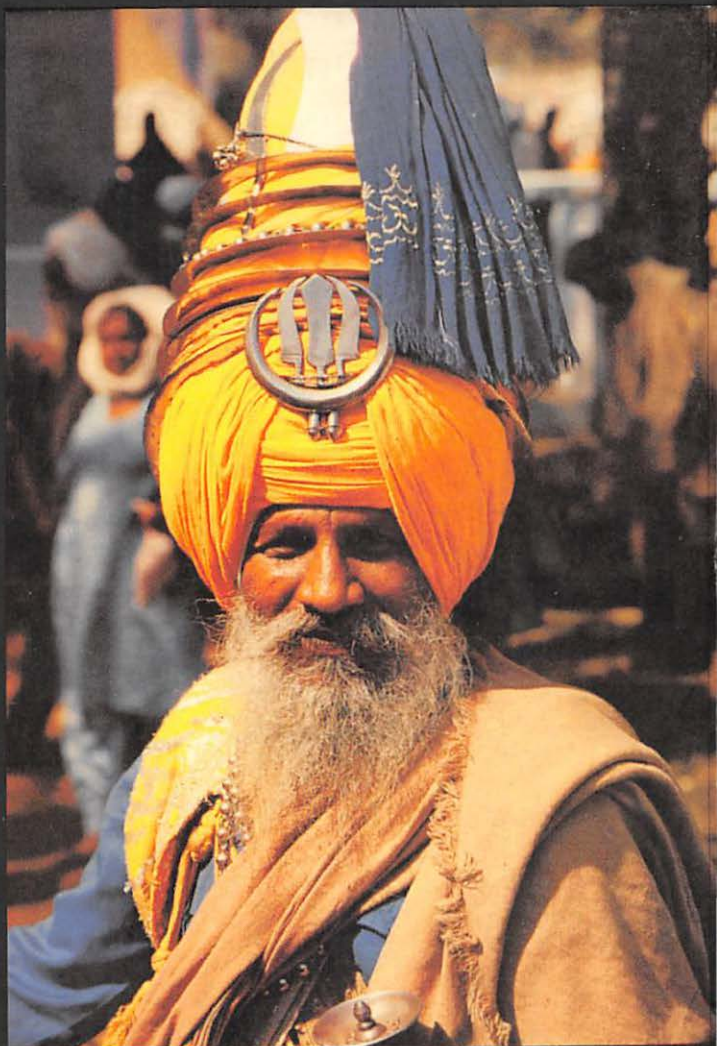


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SIKHS OF THE KHALSA
A History of the Khalsa Rahit

W. H. McLeod

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YMCA Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi 110 001

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Published in India by Oxford University Press, New Delhi

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First published 2003
Oxford India Paperbacks 2005
Second impression 2011

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ISBN-13: 978-0-19-567221-3
ISBN-10: 0-19-567221-6

Typeset in Pratap 10.5/12
By Excellent Laser Typesetters, New Delhi 110 034
Printed in India at Rajshri Photolithographers, Delhi 110 032
Published by Oxford University Press
YMCA Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi 110 001

To
AINSLIE EMBREE

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਾਲਸਾ ਹਈਏ ॥ ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਟਹਿਲ ਪਰਮ ਸੁਖ ਲਹੀਏ ॥

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Preface



My formal research on the Sikh Rahit and the rahit-namas began a quarter of a century ago. In 1987, the first-fruits of that research appeared with the publication of *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (McLeod 1987). This volume, *Sikhs of the Khalsa*, marks the second instalment. A third and final contribution, a translation entitled *The Prem Sumārag* (published by OUP in New Delhi), will bring it to a conclusion. Tracing the historical record of the Rahit has been a fascinating experience, and I do not suppose that these contributions will mark an end to the process.

Gurmukhi words have presented their usual problem of how they should be represented in the roman script. Only words that are in italics have received diacritical marks and in presenting these I have, in general, followed the standard method used in Indological studies. There are, however, some important exceptions and these I list as follows:

1. Both the sibilants, which in Hindi correspond to *ś* or *ṣ* are rendered *sh* (for example *shabad* not *śabad*). Gurmukhi does not distinguish between the two forms, having only one symbol to represent both.

2. The palatals corresponding in older schema to *c* and *ch* are rendered *ch* and *chh*.

3. A few words in common usage have a median 'a' omitted whenever the need for italics arises. The terms *Khalsa* or *Amritsar* would look very strange if they were correctly spelt

Khalasa or *Amritasar*. Other words that have had a median 'a' excised are *urdās*, *jhaṭkā*, and *kirpān*.

4. Words, which occur in Gurmukhi book titles representing original English forms, are given in the English style. For example, *Pañjābī Yūnīvarasiṭhī* appears as *Punjabi University*, and *Yang-mainaz Niranakārī Aisosēshan* is rendered *Young Man's Nirankari Association*.

In the translations of various works square brackets indicate words that do not occur in the original, but which I have added to provide continuity to the English version. Italicized words in round brackets give the Gurmukhi equivalent of a word, which has a variety of meanings (for example, *turak*) or which has several forms in Gurmukhi (for example, *hari*, *vāhigurū*, *parameshur*, etc. after 'God').

Several people have given conspicuous assistance to this project over the years. Two who have assisted me with the translations that appear in this volume are Sardar N. S. Duggal during the early years and Professor Pashaura Singh more recently. To them I extend my sincere thanks, adding that neither should be in any way blamed for the conclusions which I have drawn from these translations. They share in the work of translation. I alone take account for the reasoning which follows and for the conclusions.

The debt to Professor Pashaura Singh goes further than this, however, for he has always been available for answering questions and for reading the entire manuscript in its draft form. This task was also performed by Professor Louis Fenech. For the corrections and helpful suggestions which they made I offer my sincere gratitude.

Two institutions deserve my gratitude. The first is Balliol College, Oxford, where I spent several happy months as a Visiting Fellow in 1997-8. The second is the Rockefeller Foundation, which I warmly thank for providing me with three weeks of uninterrupted study time at Bellagio in 2000 when this book was at a critical stage. I also thank Professor Harish Puri for negotiating the copying of a crucial manuscript from the Library of Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar. And to various individuals for various forms of assistance I express my gratitude to Joy Barrow, Jerry Barrier, Jeevan Deol, Van

Dusenbery, Jagtar Singh Grewal, Surjit Hans, Doris Jakobsh, Mark Juergensmeyer, Gurinder Singh Mann, Harjot Oberoi, Joe O'Connell, and Khushwant Singh. And as always, I thank my wife Margaret for love and understanding beyond all expression.

Finally, I pay tribute to Professor Piara Singh Padam who died in 2001. Professor Padam did sterling service to the cause of rahit-nama research, bringing several manuscripts to light and publishing them with helpful notes.

HEW MCLEOD
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Abbreviations



<i>AG</i>	Adi Granth.
<i>Ashok</i>	Shamsher Singh Ashok (ed.), <i>Gurū Khālse de Rahit-nāme</i> , Amritsar: editor, 1979.
<i>B40</i>	W. H. McLeod (tr. and ed.), <i>The B40 Janam-sākhī</i> , Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 1980.
<i>BG</i>	The <i>vārs</i> of Bhai Gurdas. <i>Vārān Bhāi Gurdās</i> , Hazara Singh and Vir Singh (ed.), Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 7th edition 1962.
<i>BNLG</i>	Ganda Singh (ed.), <i>Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī</i> , Malacca: Sant Sohan Singh, 1968.
<i>ChS</i>	W. H. McLeod (tr. and ed.), <i>The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i> , Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1987. This work comprises the Gurmukhi text of the erstwhile Sikh Reference Library manuscript 6124 and an English translation. Both parts are followed by notes. In <i>Sikhs of the Khalsa</i> the first figures indicate the numbers of items in the Gurmukhi text. This is followed by their page numbers, signalled by pp. (or p. if there is only one such item). If relevant the page numbers of the English translation are also given.
<i>DayaS</i>	<i>Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i> .
<i>DesaS</i>	<i>Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i> .
<i>DG</i>	Dasam Granth.
<i>Ency</i>	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism</i> .

ESC	W. H. McLeod, <i>The Evolution of the Sikh Community</i> , Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975; Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1976. Also republished in W. H. McLeod, <i>Sikhs and Sikhism</i> , New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.
EST	W. H. McLeod, <i>Early Sikh Tradition</i> , Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1980. Also republished in W. H. McLeod, <i>Sikhs and Sikhism</i> , New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.
GM	Kahn Singh Nabha, <i>Gurumat Māratand</i> , Amritsar: SGPC, 1962.
GNSR	W. H. McLeod, <i>Gurū Nānak and the Sikh Religion</i> , Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1968. Also republished in W. H. McLeod, <i>Sikhs and Sikhism</i> , New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.
GPBS	<i>Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār</i> , Amritsar: Chief Khalsa Divan, 1915.
GRM	Naiar, Gurbachan Singh (ed.), <i>Gur Ratan Māl arathāt Sau Sākhī</i> , Patiala: Punjabi University, 1985.
GSobh	Ganda Singh (ed.), <i>Kavī Saināpati rachit Sṛi Gur Sobhā</i> , Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967.
GSudh	Kahn Singh Nabha (ed.), <i>Gurumat Sudhākar</i> , 2nd edition, Amritsar: Vazir Hind Press, 1901.
HDS	W. H. McLeod, <i>Historical Dictionary of Sikhism</i> . Lanham, Md., and London: Scarecrow Press, 1995; New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002.
H-n	Ganda Singh (ed.), <i>Hukam-nāme</i> , Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967.
KhalM	The <i>Khālsā Mahimā</i> from <i>Sarab Loh Granth</i> .
KDS	Avatar Singh Vahiria, <i>Khālsā Dharam Shāsatr</i> , Lahore: Arorabans Press, 1894.
KRP	<i>Khālsā Rahit Prakāsh</i> , the rahit-nama issued by the Panch Khalsa Divan of Bhasaur.
MK	Kahn Singh Nabha, <i>Gurushabad Ratanākar Mahān Kosh</i> . 2nd edition rev., Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, 1960.
NamdH	The Namdhari Rahit-nama.
PrahR	<i>Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmū</i> .
PrS	<i>Prem Sumārag</i> .
PSG	Randhir Singh (ed.), <i>Prem Sumārag Granth</i> ,

	Jalandhar: New Book Company, 2nd edition, 1965.
<i>Pr-ut</i>	<i>Prashan-uttar</i> , attributed to Nand Lal.
<i>PSP</i>	Piara Singh Padam (ed.), <i>Rahit-nāme</i> , Patiala: editor, 1974.
<i>SakhiR</i>	<i>Sākhi Rahit kī</i> , attributed to Nand Lal.
<i>SauS(1)</i>	Gurbachan Singh Nair (ed.), <i>Gur Ratan Māl arathāt Sau Sākhi</i> , Sakhi 8: Mukatinama, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1985.
<i>SauS(2)</i>	Gurbachan Singh Nair (ed.), <i>Gur Ratan Māl arathāt Sau Sākhi</i> , Sakhi 65: Mukatinama, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1985.
<i>SGPC</i>	Shiromani Gurduara Parbandhak Committee.
<i>Sikhism</i>	Hew McLeod, <i>Sikhism</i> , London: Penguin Books, 1997.
<i>SRM</i>	<i>Sikh Rahit Marayādā</i> , Amritsar: Shiromani Gurduara Prabandhak Committee, 14th edition, 1979.
<i>TanN</i>	<i>Tanakhāh-nāmā</i> , attributed to Nand Lal.
<i>TSSS</i>	W. H. McLeod (tr. and ed.), <i>Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism</i> , Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984; and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
<i>W&S</i>	W. H. McLeod, <i>Who is a Sikh?</i> Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1989. Also in W. H. McLeod, <i>Sikhs and Sikhism</i> , New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.

The following passages from the *Adi Granth* (AG) and the *Dasam Granth* (DG) recur frequently in this study. Their actual page references are not normally given in footnotes.

Guru Nanak, *Japujī*, AG, pp. 1–8. Also spelt *Japjī*.

The *Sodar* group of five shabads, AG, pp. 8–10.

The *So purakh* group of four shabads, AG, pp. 10–12.

The *Sohilā* group of five shabads (also known as *Kīrtan Sohilā*), AG, pp. 12–13.

Guru Nanak, *Dhanāsarī 3* (*Ārutī*), AG, pp. 13, 663.

Guru Ram Das, *Sūhī Chhant 2*, AG, pp. 773–4.

Guru Amar Das, *Rāmakalī Anand*, AG, pp. 917–22.

The *Jāp* or *Jāp Sāhib*, attributed to Guru Gobind Singh, DG, pp. 1–10.

PART I

1

Introduction



Rahit: the code of belief and conduct which all members of the Khalsa are required to obey.

Rahit-nāmā: a manual of Rahit principles.

1.1 Purpose

For more than three centuries most Sikhs have regarded the Rahit as absolutely central to their faith. Guru Gobind Singh imparted the Rahit when he inaugurated the Khalsa order, and in the minds of most Sikhs it remains unchanged to this day. Yet those who do not speak Punjabi (and this applies particularly to westerners) are largely unaware of its existence. Presumably, this is largely because the word is easily translated into English as 'code of conduct', and even those with only a sketchy view of Sikh history will know that the Guru directed his followers to observe a particular way of life. Even this, though, is an inadequate response. Outsiders who are aware that the Sikhs have an immutable code normally know only that it requires allegiance to the Five Ks and a vow not to smoke. The Rahit involves much more than this. It involves belief and also a perspective, which enables us to appreciate the varying fortunes of the Rahit over the last three centuries. Some features have entered the Rahit at various times; others have been abandoned.

Before commencing a history of the Rahit and analysing its various components some preliminary observations are required.

The first is that this study of the Rahit is not about the Sikhs as a whole. It is not about the entire Sikh Panth. Instead this investigation is about that highly visible and strongly dominant segment of the Panth known as the Khalsa. The Rahit lies at the very heart of the Khalsa and to be a Sikh of the Khalsa one must observe it, at least in a rudimentary sense. Not all who regard themselves as Sikhs would claim to belong to the Khalsa also, though one should acknowledge that the terms 'Sikh' and 'Khalsa' are increasingly becoming synonymous. It is, however, a distinction which deserves to be retained, particularly as so much of this investigation will concern the eighteenth century when many Sikhs in fact did not belong to the Khalsa.

This study, then, concerns the Rahit of the Khalsa. It is a study of how the Rahit came into being, how it developed in response to the historical circumstances surrounding it, and why it still retains an unchallenged hold over all who regard themselves as Khalsa Sikhs.¹

When one mentions the historical development of the Rahit one immediately encounters disagreement with those who accept a strictly traditional view of the foundation and transmission of the Rahit. It would be as well if this disagreement were squarely faced at the outset. In so doing it should be categorically stated that traditional testimony is not always wrong and therefore doomed to be totally dismissed. There remains, however, a fundamental difference between traditional scholarship on the one hand, and on the other the critical variety based on careful research. This difference should be frankly faced.

All believing Sikhs acknowledge the Adi Granth as the substance of their faith and accept its words implicitly. But there is much that the Adi Granth does not contain, including any reference to the Khalsa. It also omits much of the discipline required of all those who belong to the Khalsa. In other words, the Rahit requires a definition that the Adi Granth does not provide. It is true that the word *rahit* is occasionally used in the Adi Granth, but not in terms which define its specific nature. There was thus a desire to know what rules were imposed by the Rahit of the Khalsa and how a loyal Khalsa Sikh could fulfil them.

From this questioning there emerged two related answers. One was an implicit answer which appealed particularly to non-literate Sikhs. Do what your predecessors have done, for they

stand in a line that descends directly from the tenth Guru. They are the repositories of the explanations which he communicated to his immediate followers and of the example that he personally displayed. Many believe that it must surely be correct because none standing in the line descending from Guru Gobind Singh's immediate followers would dream of amending the sacred words which they had heard or the ritual actions which they had observed.

The other answer appealed to a much smaller number. This answer was communicated in the written word, and it was delivered in the *rahit-namas* or manuals of the *Rahit*. Unlike the *Adi Granth* the *rahit-namas* are not sacred scriptures. They are not canonical. The *rahit-namas* would have appealed only to the very small segment of the eighteenth-century Sikh population which was literate, though the written word could reach a much wider audience because the literate members of Sikh society were held in some esteem. The illiterate would frequently listen to what they said about their faith and commonly defer to their opinion on such matters. This, after all, was what they were accustomed to doing on a regular basis. Worship for Sikhs meant attending a *dharamsala* and singing the Guru's hymns contained in the canonical scripture or hearing them chanted by a *granthi*.

Both answers embodied a traditional view. Traditionally the formal *Khalsa Rahit* is believed to have originated with Guru Gobind Singh at the founding of the *Khalsa* and initially to have been transmitted to succeeding generations essentially unchanged. It is also according to tradition that during the first half of the nineteenth century (and perhaps even earlier) the *Rahit* was corrupted by ignorant Sikhs or by commentators who sought to bring it much more closely in line with prevailing Hindu beliefs. Modern Sikh scholars see the *rahit-namas* as a reflection of the early nineteenth century when 'Brahmanical ritualism and Vedantic thought crept into Sikh religious literature through *Udasi* and *Nirmala* sects' (Nirbhay Singh, review of *PSP* 1978, 230). Either originals were corrupted by changes introduced by *Udasis* or *Nirmala* Sikhs, or members of these unorthodox sects actually wrote *rahit-namas*, incorporating in them wayward notions drawn chiefly from Brahmanical ideals (McLeod 1995, 155, 215; McLeod 1997,

184–5). There is little evidence for this claim, but it is nevertheless a view that is accepted by almost everyone with an interest in the rahit-namas.

Focussing attention on the early rahit-namas clearly created a problem and at the turn of the twentieth century certain members of the Singh Sabha reform movement took it firmly in hand (see ch. 6.1). They purged the Rahit of its Hindu content, eliminated 'superstition', and re-ordered it in accordance with soundly rational principles, thereby restoring it to its pure form as delivered to the Panth by Guru Gobind Singh. Under the patronage of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (the SGPC) their efforts were eventually crowned by the publication in 1950 of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, the manual of the Rahit, which has ever since dominated the field.

The SGPC and most modern scholars accept this view of the Rahit and in so doing affirm a traditional interpretation. *Sikhs of the Khalsa* fundamentally disagrees with this interpretation (see Appendix 2). Instead it seeks to show that only a portion of the Rahit dates from the time of Guru Gobind Singh. It evolved according to the conditions of the time, producing significantly different patterns as the circumstances of the Sikh Panth changed. Many items entered the Rahit during the disturbed times of the eighteenth century. Some of these were then eliminated during the Singh Sabha period which began in the later years of the nineteenth century.

This points to the two critical phases which can be noted in the progressive formation of the Rahit. The first occurred during the struggles against Muslim power in the early and middle years of the eighteenth century; and the second came with the endeavours of the Tat Khalsa segment of the Singh Sabha reform movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the eighteenth-century phase the dominant desire was to provide a test which only members of the Khalsa could answer. Other Sikhs might not observe the Rahit, but such persons could not call themselves Khalsa Sikhs. During the Tat Khalsa phase the quest was for radical reformation in terms meaningful to the understanding of a portion of Sikh leaders at the turn of the century. The objective now was rather to establish that all Sikhs should be members of the Khalsa or at least headed in the right direction.

1.2 Definitions

For this discussion several definitions are needed, the first of them the meaning to be attached to the word *Rahit*. The word has already been briefly defined at the head of this chapter, together with the associated term *rahit-nāmā*. Normally *Rahit* is mistakenly used as a word designating only the code of behaviour of the Khalsa Sikh. It is true that the greater portion of each *rahit-nama* is taken up detailing specific items of conduct, leaving rather less room for issues of belief. Probably these were largely taken for granted in manuals designed for those who would be expected to know the fundamentals of their belief. Even so, the authors of *rahit-namas* laid considerable stress on the bounden duty of all Khalsa Sikhs to follow the teachings of Guru Nanak and to meditate upon the divine Name of Akal Purakh.

Rahit-namas represent the normative standard of Sikh belief and behaviour. They do not relate the beliefs of an ordinary Sikh, nor do they describe that ordinary Sikh's way of life. Clearly this would be absurd. Most Sikhs will never have read a *rahit-nama* and those who are aware of their contents will apply the various *rahit-namas* with varying degrees of loyalty. The *rahit-namas* do, however, supply what their authors regarded as the ideal standard for a Khalsa Sikh. This applies as much today as it ever did and it constitutes a fundamental axiom in this study.

A particular kind of Sikh was intended to be distinguished by the *Rahit* and this leads to *Khālsā*, a second word requiring careful definition. This surely is a common word (at least among those interested in the Sikhs) and most people who use it believe that they do so correctly. The Khalsa is the order instituted by Guru Gobind Singh at the end of the seventeenth century. That definition is certainly correct as far as it goes, but does it go far enough? Who are the Sikhs who are entitled to belong to the Khalsa? Is membership limited to those who undergo the formal rite of initiation, or do those who follow at least the elementary rules of the Khalsa also belong to it?

The eighteenth-century designation of the word *Khālsā* was probably confined to those who had undergone the ceremony of taking *pāhul* or *khaṇḍe dī pāhul*, a simple ritual, which marked the initiate as not merely a Sikh but a Sikh of the Khalsa. This

rite replaced the traditional *charan-amrit* in the very earliest days of the Khalsa (*G.Sobh* V.33). It is not possible to affirm definitively that all who were regarded as Sikhs of the Khalsa had in fact been formally initiated as members, but it does at least seem likely. Thereafter all who had undergone *khaṇḍe dī pāhul*, who retained their hair uncut, and who carried weapons were unmistakably Khalsa Sikhs. Khalsa Sikhs were proud of their status and though they might violate the Rahit in some respects they would certainly not abandon it completely.

During the Singh Sabha period and the succeeding twentieth century, however, the situation becomes much more obscure. A strict interpretation, it is true, still limits membership to those who have undergone the formal initiation, but today no one knows how many Sikhs wearing the essential panoply of the Khalsa have actually taken initiation. Certainly it is a comparatively small proportion of all adult Sikhs, the figure of 15 per cent being frequently suggested. This is perhaps a shade low, but it seems to be at least a reasonable approximation. There are, however, well over 15 per cent who observe the principal features of the Khalsa order (notably the ban on the cutting of hair). Here too there is no way of knowing the precise proportion, but certainly one is not going to quarrel with a claim that more than 80 per cent of the Panth (the Sikh community) belong to this category (even if for the males the beard is often surreptitiously trimmed).

Are these Sikhs not members of the Khalsa? In terms of a strict definition of the term 'Khalsa' they are not members, but there must be very few who assert this in practice. For a large majority 'Khalsa Sikh' means a person who observes the basic features of the Khalsa, and when they use the term it embraces a large number of Sikhs who lie outside the strict definition with which we began. Indeed, there are many of those who cut their hair yet claim to be members of the Khalsa because they come from families with a history of observing the Khalsa tradition. We are confronted by a difference of opinion concerning the definition of *Khālsā*. Some strict Sikhs would limit the term only to those who have taken formal initiation. Many more Sikhs, and virtually all the non-Sikh world beyond, extend the meaning to encompass those who obey at least the essential features of the Rahit. There can, however, be no doubt concerning the historical

meaning of the term. The Khalsa is defined by those who have formally undergone *amrit saṁskār* (the *amrit* ceremony) and taken *khaṇḍe dī pāṁhul*.

In passing it is as well to point out that the Khalsa is not strictly a brotherhood, as one frequently reads or hears. The Khalsa of today certainly cannot be described as a brotherhood because it now accepts women as members. The correct term to use is the Khalsa order. At the same time it should be remembered that historically the Khalsa has always been a men's affair, particularly during the eighteenth century. Men must fight; women should stay at home. With the development of the Singh Sabha movement late in the nineteenth century the claims of women to be regarded as fellow-members of the Khalsa were occasionally noised abroad, though they fell largely on deaf ears. Only from the middle of the twentieth century have women's voices begun to be heard, fortified in some measure by the feminist movement of western countries.

Arising from this discussion of the meaning of *Khālsā* there are three more terms which require preliminary definition at this stage. All Sikhs who, regardless of whether they have been formally initiated into the Khalsa, obey at least the rudimentary elements of the Rahit are known as *Kes-dhārī Sikhs*. The word *kes* or *kesh* means 'the hair of the head' and any Sikh who keeps his *kes* intact (or who masks his surreptitious trimming) is thereby known as a Kes-dhari Sikh. Although the term today includes females as well as males it has historically been used for male Sikhs alone and even today there is a strong tendency to limit it to men. Well over 80 per cent of all Sikhs are therefore Kes-dhari Sikhs. This includes the small proportion who have undergone initiation. For these the appropriate (if modern) term is *Amrit-dhārī Sikhs*, those who have formally chosen to accept the initiatory *amrit* or *khaṇḍe dī pāṁhul* and in so doing have consciously enrolled in the Khalsa order. All Amrit-dhari Sikhs are Kes-dhari. Only a small proportion of Kes-dhari Sikhs, however, are Amrit-dhari.

This leaves the tiny proportion of Sikhs who neither accept the Rahit nor abide by its rulings. These people are known as *Sahaj-dhārī Sikhs*,² indistinguishable from ordinary Hindus except that they regularly attend a Sikh place of worship and use the Adi Granth for their personal devotional purposes. During

the eighteenth century, and into the nineteenth, they were numerous and varied, a significant number of them qualifying as Udasi Sikhs. Sometimes they were known as Khalasa or Khualasah Sikhs (Forster 1978, I. 266n, 268–9; *WiS* 59n). The impact of the Singh Sabha movement drove them further towards the periphery of the Panth, and the political upsets of the 1980s and 1990s have attenuated their numbers still more. There are now very few members of the Panth who acknowledge a Sahaj-dhari identity. That, however, concerns modern times. During the eighteenth century they commanded a prominent position in the wider Panth, and the whole purpose of the Rahit was to distinguish Sikhs of the Khalsa from the Sahaj-dhari or Khalasa Sikhs who neither belonged to it nor adopted its overtly martial ways.

The Sahaj-dhari Sikhs were at least admitted for purposes of worship to what were originally known as *dharamasālās* and which came to be called *guraduārās* or gurdwaras.³ Sikhs have always made a practice of opening their services of worship to anyone who chose to attend, and since the time of Guru Nanak, all comers (whether Khalsa, non-Khalsa, or outsiders) have gathered in congregations to sing the praises of Akal Purakh in the hymns composed by the Gurus. These gatherings were in fact a feature of the wider Sant movement. Such a congregation is known as a *saṅgat* ('being together'), an institution which has been absolutely central to the stability and development of the Panth since its foundation. The terms *sat-saṅg* (the company of truth or the faithful) and *sadh-saṅg* (the company of the pious or the devout) are also used.

Another term which is used at various points in this analysis is Five Ks. The Five Ks are items, each beginning with the Gurmukhi letter 'k', that all who take Khalsa initiation today are bound to have on their person. The five are *kes*⁴ or *kesh* (uncut hair), *kaṅghā* (a wooden comb), *kirpān* (sword or poignard⁵), *kaṛā* (wrist-ring, worn on the right wrist), and *kachh* (breeches which must not cover the knees).

Two more cognate terms should be given a preliminary definition at this stage. These are *tanakhāh* and *tanakhāhīā*. In Sikh usage *tanakhāh* means a penance or fine imposed by a *saṅgat* on any member of the Khalsa who violates the Rahit. The person so convicted is called a *tanakhāhīā*. The two words are

said to have acquired their present meaning during the early eighteenth century. *Tanakhāh* means 'salary'. In an attempt to protect their authority in the Punjab the Mughals evidently made grants of money to those who assisted them. Recipients included some Sikhs, and the Khalsa regarded such Sikhs as hirelings and traitors. From here the word evidently shifted to mean an offence against the Rahit, and the Sikh who committed it came to be called a *tanakhāhīū* (GM 542).

The evidence for an early development of the above terms, depends wholly on the name given to the earliest of the rahit-namas. This is the manuscript, later termed the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, which bears the date S. 1775 (1718–19 CE). The manuscript, however, does not bear the title *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, nor does it include either *tanakhāh* or *tanakhāhīū* in its actual text (*TanN* endnote 1 of translation, 415). This corresponds with the grants provided by the Mughal rulers who evidently did not make them until some years after 1718–19. The process whereby the terms *tanakhāh* and *tanakhāhīū* came into fashion appears to have been the 1740s or even later. Lists of *tanakhāhs* are to be found in the later rahit-namas (*ChS* 286–549; *DayaS* 27, 30, 49–63, 80–91; *DesaS* 89), not in the earliest ones.

Finally, an attempt should be made to provide a satisfactory translation for that untranslatable word *dharam* (Hindi *dharmā*). One possible way is to consult Kahn Singh Nabha's *Gurushabad Ratanākhar Mahān Kosh*, and after eliciting translations of all the various terms which he uses in defining the word *dharam* seek one word that comes closest to the meaning in English (*MK* 496). This method is followed by Louis Fenech, and produces for him the term 'righteousness' (Fenech 2000, 147). For Fenech this method works, for he is seeking the translation, which best expresses the Singh Sabha understanding of the term *dharam yudh*. Kahn Singh writes from firmly within the Singh Sabha movement and 'righteousness' seems a justifiable equivalent for his understanding. The rahit-nama situation is different, though the difference is not great. Making righteous war against the enemy was, after all, a vital function of the true Khalsa, and in several instances 'righteousness' serves as an appropriate if approximate translation. In other instances, however, the meaning of *dharam* seems in varying circumstances to draw closer to one of the following: 'duty', 'religious duty', 'caste duty',

'religious obligation', 'faith', 'belief'. The method used in the rahit-nama translations that follow in Part 2 is to employ whichever word the context seems to indicate, with *dharam* always following in brackets.

1.3 Sources

Once again we are confronted by the difference between traditional interpretations and critical scholarship. If we are to accept tradition as the principal source of the Rahit our primary quest must be for oral reports which tell us how the Rahit was passed down, generation to generation, directly from Guru Gobind Singh. Actual practice will have been the model that each succeeding generation followed. In the process the Rahit retained its salient features, and insofar as it was subjected along the way to ignorant revision or perverse corruption, these errant items were effectively purged or changed through the efforts of Tat Khalsa scholars of the Singh Sabha movement. The result is that the Khalsa today still applies the Rahit which Guru Gobind Singh decreed at the end of the seventeenth century.

With tradition as our guide the rahit-namas will then serve as strictly supplementary sources, selectively used for those items which the modern Rahit upholds and ignored or dismissed as erroneous whenever they diverge from it. This is the method almost invariably followed by contemporary Sikh commentators. The fact that it commands such overwhelming support means that one must be exceedingly cautious in disagreeing with it. One requires well-argued conclusions, not a simplistic discarding of the traditional method.

It must, however, be discarded, and this work will seek to provide the necessary justification which requires us to do so. Rather than use the reports of Sikhs today concerning the tradition inherited by them, an effort will be made to trace the development of the Rahit through contemporary sources since the end of the seventeenth century and even earlier. As such a very different impression of the Rahit will emerge. In tracing its development and changes, written sources should therefore be consulted and utilised. Our quest must, in other words, be pursued through textual sources.

Here, however, three problems surface. They are problems common to all historical research, yet two of them at least are difficulties which are particularly serious as they relate to material held to be sacred.

The first concerns the reliability of any document that is being used. Is the document valid in terms of its origin, and has the later copy which we are often compelled to use, been altered in any respect?⁶ This problem is of particular interest as it relates to the near-universal view of the *rahit-namas* amongst Sikh scholars. Were they subjected to extensive alteration at the hands of Udasi and Nirmala Sikhs with a consequent increase in their significant Hindu content? Expressed in these terms the answer to the question must be in the negative. There are certainly indications of what might be called Hindu influence, but these would have been present in the minds of orthodox Sikhs who pre-date the Singh Sabha period.

This, however, does not answer the question of multiple as opposed to single authors. The *rahit-namas* do in fact indicate that in all cases more than one hand has made a contribution. This is particularly the case with the two *rahit-namas* that are provided by the *Sau Sākhī*, but it is not limited to them. The older a *rahit-nama* manuscript is, the less likely it is to have been corrupted in this manner. Manuscripts dating from the Singh Sabha period, for example, are particularly vulnerable to this feature. An interesting illustration is provided by different manuscripts of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Whereas the earliest manuscript dated S. 1821 (1765 CE) declares unambiguously that women should never receive sword baptism, a later analogue reproduced in Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme* reverses the meaning simply by inserting the negative adverb *na* before the verb (*ChS* 506, 111, 186; *PSP* 105). The Piara Singh Padam version obviously represents a deliberate gloss, one which reflects the understanding of the later Singh Sabha period. We have here a subject which has yet to be thoroughly researched, though it is unlikely to make any significant difference to the actual content of the *rahit-namas*.

The second problem arises from the fact that all historical texts are biased, and one is tempted to add that there are none more biased than those which strive to uphold a view which is regarded as sacred. In declaring this one is merely stating the

problem that affects all historical research. The historian who believes that s/he has documents which are wholly impartial is plainly deceived. The rahit-namas are certainly biased, and from a historical point of view one cannot possibly do them justice by refusing to recognise this. Perhaps the most celebrated case of partial judgement in all the rahit-nama literature is the claim made by the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* that a Brahman Sikh should receive twice the service of other members of the Khalsa (*ChS* 24, 60, 151). Obviously the rahit-nama was written by a Brahman Sikh, and in the light of his own expectations he recorded therein what seemed to him a perfectly reasonable injunction. Other Khalsa Sikhs would certainly have had a different opinion.

The case of the Brahman Sikhs is a simple matter to recognise. Other biases are much more difficult to perceive, and if the reader does not exercise constant care s/he can very easily be enmeshed in the same pattern of thought and expectation as affects the writer. Even succeeding in keeping clear of the writer's biases is not enough, and here we encounter the third problem which must affect our analysis. The person conducting research also brings to the subject his or her range of biases. What this is saying is that every analysis will have built into it a body of influences, which must mean that to a greater or lesser extent the analysis will be flawed. That applies to the analysis, which follows in this work. Every effort has been made to overcome such partiality and to set the analysis within the area of moderate bias rather than that of the extreme variety. The task, however, is not an easy one. Indeed it is ultimately impossible, with the result that every analysis must be imperfect.

The texts, which one must use as the most important of the primary sources are of course the rahit-namas. Opinions differ regarding the total number of all rahit-namas, the figure depending on what should properly be regarded as a rahit-nama and what amounts to a copy of some previous work.⁷ In Part 2, translations are provided of twenty-one works which either seem clearly to be rahit-namas or are extracts from various works that have a definite Rahit content. Sixteen works in the list seem clearly to be rahit-namas. Only one of the major rahit-namas is absent. This is the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, omitted partly because it is so much longer than other rahit-namas but more

particularly as a complete text and English translation is already available in print.⁸ Most of the twenty-one listings have been translated in full. Many more Punjabi works with a Rahit content might well have been added to the list.

In addition to the rahit-namas three other groups of sources deserve examination as a necessary background to the development and growth of the Rahit. The first is that collection of works together known as the Dasam Granth. This is a perplexing volume, but at least its influence on the developing Khalsa is well known. An attempt will be made later to unravel some of its complexities.

A second is provided by the Gur-bilas literature, sparse in terms of numbers but like the Dasam Granth an important influence on the understanding of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century Khalsa. This importance centres on the appearance in Gur-bilas works relating to Guru Gobind Singh of the goddess Devi.

And a third group consists of the many works promoting the Singh Sabha movement and the struggles between the Sanatan Sikhs and the Tat Khalsa.⁹ Of paramount importance was the Tat Khalsa scholar Kahn Singh (or, as he was commonly known, Kahn Singh Nabha).¹⁰ In 1898 Bhai Arjan Singh of Bagrian published Kahn Singh's *Gurumat Sudhākar* in Hindi. This had little impact, but when a Punjabi edition was issued in 1901 the influence was profound. The book was a collection of works that were believed to issue from the eighteenth century and to have had a major influence on the Khalsa of the time. This collection, needless to say, contained several rahit-namas, of interest for what it excluded as well as for those which found a place in Kahn Singh's approval. We shall be looking more closely at *Gurumat Sudhākar* when we come to the major influence of the Tat Khalsa.

1.4 Rahit-nama Manuscripts and Printed Editions

Rahit-nama manuscripts are few, and extant copies are extremely unlikely to be the pristine products of their original authors. Both deletions and additions have evidently been made to the texts, and several of the rahit-namas cannot possibly be the work of the authors to whom they are attributed. Bhai Nand Lal, the leading member of Guru Gobind Singh's literary

following, has been a favoured choice as a putative author. Three rahit-namas are attributed to him, together with another in which the author claims to be recording answers which Nand Lal received from the Guru (*Desa* 4). The marked difference in contents and in style makes it abundantly clear that at least two of these manuals cannot be his work. Some doubt must be attached to the work known as *Prashan-uttar*, but even in this case the possibility is remote.

The earliest extant rahit-nama manuscript appears to be a copy of the *Nasihat-nāmā* (later erroneously termed the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*), one of the three attributed to Nand Lal. This copy is one of several works, together bearing the date S. 1775 (1718–19 CE), which Dr Jeevan Deol reports having discovered in the Library of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, where it is numbered MS. 770 (Deol 2001, 35). The *Nasihat-nāmā* (or *Tanakhāh-nāmā*) was evidently one of the two most popular of the early products and serves as an example of the rarity of rahit-nama manuscripts. A much later version appears in MS. 234 of the Languages Department, Punjab University, located in Patiala, which lists its date as S. 1882 (1825–6 CE).¹¹ This copy is the one that the earliest English translators (Leech, Cunningham, and Attar Singh) were to use. Another copy dated S. 1913 (1856–7 CE) is included in MS. 1018 of the Guru Nanak Dev University Library. Khalsa College in Amritsar has one manuscript of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, an undated copy which is incomplete and bears the number SHR 1442A.

This is an exceedingly poor result for a work that obviously has commanded wide respect in the Panth.¹² There are doubtless a few other manuscripts in the possession of private families that occasionally find their way onto the second-hand market, yet the total will remain very small indeed.

The other early rahit-nama of importance is a dated copy of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. A manuscript was held by the Sikh Reference Library attached to Harimandir Sahib in Amritsar that was copied in Jind City and explicitly dated in its colophon as Chet *sudī* 14, S. 1821 (1765 CE). This manuscript was destroyed by fire when the Indian Army attacked Darbar Sahib in June 1984, but a copy had been made before then and appears as the Gurmukhi text in the published version of the rahit-nama.¹³

The other major version of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, appears (together with the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*) in MS. 1018 of the Guru Nanak Dev University Library and is also dated S. 1913 (1856–7 CE). Like the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, and indeed like all early rahit-namas, it too suffers from a poverty of early manuscripts. Khalsa College in Amritsar has a roughly-written modern transcription, which is evidently a copy of the Jind manuscript (MS. SHR 227A); and a late version was published by Piara Singh Padam in his *Rahit-nāme* (PSP 68–121; ChS 19–24).

MS. 1018 appeared just after the printing press was introduced to the Punjab. In 1901 there appeared the first Punjabi edition of Kahn Singh Nabha's *Gurumat Sudhākar*, which has already been noted. It contained the so-called *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and so too did *Khālsā Rahit Prakāsh* which was issued by Babu Teja Singh of the Panch Khalsa Divan in 1911.¹⁴ In 1922 the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* was published by Lala Maghi Ram Sant Ram of Bazaar Mai Sevan, Amritsar, together with the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā*.¹⁵ The text is generally the same for the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* as MS. 234 of the Languages Department, Patiala, and both rahit-namas are very similar to the 1876 translation of Attar Singh (see chs 3.5, 4.1).

Two modern versions have appeared. One was included by Ganda Singh in his edited text of the works of Nand Lal, *Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī* (BNLG, 195–9). A second version, almost the same as Ganda Singh's text, is in Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme*, first issued in 1974 as one of a collection of all the important rahit-namas (PSP 1974, 44–7). The practice of reproducing the earlier version continued and in 1979, a cyclostyled copy of the principal rahit-namas was published by Shamsheer Singh Ashok with the title *Gurū Khālse de Rahit-nāme* (Ashok 52–5). In this version, Ashok provides the earlier text of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.¹⁶

It must be remembered that Kahn Singh Nabha, Ganda Singh, Piara Singh Padam, and Shamsheer Singh Ashok all had edited the texts at their disposal. This means that they have separated the individual words that were linked in the original manuscripts, and they may also have corrected the spelling and the grammar of the original. In most cases they will have correctly reproduced the meaning intended by the original scribe. In some cases, however, they will have concealed his

intentions. They may also have tidied up a style which scholars would prefer to have reproduced in its untidy condition. MS 770 still awaits a Gurmukhi edition. It will be very interesting to see what is done with this carelessly executed manuscript.

1.5 Previous Translators

Some translations of rahit-namas into English already exist, although most are only partial. Usually they amount to little more than a few items. Only three translators have produced complete versions, each of them offering translations of two rahit-namas. The works which they have translated are the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* attributed to Nand Lal and the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā*. The fact that all three translators were early workers, producing their translations in the middle years of the nineteenth century, indicates that these two rahit-namas were accepted at the time as the chief examples of their kind.

The first contributor made his translations in 1844. This was Major R. Leech, Assistant Agent of the Governor-General on the North-West Frontier, based at Ambala. Leech preceded the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* with two sections from an unidentified rahit-nama, easily recognisable as a portion of the *Prem Sumārag*. The original is held by the National Archives of India as Foreign Secret, 20 December 1845, 144 (Barrier 1970, xviiiin). A complete translation was eventually made from this original by Nahar Singh and published in the August 1969 edition of *Guradūārā Gazar* as part of 'The rites and ceremonies of the Sikhs and the Sikh sects'.¹⁷

As one would expect from a translation made so early in the days of British contact with the Sikhs, the spelling is frequently astray, and the translation is quaintly literal and frequently mistaken. The gain is, however, substantial. As a first contribution to English translations of the rahit-namas Leech's effort was commendable and it was unfortunate that it remained unpublished for well over a hundred years. Even after it appeared in print the translation remains largely unknown, for it was published in a non-scholarly journal.

The second translation of these two rahit-namas will have been made soon after Leech's version and was the first to be published. It appeared in 1849 when Cunningham published his

History of the Sikhs, including the two as a part of Appendix XX (Cunningham 1849, 343–7). In places Cunningham provides paraphrases rather than translations, but together the two approaches give a fair impression of the originals. Unlike Leech's translations, Cunningham's versions are not slavishly literal and as a result make easier reading. In other respects there is little to choose between the two dual versions, although the verdict should probably go to Leech. At times they are both comprehensively wrong, and in other verses they miss the point of what the rahit-namas are saying. For their early period, however, they are competent translations.

The third translation of the two rahit-namas was done by a Sikh, Attar Singh of Bhadaur, and appeared as a small booklet in 1876.¹⁸ Attar Singh was later to sympathise with the radical Tat Khalsa of the Singh Sabha, but this work appeared before the Lahore branch of the Singh Sabha had been founded in 1879 or the Tat Khalsa had taken shape within the Lahore group. The date of his booklet's publication meant that it appeared too early for the contents to be influenced by the Tat Khalsa's impact on the evolving Rahit.

Attar Singh's translation is like that of Leech. His spelling of proper nouns is commonly eccentric (even for a work published in 1876), the translation is stilted, and some items of the Rahit emerge as odd or plainly mistaken. Certain passages are translated with reasonable accuracy, but this does not apply to the whole work. In addition to instances where he has plainly misunderstood his text, there are also difficulties in terms of the order in which various items are placed. In other respects, though, it too offers a useful translation.

One year later, an English version of much of the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* was published by Ernest Trumpp as a part of the lengthy introduction to his *The Ādi Granth* (Trumpp 1877, cxiii–cxvi). Trumpp's version was a paraphrase rather than a translation, a fault which he accuses Attar Singh of having committed. Most of his version is repeated by R. W. Falcon in his *Handbook on Sikhs for the Use of Regimental Officers* (Falcon 1896, 6–9). Falcon also gives in translation a brief extract from 'the Sanskar Bagh of Baba Khem Singh', a rahit-nama belonging to the immediate pre-Singh Sabha phase (Falcon 1896, 10; see pp. 358–65).

The remaining translations are partial renderings. Three which deserve mention are those contained in Trilochan Singh's *The Turban and Sword of the Sikhs* (Trilochan Singh 1977, 43–5, 92–105), and in Surindar Singh Kohli's *Sikh Ethics* (Kohli 1975, 68–74) and his *The Life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh* (Kohli 1986, 93–103).

Trilochan Singh has supplied portions of *Prashan-uttar*, *Sarab Loh*, the rahit-namas of Daya Singh, Desa Singh, and Chaupa Singh, and the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* (Trilochan Singh 1977, 43–5, 66, 92–105). These works are in fact paraphrases in which he expresses himself in competent if dated English, but the result is by no means always reliable. Quite apart from the selective nature of these paraphrases as a whole, many individual items are altered and others are frequently omitted altogether. Commonly changes are effected by grouping several items together and in the process dropping one or more of them. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Trilochan Singh has engaged in a purging process, changing or omitting such items that are not in accord with his own view of Khalsa belief.¹⁹ He does not include the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* in his collection of paraphrases, declaring it to be 'a much later work... full of curses... highly misleading on many points'.²⁰ In omitting it he was following the example of Kahn Singh Nabha who finds no place for it in his *Gurumat Sudhākar*.

Kohli is a more reliable translator, though he too omits certain items and sometimes adopts translations which are plainly different in meaning from the Punjabi or the Khari Boli intended by the original authors of various rahit-namas. All too often these omissions or accommodating translations occur in items which do not agree with a Tat Khalsa understanding of what the original rahit-nama must surely have contained.

These are the principal translators or providers of paraphrases. Several others could be mentioned as providing brief extracts. In 1928 Major A. E. Barstow provided an abstract of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* as Appendix 6 of his military manual *The Sikhs* (Barstow 1928, 216–17). More recently Mehar Singh Chaddah contributed a translation of the conclusion of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* (Chaddah 1982, 65–6). In 1990 Nripinder Singh supplied in his *The Moral Sikh Tradition* verses 79–86 of the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, together with small portions of the *Prem Sumāragand*

Khālsā Mahimā (Nripinder Singh 1990, 103–4, 121, 134–5). The most recent of all was *The Khalsa* by Prithipal Singh Kapur and Dharam Singh which included extracts from the nineteenth-century *Sarab Lohas* as appendices (Kapur and Singh 1999, 136–41). But these are only fragments. Although the rahit-namas have not been forgotten, there exists a strong tendency to avoid the difficulties that the texts raise with regard to an essentially unchanging Rahit. The purpose of this present work will be to face these difficulties. In so doing we shall endeavour to elicit an historical account of the development of the Rahit during the past three centuries.

1.6 A Summary History of Studies Concerning the Rahit

The first ventures into studying the rahit-namas came with the three translators of the mid-nineteenth century whose efforts were mentioned in the previous section. Writing in 1844 Leech clearly thought that he had uncovered works of considerable significance. Unfortunately though his work was not followed up. Cunningham provided a summary in 1849, but as far as the British authorities were concerned he was increasingly regarded as an embarrassment and it was not until 1876, when Attar Singh made tentative ventures into rahit-nama criticism, that some interest was apparently shown. Attar Singh believed that the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* was not a 'genuine document', nor that it had been written in the time of Guru Gobind Singh (Attar Singh 1876, Nand Lal section 11).

The following year Trumpp's *The Ādi Granth* appeared and with it dismissive remarks about the origins of the rahit-namas.

These injunctions are laid down in a number of so-called *Rahit-nāmās* or books of conduct, which all pretend to be dictated by the Guru himself, but none of which appear to be genuine, as they vary very greatly, and were, as may be easily proved, all composed after the death of the Guru, some of them even as late as the end of the last century. They cannot therefore be adduced as a direct testimony of what Govind Singh himself ordained and introduced into the Khalsa, but only as an evidence of the later development of Sikhism. (Trumpp 1877, cxiii)

Two things may be noted about rahit-nama criticism at this stage. The first was the perfunctory treatment it received. The second was that both Attar Singh and Trumpp had dismissed the traditional authorship of the rahit-namas. Attar Singh had applied this opinion only to the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*; Trumpp, in his customary manner, had applied it to all the rahit-namas. Trumpp's view is one that most scholars (often with evident reluctance) have held ever since. Piara Singh Padam, who has devoted considerable time to the analysis of the rahit-namas, is one such scholar.

None of the rahit-namas is by Guru Gobind Singh. If they were they would be in the Dasam Granth. They were evidently composed during the eighteenth century by Sikhs who, to impart authenticity, attached to them the names of Sikhs who were close to the Guru, for example Nand Lal, Daya Singh, Chaupa Singh, and Prahilad Singh. All seem to be post-1720 CE. (PSP 35)

Perfunctory treatment came to an end with the Singh Sabha reform movement, particularly the contributions of Kahn Singh Nabha and Professor Teja Singh.²¹ Now the rahit-namas were carefully scrutinised and Kahn Singh was very careful in what he accepted and what he rejected (Avtar Singh 1970, 21, 133). In 1915 a new rahit-nama was published under the title *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār*. This differed considerably from the old-style rahit-namas, concentrating almost exclusively on providing a manual of Khalsa rituals. This version failed to attract support and following the conversion of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (the SGPC) into a statutory body in 1925 the task of producing an authorised rahit-nama was begun under its auspices. This was where Teja Singh played a significant part. The authorised version, *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, was not published until 1950, but the contents had been determined by the early 1930s and in 1938, Teja Singh published an abbreviated version as chapter IX in his *Sikhism: Its Ideals and Institutions* (Teja Singh 1937). This did not concentrate exclusively on Khalsa rituals, but certainly the emphasis was marked.

After Professor Teja Singh the only other important figure was Randhir Singh, an auditor for the SGPC who during the early 1940s took frequent leave from his employer and spent it copying

a manuscript of the *Prem Sumārag* held by the Public Library in Lahore.²² In the introduction to his edition of *Prem Sumārag Granth*, first published in 1953, he reasoned that Guru Gobind Singh must have had a *khālsā-simriti* prepared in order to provide a permanent record of the new discipline. This *khālsā-simriti* or *rahit-nama* would have been needed as a manual of instruction for the five-man *jathās*, which he thereafter sent round the area occupied by his followers to perform initiation ceremonies. No trace, however, remained. Randhir Singh added that the printed *rahit-namas* that could be obtained in bazaars were corrupt. The *rahit-namas* attributed to Chaupa Singh, together with those of other contemporaries such as Nand Lal, Prahilad Singh, Daya Singh, and Desa Singh, were all the works of anonymous authors, spuriously published as authentic works (PSG 73–80). Although a conservative scholar he had come to the same conclusion as his better-qualified contemporaries.

These men were all scholars and consequently had considerable hesitation in affirming some aspects of the traditional *rahit-namas*. At the other extreme were the ordinary Sikhs who believed implicitly in the *rahit-namas* and frequently wondered why there was such hesitation in acknowledging them. These Sikhs formed the vast bulk of the Panth and although they may not have had the academic qualifications of the doubting variety they commonly had other kinds of influence. Fateh Singh was the leading figure in Punjab politics during the late sixties and early seventies of last century. In his autobiographical *Nirālā Panth* he devoted two chapters to the *rahit-namas*, listing them and saying how important the contents had been to him throughout his life (Fateh Singh 1967, chs 6 and 7). Academic qualifications would never be claimed for Sant Fateh Singh, but certainly, he enjoyed enormous influence in the Panth in general and as leader of the Akalis in particular.

The Singh Sabha period was an exception in the history of *rahit-nama* activities. In recent years the *Rahit* and the *rahit-namas* have received very little attention in books, though certainly they have attracted abundant attention in other ways. Controversies enliven the Panth, some lasting for decades and others receding after only a few years. These controversies are a permanent characteristic of the modern Panth. Life continues, yet always it is a life that changes.

1.7 Symbols of the Rahit

Finally, we will look briefly at the dominant Khalsa symbols. Nine symbols predominate in the modern Panth, five of which have already been mentioned. These are the Five Ks that every Khalsa Sikh must bear (see p. 8). Four symbols remain to be noted. One is the *ik-onaṅkār* emblem which is frequently seen at the top of letter-heads, on the crest of buildings, in posters, on trucks and buses, and in many other places. This consists of a combination of the Gurmukhi figure 1 and the letter O, used as an invocatory symbol representing the unity of Akal Purakh. A second symbol is *karah prasad*, the sacramental food which worshippers offer before the Guru Granth Sahib. *Karah prasad* consists of equal portions by weight of wholemeal flour (*āṭṭā*), raw sugar, and clarified butter (*ghī*), prepared in a *kaṛāhī* or iron pan. Water equal to the combined weight is added and the preparation is cooked to the accompaniment of the chanting or reciting of passages from scripture (*Sikhism* 141–2). This symbolises humble submission before the Guru and, in modern times, the concept of equality. The third symbol is what is known as the *khanda*, comprising a steel quoit flanked by two kirpans, with a vertical two-edged sword superimposed. This is now the logo for the Khalsa. And the fourth symbol is the *nishan sahib*, a triangular flag which nowadays flies over all gurdwaras.

The first of these is a general Sikh symbol, also used by those who make no pretence of belonging to the Khalsa. It is certainly very popular amongst members of the Khalsa, but is not perceived as their exclusive property. The same could be said to apply to *karah prasad*, although its actual method of preparation belongs to the period of the Khalsa. Iron is held to be sacred to the strict Khalsa and because the recipe is cooked in an iron pan it is called *karah prasad*. Writing in the time of the fifth and the sixth Gurus Bhai Gurdas calls it *mahā prasād* not *kaṛāh prasād*.²³ During the nineteenth century *karah prasad* held its central place in Sikh iconography (McLeod 1991, figs 3, 6, 10, 13, 14). Since then it has receded in popularity, though it has certainly not disappeared (McLeod 1991, figs 25, 26).

Among the reasons why *karah prasad* has receded in Sikh art is that it is not easy to draw and that when drawn it does

not present a striking appearance. More important was the appearance of the third symbol, one which certainly does present an impressive appearance. This was the khanda, plainly an emblem of the Khalsa. Since the Khalsa was established iron, with its derivative steel, has symbolised the order, present in the double-edged sword and in two of the Five Ks (the kirpan and wrist-ring or *karā*). Certain fundamentalist members of the Khalsa will always insist on all cooked food which they consume being prepared in iron receptacles (*TanV* 15; cf. *Sarab Loh Granth*, 'The All-Iron Book').

This does not mean, though, that the khanda emblem has a lengthy history. There is no evidence which suggests that it was in existence before the twentieth century, nor indeed any that would support its use until at least three decades of the twentieth century had passed. There is, however, evidence from earlier times of its formation as a Khalsa symbol. In 1870 Lockwood Kipling, the father of Rudyard, purchased a number of woodcut prints in the Lahore bazaar and one of these shows flags flying above Harimandir Sahib. On these pennants is depicted what seems plainly to be a Khalsa symbol comprising a sabre, *kaṭār* punch-dagger, and a cooking-pot (McLeod 1991, fig. 13). This must represent the famous Khalsa slogan *deg teg futeh* (charity, power, victory). The circle symbolising the cooking-pot was later transmuted into a quoit, the sabre into two kirpans, and the *kaṭār* punch-dagger into a two-edged sword. From this process there emerged a logo which admirably served the concerns of the Khalsa. It may be a recent creation, but it is nevertheless a very effective one.²⁴

The fourth symbol is rather older, although the inclusion of the khanda on the triangular pennant is a more recent convention. The nishan sahib is saffron or (rarely) dark blue in colour and its mast is usually covered with the same material as the flag. Surmounting it is a double-edged sword. A nishan sahib advertises the presence of every gurdwara and as such must be counted amongst the prominent symbols of the Sikhs. The fact that its design includes the khanda and a double-edged sword means that it too must be preeminently regarded as a symbol of the Khalsa rather than that of the wider Sikh Panth as a whole.

Endnotes

1. A brief survey of the Rahit is given in *W&S*, pp. 29–42. Comment on this survey is provided in J. S. Grewal (1998), pp. 283–6.

2. The word *sahaj* has normally been construed as 'slowly' and the compound *sahaj-dhārī* as 'gradual adopter', viz. he who is moving towards a full membership of the Khalsa for which he is not yet worthy. A more likely etymology derives from Guru Nanak's frequent usage of *sahaj* as a description of the ineffable spiritual ecstasy which climaxes the practice of *nām simaran*.

3. In the eighteenth century and earlier the place for routine worship was generally designated a dharamsala, with gurdwara reserved for sites specifically associated with one of the Gurus. Occasionally, however, the authors of rahit-namas do use them interchangeably (as for example in *DesaS* 72 and 73). During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the change from 'dharamsala' to 'gurdwara' became more pronounced in the case of ordinary places of worship, and eventually the latter term came to be universally used. As the word 'gurdwara' was expanded to include 'dharamsala' the meaning of the latter term came to be attached to the hospice for travellers or visitors which had always been attached to a Sikh place of worship.

4. See ch. 7.7, pp. 204–13. The Akhand Kirtani Jatha, a strict Sikh sect, believes that *keskī* (a small under-turban) should replace *kes*. See p. 430.

5. 'Knife' and 'dagger' are not acceptable translations as they imply devious deeds and are often concealed. A kirpan should be exposed as a symbol of the wearer's faith and its function must always be deeds of justice.

6. A prominent example is *PrahR*. See pp. 70–1.

7. Kahn Singh Nabha computed the number as 28. *GM*, pp. 796–7. Included in the number, however, is the *Adi Granth* and such works as the verses of Bhai Gurdas and collectively the body of janam-sakhi literature. His actual total appears to be only 12.

8. W. H. McLeod (1987), *Gurmukhi text and English translation with notes on both*, Part 1 contains a lengthy summary of its version of the Rahit. See pp. 93–114.

9. Particularly helpful in this regard is Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, Delhi, 1994.

10. His name is also spelt Kahan Singh.

11. Apart from MS 770 this rahit-nama always bears the title *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

12. Shamsheer Singh Ashok (ed.), *Pañjābī Hath-likhatān dī Sūchī*, Patiala, 1961, I.338, lists only the S. 1882 copy of *Tanakhāh-nāmā*. It

mentions only one other *rahit-nama*. This is a copy of *Prem Sumārag Granth* of no date (II. 219).

13. *ChS*, pp. 57–132. I made a copy of the manuscript before it was destroyed and this has been published as *ChS* together with an English translation. The attached *Sākhī Rahit kī* occupies pp. 133–8. A photocopy of this copy is held by the Library of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

14. Both will be discussed when dealing with the impact of the Singh Sabha. See chapter 6.2 and 6.4, pp. 163–5 and 171–3.

15. *Pothī rahit nāmā te tanakhāh nāmā Srī Gurū Gobind Singh jī Pālshāhī 10 kī Bhāi Prahilād Singh jī te Bhāi Nandalāl jī prati*, Amritsar, 1922, 16 p. The booklet is held by the British Library with the call number Panj D. 149.

16. Ganda Singh and Piara Singh Padam tell readers where their manuscripts are to be found. It would be of great assistance to know where Kahn Singh and Ashok obtained their texts.

17. *Guradūārā Gazar*, August 1969, Part III, pp. 5–76. The *Tanakhāh-nāmā* occupies pp. 30–5. Leech precedes this with a translation of a lengthy extract from the *Prem Sumārag* (pp. 8–29) and follows it with a translation of the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* (pp. 36–41), an account of various Sikh sects (pp. 42–70), prayers (p. 71), holidays (pp. 71–2), and shrines (pp. 72–6). He mentions having consulted *Gur Sobhā* and *Bachitar Nātak*, and taken extracts from them (p. 70).

18. Attar Singh (1876a), pp. 1–6 (*Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā*) and pp. 1–11 (*Tanakhāh-nāmā*).

19. Compare the following example. *DesaS* 14–15 reads in translation as follows:

Lust, anger, pride, drunkenness, and covetousness are enemies which cause much grief to the *man*. He who resists these practices lives a fulfilled life. Sustain within your *man* compassion (*dayā*), obedience to your duty (*dharam*), and mortification (*tap*). Never be separated from your *kachh* or your *kirpan*. In a fight never turn your back nor flee from the field of battle.

Trilochan Singh renders this verse as follows:

A Sikh should never renounce the ethical principles of moral enlightenment according to the established code of conduct (*Rehatbibek*). In the battle-field he should fight face to face and never run away from the battle-field. The Khalsa is the image of the Guru, serving whom supreme happiness is attained. (Trilochan Singh 1977, p. 96)

Plainly this is a considerably abbreviated paraphrase, not a translation. Various practices which are specified in the original are gathered

together as 'the ethical principles of moral enlightenment according to the established code of conduct'. The meaning of *dharam* is skirted; *tap* is avoided; and so too is the question of the Five Ks (of which only two are listed by Desa Singh). The reference to *Rehat Bibek* indicates Trilochan Singh's stance as a loyal member of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. *Sikhism*, pp. 199–201. This is not to suggest that Trilochan Singh deliberately altered the text. The changes will have been made with the best of intentions and the result must represent the view which Trilochan Singh sincerely held.

20. Trilochan Singh (1977), p. 90. Kohli omits it entirely from *Sikh Ethics*, but includes a selection entitled '*Rahat-nama* of Prehlah Singh' in Kohli (1986), pp. 94–5.

21. This is not Babu Teja Singh of the Panch Khalsa Divan.

22. This is not the Randhir Singh whom the Akhand Kirtani Jatha regards as its founder.

23. *Vār* 20:10 and *Kabitts* 175, 309, and 453. For further discussion of *karah prasad* see ch. 7.11.

24. A khanda appears on the title-page of this book and at the beginning of each chapter.

2

The Beginnings



2.1 The Proto-rahit: The Adi Granth

For Sikhs today the Adi Granth is holy scripture, much the most sacrosanct of all religious books. Literature dealing with the Rahit is left far behind. Stressing this can evade the issue concerning the paramount importance of the Rahit, and certain key elements that it requires, but it does at least emphasise, what is for modern Sikhs the most fundamental of religious principles. The Adi Granth (or the Guru Granth Sahib) stands totally supreme and all else must take a subordinate place.

The Adi Granth was compiled almost a century before the Rahit was proclaimed, yet it contains within it certain injunctions which belong to the Rahit as it later emerged. These injunctions are clearly stated in the following shalok by Guru Ram Das.

He who calls himself Sikh, a follower of the Guru who is true,
should arise at dawn and meditate on the divine Name.

Every dawn he arises, and for his bathe washes himself in the
pool of amrit.

Obedient to the Guru's teaching he repeats the divine Name,
driving away all evil deeds and vices.

As day unfolds he sings the Guru's hymns; sitting or rising he
meditates on the divine Name.

He who repeats the divine Name with every breath is he who
gives pleasure to the Guru.

He who receives my Master's grace is the Sikh of the Guru who hearkens to his teaching.

Nanak craves the dust of such a Sikh's feet, he who while meditating inspires the same from others.¹

This shalok specifies certain actions that are incumbent upon the true follower of the Guru. He must rise at dawn, he must bathe, and he must meditate on the divine Name. Always he must meditate on the divine Name. By so doing he will give proof of learning in humility from the Guru's teaching, and so prove himself worthy of the Guru's grace.

This is the pattern that is repeated again and again in the sacred scripture: rise early, bathe, and meditate on the divine Name. The overwhelming emphasis on repeating the divine Name is plainly brought out in Guru Arjan's *Āsā* 88, a description of the 'way of life of a sant', which incorporates the word *rahit*, and which presents the dominant view of the *Adi Granth* with regard to a believer's ideal pattern of living:

Knowing your eternal nearness, Lord, he succumbs to the sweetness of your deeds.

The one Name is the sants' support, they who humbly regard themselves as the dust of others' feet. 1

Hear of the way (*rahit*) observed by the sants, my brother; Their praise is beyond all telling. (*Refrain*)²

The *Rahit* to be observed by the believer is expressed by the divine Name. Meditate on the divine Name at all times and you shall find within you that ineffable condition that others can never know. This is the way to spiritual liberation, and the person who follows it consistently and with determination must ultimately discover that inexpressible condition which is known as *sahaj* or as *sach khaṇḍ*.

Their only concern is with the Name, and in its blissful harmony they find their peace.

Alike to them are friends and foes, knowing no other than their Lord alone. 2

Countless faults are thus erased, sorrow abandoned, life restored.

Valiant are they, their words speak [wisdom], worldly desire left far behind. 3

Celestial beings seek company with them; worthy their sight and noble their service.

With palms together Nanak makes this plea: grant me that succour O Precious One. 4³

This is the message of the *Adi Granth*, and it is one which is incorporated unhesitatingly in the *Khalsa Rahit*. The *Khalsa Sikh* is required to follow a simple life of devotion which constrains him to rise early, bathe, and meditate on the divine Name. In this sense the *Adi Granth* provides a proto-Rahit.

Taking the *Adi Granth* message further with regard to its specific *Rahit* content, however, renders it much less clear. In the following shalok by Guru Amar Das is it ordinary wine that the Guru has in mind, or does he mean something else by the 'wine of falsehood' (*jhūṭha madu*) and the 'wine of truth' (*sachu madu*)?

One man brings a cup that is full; another enters and fills his cup.

He who drinks loses his reason; disorder is the result.

Unable to tell what is his and what the others, hither and yon he is pushed by his Master.

He who drinks forgets his Master; in the divine Court he receives his punishment.

As far as you are able never drink the wine of falsehood.

By grace, Nanak, the true Guru when he comes bestows the wine of truth.

Always he dwells in his Master's love, a place reserved in his presence.⁴

Is this ordinary alcohol to which Guru Amar Das is referring? If so, the injunction certainly deserves to be included in *rahit-namas* and actually is several times mentioned, at least in the later versions.⁵ But this surely is not what the Guru meant. By 'the wine of falsehood' and 'the wine of truth' he seems rather to be using wine as a metaphor, symbolizing both the mistaken way and the way of true devotion.

Obviously there are dangers of misunderstanding involved when we push the *Rahit* contribution of the *Adi Granth* too far. Piara Singh Padam endeavoured to summarize its contribution by claiming that only *interior* observances of the Sikh tradition are given in the sacred scripture, whereas the *exterior*

observances of the Rahit are to be found in the rahit-namas (PSP 35). This division misleads in that early rising and bathing are exterior activities, but it does at least imply the Rahit contribution of the Adi Granth. This contribution consists of a repeated call to rise early, to bathe, and above all to spend one's time in meditating on the divine Name.

2.2 The Proto-rahit: Bhai Gurdas

Gurdas Bhalla (c. 1558–1637) was related to Guru Amar Das and served as a loyal follower and amanuensis under the three succeeding Gurus. He is always honoured with the title 'Bhai' or 'Brother'. Bhai Gurdas wrote prolifically during this time, composing 40 lengthy poems in Punjabi known as *vārs* and 556 brief works in Braj known as *kabitts*. The *kabitts* are now little read or recited, but the continuing popularity of his *vārs* is substantial. He was writing at the time of the Adi Granth's compilation, and he carries the duty of the loyal Sikh much further in certain selected *vārs*.

Bhai Gurdas considerably extends the proto-rahit. He emphasizes the paramount importance of early rising, bathing, and meditation on the divine Name, but then takes the obligation of the Gursikh further. In addition to these personal duties he should join in the fellowship of the devout (the sangat or satsang), he should speak gently and conduct himself modestly, and he should show unconcern for the things of this world.

Preaching loving devotion [the Guru] instilled the three-fold rule
(*nām dān isanān*).

Rising at the ambrosial hour the Gurmukh bathes and repeats
the Guru's mantra which is *Japujī*.

At night he chants the *Āratī Sohilā*, and thus remains free from
worldly concerns.

Speaking gently, with modest conduct; giving to others with no
hope of return... (BG 26:4)

In his other *vārs*, Bhai Gurdas extends this range of obligations, thereby adding to the items contained in the proto-rahit (Part II.1). Accepting the Guru's teaching he must live a life of humility. Impeccably honest, the devoted Sikh never speaks ill of another, and when evil is spoken of another he turns away.

Scorning another's wealth, he refuses to listen to slanderous tales. He sleeps little, eats little, and speaks little. He finds pleasure in giving, he celebrates the anniversaries of the Gurus, and he is never attracted by another's wife.

This is not the Rahit. There is no ban on the cutting of hair, no rigorous command to avoid smoking, no injunction which mentions the Five Ks. Yet there are elements in the *vārs* of Bhai Gurdas which fit easily into a wider statement of the Rahit. As such they can properly be regarded as parts of the proto-rahit. At the conclusion of his *vārs* Bhai Gurdas returns again to the message which he has repeated throughout his career.

Arising at the ambrosial hour the Gursikh bathes in the sacred pool.

Having chanted the Guru's divine words his thoughts then turn to the dharamsala.

Proceeding there he [joins] the fellowship and hears with love the Guru's sacred works (*gurabāṇī*).

All doubts are driven far away as [devotedly] he serves his fellow Gursikhs.

By honest labour he performs duty's calling, and from what it yields distributes food,

Giving it [first] to [other] Gursikhs and then feeding himself upon what remains.

Light has shone in the dark age of the Kaliyug, the Guru a disciple and the disciple a Guru.⁶

This is the highway which the Gurmukh treads! (BG 40:11)

2.3 The Proto-rahit: Hukam-namas

Bhai Gurdas was clearly disturbed by the changes that overtook the Panth with the accession of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, in 1606. This he made clear in a famous verse.⁷ The first five Gurus had been peaceable men, sitting in dharamsalas and blessing those who came to them. The sixth Guru, however, was a very different person, roaming the land on horseback and hunting with dogs. The answer which he gave to this dilemma was that the Guru was still the Guru, and his Sikhs must accept the change without demur.

The reason for Guru Hargobind's change of direction was, of course, that the Mughal authorities were now taking a distinct interest in this potentially troublesome Panth. Fire had to be answered by fire and so the Guru armed his followers, leading them in skirmishes with the Mughals on three separate occasions. Eventually he retired from the plains, taking up residence in the fortified village of Kiratpur situated on the edge of the Shivalik Hills.

In this situation an additional form of authority was introduced, the *hukam-nāmā* or 'letter of command'. Missives were despatched to individuals or particular groups of Sikhs, communicating such information as a forthcoming visit by the Guru or the need for Sikhs to maintain their giving. Twenty-one *hukam-namas* survive from the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur, authenticated by the Guru's *nishān* ('mark' or 'seal'). *Hukam-namas* by his successors Guru Gobind Singh become frequent. In them the Guru gives instructions to various *sangats*, commonly simple orders but sometimes matters of faith which his Khalsa should accept. Following Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708 the practice was continued by Banda and two of the Guru's widows, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi. Today the custom is still continued, *hukam-namas* occasionally being issued by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.⁸

The *hukam-namas* add some useful information to our knowledge of the Rahit, both before and after the formal inauguration of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh. In the *hukam-namas* of Guru Hargobind, two points clearly emerge. The first is that Sikhs should repeat the words 'Guru Guru' (*H-n* 65, 67; Fauja Singh 1976, 57, 61, 73), rather less commonly 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāh gurū*) (Fauja Singh 1976, 53, 97), or simply that they should utter the Guru's name (Fauja Singh 1976, 77). This, it seems, was the form which repetition of the divine Name took in the time of Guru Hargobind. The second is that Sikhs were warned to avoid eating meat or fish (*H-n* 65, 67).

In the *hukam-namas* of Guru Tegh Bahadur's time (1664–75), the emphasis moves strongly towards financial support of the Guru's establishment, and instructions are issued to his followers to give liberally. The *hukam-namas* are frequently concerned with the routine administration of the Panth, and for this purpose they admonish the Sikhs to give generously for its

support. The importance of the Guru's *golak* or receptacle for gifts is therefore underlined by the *hukam-namas*. This constitutes a feature of the *Rahit* that later emerges prominently in the *rahit-namas* which make it abundantly clear that generosity to the Guru's cause is an essential mark of the committed Sikh (*TanN* 45, *ChS* 23, 364–6, 392, pp. 60, 104, 105. *DesaS* 11, 35, 40, *DayaS* 7, 17). Some go further and specify the *das-vandh* or tithe as the required duty of the loyal Sikh (*TanN* 24, *ChS* 48, pp. 63, 154. *DayaS* 14).

Other *Rahit* features of the *hukam-namas* are few, and like the obligation for faithful Sikhs to be generous, they are plainly evident from other sources. Sikhs are still exhorted to repeat 'Guru Guru' regularly, and there are summons by Guru Gobind Singh to bear weapons when visiting him (*H-n* 169, 173, 175). Circumstances at the beginning of the eighteenth century were seriously disturbed, as the Guru's base in Anandpur was threatened, assaulted, and eventually vacated. At this time relations with the hill rajas and the Mughals were about to issue in open warfare. This explains the Guru's command to carry weapons when coming to him for *darshan*. Most of the remainder of the century was also disturbed, and travelling armed remained a necessary precaution which finds support in the *rahit-namas*. The *hukam-namas* can certainly be valuable as a means of introducing this particular feature of the *Rahit*, but without their testimony it is a feature, which would still appear in the *Khalsa* code of belief and discipline.

There is, however, one particularly prominent feature which emerges in the *hukam-namas*, so much so that it provides at least a partial exception to the rule of *rahit-nama* dominance. Frequent warnings are issued to the Guru's Sikhs always to avoid dealings with the *masands* or their followers. The *masand* system was initially set up by the fourth Guru, Ram Das, building upon the *manji* system introduced by his predecessor, Guru Amar Das. The *manjis* were preachers whose task was to proclaim the way of liberation through faith in the Guru (*HDS* 134–5). Guru Ram Das enlarged their responsibilities to embrace the pastoral care of particular *sangats*, the tasks including the collection of donations for the Guru and the transmitting of any messages which the Guru wished to communicate to *sangats*. This was the *masand* system (*HDS* 136). Some *sangats*

remained under the direct care and supervision of the Guru and these were collectively known as the Guru's Khalsa. Just as the Mughal emperors had retained particular territories under their direct authority rather than distributing them to jagirdars, so the Guru reserved particular sangats for his direct control. The areas of both the Mughal and Sikh direct authority were termed the *khālsā*.⁹

The system apparently worked satisfactorily for the greater part of a century, but by the time Gobind Singh assumed his role as Guru in 1675 many individual masands had become corrupt, exercising an independent authority and retaining for their own use donations that were properly due to the Guru. Abolition of the masand system was, therefore, a prime objective of Guru Gobind Singh in what is known as the foundation of the Khalsa. Indeed, it can be argued that termination of the masand system was *the* prime objective. This certainly was the view of the author of *Gur Sobhā*, the nearest approach to a contemporary source for the establishment of the Khalsa (see pp. 268–71). All sangats and faithful Sikhs were to sever relations with their masands and instead, place themselves under the direct supervision of the Guru.

They were, in other words, to join his Khalsa, converting it from a narrow portion of the Panth into something much wider. Several of the hukam-namas despatched by Guru Gobind Singh bear such words as *saṅgati merā khālsā hai*, 'the sangat [to which this hukam-nama is addressed] belongs to my Khalsa'. Many of the masands resisted this pressure, setting themselves up as independent authorities and persuading an indeterminate number of Sikhs to continue following them. The determination of Guru Gobind Singh to have the Panth break off all relations with the masands was resolute, and one finds frequent exhortations to both sangats and individual Sikhs to have nothing to do with them or with those who still followed them.¹⁰

Three rivals for the title of Guru (all related to the line of traditional Gurus) attracted masand support, and so there developed the notion, writ large in the rahit-namas, of bracketing these pretenders with the masands and their followers as the *pañj mel* or Five Reprobate Groups (*HDS* 159). The three rival lineages, all Khatris of the Sodhi subcaste, were the following. First there were the descendants of Prithi Chand, elder brother

of Guru Arjan and branded by the orthodox Sikhs as the Minas or 'Scoundrels'. Secondly, there were those descended from Dhir Mal, eldest son of Gurditta, who was in turn the eldest son of Guru Hargobind (the Dhir-malias). Thirdly, there were the descendants of Ram Rai, elder son of Guru Hari Rai (the Ram-raias). All were the eldest sons in the direct line of succession and all maintained that they had the prior right to the title of Guru.

This masand support was vigorously and successfully contested by the Khalsa, terming them in the *rahit-namas* as three of the *pañj mel* whom all loyal Sikhs of the Khalsa must strenuously avoid. A fourth was provided by the masands themselves. Disagreement then overtakes the naming of the fifth place in the Five Reprobate Groups, support being divided between the *masandīā* (followers of the masands), *kuṛī-mār* (killers of female infants), *naṛī-mār* (users of the hookah), *bhadaṇī* (those who observe the Hindu head shaving ritual), and *sir-gum* (initiated Sikhs who subsequently cut their hair) (HDS 72, 139-40, 159, 175-6; see ch. 7.22).

The following is an example of one of Guru Gobind Singh's *hukam-namas* in translation:

One Akal Purakh, [in the name of] the True Guru.

By the command of the Guru, to the entire sangat of Pirag [which] is my Khalsa: The Guru watches over you. Repeat 'Guru Guru' [and so] redeem your birth [into the world].¹¹ Speedily send the five tolas of gold through a bill of exchange (*hundī*) which I have requested in writing, the order which you, the sangat, have seen. The sangat will be protected. Do not have anything to do with masands or with those who follow them. Whatever you have collected on behalf of the Guru do not give it to anyone else. Send it directly to him. Associate on friendly terms with anyone who wishes to join [the Khalsa]. Do not create any difficulty. This will make me happy. Let there be love amongst you. Arm yourself and come for darshan. The Sikh who comes for darshan will be blessed. 10 Phaggaṇ, Sammat [17]58. Message [number 8]. Give the messenger five rupees. (*H-n* nos 56, 173).

Phaggaṇ 10, S. 1758 is the equivalent of 6 February 1702 CE, which means that the *hukam-nama* was written after the inauguration of the Khalsa. Recorded in his own hand, it bears Guru Gobind Singh's *nishān* (mark) and so can be taken as authentic.

The remainder of the hukam-nama is written by a scribe. In terms of the Rahit components which it contains, the document illustrates the following:

1. The Panth was divided into sangats (fellowships or congregations), each sufficiently small to permit members to gather for kirtan in one place. The rahit-namas later assume that the sangat is the primary feature of the organisation of the Panth and this model the hukam-nama supports.

2. The Pirag sangat was within the Khalsa.

3. Sikhs are routinely instructed to repeat 'Guru Guru'. This was the way of liberation for all to follow. Later the common expression was *nām japna*, 'repeating the divine Name' (HDS 146).

4. The sangat was expressly warned to have nothing to do with the masands or those who still followed them.

5. When the Sikhs came for darshan they were commanded to come armed.

At first sight the second of these components is ambiguous. Pirag was, as this hukam-nama testifies, within the Khalsa. We have already seen that for the eighteenth century and thereafter, membership of the Khalsa required *pāhul* or initiation by the two-edged sword. Was the sangat of Pirag a member in this sense? It is possible that all members of the sangat had duly taken *pāhul*, but such a situation would have been unusual. What this seems to indicate is that 'Khalsa' had another meaning in early usage. The Guru declared sangats to belong to his Khalsa if, having renounced the authority of their masands, their members had placed themselves under his direct control. This was the situation as far as the Pirag sangat was concerned. Such sangats were a part of the Khalsa, regardless of whether their individual members had undertaken initiation. The term 'Khalsa' therefore seems to possess two distinct meanings, an early one linking sangats which have accepted the direct authority of the Guru and a second knitting into an order those individuals who take *pāhul*.

It is the second of these meanings that must concern us. We are engaged in the history and content of the Rahit, which means that we must be focussing specifically and directly on

the organisation which acknowledges the Rahit as its code of belief and behaviour. That organisation is, of course, the Khalsa which one enters by means of the *pāhul* ceremony. One must be absolutely clear about this connection. The Rahit is the Khalsa Rahit. It is not the Sikh Rahit. Individuals may claim with absolute conviction that they are Sikhs, yet also maintain that the Rahit is not for them. As we have noted when dealing with definitions such individuals are normally designated Sahajdhari Sikhs, or Sikhs for whom *sahaj* is the objective rather than the Rahit. Sahajdhari Sikhs may be few nowadays, but in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they were numerically important. They were not, however, the Khalsa. The Khalsa comprised only those Sikhs who vowed to obey the Rahit.

The hukam-namas are also of interest for the revealing glimpses that they provide of the pre-Rahit practices of the Gurus, particularly those of Guru Gobind Singh. During the eighteenth century the Rahit emerged as firmly opposed to the use of Brahmans for Sikh ceremonies.¹² Professor Madanjit Kaur has examined a hukam-nama which describes how Guru Gobind Singh visited the famous Hindu tirath Kurukshetra and there appointed a purohit as the chosen priest for himself and for the local sangat (Madanjit Kaur 1980, 110–16). This hukam-nama must be treated with some caution, as it does not appear in the collections of either Ganda Singh or Shamsheer Singh Ashok (*H-n*; Ashok 1967). Its authenticity does, however, seem a strong likelihood. Madanjit Kaur comments on this hukam-nama:

Perhaps more interesting than the text itself is the reflection of the *Hukamnāmā* for the study of the fusion of the Sikh religion with the popular Hindu religious customs affecting belief of the Sikhs. The study furnishes significant historical information about the actual religious practices followed by the Sikh Gurus and their followers. The *Hukamnāmā* is a documentary evidence about the observance of a customary Hindu belief viz; of visiting the *tīraths* and the appointing local *pāṇḍās*...as *prohits*...by the Sikh Gurus.¹³

Ganda Singh also gives two hukam-namas issued under the authority of Banda two years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh (*H-n* 192–5). These are of interest for the following reasons:

1. Both have the standard introduction ('The Guru watches over you...').

2. Both exhort their recipients to repeat 'Guru Guru', which means that this method of *nām japna* was still in use in 1710.

3. Both seem to imply that the sangat addressed in each hukam-nama constitutes the Khalsa as well as the individual members of it.

4. Both command individual Khalsa Sikhs to wear 'five weapons' when they come for darshan.

The hukam-nama, addressed to the sangat in Jaunpur, reads as follows in translation:

The command of Siri Sachē Sahib [Banda] to the entire Khalsa (*sarabat khālsā*) of Jaunpur. The Guru watches over you. Repeat 'Guru Guru' [and so] redeem your birth [into the world]. You are the Khalsa of Akal Purakh. In accordance with this command don the five weapons and present yourselves before me. Observe the Rahit of the Khalsa. Do not consume cannabis, tobacco, opium, poppy-head, alcohol, or [any other] intoxicant, nor should you eat meat, fish, or onions. Do not steal and avoid illicit relations. We have brought in the Satiyug!¹⁴ Let love dwell amongst you. My command is that you maintain the Khalsa's Rahit. The Guru will help you to do so. Dated Poh 12 of the first year.¹⁵

By this time the Khalsa was well established and the Rahit was regarded as an essential marker. However, none of the features that we now regard as fundamentals of the Rahit appear in these two hukam-namas apart from their standard method of *nām japna* and certain items of consumption or use which every Khalsa is expected to avoid. The hukam-namas are certainly useful as background to the Rahit, but we are obviously expecting too much if we look to them as providing a full and rounded Khalsa code. Even after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, they still fall well short of that objective.

2.4 Pothi Bibi Rup Kaur and Granth Bhai Painda

Prescriptive material is to be found in the sakhis recorded in two old manuscripts known as *Pothī Bibī Rūp Kaur* and *Granth Bhāi Paindā* (or *Pahindā*), which are said to date from the time shortly after the death of Guru Hari Rai, the seventh Guru (d. 1661). These two manuscripts are described by Narindar Kaur Bhatia

in her *Srī Satagurū jī de Muhain dīān Sākhīān* (Bhatia (ed.) 1978, 13–17). When the book was published in 1978, the manuscript *Pothī Bibī Rūp Kaur* was in the possession of Sardar Babu Singh, granthi of Gurdwara Manjī Sahib in Kiratpur. He claimed that it was written for the personal use of Bibi Rūp Kaur, daughter of Guru Hari Rai. Randhir Singh, who was able to see the volume while employed as a gurdwara inspector by the SGPC, examined it and reported that it comprised:

- 1–492a A collection of the Guru's hymns (*bāṇī*).
 - 492b–524 A series of 27 sakhis entitled *Srī Satagurūjī de Muhain dīān Sākhīān*.
 - 525–7 Six savaīyyas attributed to Guru Arjan.
 - 528 Blank folio.
 - 529–32 Six more sakhis.
 - 533 Blank folio.
- Some more *bāṇī* follows and then a statement of the death of Guru Hari Rai (d. 1661 CE).

Up to this point the contents were all inscribed in the same hand, though the two groups of sakhis were evidently copied from two different sources. More folios have subsequently been added to the manuscript by different hands. Dr Bhatia concludes that the original portion must have been copied soon after the death of Guru Hari Rai (Bhatia 1978, 13–15). No clinching argument is offered, and the language is perhaps a little modern for the middle of the seventeenth century. It is, however, at least a distinct possibility. This manuscript was not available for scrutiny until at least the time of the publication of Dr Bhatia's book in 1978, but Randhir Singh was able to make a copy of the two groups of sakhis during his SGPC inspectorate. He passed on a copy of this copy to the late Dr Piar Singh, who permitted Dr Bhatia to use it as her primary text.¹⁶

A related sequence of sakhis is to be found in the manuscript copy of the *Adi Granth* known as *Granth Bhāī Paīndā*, a volume first noted by G. B. Singh (G. B. Singh 1944, 205–15). In 1944 it was in the Bhai Paīnda Sahib Dharamsala, Rawalpindi. The volume was brought to India in 1947 at Partition, and Dr Bhatia reported that it was in the possession of a private owner in New Delhi. Dr Piar Singh made a copy of the sakhis contained

therein and permitted Dr Bhatia to use them.¹⁷ The sakhis which are common to both collections are very close textually, and on the basis of language and script, Dr Bhatia suggests that a date shortly after 1661 fits both (Bhatia 1978, 27).

The sakhi sequence is said to be a miscellaneous collection of popular piety, the earlier portion concentrating on the janam-sakhi style of anecdote and the later moving more strongly towards doctrinal statements.¹⁸ The janam-sakhi emphasis of the earlier sakhis is well illustrated by sakhi 7:

While travelling the Guru [Nanak] came to the site of a ruined village. Standing on the mound he asked, '[My] sons, do you know why this village has been destroyed?' His Sikhs asked him to explain the reason. '[My] sons,' said the Guru, 'villages remain inhabited when the Name of God (*paramesar*) inhabits the hearts of their occupants. When God is forgotten a village is laid waste.' (Bhatia 1978, 38)

The anecdote is not the same as *Purātan* sakhis 26 and 27, but the resemblance is obvious (*GNSR* 41–2). Other anecdotes are less elevating. Sakhi 3 succeeds only in making Guru Amar Das look absurd (Bhatia 1978, 37–8), and sakhi 19 combines a grotesque piety with prurience (Bhatia 1978, 44–6). The doctrinal emphasis is most strikingly expressed in sakhi 22:

God (*paramesar*) has three forms. The first is the Supreme Spirit (*parabraham*); the second is the Guru (*gurudev*); and the third is the sangat. He who attacks the Supreme Spirit can be forgiven by the Guru, and he who attacks the Guru can be forgiven by the sangat. But if anyone attacks the sangat how can he be pardoned? Only if the sangat is merciful can he obtain forgiveness. (Bhatia 1978, 48)

Other examples of a doctrinal emphasis are sakhi 26 (the word of a bhagat is the word of God), sakhi 28 (the light of God dwells in every human), and sakhi 35 (the divine Word is the Guru and the human mind is the disciple) (Bhatia 1978, 52, 53, 56).

Inevitably both anecdote and doctrinal exposition incorporate prescriptive material, though much of it concerns the general practice of piety rather than the specifics of daily living. In three instances, however, the style which one normally associates with the rahit-namas emerges with striking clarity. The first of these is the brief sakhi 10 of *Pothī Bilī Rūp Kaur*.

The Guru said, 'Do not steal another's property. Do not gamble. Do not visit another's wife. Do not slander another. Do not eat fish [or] meat. Do not drink intoxicating liquor. Such things bring trouble to the Sikhs.' (Bhatia 1978, 39)

The second is sakhi 37 of *Granth Bhāi Paindā*. This is an expanded version of the same sakhi which was given in sakhi 10 of *Pothī Bibī Rūp Kaur*. The speaker in this case is identified as Guru Arjan.¹⁹

The Satguru said: 'There are five deeds, which should never be committed, and five, which should be performed if the Guru gives the strength to do so. The five proscribed deeds are the following: Do not steal another's property. Do not have intercourse with another's wife. Do not slander another. Do not gamble. Do not consume either intoxicating liquor or meat. [If, however, you] perform the five [approved] deeds you shall find liberation in your present life. [These are as follows:] Attend the sangat daily, taking some food [as an offering], and listen to the *Āraṭī* kirtan before retiring for the night. Act with respect and benevolence towards the poor, the afflicted, and the lowly, and encourage others to do likewise. Try to have a bride bestowed on anyone who has not been betrothed and if possible give your own [daughter for this purpose]. Try to restore any wayward Sikh to his true obedience. Do good to all, evil to none. Perceive the spirit of God (*braham*) [within]. This is true worship.'²⁰

The third instance is set within the anecdote related by sakhi 25 and thus follows the janam-sakhi style of presenting Rahit material. Again the speaker is said to be Guru Arjan, answering a question put to him by Bahora the Goldsmith: 'My Lord, what is your command?'

This is [my] command: Do not fasten your affections on another's wife. Treat her as you would treat your mother. Do not approach another's woman. Never lie. Neither utter slander nor listen to it. Do nothing which will hurt another. Let none be harmed by you. See the [Eternal] One in all living creatures. Worship none save the Supreme Spirit (*parabraham*). Apply your heart and understanding to the Guru's teachings. Repeat nothing save the words of the True Guru. Rising, sitting or sleeping, hold in perpetual remembrance the image of the True Guru. Bring [everything into submission] to the divine Name of God—wealth, physical appearance, family, possessions, food, fame, titles, happiness, liberation, and whatever greatness you may achieve. Do this and you shall be a Gurmukh.²¹

Sakhi 24, one of three sakhis attributed to Guru Amar Das,²² might well be treated as a fourth instance. Although the emphasis in this anecdote is on true belief and its reward some explicit injunctions appear within the sakhi. These include the customary insistence on avoiding entanglement with other men's wives, together with directions to sing hymns, spurn falsehood, and live life as a householder. (Bhatia 1978, 49)

In addition to these two manuscripts described and analysed by Narindar Kaur Bhatia a third one is noted from District Chittagong in Bangladesh, an *Adi Granth* *bīr* first mentioned by G. B. Singh.²³ On spare folios at the end of this manuscript there is recorded *Sākhī mahalā* 5, a passage that clearly resembles those from the other two manuscripts which deal with the five good deeds and the five evil ones, said to have been preached by Guru Arjan (G. B. Singh 1944, 373; Bhatia 1978, 24n). Piara Singh Padam notes this resemblance in his introduction to *Rahit-nāme*, although the extract which he quotes is not from *Prāchīn bīrān bāre* but from sakhi 37 of *Granth Bhāi Paīndā* (PSP 12).

What are we to make of the relevant sakhis from these three sources? First, their authenticity has not definitely been established, although it certainly seems likely. Caution is required, yet not the caution which forbids us to use this material as likely proto-Rahit. Secondly, there may well be more manuscripts of this date yet to be found. And thirdly, it is clear from these examples that much of the material contained in the rahit-namas was already abroad in the Sikh Panth before the formal inauguration of the Khalsa at the end of the seventeenth century. Certain practices were forbidden to Sikhs, regardless of whether they belonged to the Guru's restricted Khalsa or not. Other actions were positively affirmed.

2.5 Prashan-uttar attributed to Nand Lal

The term *prashan-uttar* means 'question [and] answer' or catechism.²⁴ Sikh sources have always treated *Prashan-uttar* as one of the eighteenth-century rahit-namas because it represents Guru Gobind Singh's answers to Bhai Nand Lal's queries, and because a few Rahit injunctions do occur in the course of the Guru's responses. This dating is, however, open to doubt. *Prashan-uttar* is not a typical rahit-nama, but rather a predominantly doctrinal

statement comprising the three-fold being of the Guru. This consists of his invisible form present within each believing heart, his visible form which is the sacred scripture, and the *gur-shabad* or divine Word.

There are two reasons for placing *Prashan-uttar* in the late seventeenth century, prior to the inauguration of the Khalsa, and for regarding it as proto-*rahit* in nature rather than as a formal *rahit-nama*. The first is the date of completion, which is contained in verse 22:

This message of comfort and joy was delivered on the ninth day of the waxing moon in the month of Maghar, S. 1752.

This corresponds to 4 December 1695. Dates in *rahit-namas* can certainly be falsified, but in view of the second reason for an early setting this seems highly unlikely. Nowhere in the text is the Khalsa mentioned, a feature which seems inexplicable unless an early pre-Khalsa date is accepted.

Opposed to these two reasons is the primary subject of *Prashan-uttar* which is the three-fold nature of the Guru. This seems a more appropriate subject after the Guru's death. It is, however, not compelling, and this particular argument seems less weighty than the two reasons which favour a late seventeenth-century date.

Prashan-uttar is also distinguished from the two other works which claim to be the work of Nand Lal in that it contains a relatively sophisticated philosophical content. This increases the possibility that it may in fact be by the famous Nand Lal Goya of Guru Gobind Singh's entourage. It still amounts to no more than a remote possibility though, for it involves the notion that the poetry of *Prashan-uttar* can be reasonably compared with the Persian of the *Divān* or the *Zindagi-nāmā*. There exists, however, a slender possibility of it being the work of the poet Nand Lal Goya, as opposed to the virtual impossibility of either the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* or *Sākhī Rahit kī*.²⁵

The following *Rahit* material is found in *Prashan-uttar*. In terms of doctrine it maintains that the Guru is manifest in three ways. He is formless and invisible (*nirgun*), the spirit dwelling in every heart; he is material and visible (*sargun*) in the words of the sacred scripture; and he is the divine Word (*gur-shabad*), which is the Sikh immersed in the sacred scripture. The Guru

is a visible presence in his Sikhs (*Prut* 6–16, 19). The daily discipline required of a Sikh is to rise at dawn, bathe, and repeat both *Japujī* and *Jāp*. After the third watch of the day he should listen to *kathā*, and at sunset he should join in *Rahiras* (*Prut* 1–3). He should sing the divine Word from the scripture, he should regularly visit places sanctified by the Gurus (*gurudavārān*), and he must avoid adulterous liaisons (*Prut* 13, 20).

2.6 The Rahit as delivered by Guru Gobind Singh

The date of the formal inauguration of the Khalsa order is open to question. It took place at the end of the seventeenth century, but there the certainty ends. The dominant tradition of modern times holds that it was in 1699, and although there are good reasons for questioning this there can be no doubt about the conviction of the Panth today. Baisakhi Day of 1699, the first day of the Indian astronomical New Year, has been firmly fixed in the understanding of all Sikhs. It was on that day, according to the overwhelmingly popular belief of today, that the Guru is believed to have summoned his Sikhs to his centre at Anandpur and announced the founding of the Khalsa order. All the brave, the noble, the committed of his followers were invited to join this new order.²⁶

The event unfolded in a most dramatic way. The Sikhs were accustomed to celebrate the New Year at Anandpur on Baisakhi Day and on this occasion they were commanded by the Guru to come armed. Tradition relates that when celebrations were at their height the Guru, hitherto hidden from sight, suddenly appeared and in a loud voice demanded the head of a Sikh. A stunned silence followed this unexpected demand and at first no follower was prepared to oblige. Eventually Daya Singh, a Khatri from Lahore, declared himself prepared to sacrifice his head if that should be his Guru's will. He was conducted into a pavilion, there was a thud, and the Guru reappeared, carrying a blood-stained sword. He then demanded a second head. This time the volunteer was Dharam Singh, a Jat. The procedure was repeated and again the Guru, returning with his bloody weapon, required another head. Himmat Singh was the third to offer himself, Sahib Singh was the fourth, and Muhakam Singh was the fifth.

The tradition now varies. The Guru drew back the side of the pavilion, and according to one tradition revealed that he had indeed severed the five volunteers' heads, but had restored them when the drama was over. Another relates that the five Sikhs were intact, five slaughtered goats lying at their feet. A third tradition holds that the Guru could not possibly have killed goats. Whatever was done behind the screen, the five Sikhs were dressed in appropriate garments and led out of the pavilion. These five were thereafter known as the Panj Piare, the Cherished Five who had offered their lives because they believed that this was their Guru's wish.

The Panj Piare were now initiated as the foundation members of the new Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh, each receiving *khaṇḍe dī pāḥul* or the two-edged sword baptism. With a two-edged sword the Guru stirred water in an iron vessel, sweetened by his second wife Mata Jito who added patashas or sugar candies to it. This water, called *amrit* or 'nectar', was poured into each initiate's cupped hands five times and each time was drunk by him. Five times it was applied to his eyes and five times it was sprinkled on his hair. All five of the Panj Piare were then required to eat karah prasad from the same iron bowl.

This concluded their initiation into the Khalsa order. The Guru then announced the Rahit which all initiated members of the Khalsa were thereafter to observe. Gian Singh, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, described it as follows:

You must always wear a kachh, kirpan, kes, comb (*kaṅghā*), and wrist-band (*karā*). You are forbidden to touch meat slaughtered in the Muslim manner (*kuṭṭhā*), tobacco, and a Muslim woman (*musallī*). Never cut your hair. From today you belong to the Sodhi lineage of the Khatri caste of the Khalsa. Your name is Singh and your abode is Anandpur. Your birth-place is Kesgarh, you are the sons of the one Guru, and you have abandoned your previous status.

Agriculture, trade, warfare, or the work of the pen are the four kinds of life to lead. Never be slaves, never beg, take no gifts, and do not have fellowship with unbelievers. Do not observe differences of caste. Give and take your daughters in marriage amongst yourselves, thereby forming relationships with other Singhs. Do not contract them with unbelievers. Do not commit theft or pillage (*thagī*), do not engage in slander, telling tales, meanness, or exaggeration. Serve those sadhs who are Sikhs, care for the poor, and always listen to readings from the scripture. Apart from Akal Purakh and your beloved [Guru] do not

bow your heads before any goddess, god, Hindu cenotaph, cremation ground, or idol. Daily remember Vahiguru, [attend] a satsang, [practise with] weapons, [and pursue] learning.

Have nothing to do with these five kinds of people: Minas, Masands, Dhir-malias, Ram-raias, and initiated Sikhs who subsequently cut their hair (*sir-gum*). Likewise, have nothing to do with those who kill their daughters. Have all eating and marriage relationships, birth and death [ceremonies], betrothals, and marriages [only] with those who live according to the Guru's tradition. Do not have death or marriage relationships with unbelievers. In this way make the faith of the Khalsa firm. The Guru has declared that for the reform [of society] he has imparted principles and the status of Singhs to the Khalsa. You five are my beloved. Wherever a Sikh offers karah prasad in the Guru's name he will set aside a portion in your name and distribute it to a sangat. In this way [all] is revealed.²⁷

Most of what is in this account will sound congenial to modern ears. Very little of it will seem out of touch with today's practice. It must be remembered, however, that this is a *traditional* account. No one can possibly dispute the right of the modern Panth to frame conventions in accordance with traditional ideas. Obviously it possesses the authority to do so, and no one standing outside its boundaries can ever raise an objection. This, however, is not the same as claiming that Guru Gobind Singh actually gave similar instructions when he inaugurated the Khalsa or that modern conventions necessarily correspond to the practice which he observed at the end of the seventeenth century.

The historical record is not nearly extensive enough to allow such a comparison, and such evidence as we do have indicates that Guru Gobind Singh must have followed a procedure that was considerably sparer than the traditional version of today allows. The two hukam-namas by Banda already mentioned imply that this must have been the case (see pp. 39–40), and in the chapter that follows Sainapati's *Gur Sobhā* provides further evidence. This evidence does not indicate that Guru Gobind Singh uttered a Rahit which was opposed to the traditional version that we have today or that it was inconsistent with it. It does, however, suggest that he announced a considerably simpler one.

This is the conclusion which, it seems, we are entitled to draw from an important essay by Professor J. S. Grewal.²⁸ In this

essay Dr Grewal draws attention to the paucity of contemporary or near-contemporary evidence concerning the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh. Modern historians have certainly related extensive accounts of the founding of the Khalsa order in Anandpur, but they rely upon sources which came into existence in the late eighteenth or nineteenth century. This means that the sources date from a century or more after the event which they purport to describe. These sources conflict at many points and historians have adopted the simple practice of selecting what they regard as acceptable details from some of this material and rejecting others. Grewal comments that although tradition can provide useful clues to past probabilities 'later tradition cannot be accepted literally and it seldom leads to any certainties about the past' (Grewal 1972, 56).

As an example he takes Ghulam Muhiyuddin (*alias* Butey Shah), author of *Tavarikh-i-Paṇjāb*.

Let all embrace one creed and obliterate difference of religion. Let the four Hindu castes who have different rules for their guidance abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration, and become brothers. Let no one deem himself superior to another. Let none pay heed to the Ganges and other places of pilgrimage which are spoken of with reverence in the Shastars, or adore incarnation such as Ram, Krishan, Brahma, and Durga, but believe in Guru Nanak and in the other Sikh Gurus. Let men of the four castes receive my baptism, eat out of one dish, and feel no disgust or contempt for one another. (Macauliffe 1909, V. 93-4)

Here the Guru is delivering the Rahit, and again there is nothing in it that sounds uncongenial to a modern understanding. This, though, is still tradition, not the testimony of an eye-witness nor of anyone connected with one. Historians have used this report, believing that its stirring account of the inauguration of the Khalsa order must surely be the report of someone who was present on the eventful day. Macauliffe was one and following him Banerjee, both assuming that they were citing some contemporary newswriter (Banerjee 1962, II.115). This, however, was not the case. Ganda Singh dates the first available manuscript of *Tavarikh-i-Paṇjāb* at 1848 CE. Moreover, historians who use this passage omit a preceding statement which Ghulam Muhiyuddin ascribes to Guru Gobind Singh. According to this

statement, Guru Gobind Singh declared the intention of his founding of the Khalsa to be vengeance for the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

So long as I live.... I shall meditate revenge, to the point of risking my life in pursuit of this purpose. (Grewal 1972, 57)

Ghulam Muhiyuddin attributes this to a natural desire that a son should seek vengeance for the judicial murder of his father, and he demonstrates faulty chronology by placing the event in 1675, immediately after the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Grewal 1972, 57).

If Ghulam Muhiyuddin's account is analysed, continues Grewal, it becomes clear that he was basing it on either the traditions that had developed during the past hundred years or on the work of his immediate predecessors. It was not based on earlier evidence. Other writers from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries are not essentially different. Banerjee actually argues against the widespread Khalsa belief of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Guru Gobind Singh's worship of the goddess Durga, using two sound historical principles to oppose it (see ch. 7.12). These are the difference between contemporary evidence and later tradition, and the possibility of later invention under changed historical circumstances. Banerjee, however, does not rigorously apply these principles to the question of the Khalsa's foundation (Grewal 1972, 58-9).

Grewal concludes that certain details are confirmed by the contemporary or near-contemporary evidence. Principal amongst these early sources is Sainapati's *Gur Sobhā* which, as we have noted, will be examined at the beginning of the next chapter. The details include administration of *khaṇḍe dī pāhul* to those who were willing to join the Guru's Khalsa. Those who joined were neither to cut their hair nor use tobacco; they were always to carry weapons; and many of them assumed the name Singh. Many others refused the offer of *pāhul*, particularly the Brahmans and Khatri from amongst his Sikhs (Grewal 1972, 59). It falls short of what the Rahit was later to become, but it certainly does provide a useful nucleus that later was to grow into a substantial code of belief and behaviour.²⁹

2.7 Sources of the Khalsa Rahit

Before turning to the evidences provided by *Gur Sobhā* and the early rahit-namas we shall conclude this chapter by summarizing the general sources of the Khalsa Rahit, particularly during the preceding century of the proto-rahit and as it was to develop during the two centuries that followed. It must be emphasised once again that it is the *Khalsa* Rahit, that distinctive way of life which differentiated Khalsa Sikhs from the Sikhs who chose not to join the order. This point is of fundamental importance. Sikhs who joined the Khalsa were bound to obey its Rahit. Those who did not join it were in no way obliged to heed it except, insofar as the simple obligations of being a Sikh overlapped with particular injunctions of the Rahit. These overlapping elements were internal matters of belief. They had nothing to do with the external features of the Khalsa Sikh, with his uncut hair, his array of weapons, and his repudiation of the hookah. These externals were the characteristics which so clearly marked out the member of the Khalsa from all other Sikhs.

2.7.1 Received Sikh Tradition

The Khalsa stood in a direct line from Guru Nanak and his works were treated with the utmost reverence. The same applied to all his successors. This means that their teachings (or at least a simplified version of them) were built into the Rahit. The same goes for the works of Bhai Gurdas. Received Sikh tradition does not figure prominently in most rahit-namas, but this should not imply any lack of respect for it. The purpose of the Rahit was to demonstrate an overt Khalsa identity, and as a result the rahit-namas lay much greater stress on the visible characteristics that serve to identify a member of the Khalsa (such features as the uncut hair and the ban on using a hookah). At the same time the Khalsa never forgot that they were Sikhs, and liberation through meditation on the divine Name, as taught by Guru Nanak and his successors, remained a vital part of the Rahit. The Khalsa Sikh must regularly attend the *sangat*, singing the hymns of the Gurus and listening attentively to *kathā* or religious homilies. He must accept the Granth as Guru and he should maintain a charity-box for the benefit of the poor. There is nothing exclusively Khalsa in such practices. They were Sikh

conventions and the Khalsa were avowedly members of the Sikh Panth.

2.7.2 Khalsa Practices

Although they were Sikhs, however, being just Sikhs was not sufficient. They were Khalsa Sikhs and the dominant purpose of the Rahit was to proclaim this identity. This meant that a significant part of the Rahit consisted of specific Khalsa practices. In some cases this was a feature which marked them off from other men, particularly from other Sikhs. A Khalsa should always be armed and he was to wear breeches (*kachh*) which did not go below the knees. He should never put on either a loin-cloth (*dhoti*) or a cap or hat (*topi*). Instead, a neatly-tied turban should be worn with the top-knot of the hair kept in the centre of the head. In other cases it was a mode of behaviour that he was to observe. A Khalsa greeted others with the salutation *Vāhi gurū jī kī futeh*, and he must never to turn his back in battle. And then there was the specific ritual of initiation to be observed. No other panth initiated its members in the same way as the Khalsa, using a double-edged sword in preparing the sweetened sacred water (*amrit*).

2.7.3. Hindu Tradition

Hindu tradition lay at the basis of the Rahit and had much to do with the shape which it took. It performed this function in two ways. First, it provided the cultural soil in which the Rahit first grew. It was not Muslim India which provided this cultural background, though the eighteenth century period was one, which directly pitted the Khalsa against the barbarian Muslims. Except for some minor features the Rahit was not Muslim but rather almost wholly Hindu in origin. The social organisation of Khalsa Sikhs was entirely Hindu, with the same caste structure. *Karma*, transmigration, and liberation formed key parts of Sikh doctrine; Hindu dating was used for all Sikh events; key terms were drawn from Hindu precedent;³⁰ and a knowledge of Hindu mythology was an ever-present source to be drawn on whenever need should arise. With this background the diverse items of the proto-rahit fitted neatly into the Hindu concept of various panths which together constituted the pattern of Hindu society.

Later Sikhs, particularly in the days of the Singh Sabha reform movement and after, were to insist with the utmost vehemence that whatever else Sikhs might be they were certainly not Hindus and never had been. Guru Nanak, they maintained, founded an entirely new religion, in no way dependent on Hindu tradition nor on anything else. This, however, is simply not true. Guru Nanak was a member of the Sant movement, fitting easily into its panthic mould, and his successors continued in the same tradition (*GNSR* 151–61). Future change was certainly awaiting the Khalsa that would lead it further away from its Hindu origins, but that change still lay some distance in the future. In its basic formation, the origins of the Khalsa were plainly Hindu.

This was the first fundamental element which the Khalsa owed to Hindu tradition, and it was much the more important of the two. The second emerged during the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when beliefs were expressed that can only have come directly from Hindu sources. Specifically they came from Puranic sources. Two concepts are particularly prominent during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One was the conviction expressed by some Sikh writers during this period that Guru Gobind Singh, immediately prior to the inauguration of the Khalsa order, had sought and obtained the blessing of Devi (the goddess Durga). The second was the influence of the Dasam Granth.

The issue concerning the Devi is not whether the Guru did in fact seek her blessing (see ch. 7.12), but rather the belief of his early followers that he had done so. This notion undoubtedly existed and influenced the thinking of the writers of the rahit-namas. The pattern of belief shown by the author of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, for example, would have been very different had he not accepted the reality of Mata Devi or the imminent arrival of the Nihakalank Avatar (*ChS* 205–35, 615–40, pp. 85–90, 172–3). That author may be repudiated as a Brahman who was unable to see things any differently, but what then should be made of Daya Singh who records at the beginning of his rahit-nama an assembly of the Devi and various gods before the Guru (*DayaS* 2–3)? The answer may be that this is one of the rahit-nama passages which could conceivably have been a later addition.³¹ But then there is Desa Singh's

injunction that the Khalsa should protect cows and Brahmans (*Desa*S 16), and other like references.

A second feature of this later influence of Hindu tradition lay in the impact that the Dasam Granth had on the Khalsa during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.³² Considerable reverence was paid to the Dasam Granth by the early Khalsa and the volume was accorded the same privileged treatment as the Adi Granth, being placed in an honoured position when meetings of the Sarbat Khalsa were held later in the eighteenth century (John Malcolm 1810, 255). Earlier in the century the doctrines of the Guru Granth and Guru Panth had developed, and the Dasam Granth shared with the Adi Granth the status of the Guru Granth. There could be no doubt that for the early Khalsa it was revealed scripture. It is considered in more detail in the next chapter.

It is true that this feature is not nearly as prominent in the *rahit-namas* as it is in the *gur-bilās* literature, some of which project a very Puranic version of the Sikh faith.³³ One must draw attention to *rahit-nama* features that counter this influence, for these are undoubtedly important. Various Hindu conventions were explicitly spurned by *rahit-nama* authors, Daya Singh being one who was particularly forward in denouncing Hindu customs and beliefs. Do not offer prayers at cenotaphs or temples. Do not visit Hindu places of pilgrimage. Do not worship gods and goddesses other than Akal Purakh. Do not revere idols or Brahmans. Never wear a sacred thread and do not hold a *shrāddh* ceremony (*Daya*S 12, 14, 30, 44, 50, 61, 69, 91). The Khalsa may be a panth among other panths, but it was nevertheless a distinctly different one. Certainly its members were not to mimic the conventions of other panths or of Hindus in general. Hindu belief and custom was nevertheless the ever-present background against which the Khalsa developed, and inevitably, the Singh Sabha scholars faced the difficult task of making sacred scripture tally with reformed Sikhism.

Later suggestions that such elements must have been interpolations or deletions should also be treated cautiously. These too date from the period of the Singh Sabha movement, the conviction being that such alterations must have been the work of ignorant devotees or hostile opponents. There will undoubtedly be passages that have been omitted or added to extant

texts, but every possibility requires careful analysis before it can be affirmed as proven or probable. It is certainly not sufficient to brand as fraudulent all features, which disagree with a later view of what the Rahit ought to contain.

2.7.4. Warfare with Muslims

Finally, there was the state of chronic warfare with Muslims which accounts for numerous items in the eighteenth-century Rahit. The question of relations with Muslims is actually much more complicated than it appears at first sight and we shall return to it when discussing various problems raised by the rahit-namas (see ch. 7.13). The Muslims who particularly concerned the rahit-nama authors were the Mughals or Turks, and there can be no doubt that those who wrote during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries knew how a Khalsa Sikh should treat them. Never salute a Turk. Never touch the feet of a Turk. Never entrust your sword to a Turk. A Khalsa's duty is to kill all Turks. At other times, however, the prohibition extends beyond the Turks to embrace anything concerning a Muslim. Never consume the meat of an animal killed in the Muslim manner. Never drink water from a Muslim's hands. Do not eat food left by a Muslim. Do not touch a Muslim woman because if you do you will be polluted.

And so the list continues. It was a natural feature to develop in the eighteenth century. In the early decades of the century the Mughal power was the enemy, first exercised directly from Delhi and then from the virtually independent Punjab state in Lahore. The Mughals were Muslims and so it was Muslims who led the fight against the Khalsa and endeavoured unsuccessfully to subdue them. After the Mughal power fell before the incursions of the invader Ahmad Shah Abdali the Afghan enemy who fought the Sikhs was still a Muslim one. The threat diminished as the century wore on and towards its end had disappeared entirely. By that stage, however, numerous injunctions were firmly rooted in the rahit-namas and they continued to remain there until the alert eye of the Tat Khalsa was disapprovingly focussed on them. Would Guru Gobind Singh have desired his followers to act in such a way? Obviously these injunctions (or at least the more violent of them) were examples of the ignorant or malicious alteration of the Rahit. The result was that

the Rahit which was to emerge from its Singh Sabha phase, was much less hostile to Muslims than its eighteenth-century model had been.

Endnotes

1. Guru Ram Das, *Gaurī kī Vār* 11:2, AG, pp. 305–6.
2. Guru Arjan, *Āsā* 88, AG, p. 392.
3. Ibid. For Guru Nanak's use of the term *rahit* see his *Bilāval Ashī* 1 (3), AG, p. 831.
4. Guru Amar Das, *Bihāgarī kī Vār* 16:1, AG, p. 554.
5. *Desa* 44, 102, 107. *Daya* 16, 52, 59. Trilochan Singh certainly thought that the Guru was referring literally to alcohol. *The Turban and Sword of the Sikhs* (Gravesend, 1977), pp. 41–2.
6. *guru chelā chelā guru sandā*.
7. *Vār* 26:24. For a translation see *WiS*, pp. 23–4.
8. A hukam-nama directed against the heretical Sant Nirankaris was issued in 1978. This followed a Sant Nirankari conference in Amritsar which resulted in police firing and the emergence of Jarnail Singh Bhindranvale as leader of the mainline Sikhs.
9. *H-n*, p. 25. Guru Hargobind uses the word *khālsā* in one of his hukam-namas. Ibid., pp. 26, 67. Guru Tegh Bahadur also refers to a particular sangat being part of 'the Guru's Khalsa'. Ibid., p. 77.
10. For example hukam-namas number 50 and 51, *H-n*, pp. 161, 163.
11. This conventional salutation was commonly used by the Guru when sending a hukam-nama.
12. *TanN* 45. *Daya* 12, 87–8. *ChS* 120, pp. 72, 160, was an exception in this regard.
13. Madanjit Kaur 1980, p. 115. She adds the following footnote: 'It is evidently clear from the early Sikh literature that there were no definite and clear-cut directives for the Sikh social customs. The traditional Hindu social customs and ceremonies were generally followed by the Sikhs in their day to day life. The Khalsa social code emerged subsequent to the death of Guru Gobind Singh in response to the socio-political pressures of circumstances. It was only in the late nineteenth century that Sikh society underwent a radical change in the wake of [the] quest for a distinct communal identity under the leadership of the Singh Sabha Movement.' Ibid., p. 115n. This is a very acute observation.
14. The glorious Satiyug (the Age of Truth) succeeds the evil Kaliyug (the Age of Iron) which the world, according to traditional Hindu belief, is still passing through.

15. *H-n*, no. 67, p. 195. The 'first year' indicates S. 1767 (1710 CE).

16. Bhatia (1978), pp. 9–10. In May 2001 it was reported that the manuscript is missing from Gurdwara Manji Sahib. When questioned about it the granthi of Gurdwara Manji Sahib admitted that it had been missing 'for sometime now'. *The Indian Express*, 29 May 2001.

17. Bhatia (1978), pp. 15–17. This manuscript is also noted by Piara Singh Padam, *Sri Gurū Granth Parakāsh*, Patiala, 1977, p. 90, where the present owner's name and address are supplied. Piar Singh, however, reports that the manuscript is no longer traceable. *Gāthā Sri Ādi Granth and the Controversy* (n.p.), Michigan, 1996, p. 22.

18. The early portion comprises the first sequence recorded by *Pothī Bībī Rūp Kaur* and the later the additional six sakhis which are added to it.

19. This sakhi is also contained in the Bahoval Pothi, a scriptural manuscript dated c. 1600 CE which precedes the Kartarpur manuscript. Piar Singh (2000), pp. 21–2. Pashaura Singh, pp. 82, 283. This manuscript is held by the Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi.

20. Bhatia, p. 57. Note how portions of this sakhi reappear in *Daya's* 16–17.

21. Bhatia (1978), pp. 50–1. A Gurmukh is a loyal follower of the Guru.

22. The other two sakhis are 3 and 26.

23. *Prāchīn Bīrān*, pp. 283–6. G. B. Singh calls it the Banigam *bīr*.

24. It is also known as *Rahūt-nāmā Bhāi Nand Lāl*.

25. This issue involves the claim that Nand Lal Goya was in fact the author of the *Divān* and *Zindagī-nāmā*. See pp. 65–7.

26. The earliest sources give conflicting years ranging from 1689 to 1697 CE. Baisakhi Day S. 1756 (1699 CE) is first mentioned in an extant source by Sukkha Singh in his *Gur-bilās Dasvīn Pātishāhī* in 1797, almost 100 years later. However the date is strongly supported by the modern historian Ganda Singh as a result of his interpretation of certain hukam-namas. The academic issue has not been definitively settled, but there can be no doubt concerning the corporate view of the modern Panth. For them Baisakhi Day 1699 is definitely the approved date.

27. Gian Singh, *Tavarikh Gurū Khālsā*, vol. 1, pp. 860–1. In 1869, or the years after, Gian Singh recorded most of this material in his earlier Braj poetic work *Panth Prākāsh*, 26:16.

28. 'The Khalsa of Gurm Gobind Singh', in J. S. Grewal (1972), pp. 55–61. A slightly shorter version was published as Appendix C of J. S. Grewal and S. S. Bal (1967), pp. 182–9.

29. Why were Sikhs of the Khalsa commanded to refrain from cutting their hair? No answer to this question seems more convincing than the one which appears in *EST*, p. 52, namely that the custom was

a Jat one 'which during and prior to this period was evidently observed by Hindu and Muslim Jats as well as by Sikh Jats'. References for this theory are cited in a footnote on p. 52.

30. Terms such as *nām*, *shabad*, and *dharam* (*dharma*) are examples, as is the concept of the *guru*. It is true that both *khālsā* and *rahit* are drawn from Persian. Neither, however, expresses theological concepts such as certain words taken from the Sanskrit language and Hindu practice.

31. There is some resemblance to this passage in Kuir Singh's *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī 10* (Shamsher Singh Ashok, ed., p. 121). It is possible that either Kuir Singh borrowed material from *Dayaś* or else some later redactor of *Dayaś* may have transferred the information from Kuir Singh.

32. For the Dasam Granth see Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, Delhi, 1994, pp. 93–7; and *Sikhism*, pp. 176–80. An English translation is provided in Jodh Singh and Dharam Singh, *Śrī Dasam Granth Sāhib: Text and Translation*, 2 vols Patiala, 1999.

33. The *gur-bilās* ('splendour of the Guru') literature comprises works which project a strongly militant spirit. It includes the following: Sainapati, *Gur Sobhā* (probably 1711). Sukkha Singh, *Gur-bilās Dasvīn Pātashāhī* (1797). Kuir Singh, *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī 10* (probably early nineteenth century). Sohan, *Gur-bilās Chhevīn Pātashāhī* (mid-nineteenth century). Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prāchīn Panth Prakāsh* (1841). Santokh Singh, *Gur Pratāp Sūray* (the *Sūraj Prakāsh*, 1844). Kesar Singh Chhibbar's *Baṁsūvalī-nāmā Dasān Pātashāhīān dā* (1769) can also be considered in this group although it lacks the true *gur-bilās* spirit. Sainapati and Ratan Singh Bhangu are not nearly as influenced by the Purans as other examples of *gur-bilās* works. Sukkha Singh, Kuir Singh, and Sohan are, however, particularly conspicuous for their manifest Puranic influence.

3

The Eighteenth Century



3.1 Gur Sobha

Gur Sobhā (or *Srī Gur Sobhā*) was written by Sainapati, an author in the darbar of Guru Gobind Singh. The lengthy poem is not a rahit-nama, but it does offer the first clear impression of what the Guru required of those who were initiated as the first members of the Khalsa order. The style that it actually represents marks it as an early gur-bilas, the only previous example being the work which is regarded as Guru Gobind Singh's biographical study, *Bachitar Nāṭak*, which appears in the Dasam Granth. *Gur Sobhā* is not strictly a history of the times nor a biography of the Guru, but rather a sustained hymn of praise to the Khalsa that the Guru had established. It provides valuable details of the Rahit and as such is a work of considerable importance in the history of the rahit-namas.

There has been much controversy concerning the date of *Gur Sobhā*, but opinion seems once again to be hardening in favour of 1711. The exact date of the text has been difficult to fix and three dates have been advanced. These are 1701, 1711, and 1741. The first of these can be easily eliminated as *Gur Sobhā* includes events that belong to the last years of Guru Gobind Singh's life which ended in 1708. The 1741 date proved, however, to be a little more difficult to dislodge. Akali Kaur Singh had argued in 1927 that *athāvan* (fifty-eight) should really be read as *athānav* (ninety-eight), which would make the date

of the text S. 1798 or 1741 CE. Ganda Singh responded by pointing out that none of the important events of the years separating 1711 and 1741 received even the hint of a mention and that 1741 could therefore be definitively eliminated. This left 1711 as the only acceptable year.¹ For some years his reasoning was accepted, but recently the controversy has been reopened on the grounds that no definite text exists. This, however, did not disprove Ganda Singh's argument concerning the silence of *Gur Sobhā* on events between 1711 and 1741, and once again opinion has swung back to 1711 (Oberoi 1994, 60n). There seems to be little reason for maintaining 1741 as the approved date. The claims of 1711 are much stronger.

Ganda Singh relates that Sainapati's real name was Chandar Sain, a Jat of the Mann *got* who came from Lahore. His father's name was Bal Chand Mann, and his teacher was Devi Das Chandan who trained him well and sent him to Anandpur to serve Guru Gobind Singh. Some time later he went and lived in Vazirabad and there, at the suggestion of his friend Mir Jagat Rai Vaid, he adopted as his pseudonym the name of Sri Saina Sukh. This later became Sainapati (GSobh 19). The fact that he seemed not to bear the name Singh (which suggests that he was not himself a member of the Khalsa) is, according to Ganda Singh, explained by the fact that in the first section (*dhiāu*) he writes of *khālsā bāch*, the 'conversation of the Khalsa'. This suggests, according to Ganda Singh, that 'Khalsa' was his nick-name (GSobh 17). The explanation is unconvincing. Sainapati may be called Saina Singh by some Sikhs, but the fact that he was not known by the designated Khalsa name leaves the impression that he was not a member.²

Gur Sobhā, as we have already noted, was a paean of praise for the Khalsa, and again it must be emphasised that its key message placed it firmly within the area of the rahit-namas. As they existed to list the distinctive qualities of the Khalsa Panth, so too did *Gur Sobhā*. The details of the Rahit supplied by Sainapati were as follows:

1. The purpose of the founding of the Khalsa order was to depose the masands.³ All members of the Khalsa must have nothing to do with them or their followers.

2. Initiation with the two-edged sword is essential for the Khalsa.

3. Those who have been initiated must bear the name Singh.
4. All members must maintain their kes uncut.
5. They should have nothing to do with those who shave their heads (*sir-gum*).
6. They should have nothing to do with those who perform the tonsure ceremony at death (*bhaddar*).
7. They must avoid the Five Reprobate Groups.⁴
8. Each one should join a sangat.
9. They should always be armed.
10. The hookah must be strictly avoided.
11. Keep your offerings and tithes in a charity-box at your home.
12. The Khalsa will be the Guru after the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

Three things stand out. First, the Khalsa was founded specifically to separate the Guru's Sikhs from the masands. Prominent notice of this requirement is repeatedly made in *Gur Sobhā*. Secondly, Sikhs of the Khalsa were to take particular notice of the obligation to never cut their hair or shave their scalp.⁵ Even after death this was not to be done on a Sikh's corpse. Hindus of other panths who shaved their heads (both *sir-gum* and *bhaddar*) were to be avoided at all costs by Sikhs of the Khalsa. And thirdly, at the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa became the Guru. The doctrine laid down by *Gur Sobhā* was that of the Guru Panth, and by the Guru Panth the author specifically meant the Khalsa. It was not the Sikh community which constituted the Guru Panth, but rather the Khalsa which occupied that position. No mention was made of the Guru Granth. For Sainapati the Guru chose to reside always in the Khalsa, and this alone constituted the ever-living Guru who would always be present to guide and shepherd his people.

3.2 The Dasam Granth

For the Khalsa of the eighteenth century there was no doubt about the sanctity of the Dasam Granth. Once the contents had been assembled they were all unhesitatingly accepted as the works of Guru Gobind Singh and placed on the same level as

the Adi Granth. In 1769, Kesar Singh Chhibbar declared that the Dasam Granth, along with the Adi Granth, was the Guru. At meetings of the Sarbat Khalsa, held at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was set in the midst of the gathering together with the Adi Granth. Guramatas were agreed in their joint names, and during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Dasam Granth was always carried in procession with the Adi Granth whenever he travelled (Deol 2001, 31). When reference was made to the Guru Granth Sahib the Dasam Granth was indicated together with the Adi Granth. Today the situation is very different. In the eighteenth century, however, for Sikhs in general and the Khalsa in particular, the Dasam Granth comprised only the works of the tenth Master and as such it deserved the title of the eternal Guru.

The origins of this collection of works are obscure. According to tradition the famed martyr Mani Singh was chief custodian of Harimandir Sahib⁶ from 1721 until 1738. During this time he collected manuscripts which he termed jointly *Dasvīn Pātashāh kā Granth*, 'the Granth of the Tenth Master'. After the death of Mani Singh there arose the question of whether the various compositions should be bound as a separate volume or left in their separate parts. In 1740 a Sikh called Mahtab Singh proposed a solution. He was on his way to slay Masse Khan Ranghar (or Massa Ranghar), the sacrilegious Muslim who controlled Harimandir Sahib and had vilely desecrated its most holy precincts. If he was successful in his mission the various parts should be retained as a single volume. If he failed they should be dispersed. Mahtab Singh was duly successful. Massa Ranghar was assassinated and the different parts were bound as a single volume. Much later this composite work came to be known as the Dasam Granth, 'the Granth of the Tenth [Guru]'.

Mani Singh's collection, however, was not the only one. An independent collection is said to have been gathered in the mid-eighteenth century by the martyr Dip Singh, and a third one is attributed to Sukkha Singh, the Granthi at Patna during the closing years of the century.⁷ The greater part of the three collections were the same, but there were some differences. A committee was set up by the Sanatan Sikhs of the Amritsar Singh Sabha in 1885, and in 1902, it issued an authorised edition in print. It was at this time that the term 'Dasam Granth'

was first used as a means of distinguishing the collection from the older *Adi Granth*.⁸

The leaders of the *Tat Khalsa* faction of the *Singh Sabha* had by this time been alerted to the radical difference which this implied. The difference was, on the one hand, its own insistence that the Sikhs were not Hindus and, on the other, the manifestly Hindu influence of most of the *Dasam Granth*'s contents. As a result they were less happy with its publication than was the case with the *Sanatan Sikhs*. Some of the works seemed obviously to be by *Guru Gobind Singh*, and these were warmly welcomed, but what were they to make of the remainder? During the century that has followed the *Dasam Granth* has been left increasingly to one side, its contents potentially embarrassing and therefore left undisturbed. Its language has also influenced this neglect. All of the *Dasam Granth* has been written in the *Gurmukhi* script, but most of the collection is in *Braj* rather than in *Punjabi*.⁹ Only during very recent years has it been openly discussed and some of its contents challenged as plainly contrary to the Sikh faith.¹⁰

This, however, was not the case in the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth. The *Khalsa* solidly believed the *Dasam Granth* to be the word of *Guru Gobind Singh*, and all who took initiation into the *Khalsa* had no hesitation in accepting this. Inevitably, therefore, the substantial *Puranic* contents had an influence on their eighteenth and nineteenth-century beliefs. In no area was this more significant than in the widespread *Khalsa* belief in the reality of the goddess *Devi*.

The current dispute promises to be a lively one. Most Sikhs still revere the *Dasam Granth* as wholly the work of *Guru Gobind Singh* without having much idea of what the scripture contains. Some who do know its contents agree that the volume is all by the *Guru*, and the *Nihangs* still proudly uphold its earlier ranking as a part of the *Guru Granth*. Many more Sikh scholars allow that a portion should be regarded as the work of *Guru Gobind Singh*, but that much of the volume comprises *Puranic* works which Sikhs cannot possibly accept. And a small minority believe that none of it is the work of *Guru Gobind Singh* and that every part of it should be rejected except, perhaps, the *Zafar-nāmā* that *Guru Gobind Singh* is believed to have addressed to the Emperor *Aurangzeb*.¹¹

During the eighteenth century there was no such doubt. The Dasam Granth was unhesitatingly accepted as the word of the tenth Guru. This poses a significant problem for modern Sikhs who believe that it should be accepted as sacred scripture. The problem has still not been really confronted, though an apparent answer has been found. This answer, devised during Singh Sabha days, is that the Puranic stories have been related in the Dasam Granth, not because they were literally believed, but rather that their objective is 'to inspire and exhort the reader to fight, as did these Puranic personages, for a righteous cause—*dharam judh ke chai*' (Jodh Singh and Dharam Singh 1999, Intro., V.2). There is no question of ever believing them as history. They are but myths. As myths, however, they can inspire and serve the Khalsa's needs by providing it with stirring stories.

Hindu concepts (particularly those which should be labelled Puranic) are therefore rigorously excluded from Sikh belief today. The contents of a substantial portion of the Dasam Granth concern the re-telling of stories from the mythology of the Purans. Incarnations of Ram are described in detail and stories of Krishan are narrated at great length. The tales of Chandi or Bhagauti (the goddess Durga) are related and find a particular poetic and popular expression in *Vār Sṛī Bhagautī jī kī*. They are, however, mere stories. To find the truth the Khalsa must reach beyond them.

This was the message of the Tat Khalsa. Since the days of the Singh Sabha reform movement the answer to the problem of Chandi or Bhagauti has been to insist that Bhagauti designates not the goddess but Akal Purakh in the form of an unsheathed sword.¹² This provides an example of attempts to make the *rahit-namas* fit the reformed understanding of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because the intellectual leaders of the Tat Khalsa promulgated the belief that Sikhs were not Hindus the notion that Sikhs could ever have believed that Bhagauti actually meant the goddess Durga was clearly erroneous in the extreme. Prior to the Singh Sabha period, however, the question rarely occurred. Hindu beliefs could easily be accommodated within the Khalsa, and the Khalsa was quite content to see itself as a distinctive panth among other panths. It was distinguished as a fighting panth that fought for

what it believed to be right, but it was still one panth among the many that were to be found in India.

3.3 Six Rahit-namas of the Eighteenth Century

There are six rahit-namas that can claim to have been written during the eighteenth century. They are two rahit-namas to which the name of Nand Lal has been attached, and one each attributed to Prahilad Rai, Chaupa Singh, Desa Singh, and Daya Singh. The Nand Lal who has been popular as the putative author of three rahit-namas (including *Prashan-uttar*, considered in the last chapter) has traditionally been identified with the celebrated Nand Lal 'Goya', the Persian poet in the darbar of Guru Gobind Singh. Chaupa Singh is traditionally understood to be the *khidāwā* or adult play-mate and later the tutor of Guru Gobind Singh. Desa Singh is traditionally regarded as the tenth son of Mani Singh, who was executed by the Mughal governor of Lahore in 1738. And Daya Singh is traditionally believed to have been one of the Panj Piare first initiated into the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh (Padam 1976, 77–8).

Three of these rahit-namas are brief works, two of them in verse and one in prose. The prose version is the short work known as *Sākhī Rahit kī*, said to be by Nand Lal. The two in verse are *Tanakhāh-nāmā* attributed to Nand Lal and the rahit-nama of Prahilad Rai. The remaining three rahit-namas are all much longer. By far the longest of them, and also the earliest of these three extended works, is the prose rahit-nama attributed to Chaupa Singh. Daya Singh's rahit-nama is also in prose, whereas Desa Singh's is in verse.

The script is always in Gurmukhi, but the language of these rahit-namas is difficult to define in modern terms. Much of the various texts can be characterised as eighteenth-century Punjabi, but there is usually a substantial mix of Khari Boli, which is often the dominant language. This is particularly the case in the rahit-nama of Daya Singh.

3.4 Authorship of the Early Rahit-namas

Were these rahit-namas composed by their alleged authors? Some Sikh scholars regard the Nand Lal of the rahit-namas as different from the Persian poet of Guru Gobind Singh. This is

a view with which one can agree wholeheartedly, though perhaps for a different reason. Some Sikh authors who affirm the existence of two men with the name Nand Lal, evidently do so because in spite of the rahit-namas' support for the Khalsa and all its works Nand Lal Goya obviously did not become a member. Positing a second Nand Lal makes it possible (in spite of a complete lack of evidence) to claim that the person who wrote the rahit-namas must surely have entered the Khalsa, perhaps adopting the name Nand Singh.¹³ This reason cannot possibly be accepted, and justification for the conclusion that there are two Nand Lals must instead be reached through a comparison of styles. It is entirely reasonable to claim that the author of the *Dīvān* and *Zindagī-nāmā* could never have written the three rahit-namas attributed to him (again counting *Prashan-uttar*). The verse of two of them approaches doggerel and it is inconceivable that a poet of Nand Lal Goya's standing would ever have written it. *Sākhī Rahit kī*, the one that is in prose, would be most unlikely to have been written by a poet, and if it were it would certainly be cast in a much more elegant style.

It is possible that there was a person called Nand Lal in Guru Gobind Singh's entourage. This person should not be identified with the Nand Lal Goya who today commands such high respect in the Khalsa Panth. There can be no doubt that the rahit-nama claims to be by someone who calls himself Nand Lal, for although the earliest manuscript possesses no title the name is mentioned seven times in its text.¹⁴ Much obscurity surrounds Nand Lal Goya, who does not receive the notice attached to Bhai Gurdas prior to the late nineteenth century. This may be due to his using Persian rather than Punjabi or Khari Boli. Persian was the language of the Muslim enemy and for this reason condemned by some of the rahit-nama authors. Whatever the situation, we can at least conclude that Nand Lal Goya was not the author of the rahit-namas. They may have been written by a different person called Nand Lal or they may have had his name attached to them in order to give them some form of authority.

It seems that we are unable to proceed further at present, leaving future clarification to Fenech's research. The author of these rahit-namas may have been called Nand Lal. If so, he would have been a different person from Nand Lal Goya.

Alternatively, the name Nand Lal may have been spuriously attached to the rahit-namas. It is possible that there were three such anonymous authors who acquired this name. In fact there may have been four of them. The *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* purports to be the record of a conversation with this ubiquitous Nand Lal (DesaS.4).

Daya Singh of the Panj Piare can also be eliminated as author of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. The author may well have been a Khatri like the person initiated by Guru Gobind Singh,¹⁵ but the rahit-nama dates much later than the early eighteenth century, well after the time when Daya Singh of the Panj Piare was still alive. The traditional linking of his name with one of the Panj Piare is the result either of deliberate deception by the actual author or of the simple coincidence of names.¹⁶

But what should be made of the other three? There is considerable confusion surrounding the circumstances that produced the rahit-nama of Prahilad Rai, but nothing is really known concerning this author. He may have been a Brahman Sikh courtier of Guru Gobind Singh who bore the same name. One such person has been reported. It seems highly unlikely that the two were in fact one, however, and the Prahilad Rai of the rahit-nama must seemingly remain a mystery.¹⁷

The case of Chaupa Singh, however, has rather more evidence that warrants examination. There can be no doubt that the extant version of the rahit-nama is too late to have been composed by the *khidāvā* of Guru Gobind Singh, but could this servant of the Guru have written one, which subsequently came to be included in the extant text? Certainly Chaupa Singh Khidava belonged to the same Chhibbar family of Brahmans, which was responsible for the rahit-nama, the family that produced Kesar Singh Chhibbar who prepared *Bansāvali-nāmā Dasān Pātashāhiān dā* in 1769. The rahit-nama bears indisputable evidence of having been written by a Brahman Sikh (ChS 24, pp. 60, 151) and it is at least possible that a portion of the work can be traced to the personal servant of Guru Gobind Singh. Beyond this it seems impossible to go.

In Desa Singh's case it seems possible to go further, cautiously and very tentatively. Desa Singh may be the correct name of the actual author of the complete rahit-nama that bears his name, though it seems improbable that he was the

son of Mani Singh. If this was so it is unlikely that he would have avoided all mention of his famous father. Appended to the rahit-nama is a brief autobiography wherein the author mentions having spent a lengthy period at Amritsar in the bunga or hospice of Jassa Singh Ahluvalia, and having grown old there (*Desa* 125–6). This attachment may be a later addition, and the tale that it tells of a vision of Guru Gobind Singh is obviously astray (see pp. 308–10) but it does fit the rahit-nama in terms of dating. It indicates the late eighteenth century or the early nineteenth, Jassa Singh having died in 1783. This fits the likely period of the rahit-nama and there is no evident reason why the author should not have been called Desa Singh.

3.5 The Dates of the Rahit-namas

It seems possible to locate the date of Desa Singh's rahit-nama at the end of the eighteenth century or the beginning of the nineteenth. What can be said of the remainder? All claim conversations with Guru Gobind Singh, but can these claims be justified? Our discussion of the actual authorship of these six rahit-namas will indicate that this is certainly not the case. But are they far removed from the death of the tenth Guru? The verdict appears to be that they should be spread over almost the entire eighteenth century and perhaps into the early nineteenth century.

This verdict contradicts the received wisdom of most Punjabi scholars, and brings the dating of the various rahit-namas back to a period closer to the traditional view. The earliest date for any extant version of a rahit-nama appears to be that of a manuscript, held by Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar. Dr Jeevan Deol reported having found, in the Bhai Gurdas Library of the university a manuscript with the content (though not the name) of the *Tankhāh-nāmā* dated S. 1775 (1718–19 CE) (Deol 2001, 45n). This is a dramatic find which, if the date of the manuscript is correct, compels us to revise our rahit-nama dates to an earlier period than had previously been thought possible. One must be cautious, if only because the dating given for other manuscripts is not always accurate.¹⁸ It does, though, make better sense of the rahit-namas as a whole.

Dr Deol's discovery is the manuscript bearing the number 770 in the Bhai Gurdas Library of Guru Nanak Dev University. Upon examination it proves to be a detached portion of a much larger manuscript, starting with folio 392b and concluding on folio 426a.¹⁹ The portion will have been the actual conclusion of the complete manuscript, as folio 425a contains the colophon. This indicates that the work was completed in S. 1775 (1718–19 CE). Statistical analysis supports this early date.²⁰

There are numerous errors in the text. Several words have been miscopied. For instance the word *khālsā* is misspelt twice by omitting the first long *a* (MS 770, f. 416b) and in places whole lines have been left out. An example is provided by the missing line in the couplet corresponding to verse 52 of the version of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* provided by Ganda Singh in *Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī*.²¹ Had the missing line been included there would have been a second line that rhymed with it and there would have been an even number of lines in the *chaupai*, not an uneven number as at present.²²

An even more prominent example is provided by a portion of almost ten verses that the scribe of MS 770 has missed. On folio 415a, he begins a *doharā*, which corresponds to verse 15 of the *Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī* version and commences the second line. Half way through this second line, however, the manuscript jumps ahead to the second line of verse 25, omitting everything in between. Obviously a folio of the original manuscript had been detached or (what seems much more likely) the scribe has somehow missed it. Certainly the material must have been there originally because the scribe has failed to complete the *doharā* and is now in a *chaupai*.

The scribe's carelessness is important as it means indisputably that he was copying an existing text. From this it follows that the version of the so-called *Tanakhāh-nāmā* contained in MS 770 cannot have been the original one. At least one other copy lies behind it. If the colophon is correct (and there seems to be no reason for questioning it) MS 770 was copied only ten years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, and there was at least one earlier copy of the *rahit-nama*, now no longer extant. This conclusion explains why the discovery of this manuscript is dramatic. The *Tanakhāh-nāmā* can be dated very close to *Gur Sobhā*, and both can be dated within a few years of Guru Gobind Singh's death.

This fixes an approximate date for the earliest rahit-nama. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* has already been fixed sometime between 1740 and 1765 (*ChS* Intro. 10). Chaupa Singh's version is a rahit-nama which, by virtue of its length and greater complexity, would have come later than the shorter, simpler versions of those that have been attributed to Nand Lal or to Prahilad Rai. Discovering proof of an earlier dating for the brief *Tanakhāh-nāmā* serves to strengthen this assumption.

Dates have, therefore, been approximately fixed for three rahit-namas. The earliest extant example of what comes to be called the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* has been allocated to 1718–19. An even earlier manuscript may yet be found, but this seems unlikely. The earliest extant *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* has been placed in the period 1740 to 1765, with a strong probability that it was written during the 1740s. And the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* was recorded at the very end of the eighteenth century or early in the nineteenth. An attempt may now be made to fit the others into this chronology.

In terms of structure, *Sākhī Rahit kī* bears all the marks of a more primitive product than *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and at first sight warrants an even earlier position in the list of rahit-namas. Other features, however, raise doubts. It is difficult to imagine an earlier example being entirely without signs of the turmoil created by Banda, yet *Sākhī Rahit kī* gives no hint of these. It seems rather to have been written during a peaceful period and the figures at whom it is aimed are the Brahmans, not the Muslim perpetrators of Banda's downfall. This certainly was not the case with *Tanakhāh-nāmā* which bears abundant indications of warfare against Muslims (*TanN* 15, 22a, 29, 44, 44a, 48, 51, 53, 54). *Sākhī Rahit kī* also uses the word *tamākū* (tobacco) rather than warning of the Khalsa of the dangers of the hookah. This too suggests a later date.²³ Finally, *Sākhī Rahit kī* is always found as an appendix to the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, never as an independent work. A date set in the mid 1730s seems at least a possibility.

The same dating hesitantly applies to the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā*. Frequent reference is made to the fact that the author clumsily locates Guru Gobind Singh in Abchnagar (Nander) in 1696, whereas he did not arrive there until shortly before his assassination in 1708 (*MK* 596). The author states that the

rahit-nama was completed on 'Sambat 1752... which is Sunday, the fifth day of the dark half of the month of Magh' (*PrahR* 38). This is mistaken as Magh *vadī* 5, S. 1752, is the equivalent of Thursday 13th of February 1696. Note also that the rahit-nama refers to a Sikh who 'has been a Khalsa of the Guru from birth' (*PrahR* 11). This could conceivably refer to the Guru's Khalsa prior to the founding of the order, but it is highly unlikely that it does so. The dating recedes beyond all hope when the author's general references to the Khalsa are considered as they include a specific reference to initiation (*PrahR* 22, 28-30, 32). It is obviously not possible to trust him with anything concerning dating.

So when was the rahit-nama composed? The author is much more extreme than other rahit-nama producers, with his promises of condign punishment awaiting members of the Khalsa who violate the Rahit, but this merely marks him off from them. It does nothing to indicate the date. The injunction in verse 12 against the wearing of red clothing (*sūhe*) presumably refers to the dispute between the Bandai Sikhs and the Tat Khalsa, but beyond indicating that the author supported the Tat Khalsa (the eventual victors in the intra-Khalsa quarrel) the command does not help us. At the most it may perhaps be held to indicate a date after the late 1720s.²⁴ The same verse also forbids the inhaling of snuff without any reference to the hookah, much less to tobacco. This suggests an earlier rather than a later eighteenth-century date.

The indications are, however, very sparse. We may hesitantly place the *Prahilūd Rāi Rahit-nāmā* in the 1730s, but it should be understood that this location is exceedingly doubtful. It is as much due to the fact that the rahit-nama is a brief one as to any other reason. The longer ones characteristically belong to the middle or later years of the eighteenth century.

This leaves us with the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Once again there is very little definite information to determine our choice, other than the fact that it is a lengthy piece of work and that it has been expressed in a comparatively modern Khari Boli prose. The features that should be considered can be listed as follows:

1. The rahit-nama is very detailed, both with regard to injunctions and to *tanakhāhs*, with an order of service spelt out for

devotional gatherings. These point at least to the late eighteenth century and perhaps to the early nineteenth century.

2. Rites of passage are recognised, and in the case of Khalsa initiation a detailed order of service is provided (*DayaS* 4–7, 60, 72). This too suggests a comparatively late date, possibly in the nineteenth century.

3. A nineteenth-century date also receives some support from Daya Singh's description of the Devi and various gods bestowing gifts on the Khalsa (*DayaS* 2–3), and on the qualities of particular gods and rishis which those who perform initiation services should possess (*DayaS* 9). These bear a resemblance to a similar passage in Kuir Singh's *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī 10* that also appeared in the nineteenth century (Kuir Singh, Ashok (ed.) 1968, 121; Gurpreet Kaur 1988, 237–8). The resemblance is not great, however, and the fact that they jar with the remainder of the rahit-nama, suggests that they may have been added later. Two concluding supplements have certainly been added to Daya Singh's rahit-nama (*DayaS* 94–5). Appending material to a prose product is distinctly easier than adding it to one in verse.

4. The author is violently anti-Muslim, declaring in one of his injunctions that 'a Muslim is an enemy and should be slain with the sword' (*DayaS* 84. Also 29, 35, 57, 59, 79, 83, 92). This points to the late eighteenth century rather than to the nineteenth.

5. The references to the 'army, clerks, vazir and diwan—all are Khalsa' (*DayaS* 94), seems clearly to indicate the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This, however, is a portion of the rahit-nama's addendum that has been added later. If this later addition dates from the time of Ranjit Singh it seems likely that the rahit-nama itself will come from an earlier period. This would mean that it dates from the late eighteenth century.

The period that these factors indicate is the end of the eighteenth century. With the customary doubt and hesitation this can be pronounced the most likely date of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.

3.6 Single or Multiple Authors

We have already noted the current opinion amongst most Sikh scholars that the original texts have been corrupted by later editors who were concerned to draw the rahit-namas much

closer to their essentially Hindu notions. Udasis and Nirmalas have been singled out as particularly culpable in this respect (see pp. 5–6). That the original manuscripts have been altered and amended is beyond doubt. Evidence of contradiction within the same rahit-nama is an example of this. This aspect, however, should not be too strongly emphasised, for it does not become prominent until we reach the *Sau Sākhī* in the nineteenth century. All six of the early rahit-namas are generally consistent internally.

We have thus divided the six rahit-namas into three brief ones and three longer ones, the brief versions all pre-dating the lengthier variety. We shall now consider each of the six in more detail. Before doing so, however, we shall consider one other work which purports to date from the end of the eighteenth century.

3.7 The Bhatt Vahis and Guru kian Sakhian

Writing in 1982, Harbans Singh made the following dramatic announcement:

A new source which has gained vogue in modern scholarship is the Bhatt Vahi material brought to light by Giani Garja Singh, who, alas, passed away recently and to whose memory I render my humble tribute. These Bhatt Vahis are records of old families, kept by bards and genealogists. Giani Garja Singh took down from them in his own hand, extensive notes relevant to the Gurus' own families and their Sikhs. For many of the dates in this book I have drawn upon these Bhatt Vahi extracts. I have also had access to Giani Garja Singh's manuscript copy of the *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*, said to have been written in AD 1790 by Sarup Singh Kaushish.²⁵

A Bhatt is a genealogist and *vahī* means 'scroll'. These Bhattas are believed to have been contemporary with, or very close to the time of, Guru Gobind Singh. In his work on Guru Tegh Bahadur Harbans Singh made considerable use of one of the Bhatt *vahīs* (*Bhatt Vahī Talauḍhā Parganā Jind*) and Svarup Singh Kaushish's *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*. Elsewhere he cites the Bhatt *vahīs* as proof of Guru Gobind Singh having designated the Adi Granth as Guru shortly before his death.²⁶ Other authors have also used Giani Garja Singh's version of the Bhatt *vahīs*, regarding them as valuable sources.²⁷

The Bhatt *vahīs* therefore appear to be important historical sources, and likewise *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* which was also discovered by Giani Garja Singh. Note that both the Bhatt *vahīs* and *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* are transliterations, not translations.²⁸ Commenting on Harbans Singh's article in Gurdev Singh's *Perspectives on the Sikh Tradition* Professor J. S. Grewal observes: 'These *vahīs* were written in a script called *bhatakshri*, 'a kind of family code like *lande* and *mahajani*'.²⁹ Garja Singh's manuscript copies are now held by the Department of Punjab Historical Studies at Punjabi University in Patiala.

Gurū kīān Sākhīān was edited by Piara Singh Padam and published in 1986.³⁰ The original manuscript is said to have been written by Svarup Singh Kaushish in 1790 CE (Kaushish 1995, 37, 202). Svarup Singh Kaushish, reports Padam, was one of two sons of Kesar Singh Bhatt of village Bhadason in Pargana Thanesar.³¹ In the preface, Padam tells of how he located the manuscript which he now presents (Kaushish 1995, 9–10), and in his introduction he describes the Bhatt and the Bhatt *vahīs* (Kaushish 1995, 11–36). The remainder of the volume then gives Garja Singh's version of the 112 sakhis attributed to the Bhatt who were said to be companions of Guru Gobind Singh.³²

Certain contents of both the Bhatt *vahīs* and *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* would, if authentically reported, contradict important features of the argument that this present work is pursuing. In *Bhatt Vahī Bhādason Paragaṇa Thānesar*, for example, there appear the Five Ks, listed as *kaṅghā*, *karad*, *kesgī*, *kaṛū* and *kachhahirā* (Padam 1995, 16). The Five Ks appear again in *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*, together with much more that is of compelling interest to the Sikhs of today and of the recent past.

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Pāhul administered with the two-edged sword

...The Guru, first divested them of their names and then bestowed the name 'Singh' on the five, with a shout of triumph and a [rousing] slogan.

[Then he] said: These five—your [former] birth, duty, works, illusions, and effort—have been renounced. You are the Khalsa and you wear its uniform, visible and handsome, with due honour. Before administering initiation (*pāhul*) to you [I command you] never to be without these five [items beginning with the letter] 'k'. First, you must

wear a blue keski,³³ a kangha, a kirpan, an iron (*sarab-loh*) kara, and a white kachhahira. If ever you are separated from any one of these go to a gurdwara and seek forgiveness, [promising] not to be careless in future. Now listen to these four serious violations of the Rahit (*bajjar kurahit*) which render a Sikh a renegade, unable to belong to a sangat or the equal ranks of Sikhs (*sangat paṅgat*). First, from the top of your heads to the tip of your toes never dishonour your hair. Do not consume meat which has been killed in the Muslim manner (*kuṭṭhā*). Never become addicted to tobacco. Never keep company with a Muslim woman (*turakanā*). If you commit any one of these four violations of the Rahit you will have to take initiation [again] and confess your error. Do not associate with these five people: Minas, Dhirmalias, Ramraias, masands and sirgums. If any of these five enter a sangat and confess their fault that person should be forgiven. Let there be no misunderstanding about this. Do not mistakenly believe in a religious establishment of Shiv (*mahākāl*), a cenotaph, or a grave. I have mingled you in the bowl that holds amrit. Do not let doubt or misunderstanding continue amongst you.

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Promulgation of the Rahit tradition of the Khalsa

Brother Sikhs! Do not fear anyone and do not believe him. Trust only in the one Akal Purakh—[the One] who aids you everywhere. Retain nine-tenths of what you earn, but one-tenth give for the Guru's cause. Keep a chest for the Guru in your house and regard it [as a receptacle] for the poor. There should be no misunderstanding about this. Let no one hear the Guru defamed. If anyone does this caution him. If he does not heed you let him be rewarded with the kirpan or totally abandon him. Wake up during the last watch of the night, brush your teeth, and bathe. Repeat the Name and have others do the same. Chant the Guru's works and have others do likewise. When day breaks, join the sangat. Every four days wash your hair and [each time] comb it twice. Care for your hair. Do not put a dirty hand on it. Show it the same reverence as you would show to the Guru. Keep away from these five: a killer of daughters, a user of the hookah, a money-lender, somebody who does evil after having received *pāhul*, somebody who deceives the Guru. Protect the cow and the poor.³⁴ If anyone takes the daughter of a shaven person as a relation [by marrying her to his son] and does not correct the error he will

not be accepted in the sangat. Treat the daughter of another as your own; treat another's woman like your mother. Apart from your own woman [i.e. wife] do not look with prurient desire upon any other. Teach your children how to read and write Gurmukhi. Thereafter other learning may follow. There should be no misunderstanding about this. Go to the gurdwara twice, morning and evening. When you enter the sangat greet it with hands together and utter 'Fate[h]'. Without darshan you will get neither food nor water (Kaushish 1995, 123-4).

This passage runs contrary to the impression of a developing Rahit that has hitherto emerged from our analysis. It includes specific mention of the Five Ks and it projects a narrative that seems extraordinarily modern. How is this to be explained?

The explanation is that the narrative is not what it claims to be. It is true that one feature does support its traditional date of composition. In sakhi 58 it names Baisakhi Day, S. 1755, as the date of the inauguration of the Khalsa order.³⁵ This corresponds to 1698 CE, not to the widely-accepted date of 1699. Throughout the eighteenth century, the date of the inauguration was disputed, and the fact that *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* records it as S. 1755 must count in favour of an eighteenth-century text.

Other features, however, point in a different direction. The language is too modern to be the report of a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, or even of a writer who completed his work in 1790. Transliteration is not translation. Chhajju Singh Kaushish produced his version by transliterating Bhattachchhari into Gurmukhi, but the actual language will presumably have remained the same. Items from the Rahit also stand out, notably the Five Ks. No other source provides the Five Ks at such an early date, almost 100 years before their first indisputable appearance (see pp. 207-8), and later works pre-dating the Singh Sabha provide a different set or ignore them altogether. It is difficult to see, for example, how they could have been overlooked by *Sarab Loh Granth* or by Malcolm in his *Sketch of the Sikhs*, both of which date from the same period.³⁶ As a foreigner this could perhaps be expected of Malcolm, but certainly not of Ratan Singh Bhangu or Santokh Singh had these symbols been current by the late eighteenth century (see pp. 206-7). Serious offences against the Rahit (the *kurahit*) have also adopted a recent form and likewise the Five Reprobate Groups. In these

respects it no longer seems possible to accept this portion of *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*. It is too modern.³⁷

There are, it seems, three possibilities. The first is that the whole of *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* was written in 1790. The second is that an original has been interpolated or changed, perhaps during the later nineteenth century. The third is that the whole of *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* is a spurious work, dating from an appreciably later date.

Of these possibilities the third is perhaps unlikely. Otherwise how would it contain Baisakhi Day, S. 1755, as the date of the founding of the Khalsa order? This alone does not rule out the possibility of the third explanation, but it does render it less likely. That leaves a choice between the first and the second options and of these it seems that the second is much the stronger. This option is that although the text may have an earlier origin certain items are later insertions.

These features of the Bhatt *vahis* were evidently perceived by Professor Grewal. In his comments on Harbans Singh's use of them he notes:

However, the nature and character of *Bhatt Vahis* has not yet been examined critically to evaluate their authenticity (Grewal 1998, 192).

Giani Garja Singh was the only person ever to work conscientiously on the *vahis* or *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*. His contribution may well be entirely honourable, and we must accept in the meantime that he genuinely believed that what he had found was the authentic truth. He was, however, no scholar. The manuscripts which he discovered have not been subjected to critical attention, and apart from *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* and isolated fragments they have never been published. It is high time that these tasks were properly performed.

Endnotes

1. *Sri Gur Sobhā*, ed. Ganda Singh, Patiala, 1967, introduction, pp. 21-3. In the unidentified text used by Ganda Singh the date of composition is given as *amat satrah sai bhae barakh aīhāsath bīt* (S. 1768). *GSobh* 1:6, Ganda Singh, p. 2. J. S. Grewal also adopted this view. Grewal (1972), chapter VIII.

2. The same conclusion also has to be applied to Banda.

3. For the masands see pp. 34-5, 196-7.

4. These are undefined.

5. There is also independent confirmation of this. On 24 May 1710 the wakil of Sawai Jai Singh explicitly mentions Guru Gobind Singh's command that a Sikh of the Khalsa should never cut the hair of his head, moustache, or beard. Grewal and Habib (2001), p. 107.

6. The pre-eminent gurdwara of the Sikhs, located in Amritsar. The first Harimandir Sahib was begun by Guru Ram Das and completed by his son Guru Arjan. After the *Adi Granth* had been completed it was lodged there in 1604. In the early nineteenth century Maharaja Ranjit Singh had gold leaf beaten on the outer surface of the two upper storeys, thereby converting it into what English speakers know as the Golden Temple.

7. Sukkha Singh is also celebrated as the author of *Gur-bilās Dasvīn Pātashāhī* which was completed in 1797.

8. For a list of the contents of the Dasam Granth see Jodh Singh and Dharam Singh (1999), Introduction, pp. ix–xii; and *Sikhism*, pp. 177–80. Jeevan Deol's essay (Deol 2001) offers a brief but very perceptive view of the Dasam Granth, as indeed of the eighteenth century rahit-nama literature as a whole.

9. Braj is the language which is spoken around Mathura and Brindaban, and was used for the important cycle of Krishan legends. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries its coverage was much wider, taking the Punjab into its sphere of influence. Very few people who know the Braj language also know the Gurmukhi script and vice versa. There are accordingly few who possess the linguistic credentials to study the Dasam Granth.

10. See for example Harbhajan Singh (1999). Pritpal Singh Bindra and S.S. Sodhi (2000). The latter is illustrated by lurid examples.

11. *DG*, pp. 1389–94. The *Zafar-nāmā* was, however, added later.

12. *Bhagautī* can mean either a name for the goddess Durga or a sword. In *Vār Sṛī Bhagautī jī kī* the name is taken to mean a sword.

13. Louis E. Fenech, 'Bhai Nand Lal "Goya" and the Sikh tradition', draft. Fenech cites Haribhajan Singh, *Sāchi Prītī*, Amritsar, 1967, pp. 22–3, as one writer who supports this view. This and other aspects of Nand Lal are comprehensively and intriguingly investigated by Fenech in this important study.

14. MS 770, ff. 415a (twice), 415b (twice, one of which gives only 'Lal'), 416a, 417a, 417b.

15. The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* contains references which could indicate that the author was a Khatri. See items 69, 73, 75, 77.

16. Kahan Singh had his doubts concerning Daya Singh. He prefaces his five short biographies of the Panj Piare on page 593 of *MK* with the following:

It is a pity that in spite of our efforts authentic biographies of these great and supremely benevolent disciples are not available. Whatever has been written is not, in our view, entirely trustworthy. For the information and interest of readers, however, we offer what has been recorded by Bhai Thakur Singh Giani in *Guruduāre Darashan*.

17. Piara Singh Padam declares that they were different persons. Padam (1974), p. 122.

18. The dating given for the composition of *PrahR* is certainly inaccurate. See pp. 69–70.

19. MS 770 is a composite collection comprising *Jāp Sāhib*, ff. 392b–414b; the mis-named *Tanakhāh-nāmā* (mistakenly called *Rahit-nāmā Bhāi Nand Lāl* in a note at the beginning of the MS), ff. 414b–418a; *Savayyā*, ff. 418a–419a; and *Sākhī M10 [Guru Gobind Singh] Bhāi Dān Singh nāl*, ff. 419a–426a. I possess a xerox copy of the manuscript for which I thank the Vice-Chancellor of Guru Nanak Dev University.

20. According to the theory of statistical analysis before 1750 vowels were used at the end of words to indicate case. For example the word *ghari*, comprising *ghar* plus a short *i*, meant 'in the house'. By adding a short *u* to *tan* (giving *tanu*) the accusative case was indicated. This was the case with the *Adi Granth* and the B40 *Janam-sakhi*. After 1750 the practice vanishes and vowels are no longer used at the end of words to indicate cases. This means that any text can be scrutinised and the vowel-endings added up simply by counting them. Those which have an appreciable number of vowel-endings can be identified as pre-1750. Those in which they are largely absent must be post-1750. I owe this explanation to Dr Surjit Hans. As it stands the theory is too neat. Change is much slower than this method allows, some texts producing the change in advance of others. In the *Dasam Granth* (which was recorded before 1750) one finds that vowel endings are scarcer than in other early works. What this means is that the change must have been happening over the course of several decades rather than suddenly. With this amendment statistical analysis is a useful tool.

21. MS 770, f. 417a. *BNLG*, p. 198. For *Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī* see the introduction to the translation of *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, p. 279.

22. Carelessness is evident right from the beginning of the scribe's version of the mis-named *Tanakhāh-nāmā*. On f. 414b he breaks off his copying of *Jāp Sāhib* after verse 197 (leaving two verses untranscribed), and without any evidence that he has taken up another work starts on the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* at verse 7. The transcription of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* starts immediately after the incomplete *Jāp Sāhib* text, in the middle of the line, and in comparison with the *BNLG* text it does so with the

first six verses of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* omitted. It begins with verses 7 and 8 of *BNLC*, thus completing the *chaupai* in which they occur.

23. Note, however, that tobacco was explicitly forbidden by Banda. See p. 40.

24. Jeevan Deol (2001), p. 45n. During the time of Banda and in the years following his execution in 1716 a dispute developed within the Khalsa between the followers of Banda (the Bandai Sikhs) and those who identified with Mata Sundari, one of Guru Gobind Singh's widows (the Tat Khalsa). Amongst other things this concerned Banda's decision to abandon the blue clothing of the Khalsa for red. This dispute was won by the Tat Khalsa during the 1720s. This Tat Khalsa should not be confused with the segment of the Singh Sabha which at the end of the nineteenth century also adopted the name of Tat Khalsa, apparently out of admiration for their predecessors of the early eighteenth century. *HDS*, p. 49.

25. Idem., *Guru Tegh Bahadur*, New Delhi, 1982, Preface, p. vi. Garja Singh died in 1977.

26. Harbans Singh, 'Sikhism: The Beginnings (AD 1469–1708)', in *Studies in Sikhism and Comparative Religion* I.1, October 1982, pp. 13–15. There he attributes it to the *Bhaṭṭ Vahī Bhāḍson Pargaṇā Thānesar*. Harbans Singh, 'The Guru Granth Sahib: Guru Eternal for the Sikhs', in Gurdev Singh (ed.), *Perspectives on the Sikh Tradition*, Patiala, 1986, pp. 217–18. This account is attributed to *Bhaṭṭ Vahī Bhāḍson Pargaṇā Thānesar* by [Nikky] Gunindar Kaur Singh in her *The Guru Granth Sahib*, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 20–1, where she cites her father, Harbans Singh, as her source.

27. Nirbhai Singh, *Bhagata Namadeva in the Guru Grantha*, Patiala, 1981, pp. 138–9. Surjit Singh Gandhi, *History of the Sikh Gurus*, Delhi, 1978, Appx III, pp. 583–91. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, 'An integrated method for appraisal of sources for Sikh Studies', in *Recent Researches in Sikhism*, ed. Jasbir Singh Mann and Kharak Singh, Patiala, 1992, p. 117. Nirbhai Singh also used *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*. He adds in a footnote to p. 139: 'All these MSS. were copied from Late Giani Garja Singh, village Khurajapur near Rajpura, Dist. Patiala (India) by the author.'

28. *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* was transliterated by Bhatt Chhajju Singh Kaushish, completing his task on 10 Phalagun, S. 1925 (1869 CE). This is the only manuscript copy which has survived. Piara Singh Padam (ed.), *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*, Amritsar, 1995, p. 202.

29. J. S. Grewal (1998), p. 191. Giani Garja Singh spells the original script Bhattachchhari. *Ency* II.210.

30. A third edition appeared in 1995. The third edition has been used in this work.

31. Garja Singh has also edited *Shahād Bilās*, an account of Mani Singh by Seva Singh Kaushish, Ludhiana, 1961. Seva Singh is also said

to have been a son of Kesar Singh Kaushish. Piara Singh Padam (ed.), *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*, p. 9.

32. Nirbhai Singh continues his footnote from p. 139 of *Bhagata Namadeva in the Guru Grantha*: 'Giani Garja Singh on the basis of his interviews with the descendants of Bhatt Narbud Singh told me that the writer of this entry was Narbud Singh Bhatta son of Kesho Das Bhatta. Narbud Singh was with Guru Gobind Singh at Nanded when the latter breathed his last.'

33. See endnote 18 attached to the translation of verse 31 of sakhi 8 of *Sau Sākhī* (p. 432).

34. A famous phrase used in gurdwara lectures by traditional gianis.

35. Padam, p. 120. Harnam Singh Shan explains this apparent discrepancy as a word (*pachāvan*) 'which seems to have been either copied wrongly from the original manuscript of the book or printed erroneously from its transcribed version or its extant copy'. 'Creation of Khalsa as described by Bhatt Sarup Singh Kaushish [Part I]', in *The Sikh Review* 49.2, February, 2001, p. 33n.

36. See chapter 6.7, p. 181. The Five Ks provided by sakhi 59 actually consist of those maintained by the Akhand Kirtani Jatha, with the keski (under-turban) replacing the kes. The *sarab loh* wrist-ring is also congenial to the Akhand Kirtani Jatha.

37. The occasional occurrence of English words in the text of *Gurū kīān Sākhīān* should also be noted. These would not have been used in 1790. *Ency* II.210.

4

The Six Rahit-namas of the Eighteenth Century



We turn now to analysing the contents of the six rahit-namas, which date from the eighteenth century or very early in the nineteenth.

4.1 Tanakhah-nama

The *Tanakhāh-nāmā* that has been attributed to Bhai Nand Lal, has been discounted, and it should be noted that the title of the rahit-nama is also mistaken. Only general answers are given to the question of the fate awaiting the Khalsa who flouts aspects of the Rahit. It contrasts in this respect with the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* which is thoroughly specific regarding the *tanakhāhs* imposed on the wayward Khalsa. The word *tanakhāh* never enters the earliest version (MS 770), nor does *tanakhāhīā*. *Tanakhāh-nāmā* is actually the wrong name for this rahit-nama. In MS 770 it is entitled *Nasīhat-nāmā*, the 'Manual of Instruction'.¹

There is, however, little doubt concerning the early date of this rahit-nama. This, as we have already noted, is S. 1775 (1718–19 CE). As a product that first surfaces barely ten years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh it provides valuable insight into the Rahit as it was understood by at least one early member of the Khalsa.

Note that this does not mean that it necessarily communicates an accurate report of the words of Guru Gobind Singh, nor that it was a view held by all members of the Khalsa at that time. The words of *Gur Sobhā* are likely to be more authentic than those of the author of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, as Sainapati was evidently much closer to the Guru during the latter's lifetime. The unknown author may have represented the doctrines and practices of the Khalsa accurately, but there must remain an element of doubt that cannot be put aside. Already the Khalsa had been split by the quarrels between the Bandai Sikhs and the Tat Khalsa, and it is quite possible that the author was concerned to communicate the notions of a particular group within the Khalsa rather than a balanced and unbiased statement. We are, in other words, up against the problem that obstructs all studies of all rahit-namas.

But the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* or, more accurately, the *Nasihat-nāmā* does at least emerge from an early period and in general terms its views must surely represent this period. These views may be tabulated as follows. Words which have been inserted to maintain continuity are indicated by square brackets in the text. The numbers in square brackets following each section indicate verses in the English translation.

Duties and privileges of a Khalsa

A Sikh of the Khalsa remains absorbed in the divine Name and always repeats it. He abandons pride, triumphs over the five [evil impulses], and upholds his duty as a member of the Khalsa. A Khalsa should never [show disrespect to] iron by touching it with his foot. A Khalsa causes no harm to the created world. A Khalsa breaks free from that which binds him. A Khalsa is exalted to kingly rank. [15, 45-7, 49, 51, 52, 54a]

Doctrine and devotion

Perform only those deeds which are in accordance with the divine Name, charity, and bathing (*nām dān isanān*). He who utters the divine Word without understanding gains nothing. Always pray before beginning an undertaking. Join in Rahiras each evening and recite Kirtan Sohila before retiring. [2, 7, 26, 31]

Dress and outward appearance

No Sikh shall cut his hair. Tie your turban afresh each time you remove it. Do not clothe yourself in red. Do not roam around naked. [17, 23, 43, 64]

Bathing and personal hygiene

Always bathe in cold water. Do not bathe naked. Every day clean your teeth and twice comb your hair. Do not use snuff (*nasavār*). [17, 23, 25, 42]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Do not give way to anger. Do not tell lies. Always keep your word. Do not slander others. Do not gamble. Do not steal. Do not be deceitful. A Khalsa refrains from scurrilous talk and does not look covetously on another's property. [19, 24, 27, 28, 35, 40, 44, 47]

Social relationships

Do not trust a sadhu who does not observe the Rahit. Do not trade deceitfully. [30a, 37]

Sexual morality

Do not look with lustful eyes on women who enter the sangat. A Khalsa must not have sexual relations with any woman other than his wife. Do not visit a prostitute, nor show affection for another's wife. Do not seduce the Guru's wife.² Do not sleep at night naked from the waist down. Do not engage in intercourse while naked. [18, 32, 38–42, 46, 47]

Charity

Keep a charity box. Give a tithe to the Guru. Before eating always set aside a portion for the Guru. Give when you see someone in need. A Khalsa gives gifts as charity and always supports the needy. [24, 31, 33, 37, 44a, 50]

The sangat

Regularly attend the satsang. When attending satsang do not let your mind wander. Do not talk while listening to the singing of

the praises of God (*harī*). Do not refuse to have a poor person sit beside you. Assemblies (*divān*) should be attended. Listen attentively to kirtan and katha. [3–6, 16, 34]

Guru Granth Sahib

Always bow after completing a reading from the sacred scripture. Sing only songs composed by the Guru. A Khalsa loves the hymns of the Guru. [8, 29, 48]

Rituals

Marry your daughter [to a Khalsa Sikh]. Accept no price for your daughter's or sister's hand. [19, 20]

Karah prasad

Rules for the preparation of karah prasad: The three ingredients must be in equal quantities and the place for preparation must be swept and plastered. Cooking vessels must be scoured and washed clean. The person preparing karah prasad must bathe and must utter only 'Praise to the Guru'. Fill a new pitcher with water. When the karah prasad is ready place it on a four-legged stool. Sit around it and sing kirtan. [10–14, 36]

Preparation and consumption of food

When distributing food [in the langar] do not be a greedy person [who keeps a large portion for himself], and who serves unequal portions [to others]. Do not distribute food without concern for the approved procedure. Never consume anything that is proscribed. Never eat without first reciting *Japujī*. Say 'Praise to the Guru' before eating. Do not distribute nor eat food bare-headed. [9, 16, 25, 32, 38, 43]

Weapons and warfare

Never go unarmed. A Khalsa always carries weapons. A Khalsa never turns his back when fighting. A Khalsa destroys those who oppress [others]. A Khalsa knows how to ride a spirited steed. A Khalsa is always fighting battles. [21, 22a, 44, 48, 50, 53, 54]

False teachers

Do not listen to anyone who defames the Guru. Kill him. Never abandon the Guru and follow another. [36, 41]

Attitude towards Hindus

A Khalsa despises the rituals [of the Brahmins]. [45]

Attitude towards Muslims

Do not accept a Turk as your master (see ch. 7.13, pp. 219–23). Do not salute a Turk. Avoid meat cooked by Turks. A Khalsa fights against Muslims. A Khalsa slays Muslims. [15, 22a, 29, 44a, 51, 54]

Sundry prohibitions

Do not rob a wayfarer. Do not blow out a lamp [instead of extinguishing it with your fingers]. Do not extinguish fire with water from which you have been drinking. [22, 37a]

Tanakhāh-nāmā concludes with a triumphant couplet in praise of the Khalsa, the mighty Khalsa which though few in number will yet overwhelm the Turks and demolish all enemies of truth. All those who acknowledge its rule shall find eternal liberation.

rāj karegā khālsā ākī rahih na koi

khvār hoi sabh milāinge bachahi saran jo hoi (TanN 62).

The author of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* shows a particular interest in the following features:

1. Warfare. This is predictable, given the recent struggles during the time of Banda and the continuing resistance of the Khalsa to Mughal rule.

2. Strong opposition to Muslims, including the killing of them. In view of recent events this too is predictable. The first of the two items which still appears in the modern Rahit makes its appearance here. This is the ban on eating meat from animals killed according to Muslim rites (*kuṭṭhā*).

3. Attendance at the sangat. This is also understandable. Religion was, after all, the basis of the Khalsa.

4. The distribution of food (presumably in the langar) and the consumption of it in general.

5. The preparation of karah prasad. This is peculiar to the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* in that it receives such detailed treatment. Obviously the custom was one which the Khalsa, having received it from its earlier Sikh antecedents, was concerned to continue.

6. The sexual morality of the Khalsa. This feature is perhaps surprising, not because its strict message appears in this rahit-nama but because it is so strongly emphasised. Is this a strongly-held view by the author as an individual, or does it represent a generally accepted attitude among the Khalsa? Sexual propriety is certainly a message that continues through the rahit-nama literature, but nowhere else does it receive such emphasis as in the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

The following features, which were mentioned by Sainapati in *Gur Sobhā*, have been omitted:

1. There is no reference to the rite of initiation.
2. No warning is issued concerning the hookah. The Khalsa is, however, cautioned about the use of snuff (*nasavār*).
3. There is no reference to the Five Reprobate Groups (the *pañj mel*).

4.2 The Prahilad Rai Rahit-nama

Was the author's name Prahilad Rai or was it Prahilad Singh? It is tempting to think that his original name must have been Prahilad Rai. The fact that he was the author of an influential rahit-nama would then have meant that he took initiation and so came to be called Prahilad Singh. Can this be drawn as a firm conclusion?

There is an earlier text of the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* and a more modern one, both of which call him Prahilad Singh. The earlier text is provided by Lala Maghi Ram Sant Ram of Bazaar Mai Sevan, Amritsar, and by Shamsheer Singh Ashok in his *Gurū Khālse de Rahit-nāme* (Ashok 56–8). The translations of Leech, Cunningham, and Attar Singh generally follow the earlier version³ and Trumpp evidently used it for his paraphrase (Trumpp 1877, cxiii–cxvi). The later version is given in Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme* (PSP 44–7). In the case of this rahit-

nama, however, differences distinguishing the two versions are rarely of any significance.

Attar Singh reverses the order of the translations from that indicated in the title of his booklet, and calls the second of his authors 'Prahilad Rai' or 'Prahilad the Brahman'. All other versions, except for Trumpp, refer to him as Prahilad Singh. This seems to suggest that the early texts used by Attar Singh and Trumpp called him Prahilad Rai. Both Leech and Cunningham, however, give his name as Prahilad Singh and they produced their translations before either Attar Singh's version or Trumpp's paraphrase.

Beyond this it seems impossible to proceed and as a result we shall never know whether the author's name was Prahilad Rai or Prahilad Singh, or whether it was originally Prahilad Rai but was changed with initiation to Prahilad Singh. The name Prahilad Rai has been used in this survey, but it should be understood that the name Prahilad Singh also has strong claims.

Features of the Rahit contained in the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* may be listed as follows.

The Nature of the Khalsa

Accept the Khalsa as Guru, as the Guru's visible body. The Sikh who wishes to find me should seek me in its midst. Have dealings only with the Khalsa. Honouring the gods of others is a sham. The [Khalsa] Panth was founded at the command of Akal Purakh. Do not speak highly of any panth other than the Khalsa. [22, 24, 28-30]

Doctrine and devotion

Put your trust in Akal Purakh and escape the net of transmigration. Do not forsake Akal Purakh and follow some other god or worship some stone. Every Sikh must accept the Granth as Guru. Meditate only on the mantra 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāhi gurū*). *Sat Akāl Sṛī Vāhi Gurū* is the basic mantra. He who lives according to the Rahit is my Sikh. Do not abandon the Sikh faith and join some other panth. Do not eat before participating in [evening] Rahiras. Recite Rahiras with love in your heart. [7, 14, 16-17, 21, 27, 30-1, 34, 36-7]

Dress and outward appearance

Never wear a topi. Do not clothe yourself in red. [4, 12]

Bathing and personal hygiene

Do not use snuff (*nasavār*). [12]

Social relationships

Give help to other Sikhs. Massage them as a devotional gesture. Give them a share of the food which you have prepared. [8, 33]

Sexual morality

Never visit a prostitute. [4]

Charity

Do not use the Guru's charity-box for your own purposes, nor misappropriate pious offerings. Do not promise to make an offering and then hesitate to fulfil it. [9, 19]

Guru Granth Sahib

Sing only the True Guru's songs. Sing them early in the morning. Singing the Guru's songs is a precious gift. [14, 26, 32]

Rituals

Imparting [Khalsa] initiation is the greatest of blessings. [32]

The preparation and consumption of food

Never remove your turban while eating. Recite *Japujī* and *Jāp* before eating. [5, 13]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Never [gamble by] playing at dice. [4]

False teachers

Have no dealings with Minas, followers of the masands, those who cut their hair, or those who kill their daughters. Never accept food from a killer of daughters, a masand, or a Mina. Do not worship at cremation-grounds, tombs, or in temples containing idols. Do not bow to anyone wearing a topi. [6, 20, 22, 23]

Attitude towards Hindus

Never wear a sacred thread [as required by Brahmans]. Have no faith in a Kanphat yogi. Have no faith in the six darshans [of the Hindu tradition]. [4, 25, 27]

Attitude towards Muslims

Have no faith in a Turk. [25]

The *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* differs from the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* in the following respects:

1. The *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* leaves the reader uncertain whether the author is explicitly addressing the Khalsa or the wider area of belief which also embraces the non-Khalsa Sikh. References certainly are made to the nature of the Khalsa, but the author's threatening promises are addressed to an indeterminate audience of Sikhs. This was not the case with the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* where the injunctions were more specifically addressed to the Khalsa.

2. It does, however, give a fuller description of the Khalsa than is found in the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

3. The *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* is much fiercer with regard to the fate it holds out for any Sikh who fails to obey the injunctions which the author lists. Some of its injunctions are ridiculous, for example the instruction to recite both *Japujī* and the *Jāp* before eating (*PrahR* 13).

4. The doctrinal section of the *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* is lengthier than the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

5. The *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* lacks the emphasis on weapons and warfare that characterises the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*. This suggests later, more settled circumstances.

6. The author is much gentler concerning the Muslims.

7. The *Prahlād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* omits all reference to sangats.

8. Although he does not refer to the Five Reprobate Groups, the author does name four types of people with whom the Sikh must never associate. These are the Minas, the masands, those who cut their hair, and killers of daughters. The hair-cutters are presumably persons who are meant to be Khalsa Sikhs.

9. Female infanticide is introduced for the first time. Khalsa Sikhs should have no dealings with those who practise it.

The two rahit-namas share the same failure to name the hookah as an artifact to be avoided, both reserving their condemnation for snuff.

4.3 Sakhi Rahit ki

The mid 1730s has already been suggested as a possible dating for *Sākhī Rahit kī*. Certainly its attachment to the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* means that it could have been no later than 1765 (see p. 70). It gives an impression of peaceful times, which are not easily reconciled with the middle years of the eighteenth century.

Contents

Doctrine and devotion

A Sikh should believe and obey none save the Guru, loyally adhering to the Guru's Khalsa and worshipping only in the presence of the Guru's Word. He should read, hear, and repeat the divine Name, for thus is spiritual liberation attained. [2, 18, 21, 22, 27]

The daily discipline

During the last watch of the night, a Sikh should arise and bathe. After cleaning his teeth, he should either read both *Japujī* and *Jāp* or recite two stanzas of each from memory. At daybreak, he should proceed to a satsang and after hearing the divine Word he should proceed on his daily business. At midday, having washed his feet and hands, he should again recite both *Japujī* and *Jāp*. An hour before the close of day, he should recite the *Sodar Rahirās* liturgy. [15]

Dress and outward appearance

A Sikh must be distinguished by a turban, a fine flowing beard, and an uncut kes. He must never use a razor or remove his beard. [3, 7]

Personal hygiene

A Sikh must never smoke tobacco nor use it as snuff. Using tobacco is as heinous a sin as eating beef. [5, 8]

Illness and need

In times of need summon five Sikhs and feed them. The five Sikhs will then say Ardas⁴ and the suppliant's wish will be granted. [12]

Sangat

Sikhs should regularly gather together, read the *Anand*, recite Ardas, and eat together. [10, 15]

Rituals

For a shraddh ceremony, prepare the tastiest of food and summon fellow members of the Khalsa. Read the *Anand*, recite Ardas, and feed the assembled Sikhs. Perform other unspecified rituals punctiliously, never entrusting them to Brahmans. [16, 20]

Preparation and consumption of food

Giving food to a fellow Sikh is as meritorious as giving it to the Guru himself. Fellow Sikhs should be served, regardless of their status. [9, 13, 26]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Do not steal. Do not be mean. Do not slander others. [23, 24]

Treatment of women

Never trust a woman. Do not cast lecherous eyes on the women of another man's family. [23]

Attitude towards Hindus

A Sikh should spurn the teachings of Brahmans, Hindu teachers, and Nath masters. He should reject Brahmanical observances. He should never wear a sacred thread, perform head-shaving rituals, recite the Gayatri, make water offerings, worship idols, wear a dhoti, or eat with his head uncovered; and he should never solicit the services of those bare-headed Brahmans. He should never offer prayer at cremation grounds. [2, 7-11, 17-19, 28]

Attitude towards Muslims

A Sikh should spurn the teachings of Muslims. He should never pray at a tomb. [2]

The particular features of *Sākhī Rahit kī* are as follows:

1. The rahit-nama deals in detail with the daily discipline expected of all Sikhs, a feature which it shares with *Prashan-uttar*. It does not normally distinguish the Khalsa specifically, though the author's views on head-shaving make it clear that the rahit-nama specifically concerns them.

2. This rahit-nama appears to be the first to specify the reciting of Ardas and Guru Amar Das's *Anand* as a part of Khalsa ritual.

3. It is also the first to mention tobacco. This would still be directed at hookah smoking. Other forms of smoking were not yet current in the Punjab.

4. Evidently the shraddh ceremony was still current among at least some of the Khalsa. It may have been general in the mid-eighteenth century.

5. The influence of Hindu conventions is also evident in that the eating of beef is regarded as a particularly heinous practice.

6. Whereas Brahmans are several times targetted Muslims are treated very lightly. The author's feelings concerning Brahmans is at least partly due to the fact that they shaved their heads. In this respect he strongly agrees with Sainapati. In view of his repugnance for Brahmanical ceremonies the retention of the shraddh is interesting.

4.4 Chaupa Singh Rahit-nama

We come now to the three longer rahit-namas. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is both the earliest and by far the longest of these. This rahit-nama has already been the subject of a study comprising an introduction covering its origins, Gurmukhi text, English translation, and detailed notes on both text and translation. *Sākhī Rahit kī* is also included in the same volume as it has invariably been found attached to the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.⁵

Piara Singh Padam explains the writing of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* as follows:

After Bhai Chaupa Singh, assisted by faithful Sikhs, had prepared the first rahit-nama Bhai Sital Singh Bahurupia wrote a fair copy and had it approved by the Guru on 7 Jeth S. 1757 [1700 CE]. Chaupa Singh himself mentions this.⁶

The rahit-nama that now appears under the name of Chaupa Singh cannot possibly be this version, if in fact any such document was ever written. At the same time we should allow for the possibility that the extant version may have roots which go back to the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The extant version was produced between 1740 and 1765, with a date in the 1740s, a strong probability (*ChS* 10).

Chaupa Singh, the putative author, was a Chhibbar Brahman. In its extant form the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is a composite product comprising two substantial blocks of classical rahit-nama material, interspersed with narrative sections, which relate the foundation of the Khalsa, anecdotes concerning the enemies of the Guru, and the turmoil which is to come. Although the various injunctions are always addressed to the loyal Gursikh ('Sikh of the Guru') there is no doubt that it is directed at the Khalsa. 'Gursikh' is a synonym for 'Khalsa Sikh'. When the term is first introduced it is defined as one who must 'earnestly study the Rahit' (*ChS* 57, 149). Who would be likely to study the Rahit other than a Sikh of the Khalsa? And every Gursikh, we are informed, must receive Khalsa initiation (*pāhul*) before his hair has grown to full length.⁷

The stress that the author lays on the kes makes his preference clear and it is reinforced by his treatment of the sword, of arms generally, of eternal vigilance, and of the righteousness of fighting for a just cause. Other injunctions confirm this. There is, for example, little point for other than Khalsa Sikhs in claiming that using only half a name is worthy of a *tanakhāh* (*ChS* 408, 105, 181). The reason for the injunction concerns those for whom the omitted portion of the name is the word 'Singh', a lapse for which a penance is surely legitimate.

There are five reasons why this rahit-nama has been regarded as hopelessly confused and corrupted.

1. The extant text is a conflation of at least three different sources. It cannot be the work of a single author.

2. There are doctrinal reasons against accepting the work of a Brahman, particularly as in one of the rahit-nama sections it is stated:

Any Gursikh who is a Brahman should receive twice the service [and consideration that other Sikhs receive. He who renders such service] shall earn a double reward (*ChS* 24, 60, 151; see also 120, 167, 622, pp. 72, 80–1, 127, 160, 168, 197–8).

Any Sikh of today would find this instruction intolerable.

3. The rahit-nama relates, as if it were authentic, the notorious story of how Guru Gobind Singh was persuaded to seek the blessings of Mata Devi (the goddess Durga) by celebrating the traditional fire ritual (*ChS* 205–35, 86ff, 172–3). The Puranic cosmology introduced near the end presumably falls under the same condemnation (*ChS* 615–40, 125–30, 196–200).

4. The unctuous references to Chhibbar Brahmans, which occur in two of the narrative portions are plainly intended to serve a family purpose.⁸ This would not be appreciated by many of the rahit-nama's readers.

5. The language of the rahit-nama has been tentatively held to be later than the usage current during the time of Guru Gobind Singh (*PSP* 41a).

These reasons may explain the unpopularity of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, but they should not conceal its considerable significance. Its length, its detail, its date, and its circumstances as a product of the Chhibbar family make it an extremely valuable document. The details of its rahit-nama contents may be summarized as follows.⁹

The Khalsa

The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* favours a wider Sikh understanding rather than the distinctively Khalsa mode. It addresses its injunctions to the loyal Gursikh rather than to a specifically Khalsa Sikh, and in its first item it notes that these directions are for a Sikh who is 'either a Kes-dhari or a Sahaj-dhari'. It is true that there is an apparent ambivalence in the rahit-nama as a whole, with its author sometimes favouring the Kes-dhari and explicitly placing the Sahaj-dhari outside the Khalsa Panth. This is explained by the author's valid understanding of the

Sahaj-dhari as outside the Khalsa Panth but not outside the wider Sikh Panth. It is not a prominent feature of the rahit-nama, which generally includes the wider Sikh Panth within its range.¹⁰ The one exception is the kes. This receives very considerable attention and clearly shows that the author adamantly favoured its retention by all Sikhs.

Character and Behaviour

General

A Gursikh must be benevolent and sympathetic, fair and impartial, patient and forgiving, compassionate, generous, and wholly trustworthy. He should never be proud, arrogant, or deceitful. Anger is particularly polluting. A Gursikh should associate with others of exemplary character in order that he may assimilate their qualities of love, trust, piety, and wisdom. He should never associate with the perverse. The qualities which accompany the faithful Gursikh at death are compassion, charity, austerities, devotion, continence, truth, humility, his faith as a Sikh, service to the Guru, and service to others. [34–5, 39, 40, 88, 104, 120–1, 123, 153, 189, 270–3, 465, 471]

Doctrine

The ten Gurus must be recognized as ten incarnations of the one eternal Guru. The Gursikh should praise and glorify the Guru, and should obey his commands. He should show respect to descendants of the Gurus, places associated with the Gurus, all who serve the Gurus, and the Gurus' writings. [107, 125, 448–9, 502, 534]

Devotion

Every Gursikh should know the Guru's mantra (*guramantar*) and should learn *Japujī* by heart. He should recite the Guru's mantra and *Japujī* every day. Every day he should read or hear the Guru's Word, he should memorize portions of it, and should regularly meditate on it. He should regularly repeat 'Praise to the Guru!' (*vāh gurū*). [87, 126, 142, 149, 337, 504, 535]

Daily discipline

During the last watch of the night, a Gursikh, whether a Kes-dhari or a Sahaj-dhari, should rise and bathe, or at least wash

his hands and feet, and rinse his mouth (*pañj isanān*). He should then recite *Japujī* five times, together with any other scriptural passages which he may know by heart, and he should conclude with Ardas. Next he should proceed to the dharamsala where he should make an offering, bow his forehead to the ground, and join his fellow Sikhs in praise to the Guru. He should then proceed to his daily labours. At dusk he should participate in *Sodar Rahirās*, preferably in a dharamsala but otherwise at his home. After his evening meal, he should join his fellow Sikhs at worship in the dharamsala. Before sleeping he should perform kirtan. [1-2, 3, 120]

Dress and outward appearance

CLOTHING

A Kes-dhari Sikh is not permitted to wear either a topi or a loin-cloth. Presumably only a Sahaj-dhari Sikh may wear these. A Gursikh's tunic must be fastened at the front, not at the side, and he should never wear red garments. A Gursikh should never sleep naked. He should have on a kachh at least and should also wear a turban.¹¹ [191, 291-2, 380, 477-8]

HAIR AND KES

The Gursikh must always protect the dignity of his kes and thus preserve the honour of his Sikh faith. The kes is the outward symbol of the inward faith of the Sikh. It is the seal of the Guru, the visible sign of loyalty to his teachings. The hair of a Kes-dhari Sikh must be left uncut from birth. His kes, facial hair, body hair, and pubic hair must all remain uncut. A Sahaj-dhari Sikh may remove his body hair with scissors, but he must not touch his beard or (if living as a family man) his pubic hair. The Gursikh should comb his kes twice a day and wash it in whey (though not whey from sheep's milk). It should never be touched with dirty hands, and it must be protected from insect infestation. The kes may not be washed with soap or salt-earth detergent. The hair of the kes should never be vigorously winnowed with one's hands when drying it after washing. It must never be left tangled and it must never be dyed. White hairs must not be plucked from the kes. The hair of the beard must not be nibbled with one's teeth, nor should it be trimmed with

scissors or plucked with tweezers. The kes must be kept covered when out walking, sitting in a bazaar, travelling, or eating. The kes must never be allowed to hang loose in the presence of women. An adult male Sikh must not permit women to pick insects out of his kes. Always use terms of respect when referring to one's kes. Never call it 'hàir' (*vāḷ*). After washing the kes speak of 'refreshing' it, not 'drying' it. [53-4, 61, 80, 92, 145, 287, 295, 335-6, 346-7, 360, 390, 411, 473, 482, 510, 518-22, 524-8]

The turban

A turban must be freshly tied each time it is put on. It should not be removed when eating or sleeping. A Gursikh must never tug another Sikh's turban, nor knock it from his head. If his own turban falls to the ground he must apologize. A Kes-dhari Sikh must never use a waist-cloth as a turban. [191, 297, 312-13, 323, 334, 478, 542]

Bathing

A Gursikh should never bathe at a dhobi ghat, never bathe naked, and never pour strained water on his head. He should always wear a kachh and should bathe after sexual intercourse. [5, 19, 119, 148, 340, 368]

Personal hygiene

After urinating a Gursikh must wash his hands. He should never defecate in a field of grain or beside water, and he should not speak during the operation. After defecating he should use earth to cleanse himself, employing only his left hand in the process. He should then wash his hands and feet, and rinse his mouth. Merely washing his hands is not sufficient. [105-6, 333, 466, 475-6, 540]

The hookah

A Gursikh should not work for a Muslim if he is required to take poisonous substances,¹² nor should he sit beside anyone who does so. No smoker of the hookah should be employed as a cook by a Sikh nor permitted to prepare karah prasad. [80, 84, 432, 438]

Family responsibilities

A Gursikh should instruct his family in the Guru's teaching (*gurumati*) and the duties which these teachings require. Parents must be cared for, and they should also be obeyed, provided that they are themselves obedient to the Guru. Any Gursikh who possesses the means should make provision for wife and family in the event of his death. As he approaches old age he should transfer his responsibilities to his offspring and increasingly devote himself to attending the satsang. A Gursikh must never kill a female baby. He must have no dealings with anyone who has committed this unpardonable offence. [12, 80, 122, 359, 371, 426, 428, 547]

Sexual morality

A married Sikh may have intercourse with his wife only between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. If he has sexual intercourse during the night he must bathe completely when he arises. A Gursikh may not stare at another's wife, nor should he have intercourse with her. Adultery is forbidden. Intercourse with a Muslim prostitute is strictly forbidden. [4, 5, 11, 102 368, 370, 396]

Speech and manner of address

A Gursikh should never speak offensively, nor should he use bitter words that may cause distress. He should always speak with kindness and affection. [119, 121]

Illness and need

Ardas may be said on behalf of a Sikh who is ill. If this is done, he must serve a thanksgiving meal when he recovers. In times of need or distress a Gursikh should arise during the last watch of the night, repeat *Japuji* five times, and proceed to the dharamsala. There he should offer petition to the Guru and service to the sangat. The Guru will grant him the peace which he needs. He must accept without complaint whatever response the Satguru may make to his petition. [25, 489, 536]

Charity

Every Gursikh should regard a pauper's mouth as the Guru's alms-box. If a Gursikh encounters a needy Sikh he should provide him with shelter. If possible he should have his clothes

washed, enable him to wash his hair, and serve him food. From the proceeds of his labours every Gursikh should set aside a tenth part for the Guru. The Guru's portion should be taken from each heap of winnowed grain. This offering should be used to feed other Sikhs in the Guru's name, particularly those who are poor. Ardas offerings are to be made to a person duly authorized by the sangat. This person must dispense the collection honestly and must not conceal it for his own future use. A portion of the Ardas offerings may be given to descendants of the Gurus, but they must not pass any of it on to Muslim authorities. [23, 48, 101, 364-7, 392]

Oaths and vows

A Gursikh should never require another Sikh to swear a false oath, nor should he himself swear an oath which harms an honourable man. If a Gursikh vows to donate anything in return for the granting of a favour he must honour his promise in full, withholding nothing. [56, 451-2]

Crimes and misdemeanours

A Gursikh should never commit theft or adultery, nor should he gamble. He should not drink intoxicating liquor. A Gursikh should not sing worldly songs, nor should he dance. At weddings he should not listen to lewd songs nor watch vulgar dancing. [7, 102, 127, 128, 345, 405]

Social Behaviour Within the Panth

Relationships with other Sikhs

A Gursikh should regard all fellow Sikhs as members of the Guru's family and thus as his own relatives. He should serve all Sikhs with love and affection and never cause grief or distress to any of them. He should never look with evil intent on any of them, never betray their trust, and never obstruct their legitimate activity. The first-fruits of each harvest should be eaten by another Sikh. [22, 39, 59, 72-3, 76, 78-9, 94, 319, 446, 469, 484, 531]

Courtesy in speech and behaviour

A Gursikh should never criticize another Sikh nor quarrel with him. He must not abuse him, ridicule him, speak sarcastically

to him, or address obscenities to him. Descendants of the Gurus should be treated with particular respect. Never insult another Sikh by making rude gestures, pulling his turban, knocking off his turban, pulling the hair of his kes, or grasping his beard. Do not be discourteous to poor Sikhs. A Gursikh should not keep a poor Sikh waiting while he finishes his meal. Do not address another Sikh by only half his name. Always attend a fellow Sikh's funeral if possible. When drawing water from a well, always serve it to any Sikh who requests a drink. Never refuse an invitation thrice to dine with another Sikh, and never awaken a sleeping Sikh by kicking him. [18, 57, 107, 304, 309-15, 358, 408, 412-13, 415, 417, 447, 454, 495, 514, 530]

Assistance in times of need

Gursikhs should help fellow Sikhs who are in need. Assistance should always be given to a Sikh who requests in the Guru's name. They should warn a fellow Sikh if they perceive that his business affairs are at risk and should assist him when he is afflicted by financial need. Shelter should always be given to a Sikh traveller who is in need. Always aid a wounded, disabled, or exhausted Sikh on the battlefield. [25-7, 135-6, 357, 418, 421, 486, 515]

Hospitality

A Gursikh must share his food with other Sikhs. Whenever he eats he should invite another Sikh to join him. Any Sikh who visits his house must be fed as generously as circumstances permit. A Gursikh should not eat good food himself while serving inferior food to another Sikh. Poor Sikhs should be invited to dine, not merely those who are regarded as respectable. A Gursikh should not take possession of a bed if it means that other Sikhs must sleep on the floor. If a visiting Sikh wishes to wash his hair he should be supplied with whey if any is available. The clothes of a poor Sikh staying in the house should be washed. [2, 63, 111, 316, 352, 354-5, 358, 391, 393, 404, 423]

Business dealings

Gursikhs should have business dealings only with other Sikhs. Honest Sikhs should be permitted to conduct their business

without interference. If two Sikhs are involved in a business dispute they must effect a reconciliation by nightfall. A Sikh who has suffered a loss in trading should not be required to repay outstanding debts in full. A Gursikh should never take a bribe. Never dismiss a Sikh servant and then employ a non-Sikh in his place. Always pay a Sikh servant the wages that are his due. [17, 55, 444-5, 456, 459, 464, 481]

Treatment of women

A Gursikh should never trust a woman, neither his own nor another's. Never entrust a secret to them. Regard them as the embodiment of deceit. Never keep company with women belonging to another man's family. Never touch the feet of any woman other than one's own mother. Never eat food left by a woman. Never curse a respectable woman nor use weapons against any of them. [100, 192, 341, 342-3, 443]

Disputes between Sikhs

No Sikh should assault another Sikh, nor should he provoke disagreement between Sikhs. Any Sikh who deliberately has another Sikh imprisoned, plundered, or killed should be completely ostracized. He who kills another Sikh will go to hell. If two Sikhs are fighting, they must immediately desist when so commanded by another Sikh. Disputes between Sikhs must be settled within the Panth. They should not be taken to a magistrate unless the magistrate is a Sikh. [79, 319, 350, 459-60, 462, 470, 532]

Tanakhāhs specified

In the case of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* these are too numerous to mention. See items 286-549 in the translation of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (Chs 176-88).

The Sangat

The satsang

A Gursikh should regularly join with other Sikhs to hear the sacred scriptures sung and expounded. Four blessings are conferred when Sikhs gather. The scriptures are read and sung; the

deeper issues of the Sikh faith are explored; a better understanding of the Rahit is acquired; and each Sikh is encouraged to give alms according to his means. A Gursikh may participate only in a Sikh satsang. In it one may only read passages from Sikh scripture and sing Sikh kirtan. All must sit in lines without reference to status. The only exceptions are descendants of the Gurus¹³ and those who are leading the singing. They should be given seats at the front of the gathering. Every Gursikh should learn humility by placing in rows the shoes of those attending a satsang. Women may meet in a separate satsang. Do not dispute the verdict or consensus of a satsang. [96–8, 117–18, 123, 277, 289, 302, 345, 480, 539]

The dharamsala

Every village or locality with Gursikh homes should maintain a dharamsala dedicated to the Guru, where the sangat should regularly gather. This building should include facilities for Sikhs who may need a place to stay. There must be free access to it. No Sikh should be prevented from entering. A Sikh of the village must visit it regularly, taking an offering and bowing his forehead to the ground. If a Sikh passes a dharamsala while the scriptures are being read or kirtan sung he should enter and bow his forehead to the ground. He should not talk during kirtan, the reading of scripture, or a religious discourse. Rahiras should be sung in dharamsalas each evening at dusk. At its conclusion the officiating Sikh should address those assembled there with the cry *Vāhi gurū jī kī fate[h]* ('Hail the Guru's victory!'). Every Sikhni should daily contribute a handful of flour to the dharamsala kitchen. [1, 3, 133, 144, 388, 416, 494, 498, 501, 529, 561]

The dharamsalia

The person placed in charge of a dharamsala (the dharamsalia) should possess all virtues and be a careful observer of the Rahit. The conduct of divine worship and rituals is his duty. He should instruct the Sikh boys of his locality in the contents of the Granth Sahib, teaching them its hymns and how to sing kirtan. The Sikhs of each locality should support their dharamsalia. He should receive a portion of the offerings made in the dharamsala,

though not from descendants of the Gurus. A dharamsalia should remain celibate and should never steal. [32-3, 69-72]

The Granth Sahib

Preparation and care of the sacred volume

Any Gursikh who is able to copy the Granth Sahib should prepare a volume and present it to his sangat. He should ask nothing for this service, but may accept anything which is offered. The sacred volume must never be kept in a demeaning place. It must always be given a place of honour. A lectern, wrapping-cloth, and whisk should be provided. When in the presence of the Granth Sahib never turn your back on it. [16, 64, 68, 383, 434, 493]

Reading the Granth Sahib

The Granth Sahib is to be revered as the Guru. Every Gursikh should regularly read or hear it and meditate on its meaning. Before touching the sacred volume a Gursikh must wash his hands. Before reading it he must bathe, or at least wash both hands and feet and rinse his mouth. While reading it he must never sit on a stool or string-bed which is higher than the sacred volume itself, and he should not rest his forehead on his hand. Do not interrupt a Sikh who is reading or expounding the Granth Sahib. Respectfully announce when a reading is complete and touch the floor with your forehead. Do not use a piece of straw as a book-mark, and do not read the Granth Sahib when naked. If a copy of the Granth Sahib is kept in a private house it must be regularly read by the owner of the house or by someone else appointed for the purpose. A woman should not read the Granth Sahib in any Sikh assembly. [126, 131, 138-9, 339, 435, 437, 450, 467, 483, 492, 508-9, 538]

Complete readings

When a Gursikh concludes a reading of the Granth Sahib he should read the scribe's ink formula, repeat *Japuji*, and end the entire reading with its terminal shalok. The complete Granth Sahib should be read following the death of a Sikh. This should be spread over as many days as his family can afford to provide hospitality for mourners.¹⁴ [45, 141]

Rituals

Post-natal

The newborn son of Gursikh should not be publicly displayed until he has been given an initiatory drink of water which has been sweetened with raw sugar and touched by the feet of five Sikhs. If the child is to be brought up a Kes-dhari his hair should be left uncut from birth. He should be given a name from the Granth Sahib and after the ceremony he should be bathed in whey.¹⁵ [60–1]

Marriage

Marriage should be in accordance with caste and lineage prescriptions. A marriage should be performed at the house of the bride's father, to which the bridegroom should be escorted by a marriage-party. A Gursikh should not demand a bride-price. A Kes-dhari's son may be married to the daughter of a father with cut hair (*monā*) if she receives foot-wash initiation (*charanān dī pāhul*). He should not marry his daughter to a Sahaj-dhari Sikh unless the prospective bridegroom undergoes initiation. This is performed with sweetened water that has been used to wash a Granth Sahib lectern. Five stanzas of *Japujī* and five of *Anand* are recited and the couple then drink the water. If the bridegroom has previously worn a sacred thread he may continue to do so during the wedding ceremony, but he should subsequently remove it. [11, 13–16, 21, 503]

Initiation

A Gursikh should receive initiation (*pāhul*) before his hair has grown to its full length. It is a father's duty to have his son initiated.¹⁶ The procedure for conducting an initiation ritual is set out in detail (see pp. 196–8). He who accepts initiation is required to keep his kes uncut. Any Sikh who administers initiation must be devout, wise, and scrupulous in his observance of the Rahit. He should not be one-eyed, bald, lame, or a leper, nor should he be a beardless person. Sword baptism (*khaṇḍe dī pāhul*) should not be administered to a woman. [88, 90–1, 122, 178–83, 375, 506]

Funerals

The head of a deceased Gursikh must not be shaved, not even that of a Sahaj-dhari. Kirtan should be sung and charitable offerings distributed. There should be no public lamentation. Karah prasad is distributed after the corpse has been washed. Katha and kirtan should continue for as many days as the family of the deceased can afford. The mourners should all be Sikhs. Spread a complete reading of the Granth Sahib over this period. After the funeral the ashes of the deceased should be deposited in the Ganga. On the anniversary of a father's death hold a shraddh ceremony. [45–6]

Karah prasad

The preparation of karah prasad must not be entrusted to anyone who cuts his hair or smokes a hookah, nor to any other transgressor of the Rahit. Before it is prepared the cooking-square must be freshly smeared and clean clothes put on. *Anand* should be recited before commencing the preparation. Karah prasad should not be weighed after it has been prepared. Before it is distributed, recite Ardas. Karah prasad should be distributed to all without favouritism or discrimination. A Gursikh should never set aside his own portion before serving others. [288, 290, 294, 296, 305, 376–7, 430–3, 440]

The Preparation and Consumption of Food

The preparation of food

The Sikh who can afford a cook should employ only a Sikh. He must never employ anyone who smokes a hookah, wears a topi, cuts his hair, steals, fornicates, gambles, or otherwise flouts the Rahit. Shoes must never be worn in a kitchen. Hands must be washed before kneading dough and finger-nails should not be permitted to grow long. Remain silent while preparing a meal. Burn wood when cooking, not dung. If wood is insufficient burn equal parts of wood and dung. [84, 86, 105, 298]

Eating and drinking

A Gursikh should wash his hands and feet, rinse his mouth, and say '*Sat nām vāhi gurū*' before eating. Before commencing he

should also put aside a portion as an offering to the Guru. Take care not to begin to eat before a guest does so. Sikhs should sit in a single line when eating together. Before eating a Gursikh should remove his shoes, but not his turban. Do not talk while eating and do not stand up if anyone arrives during the meal. When others are present do not eat carelessly, spitting out particles of food. Eat no more than is necessary to satisfy your hunger. A Gursikh is strictly forbidden to eat meat killed according to Muslim rites. If possible he should also avoid drinking water from a leather bag. He should certainly never drink water served by a Muslim. A cup received from someone who cuts his hair must be washed before it is used. A Gursikh will never give others food that he has already tasted. He will never eat food left by a woman. [8, 10, 42, 52, 104, 119–20, 299, 301, 342, 372, 399, 521, 542]

Weapons and Warfare

The obligation to bear and revere arms

A Gursikh should carry weapons, both large and small. He should always have at least one weapon on his person. A Gursikh should revere and worship his sword (*siri sahib*). Worship is due first to the Guru and secondly to the sword. The right to rule is won and sustained by the sword. Arms should only be used, however, when there is good cause for so doing. [41, 146, 188, 196, 250, 279, 322, 332]

The fighting Singh's equipment

A Singh should regularly practise the use of his weapons to ensure that he maintains and improves his skill. A Singh should wear a kachh made from strong cloth, not a flimsy article which will fail to serve its purpose. A weapon should never be left uncleaned. [189, 193–4, 197]

The need for vigilance

A Singh should never keep his sword on his person while defecating. Place it some distance away to ensure that it is not defiled, or else entrust it to another Singh who will keep watch for him. He must remain ever alert, even when sitting and thinking or when defecating. He will always remain ready to spring into

action with his sword. He should always sleep prepared, clothed and wearing a turban. His sword should never be carried behind his back nor slung over the shoulder with the hilt behind the shoulder. Never entrust your sword to a Muslim while you walk ahead. A Singh should don his kachh as soon as he has bathed, regardless of whether it is wet or dry. [189, 191, 195, 198, 204, 328–31]

The battlefield

A Singh should never turn his back in battle. Always aid a wounded, disabled, or exhausted Sikh on the battlefield. Always have a slain Sikh cremated on the battlefield if possible. [190, 418, 420]

Caste

Personal relationships amongst Sikhs should be based on the belief that there is only one caste and only one lineage for those who are followers of the one true Guru. Sikhs should, however, observe the distinctive customs of their various castes, and they should marry according to the traditional prescriptions of caste and lineage. This they should do in order that no stigma may attach to their name. Sikh marriages should be performed by Brahmans. Brahman Sikhs should receive double the deference and attention normally bestowed on a Sikh. In the langar, however, Brahmans should not be seated in front of others. All should be required to sit in the same line and Brahmans should not necessarily be served first. [11, 24, 79, 120–1, 499]

Women's Duties

Personal behaviour

A Gursikhni should maintain a dutiful and placid disposition as a wife. She should regard her husband as her lord, serving him better food than other members of the family and instructing him in the principles of the Sikh faith. A Gursikhni should never abuse or berate a man, nor should she fight with one. She should spurn ridicule, mockery, vulgar jokes, and obscene language. She should not sing coarse songs at weddings or at any other times. The songs which she sings should always be chaste and wholesome. A Gursikhni should not bathe naked, nor should she

stand naked in water and cast it towards the sun. [550, 552, 554, 556-8, 565, 567]

Cooking and serving food

A Gursikhni should wash and cleanse herself with fresh earth before preparing or serving food. To avoid pollution a Gursikhni should observe the following rules while preparing food:

1. She should not speak.
2. If she clears her nose or scratches her body she should wash her hands before proceeding.
3. Small children should be kept out of her cooking area. [551, 562-3]

Women's prayer and devotions

Before reciting the Guru's mantra a Gursikhni should bathe, or at least wash her hands and feet and rinse her mouth. She should visit the dharamsala twice daily; she should keep her head covered in a satsang; and she should learn portions of the sacred scripture by heart. She should not read the Granth Sahib in a Sikh assembly. A Gursikhni should spin cotton, and with it weave cloth to be used as a wrapping (*rumāl*) for the Granth Sahib or as a covering for the dharamsala floor. She should not offer prayers at tombs or cenotaphs. Sword baptism is not to be administered to women. [506, 538, 553, 559-60, 566]

Social relationships

A Gursikhni should not keep the company of men other than those of her own family. She should not sit with malicious women, exchanging gossip with them. Social contacts with women belonging to the Five Reprobate Groups (*pañj mel*) are to be avoided. [555, 564]

Travel and Pilgrimage

Visiting a pilgrimage centre does not free a Gursikh from obedience to the Rahit. If he decides to go on pilgrimage, he should visit only places associated with the Gurus. Before commencing any journey, he should offer Ardas to the Guru and ask for his protection. When he returns he should proceed to

his dharamsala as soon as possible and make his thanksgiving. When on pilgrimage he should not accept support from offerings made by others if this can be avoided. He should himself make offerings in order that others may be fed. Any Gursikh traveller in need should receive assistance from local Sikhs regardless of his capacity to pay. [108–9, 111–12, 121, 135, 537]

False Teachers and Enemies of the Guru

A Gursikh should have no dealings with any of the Five Reprobate Groups, viz. (1) Minas. (2) The followers of Ram Rai. (3) The followers of Dhir Mal. (4) The masands. (5) Those who acknowledge the authority of the masands. A Gursikh should not associate with any of the following, nor should he accept their teachings: (1) A Muslim (*turak*). (2) A yogi. (3) Anyone who does not wear a turban. (4) One who shaves his head (*sir-khuthā*). (5) A mendicant who mats his hair. (6) A naked sadhu who coats himself with ashes. (7) A person who wears a topi. (8) Anyone who arrogantly assumes spiritual authority. A Gursikh should never patronize nor protect apostates, delinquents, impostors, cheats, thieves, adulterers, or gamblers. [6, 31, 83, 121, 186–8, 546–7]

Attitude towards Muslims

Never associate with a Muslim nor trust his word. Never drink water from a Muslim's hands, never eat his food, and never sleep in his company. Do not be influenced by anything a Muslim may say. Muslims have no respect for the religious obligations of caste and the cow. A Gursikh should not enter a Muslim mosque nor accept the authority of a mullah or a qazi. Never touch a Muslim woman. Never eat meat from animals killed according to the Muslim rite (*kuṭṭhā*). Do not distribute or eat karah prasad in the company of Muslims. Never eat sweets or any other food offered as an oblation by a Muslim official. Religious discourse should not be held with Muslims. A Gursikh should never delegate the management of his household affairs to a Muslim. He should never entrust his sword to a Muslim and then walk on ahead. Never invite a Muslim to recite the Kalima nor attend the mourning ceremony for a deceased Muslim. A Gursikh should never reverently place on his kes anything

inscribed in Arabic. Gursikhs who are employed by a Turkish administration may be forgiven any unavoidable transgressions which may result from their employment, except for the following three offences that can never be pardoned: (1) Killing a daughter. (2) Cutting of one's hair or beard. (3) Taking poisonous substances (i.e. smoking a hookah). Never touch a Mughal's feet nor eat food which he leaves. The command of the Guru is, 'Fight the barbarians! Destroy them all!' [10, 31, 80, 120-1, 137, 330, 372, 384-6, 407, 436, 441-2, 444-6, 472, 541]

Hindu Conventions

A Gursikh must not wear either a sacred thread or a frontal mark. He must never offer prayers at any tomb, cenotaph, or sacred pool, nor at a shrine dedicated to Gugga Pir. He should not worship at the shrines of deceased Hindus and he should not enter a Hindu temple. Sikh marriages should be performed by Brahmans. Brahman Sikhs should receive double the deference and attention normally bestowed on a Sikh. The ashes of a deceased Sikh should be deposited in the Ganga. On the anniversary of a father's death, a shraddh ceremony should be held. [20, 24, 45-6, 120, 137, 387, 406]

Belief in the Goddess Devi

The Devi receives abundant attention in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. It comes in the lengthy narrative description of the successful fire ceremony, held on the hill called Naina Devi. [205-35]

Salutations

A Gursikh should never fail to respond when greeted by the salutation '*Vāhi gurūjī kī fate[h]!*' ('Hail the Guru's victory!'). Each morning a Gursikh should greet the sun with a '*Namaste*' and his fellow Sikhs with the salutation '*Vāhi gurūjī kī fate[h]!*'. When the new moon appears a Gursikh should salute it with a '*Namaste*' and his fellow Sikhs with '*Vāhi gurūjī kī fate[h]!*' [150-1, 363, 516]

The Gurmukhi Script

A Gursikh should never tread on any paper inscribed with Gurmukhi, nor use such paper as a wrapping. He should show respect for the letters of the Gurmukhi alphabet. Never speak

of 'drying' a slate after washing Gurmukhi characters from it. [147, 511]

Miscellaneous

Sundry prohibitions

Never misdirect a Sikh who asks the way. A Gursikh should not rub gum-tragacanth or henna on his hands, nor apply black collyrium to his eyes. [382, 419, 490, 513]

Miscellaneous injunctions

Take care never to drop a knife (*karad*) when it is being passed from one person to another. A tree should not be cut down while it is still able to bear fruit. A lamp should be extinguished by waving a fan or piece of cloth. It should not be blown out by human breath nor snuffed with the fingers. Do not extinguish a fire with water left over after drinking. Do not throw a stone at a dog without good reason. [324, 491, 505, 523, 543]

This is a substantial statement of what the Rahit was believed to contain. It is true that it represents the views of the Chhibbar family, and it is also true that it may have been corrupted to some extent. Little importance needs to be attached to the latter possibility. A manuscript copied in S. 1821 (1765 CE), is sufficiently early to make corruption unlikely (see p. 13). More importance should perhaps be attached to the rahit-nama's Chhibbar origins. Yet barring the few items that communicate privilege to Brahman Sikhs there is little reason for believing that it had strayed far from the orthodox Khalsa path. The standard Khalsa precepts have all been written into the rahit-nama, and although the author may sometimes have addressed it to all Sikhs there can be no doubt that his injunctions are overwhelmingly directed to the Khalsa. Certain features stand out.

1. The author takes into account the whole of life. Detailed prescriptions are enunciated that cover virtually every aspect of a Sikh's life, with summary listings of qualities to be upheld and evils to be spurned. In this respect the rahit-nama is in marked contrast with its predecessors (though not with its successors).

2. In spite of its length the rahit-nama contains little doctrinal material. The emphasis is on behaviour rather than on belief. The general attitude is a rather puritanical one.

3. Considerable stress is laid upon the maintenance of the kes and care of the hair.

4. Likewise the use of arms and the practice of warfare receive close attention.

5. Smoking still means use of a hookah. A cook and anyone responsible for preparing karah prasad must not be a *hukai*. A Gursikh should not work for a Muslim if he is required to join in smoking a hookah.

6. A lengthy list of offences against the Rahit (*tanakhāh*) is given. No penances are prescribed.

7. Like the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* the author attaches considerable importance to the *sangat*, going into detail concerning the *dharamsala* and the duties of the person in charge of one.

8. A detailed initiation ceremony is provided.

9. Hindu conventions are retained to some extent. At funerals the head of a deceased Sikh must not be shaved (thereby agreeing with *Gur Sobhā*), but the ashes of a deceased should be deposited in the Ganga and on the anniversary of a father's death a shraddh ceremony should be held. Reverence for the cow is upheld (*ChS* 10, 59, 150).

10. Caste and lineage distinctions are maintained.

11. Although the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is unique in allocating a lengthy section to the duties of female members of the Khalsa, the author staunchly upholds patriarchy. In this regard he agrees at much greater length with the author of *Sākhī Rahit kī*. Women are the embodiment of deceit and one should not entrust a secret to them. Initiation can never be conferred on women. A Khalsa has important duties to perform for his son (such as preparing him for initiation), but arranging a suitable marriage is the only one that he has for his daughter.

12. The Five Reprobate Groups are all named. Eight other kinds of people to be avoided are separately named.

13. Muslims are subjected to an extensive panoply of condemnation, culminating in a quotation from the Dasam Granth: 'Fight the barbarians! Destroy them all!'¹⁷ It appears that Sikhs and Muslims uneasily co-existed in the Punjab of the time, but there was no doubt about the Khalsa opinion of Muslims. The third of the three items which, in an altered form, still survives

in the modern Rahit makes its appearance. This is the ban on touching Muslim woman (see ch. 7.15, pp. 224–5).

14. The author firmly believes the account of Guru Gobind Singh's encounter with the goddess Devi or Durga.

The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* supplies a substantial array of Rahit provisions. It has been argued that in spite of its Brahman provenance the rahit-nama is generally orthodox. The fact that it is securely located in the middle years of the eighteenth century means that a comprehensive view of the Rahit has emerged at a relatively early date.

4.5 Desa Singh Rahit-nama

This rahit-nama purports to be a lengthy question-and-answer conversation between Nand Lal and Guru Gobind Singh, followed by an account by the elderly Desa Singh of a vision that he had of the Guru. In this vision Guru Gobind Singh assured Desa Singh that he had written the whole of the Dasam Granth. It is by no means certain that the two parts of the rahit-nama belong together, their contrasting subjects fitting very imperfectly. It is, however, the composite version which has come down to us, and we must accept it in its present form until evidence is produced which enables us to change our view. There can be no doubt of course that the reasons for both sections are fanciful. We have already seen that the date of Desa Singh's rahit-nama is late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, a period which makes it impossible to record a conversation between Guru Gobind Singh and Nand Lal. Similarly the vision of Desa Singh must be rejected, as only a small portion at most of the Dasam Granth can claim to be the work of the Guru.

According to the Bhatt *vahis*, Desa Singh was the youngest of Bhai Mani Singh's ten sons.¹⁸ This may or may not be true, but it makes little difference to the contents of the rahit-nama. These may be summarised as follows.

The Khalsa

The benefits of the Khalsa

The Khalsa is the Guru made manifest. Faith in the Guru brings firm devotion to a Sikh of the Khalsa. Wealth, renown, peace,

a wife, sons, and knowledge are the reward. These are all the gifts of the Guru. [22, 57]

The Rahit

One recognizes Singhs by their obedience to the Rahit. He who takes initiation insincerely and violates the Rahit, earns for himself an evil karam. How can anyone who flouts the Rahit earn a good reputation merely by maintaining his kes? This splendid Rahit deserves the highest praise. Anything opposed to it is contrary to the Rahit (*kurahit*). The Rahit is the religious duty of the Singh and without it none can be regarded as a Singh. Without the Rahit there is no access to truth and none can be accounted virtuous. Without the Rahit one wanders lost in the world, is punished in the divine court, goes to hell, is treated as a *tunakhāhīā*, is a demon, and knows no happiness. Therefore hold fast to the Rahit. [75–6, 82–9, 121]

Khalsa virtues

Always be humble. Never associate with those who are evil. Uphold humility, true understanding, and dharam. Accept the destiny which has been given to you. [51, 53–6]

Character and Behaviour

Doctrine

The supreme truth lies in following the Guru. Every day utter 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāh gurū*). Repeat the divine Name, give alms, and bathe. Never neglect worship (*pūjā*). [10, 12, 35, 71]

The daily discipline

Rise at daybreak, bathe, and recite *Japujī* and *Jāp*. Towards evening wash your hands, feet, and mouth. Then put your comb, knife, and turban on again. In the evening recite *Sodar*. After 9 P.M. recite [*Kīrtan*] *Sohilā*. Each day learn a text from either Granth. [11, 38, 68, 101]

Dress and outward appearance

Always wear your kachh and kirpan. Wash your kes in whey every fortnight. Dry it in sunshine. He who shaves his head can never find God (*harī*). A man without his kes is like a bird without wings, a sheep without wool, a woman without clothing. Retaining

his kes and obeying the Rahit is the supreme glory. [15, 69, 79–85]

Bathing and personal hygiene

Early in the morning scrupulously bathe. Then put on your comb, knife, and turban. Take a vessel filled with water when you go out to defecate. After defecation splash on water and rub with earth. Then you may put on your weapons. Have your clothing washed after 20 days. [66–7, 70]

The hookah and other intoxicants

Keep away from poisonous substances (*bikhayā*). Avoid the hookah, the tobacco bowl on a hookah, tobacco (*tamākū*), cannabis (*charas*), hemp (*gāñjā*), toddy, and other intoxicating things. It is, however, acceptable to take small amounts of opium or bhang. [25, 30]

Family responsibilities

Do not attach yourself wholly to your family. Always serve the Guru. Manage income prudently and so provide for your household's needs. Keep well away from those who kill their daughters. [8, 50, 71]

Sexual morality

Sleep only with your own woman. Avoid prostitutes. Shun the following women: a Musalli, a Dum, a procuress, a loose woman, and anyone belonging to a caste different from your own. [14, 25, 29, 44]

Speech and manner of address

He who is fierce on the battlefield will remain calm at home. He will be simple of speech, with sweet words, always devoted to the Guru. Never utter a frivolous word. [52, 55]

Charity

Give gifts as your resources permit. Allocate a tithe of your income to the Guru. [11, 13]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Do not tell tales, slander others, or covet their property. Avoid

lust, anger, pride, drunkenness, and covetousness. Do not gamble. Do not be greedy for excessive wealth. Do not take bribes. A Singh should avoid the following five vices: taking another's woman, gambling, speaking untruth, theft, drinking alcohol. [8, 14, 25, 44, 51, 54, 64]

Social Behaviour Within the Panth

Courtesy in speech and behaviour

When bidding farewell to someone bestow on him affection or money. Always show affection to other Singhs. [42, 43]

Assistance in times of need

A Singh who is a raja should care for a poor Singh. Give him money or a horse. Singhs who are away from home require particular attention. Keep only Singhs as servants. [41, 42]

Hospitality

Serve a renunciant Singh. Bathe his feet and give him food. [25]

Festivals

Celebrate the birthdays of all the Gurus. On these occasions prepare some food, cooking it in an iron bowl, and feed it to Khalsa Sikhs. [39]

Business dealings

Practise a profession that does not involve violation of the Rahit. Agriculture, trade, or handicrafts are all suitable. Work hard and earn an honest living. Do not be tempted by stealing or by highway robbery. [23, 24]

Treatment of women

Regard another's daughter as your own and treat another's wife as your mother. [13]

The Sangat

The satsang

Never go to worship empty-handed. Give what you can afford when offering Ardas. [40]

The dharamsala

Offerings made in a dharamsala should not be used by the attendant for his own private purposes. He should take from them enough to live. The remainder should be used for feeding visitors and for the maintenance of the gurdwara. He should never keep them for spending on his wife and children. [72–4]

The Guru Granth Sahib

Every day, show your love for the sacred *bāṇī*. When a passage is being read from the Granth, or God (*harī*) is being proclaimed, concentrate your attention closely. [8, 27]

Rituals

Marriage

Marry a girl from your own caste. [28]

Initiation

Admission to the Khalsa is by the two-edged sword initiation (*khaṇḍe kī pāhul*). This is the superior form of initiation. It is administered by five Singhs. [6–7, 9]

Karah prasad

Having recited *Japujī* and *Jāp* mix together in equal proportions ghi, flour from wheat, and something sweet. Boil them together. Always score karah prasad with a knife before consuming it. Karah prasad should be distributed equally. [63, 119–20]

The Preparation and Consumption of Food

Never consume fish, meat, or alcohol. The flesh of a goat may be eaten provided the goat is killed with a single blow well away from a langar, but all other meat is forbidden. Always wash your hands before eating. Take food when you are hungry. Never eat alone. Share your food with other Singhs. Gather many Singhs and give them food. [25, 32, 65, 66, 70, 102, 107 (cf. 105)]

The langar

Verses 90–113 and 117 provide a very detailed procedure for conducting a langar. The author inconsistently claims that in the

langar, there should be no discrimination on the grounds of caste (see Caste). He adds that a prince preparing a large langar for his poor subjects should follow the same procedure.

Weapons and Warfare

A Khalsa should never be without a weapon. Do not pray without having your weapons with you. Intoxicating liquor may be taken before battle, but should otherwise be avoided. In battle the Khalsa should never be defeated. Sustain the spirit which declares, 'I shall kill the enemy!' In a fight, never turn you back or flee from the field of battle. In battle the Singh should roar like a lion. Let him do the deeds of a Kshatriya, crying 'Kill! Kill!' as he fights. Never wield a weapon against another Singh. See him as the Guru. The Khalsa who is killed in battle will certainly go to paradise. The glory of he who wins will resound the whole world over. If anyone fears fighting battles let him turn to agriculture. [33, 43, 45-9, 70]

Caste

A Singh protects cows and Brahmans. Ensure that your cooking arrangements are kept unpolluted. Do not permit the following to participate in your langar: barbers, Jhivars who shave heads, weavers, potters, and others of low caste. Brahmans and those of good family who do not touch bhang or tobacco can all prepare food in a langar. Preaching should convince the four castes of the message concerning warfare.¹⁹ [16, 102-4]

Pilgrimage

Anandpur, Amritsar, Patna, and Abchalnagar [the four takhats], are truly splendid places. Reverently walk around any place associated with a Guru, make an offering, say Ardas, and inwardly meditate on the supreme Guru. [17, 18]

False Teachers

Slander of the Guru is a serious offence. The Veda tells us that we should not defame any of the world's panths. Every panth is the dwelling-place of God (*hari*). Slander, misrepresentation, and envy are great evils. [60-1]

Attitude Towards Muslims

Smite Turks with immense vigour. A Singh who obeys the Rahit does not bow when he meets a Turk. Never serve Turks, never greet a Turk, never trust Turks. Serve only the Khalsa. Avoid Muslim *kuṭṭhā* meat. By fighting them face to face the Muslims will be defeated. Remain ever alert against the Turks. A Turk should be neither accepted as a master nor treated with deference. Keep Muslims away from your cooking-square when preparing for a langar. Muslims are polluted. [16, 20, 21, 30, 45, 46, 62, 94]

Attitude Towards Hindus

A Singh protects cows and Brahmans. Avoid Sanyasis, Bairagis, Udasis, yogis, Shaivite mendicants, and Tantrics. Never eat their food. Those who follow any of the six Hindu systems may believe in them, but for a Singh they are not acceptable. [16, 33, 34]

Salutations

When you meet a Sikh greet him with *Vāh gurū kī fateh* ('Hail the Guru's victory!'). [10, 19]

The Gurmukhi Script

A Singh should learn Gurmukhi from another Singh. He should also learn other useful things. [36]

Desa Singh concludes by telling his 'own story' in verses 124–49. In it he sees a vision of Guru Gobind Singh who recites to him the names of all the works contained in the Dasam Granth, telling Desa Singh that he composed them all. He then told him that he had also propounded the Rahit of the Khalsa, though he had not included it in the Dasam Granth.

Modern Sikhs tend to be sceptical of this rahit-nama, regarding it as a reflection of the early nineteenth century when (according to their view) the Panth was subjected to misguided notions of Vedantic principle and Brahmanic ideals. They believe that it is not as misleading as the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, but certain features of it mislead nonetheless. In particular they object to the rahit-nama's acceptance of caste. There

is no evidence, however, to support this view of the rahit-nama's origin. With only minor blemishes Desa Singh appears to represent the Khalsa accurately at the end of the eighteenth century. Some of his principal points are the following:

1. Desa Singh does indeed uphold caste divisions with the significant exception of eating in the langar. In this regard he is not so far removed from the attitude of the majority of today's Khalsa. Whereas today there is absolute equality on the sacred ground of the gurdwara and the langar, the divisions are generally maintained in matters of marriage.

2. The ban on the hookah is still maintained, and its dangers are extended to cover intoxicants. Intoxicating liquor may, however, be taken before battle. There is no mention of snuff.

3. *Jhalā* meat appears, though its use is granted only reluctantly. It is only permitted with goat meat and then only if the animal is killed well away from a langar. In the langar meat is absolutely banned and one is left with the impression that Desa Singh would gladly proscribe it altogether.

4. Detailed instructions are given for the procedure in a langar. Obviously Desa Singh attached great importance to eating in a langar. This portion of the rahit-nama (verses 90-118) is attributed to the instructions of Nand Lal.

5. Instructions are also provided for the preparation of karah prasad. This time, however, it is the Guru who gives them.

6. Considerable stress is laid upon the Khalsa Sikh's duty as a warrior.

7. The same applies to the author's comments on the kes (verses 79-85).

8. Little mention is made of *tanakhāhs*.

9. The term *kurahit* (contrary to the Rahit) appears for the first time in a rahit-nama (verse 121).²⁰

10. Desa Singh's comments concerning Muslims are both numerous and extremely vigorous. It is this aspect of the rahit-nama which particularly suggests that it was written at the end of the eighteenth century rather than during the early nineteenth century.

11. His comments about Hindus are much fewer and less

vigorous. Certain varieties of Hindu should be avoided, but the Brahman is not included amongst them. Singhs are counselled to protect both cows and Brahmins.

12. The rahit-nama contains little about rituals.

13. Renunciant Singhs are recognised as legitimate members of the Khalsa (verse 25).

14. The Khalsa is called upon to celebrate the birthdays of the Gurus (verse 39).

4.6 Daya Singh Rahit-nama

The eighteenth century rahit-namas draw to an end with the one attributed to Daya Singh. Amongst all the rahit-namas this is perhaps the most difficult one to analyse, partly because there appears to be a real possibility of corruption and partly because there is actually more than one version attached to Daya Singh's name. In his *Gurū Khālse de Rahit-nāme*, Shamsheer Singh Ashok includes two works attributed to the same Daya Singh, one entitled *Rahit-nāmā* (Ashok 59–62) and the other *Tanakhāh upadesh* (Ashok 63–67). Neither is the same as the version published by Piara Singh Padam in *Rahit-nāme* (PSP 57–67). Their language retains the Khari Boli impress of the version contained in Padam's collection, but neither is in prose. Both are cast in the simple verse of most other rahit-namas. Ashok gives no indication of the source of these two rahit-namas.

Although neither of Ashok's rahit-namas reproduces the text of Padam's version in verse form, it is evident that there has been access to it in the case of at least *Tanakhāh upadesh*. The latter opens with the following couplet:

*pañch singh mil ekaṭhe karai bibek bichār
tanakhāh rahit upadesh kar det dokh ko tār //1//* (Ashok 63).

This should be compared with the following passage that occurs half way through the Padam version.

*pañj singh mil kar ke ikaṭhā bibek karan rahat bamūjab tab
tanakhāh ko lā kar dokh ko tar saket hain* (PSP 74).

When five Singhs meet to determine [an issue] arising from the Rahit, they can remove the blame by imposing a penance (*tanakhāh*) (DayaS 49).

Either the couplet has been borrowed from the Padam version or it has provided the original source. The probability strongly favours the former. A verse version is more likely to spring from a prose version than vice versa, and the language of both poems is more modern than that of the prose version. It is largely for these reasons that the version recorded by Padam has been translated and the two poems set aside.

A second borrowing poses greater difficulty in terms of deciding its source. Towards the conclusion of the prose version recorded by Padam the style suddenly switches to verse with the announcement *Srī Satigurū vāch* ('the word of Sri Satguru'). This verse version has also been attached to *Tanakhāh upadesh* where it appears as two works, each separate from *Tanakhāh upadesh* in that the numbering of couplets starts anew with each section. The first is entitled *Akālī Singh* (Ashok 65–6), followed by *Nihang Singh*.²¹ This, at least, is how the various works are recorded in Ashok's version, though it should be remembered that the headings, at least, may have been inserted by Ashok. The two sections are followed by a third in the Ashok version only. This comprises 31 couplets headed *Niramale Singh*, also with a new set of verse numbers (Ashok 71–3).

There are four differences that distinguish Ashok's version of this supplement from that of Padam. First, there is the division of Ashok's version into three sections comprising definitions of an Akali, a Nihang, and a Nirmala. Padam has only one unbroken definition, much shorter in length and implying that Akali and Nihang are names for the same kind of Khalsa Sikh. Second, Ashok's version of his Akali definition is headed by a couplet in which Daya Singh asks the Guru to explain the nature of an Akali, and then ends with a summary couplet. Padam's version lacks these. Third, Ashok's version of the second definition is much longer. Whereas his version has 64 couplets, Padam's has only eight.²² Ashok's third section is completely absent from Padam. Fourth, although the language and content of the two versions is very similar in the Akali section, in the Nihang section the content soon diverges completely and only comes together in rare instances thereafter.²³

This supplementary portion seems to be older in Ashok's version, the poem having apparently been attached to Padam's text at some later date. The greater length of the

Nihang definition and the complete absence of the Nirmala definition suggest this. Presumably the prose section *ab bihaṅgam ke lakkhan* ('Now a definition of a Bihangam'), which follows immediately after the poem and concludes the Padam text, will also have been affixed to an earlier manuscript. The material contained in the supplementary portion can be regarded as appropriate for a rahit-nama, but it belongs to a different rahit-nama from the prose version attributed to Daya Singh. The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* concludes with item 92 of the translation.²⁴

The contents of the prose version of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* may be summarized as follows.

The Khalsa

The benefits of the Khalsa

The Guru's Khalsa is the image of Akal Purakh manifested to the world. Believe this and you will end the round of death and rebirth. Akal Purakh is joined to the Khalsa in faith. Devi and the gods have given various items required for initiation into the Khalsa (*amrit*). Whereas faith in the Khalsa is exalted, all others are wholly insignificant. At the command of Akal Purakh the wondrous Panth appeared. Believing that the Guru was present in both Granth and Panth entire families attained spiritual liberation. He is a Khalsa who has totally surrendered himself to Guru Akal Purakh. [2-4, 13, 22, 43, 45]

The Rahit

A Sikh is known by his faith in the divine Word. He should be recognized by the Rahit which he inwardly observes. Let him drink the amrit of the Divine Name and put on the kachh of restraint. Never abandon the Rahit. [18, 71, 74]

Worship

Items 64-5 provide a detailed account of the Khalsa procedure for holding a service of worship.

Duties of a Khalsa Sikh

The Singh's duty is to repeat the Word (*shabad*), to learn how to wield weapons, and to enshrine the mantra '*Vāh gurū*' in his heart, repeating it with every breath in and every breath out, and thereby fixing it within his inner being (*man*). [10]

Duty to fellow members of the Khalsa

All Singhs are brothers and equals. Wash their hair and clothe them. Gifts given to a Singh are received by the Guru. Do not call a Singh by only half of his name. Do not touch the feet of anyone who is not a Khalsa Sikh, but certainly touch the feet of a Khalsa. Do not bow to anyone except a Singh. Do not abuse a Singh. Achieve spiritual liberation by massaging the feet or pressing the limbs of other Singhs. [26, 27, 34, 36, 46, 80]

Character and Behaviour

Doctrine

The Guru is the incarnation (*avatār*) of Akal Purakh. The world is like an ocean, across which the Guru carries his followers. [8, 13, 22]

Devotion

Put on the Guru's sacred words (*bāṇī*) as your weapons and firmness of intellect as your kes. Recite an Ardas before every important undertaking. Obey the Guru's commands. Those who are spiritually liberated utter '*Vāhi gurū*', even those who have been initiated by *charan pāhul*. [10, 14, 19, 78]

Dress and outward appearance

Clothing should be dark grey, white, yellow, or green. Do not wear red clothing. Wear a close-fitting garment which fastens with tapes. First let clothing touch the Granth and then wear it. Anyone who wears a topi will be reborn a leper. Do not sleep naked at night. [23, 25, 28, 36, 62, 80]

THE KACHH

The punishment for not wearing a loin cloth or a dhoti is hell. The kachh should be made from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 metres (*gaz*) of cloth. Every fourth day the kachh should be washed. When changing his kachh a Singh must withdraw one leg and put it the leg-hole of another pair before withdrawing the second leg. The kachh must not conceal the knees. Always have on your person a kachh, a knife (*karad*), a wrist-ring (*karā*), and a finger-ring (*chhāp*). [21, 38, 56, 57, 70]

THE KES AND BODY HAIR

The kes merits great respect, the noblest of all features. Twice a day hair should be combed. Wash your hair in whey, milk, and ghi, drying it in the sun and decorating it with flowers. Protect it from dust. Then tie your turban and take food. Do not apply oil to your kes. Do not cut any of your body hair. He who receives *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* and yet does not maintain his kes uncut, is an impostor. [19, 20, 24, 38, 58, 63, 86]

THE TURBAN

The top-knot should be kept in the centre of the head and the turban neatly tied. The kes should always be covered. Twice a day hair should be combed and the turban retied. Carry a steel knife (*lohe kī karad*) in your turban. The punishment for leaving the kes uncovered is hell. Do not place your turban on your knee. [20, 23, 38, 82]

Bathing and personal hygiene

Do not bathe naked. Cut your finger-nails in such a way that they do not fall into your food. Do not apply antimony to the eyes during the day. [24, 63, 80]

The hookah and tobacco

Do not use snuff or tobacco. Smoking a hookah is strictly banned. Land which has grown tobacco is polluted. If you touch tobacco you must bathe in the pool at Amritsar. If you chew it everything is lost. Fall at the feet of anyone who spurns tobacco, even though he may look like a rishi with matted hair. [24, 33, 57, 68, 81, 89]

Family responsibilities

A Singh should have his son initiated as a Singh. A Singh should give advice to his son. Do not kill your daughter. Do not marry your daughter to a person who cuts his hair. Marry her to a Sikh. Giving your daughter to anyone other than a Singh is like giving a goat to a butcher, and you will seven times be reborn as a crow. Marry your daughter to someone who has received either *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* or *charan kī pāhul*, but who follows the Rahit. Bind your daughter's hair in a knot, leaving none to hang down. Do not make friends with a child. [26, 28, 31–2, 47, 62, 74, 76, 78]

Sexual morality

Keep away from another's woman. He who has intercourse with another Sikh's wife, daughter, sister, or mother goes to a horrible hell. Neither receive from nor give anything to anyone who sleeps with another's woman. He who enjoys a prostitute goes to hell. The following sexual relations are prohibited: with a minor, a Muslim woman, a Brahman woman, a girl from one's own sub-caste, a sister, or some other relative. Do not have intercourse with a menstruating woman. A family man can remain pure though there be many Khalsa Sikhs in his house. A Sikh who is a celibate sadhu (*bihangam*) must remain alone to stay pure. [11, 16, 35, 39, 53, 59, 82, 85, 89]

Charity

Set aside a tithe of what you earn for the Guru's work. Give to the poor. [14, 17]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Do not lie. Avoid anger, pride, greed, slander, violence, and falsehood. Do no wrong. Inflict no pain. Speak agreeably. Keep your heart pure. Free yourself from both happiness and sadness. Do not be arrogant. There are five deeds to be avoided if you aspire to spiritual liberation: embezzlement, taking another's woman, slander, gambling, drinking alcohol. Do not rob. If outwardly a person is a Sikh yet inwardly is evil he will go to hell. [11, 14, 16, 28, 30, 52, 59, 77]

Social Behaviour Within the Panth

Hospitality

Share with others when eating. Feed a hungry person. Do not scorn another's food. [14, 83]

Business dealings

Do not trade in grain, straw, wood, or hides. [74]

Tanakhāhs specified

Five Singhs can settle matters concerning the Rahit by imposing a variety of penances. These penances are specified for

particular offences against the Rahit, and include monetary fines and strokes of the cane. Some of the offences seem highly inconsistent. For example female infanticide or having sexual relations with a minor earns a fine of only $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupees, whereas gambling, thieving, or drinking alcohol receives a penalty of 25 rupees. Smoking a hookah receives a punishment of 24 rupees, 50 strokes of the cane, and re-initiation. Eating *halāl* meat or concealing one's knees with a *kachh*, are described as serious offences. [49–53, 55, 57–8, 61–2]

The Sangat

Hear kirtan and participate in singing it. Offer a gift, placing it in the poor-box. If he says Ardas silently, all that he does will be approved. Do not think lustful thoughts while going to the gurdwara. Do not enter a satsang (*sangat*) empty-handed. [14, 17, 24]

Guru Granth Sahib

Where the Granth resides, there one obtains spiritual liberation. Whenever the Sarbat Khalsa gathers the Granth Sahib should be present in its midst. By worshipping the Granth you worship God (*parameshar*). Singing [the Guru's] sacred words is the duty of every Singh. Do not recite the *bāṇī* of anyone other than the Gurus. Read the sacred scriptures every eighth day. He who carries the Guru Granthji on his head will spend as many years in heaven as the number of steps which he takes. [4, 14, 15, 37, 40, 42, 46, 92]

Rituals

The Sikh who does not perform the Guru's rituals is a *tanakhāhīū*. [91]

Birth

When a birth in your family occurs donate $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupees as an offering. [60]

Marriage

If anyone's daughter is not engaged seek a partner for her and perform the marriage. If the man is not a Sikh have him become

one. Celebrate a marriage only by using the Anand order.²⁵ At the time of marriage donate $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupees as an offering. Do not accept food from anyone who has a marriage performed by a Brahman. [17, 60, 80, 91]

Initiation

The correct procedure for administering Khalsa initiation is described in specific detail in items 4–8. The qualities required of those who administer initiation are specified, illustrated by reference to particular Hindu rishis. Receiving amrit brings spiritual liberation. [4–9]

Funerals

When a Sikh dies change his kachh, bathe him, and tie on a turban. Read *Japuji* continuously. Sing Guru Arjan's *Mārū* 6. Prepare and distribute karah prasad to Sikhs. At a cremation donate $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupees as an offering. Do not weep when a Sikh dies. If a Khalsa dies without wearing a kachh he cannot achieve spiritual liberation. When the water from Singhs' foot-washing is poured on a corpse, the deceased person obtains spiritual liberation. [19, 56, 60, 80]

Karah prasad

Items 66 and 67 detail the procedure for the correct distribution of karah prasad. The three ingredients for preparing it have been given by Vishnu, Mahadev (Shiv), and Brahma. He who is initiated at a takhat should donate $1\frac{1}{2}$ rupees for the purchase of karah prasad. [51]

The Preparation and Consumption of Food

In your earthen cooking-square cook over a wood fire, not a dung one. Wash your hands and feet and sit in a clean place to eat. Always wear a kachh when eating. Do not eat with your kes uncovered. Neither consume too much grain nor wholly abstain from it. Do not drink water in which you have washed your hands. Do not eat from the same dish as someone else. Those who have received either *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* or *charan kī pāhul* cannot eat Muslim meat (*kuṭṭhā*), domestic pig, or donkey. [15, 42, 63, 79, 80]

Weapons and Warfare

Weapons are worshipped (*kari pūje*) during the initiation ritual. Do not falter in battle. In battle display dignity before an adversary. Take special care of horses and weapons. A Khatri should not mount a mare, only a stallion. [7, 74, 75, 82, 83]

Caste

To adopt the forms of caste is not to our taste. Any member of the four castes can take amrit initiation.²⁶ The following are useless: a Khatri without a weapon, a Brahman without knowledge, a Shudra with learning, and a recluse with a woman. The religious duty (*dharam*) of a Khatri is to bear weapons and consume food. [22, 73, 77]

Travel and Pilgrimage

Do not go where the Guru is no longer remembered. A Sikh must visit both Amritsar and Anandpur. When visiting Darbar Sahib in Amritsar always ask for blessing and offer Ardas. The Sikh who has not bathed at Amritsar is as impure as unwashed clothes. Without visiting Anandpur and Kesgarh you cannot acquire knowledge of the Sikh faith. Damdama is the Guru's Kashi. He who bathes at Muktsar will be spiritually liberated (*mukat*). [15, 51, 54, 83, 92]

False Teachers and Enemies of the Gurus

Singhs should have no dealings with (1) the followers of masands, (2) Dhir-malias, (3) Ram-raiyas, and (4) those who have undergone the tonsure ceremony. Do not take food or water from the hands of a Kanphat yogi. Do not trust yogis, Jains, or those who are clean-shaven. Those who have taken amrit initiation should have nothing to do with either a Brahman or with a faqir of Sakhi Sarvar Sultan. Do not make friends with a hillman.²⁷ The person who slanders the Guru should be beheaded. [10, 25, 40, 42, 62, 83, 88]

Attitude Towards Muslims

An initiated Khalsa who bows to a Turk is a despicable creature. He who associates with anyone who mixes with Turks goes to

hell. Do not trust Turks. Do not make friends with a Muslim. End the authority of the Turks. A Turk is an enemy and should be slain with the sword. Do not consume *halāl* meat. Pay no heed to a [Muslim] pir. Those who worship Muhammad will go to a horrible hell. Anyone who eats food prepared for a Muslim festival, who offer sweets to a Muslim holy man, or who brews intoxicating liquor goes to hell. Do not trust the illegitimate offspring of a Muslim. Do not desire to learn Persian. Anyone who reads Persian is a *tanakhāhiā* and not my Sikh. Do not drink water from his hand and do not trust him. [12, 29, 35, 42, 44, 57, 59, 77, 79, 83, 84, 87, 90, 91, 92]

Attitude Towards Hindus

Do not worship at cenotaphs, nor pay heed to any temple, religious vow, place of pilgrimage, goddess, god, fasting, Hindu worship, idols, mantras, or Brahmans. Do not make libations to the gods. Do not repeat the Gayatri, nor the evening prayers of Hindus. Do not worship at the cenotaph or tomb of some dead person. Do not hold a shraddh ceremony. Do not wear a sacred thread, feed a clean-shaven person, worship an idol, believe in an earthen image, or desert your own Guru. Do not observe the following: offerings to ancestors, Hindu evening ritual, bride-price, worship of the sun and planets, worship of gods, idol worship. Belief in the merits of particular phases of the moon is futile. Do not pierce your ears or your nose. Do not believe in the six darshans. Do not wear a tilak. Do not take food at a hair-cutting ceremony. Do not undergo a tonsure ceremony. A Brahman should not ride a bull. End the authority of the Hindu. A Singh should feed a Hindu. Having become a Singh, do not seek to learn the Hindu scriptures. You will become involved in the futile concerns of the Brahmans and will abandon the Guru's hymns. It is acceptable to have studied the Hindu scriptures before becoming a Singh. If a Brahman does not maintain his kes uncut and has not been initiated into the Khalsa do not accept food from his hands or make any offering to him. Those who worship Shankaracharya, Dattatreya, Ramanuja, or Gorakhnath will go to a horrible hell. [10, 12, 14, 30, 37, 40, 42, 44, 50, 61, 62, 69, 75, 76, 77, 83, 87, 88, 91]

Salutations

Be the first to shout 'Fateh' (Victory!). Let your shout of victory be for triumph over your own wayward self. [18, 25]

The Gurmukhi Script

Learn to read the scriptures in Gurmukhi. [87]

Sundry Prohibitions

Do not worship members of the Bedi, Bhalla, or Sodhi sub-castes.²⁸ [41]

The principal issues which arise from this list are the following:

1. The author is concerned about the Khalsa's attitude towards Muslims. The number of injunctions directed against them make this abundantly clear. He is particularly concerned that a Khalsa must never eat *kuṭṭhā* meat.²⁹ Roundly he declares that 'those who worship Muhammad will go to a horrible hell' and that all Muslims 'should be slain with the sword'.³⁰ This catalogue of wickedness makes it unlikely that the *rahit-nama* was written during the early nineteenth-century period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. A late eighteenth-century date seems to be indicated.

2. If the author had much to say against Muslims he had even more to say against Hindus, particularly against the practice of wearing a sacred thread.³¹ Their conventions are branded as mere superstitions and the shraddh ceremony is prohibited. Brahmans are criticised, although they are acceptable if they maintain the kes uncut and take initiation into the Khalsa.³² The Khalsa is urged to end the authority of the Hindus, though its members are apparently permitted to feed a Hindu.³³

3. Loyalty to the Guru is stressed.

4. Considerable emphasis is given to wearing the kachh.³⁴

5. Smoking the hookah is firmly prohibited. Tobacco (*tamākū*) is proscribed.

6. The author details in specific terms, the various *tanakhāhs* that may be awarded.

7. Detailed instructions are given for Khalsa worship, Khalsa initiation, and the distribution of karah prasad.

8. Weapons are part of the Khalsa's apparel, although they receive no emphasis.

9. The langar is not mentioned.

10. Reference is made to only four out of the Five Reprobate Groups.³⁵

11. A strict view is taken of sexual morality.

12. The Five Ks are not yet enjoined, but the author is drawing closer to them in item 70.

Endnotes

1. *TanN* note 1, p. 415. This *Nasihat-nāmā* should not be confused with the work of the same name which occurs in the apocryphal Medina Discourse and, which is said to be Guru Nanak's advice to King Qarun. *EST*, p. 102.

2. For this curious injunction see *TanN* note 18, p. 417.

3. *Guradūārā Gazar*, August 1969, Part III, pp. 36–41. Joseph Davey Cunningham (1849), pp. 343–4. *The Rayhit Nama of Pralad Rai or the Excellent Conversation of the Duswan Padsha, and Nand Lal's Rayhit Nama or Rules for the Guidance of the Sikhs in Religious Matters*, Lahore, 1876, pp. 1–6 (first numbering).

4. The Khalsa Prayer. See ch. 7.3, pp. 194–6.

5. W. H. McLeod (1987).

6. *Idem.*, *Srī Gurū Gobind Singh jī de Darbārī Ratan*, Patiala, 1976, p. 255. Chaupa Singh is said to have mentioned this only in a much later prologue attached to the rahit-nama manuscript. *ChS*, p. 31.

7. *Ibid.*, 88, pp. 68, 157. The first of the page numbers indicates the Gurmukhi text and the second the English translation.

8. The references, which are scattered through the text, concern various members of the family as well as Chaupa Singh himself.

9. The figures in square brackets after each section refer to item numbers in the *ChS* Gurmukhi text and translation.

10. *ChS*, p. 206 n8. For examples see items 54, 61, 80, 291–2, 295, 360. Cf. also 15–16, 21.

11. Item 7a which is a late interpolation (though not as late as the Singh Sabha movement) specifies that a Gursikh should embrace five things: kachh, kirpan, kes, the sacred scripture (*bāṇī*), and the congregation of the faithful (*sādh saṅgat*). *ChS*, p. 212 n28.

12. The term is *bikhiā* (or *bikhayā*) which means tobacco and which in this context means smoking a hookah. The interpolated item 7a also specifies that a Gursikh should never take a poisonous substance or trade in it, even if he is a Sahaj-dhari. He should not take snuff either.

13. At the end of the nineteenth century Sanatan Sikhs defended the right of direct descendants of the Gurus to have cushions to sit on in a gurdwara. Their Tat Khalsa rivals took strong exception to the practice and eventually carried the day.

14. No reference is made to an *akhand pāṭh* (an unbroken reading) or to a *saptāhik pāṭh* (seven-day reading).

15. This ritual concerns only boys. It does not mention girls.

16. Again girls are omitted.

17. *Pakhayān charitr* 405:396, DG, p. 1387. The term *malechh* ('barbarian') designates a Turk (that is, a Muslim) in eighteenth-century Sikh usage. See ch. 7.13, pp. 219–23.

18. PSP, Introduction (1st edition), pp. 40A-B. For the Bhatt *vahis* see pp. 73–7.

19. Note that the outcastes are omitted.

20. The term *patit* ('fallen', apostate, renegade) which is now used to identify one who has committed a *kurahit* is, however, a Singh Sabha introduction.

21. *Ashok*, pp. 66–70. It is presumably because of this addition to *DayaṢ* that the rahit-nama is very popular with the Nihang Sikhs of today.

22. The Padam version includes one with three lines instead of the usual two. Possibly a line has been omitted from what should have been two couplets. The nature of this three-lined couplet is, however, uncertain as none of the lines rhyme in the usual manner.

23. A comparison between the Ganga and Amritsar is expressed in different words and the final couplet of the Padam version appears as 59 in Ashok's version.

24. Item 93 which immediately precedes 'The word of Sri Satguru' also seems to have been interpolated. The same item is found in sakhi 12 of *Sau Sākhī*. See *DayaṢ*, endnote 54, pp. 429–30.

25. So called because it included a singing of the first five stanzas of Guru Amar Das's *Anand*. It should not be confused with the modern form of marriage known as Anand Karaj.

26. The Outcastes were apparently excluded. Cf. Also item 66, p. 319.

27. The hillmen joined the attack on Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur.

28. The Khatri sub-castes to which all the Gurus (except for Angad) belonged. Guru Angad's sub-caste (Trehan) has been omitted.

- 29. Items 35, 57, 59, 79.
- 30. Items 91, 84.
- 31. Items 14, 30, 44, 50, 69.
- 32. Item 88.
- 33. Items 77, 83.
- 34. Items 38, 21, 56, 57, 70.
- 35. Items 10, 62.

5

The First Six Decades of the Nineteenth Century



5.1 The History of the Period

During the last decade of the eighteenth century the question of who was to rule the Punjab for the next half-century was finally settled. Mughal power was gone; Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Afghan invader, was dead and the twelve Sikh misls were engaged in internecine warfare. In 1801 Ranjit Singh of the Shukerchakia misl was proclaimed Maharaja and for the next four decades he ruled an expanding Punjab. Not until he died in 1839 was there any questioning of his authority. In the decade following his death, however, the Punjab slipped into disorder, and following two Anglo-Sikh wars in 1845–6 and 1848–9 the state was annexed by the British.

Greater changes awaited the Panth at the end of the nineteenth century, but the first half was nevertheless a significant period for the development of the Rahit. One difference was that Muslims ceased to be a serious danger. The army of Ranjit Singh fought against Muslim enemies and conquered territories that had hitherto been in Muslim hands, but there was now no danger of confrontation in the Punjab. Injunctions against Muslims certainly persisted in the rahit-namas (and indeed still persist today), but their threat had ceased to be real and the anti-Muslim admonitions slowly decline. At the same time those

which showed favour to Hindus showed signs of increasing. Shortly before he died Ranjit Singh made generous contributions to Brahmans, and after his death his four widows and seven 'slave girls' cremated themselves on his funeral pyre. Attitudes of this kind certainly constituted a danger to the Rahit.

It was partly in response to this threat that two important sectarian movements developed within the Panth. These were the Namdhari and Nirankari movements, both arising during the latter years of Ranjit Singh's rule and both initially confined to the north-west of the Punjab. The two sects differed widely in some important respects (notably in their doctrines of the Guru), but both were founded by individual Sikhs who shared the same sense of disquiet. Military struggles had brought glory to the Panth under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, yet what had happened to the eternal message of the Gurus? Their teaching on the fundamental issue of the divine Name had been obscured, and with it the paramount and continuing need for the discipline of *nām simaran*.

The *Rahit-nāmā* of the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh and the *Hukam-nāmā* of the Nirankaris were both circulated amongst the respective followers of the two sects during the late 1860s or early 1870s. Before they actually appeared, however, at least three other rahit-namas had emerged. Two of these rahit-namas were embedded in the *Sau Sākhī*, and the third was an entirely different one known as either *Prem Sumārag* or *Param Sumārag*. The *Sau Sākhī* (or *Sau Sākhīān*, 'Hundred Anecdotes') presents considerable problems of dating and purpose, and these must first be considered before any conclusion can be reached concerning the two rahit-namas which the work contains. In contrast, the *Prem Sumārag* ('Supreme Way of Love') is rather easier to fix in terms of its period. As a rahit-nama, however, it is altogether different from those contained in the *Sau Sākhī*, and indeed from the six examples that were produced in the eighteenth century. Instead of the rapid punching out of injunctions the *Prem Sumārag* produces a detailed and leisurely analysis of all that concerns Sikh society, starting with the ritual practices required of a Sikh and proceeding on to the duties expected of a Sikh state.

Two other compositions containing Rahit material have also been included within this part of the nineteenth century. One is

the *Khālsā Mahimā* ('Praise of the Khalsa'), a portion of the work known as the *Sarab Loh Granth* (the 'All-Iron Book'). Like the *Sau Sākhī* this is difficult to fix in terms of its period, though obviously it cannot belong to the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The other is *Vājib-u'l-Araz* ('Reasonable Request'), said to be a portion of Mani Singh's *Bhagat Ratanāvalī*. Like its reputed host the *Vājib-u'l-Araz* is a work which explicitly concerns Sahaj-dhari Sikhs. In other words it is an erratic block, far from supporting the Khalsa mode. It was almost certainly composed during the early or possibly the mid-nineteenth century. *Vājib-u'l-Araz* appears in the composite manuscript 1018 held by the Guru Nanak Dev University Library in Amritsar (MS 1018, ff. 164b–71b; see pp. 16–17) and was therefore current by 1856.

5.2 Sarab Loh Granth

Contained in the *Sarab Loh Granth* is a portion termed *Khālsā Mahimā*, or 'Praise of the Khalsa'. It is not strictly a rahit-nama, but it has been included here as it is sometimes to be found in Punjabi collections dealing with the Rahit (PSP 156–9) and in works by Sikhs relating to the Rahit. Jodh Singh, for example, sets a lengthy quotation from the *Sarab Loh Granth* on the first two pages of his chapter dealing with the Khalsa in his widely-used *Guramati Nirāṇay* (Jodh Singh 1932, 281). When these quotations are recorded in English one finds frequent differences in their translation. This is not surprising. The *Khālsā Mahimā* portion is staccato poetry written in Khari Boli, and although the individual words often seem clear enough to a person who knows Punjabi it can be difficult finding corresponding words in English.¹

Sarab Loh Granth has always been popular in Nihang circles and thanks to its emphasis on the sanctity of iron, is currently experiencing a revival.² It is traditionally believed to be the work of Guru Gobind Singh and to have been written in 1698 (Nara 1985, 51). Sikh scholars maintain that this cannot be accepted. Kahn Singh Nabha describes it as a work in five parts which narrates the descent of God (*īshavar*) as the Sarab Loh avatar, to assist an army of gods who were being worsted by demons. It is said to be by Guru Gobind Singh and the text is preceded by *mukh-vāk pātashāhī 10*, but this is not a possible attribution.

It is, writes Kahn Singh Nabha, plainly a later composition that originated within the Devi cult. On linguistic grounds it must come after the time of Guru Gobind Singh. Tara Singh Narotam, a scholar of the late nineteenth century, believed it to be the work of Sukkha Singh who was the Granthi of Patna Sahib in the late eighteenth century (MK 125).

Vir Singh is even more definite, stating that the author was the 'Gurdas Singh' who wrote the 41st Var, spuriously attributed to Bhai Gurdas (BG 1962, 662n+). Sikh scholars appear to be virtually unanimous in fixing the later eighteenth century as the date of *Sarab Loh Granth* (EncyS IV: 57-8). Whatever the period, the *Khālsā Mahimā* portion has had a considerable and lasting effect on generations of Khalsa Sikhs. The translated section in Part II corresponds to the Gurmukhi portion included in Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme*.³

5.3 The Two Rahit-namas of the Sau Sakhi

Although this work is commonly referred to as the *Sau Sākhī* or *Sau Sākhīān* it is correctly entitled *Gur Ratan Māl*. In it are embedded two rahit-namas, one of them sakhi 8 and the other sakhi 65. Sakhi 8 is headed *Mukati-nāmā* or the 'Way of Liberation', whereas sakhi 65 bears no specific name, being entitled simply *Rahit-nāmā*. Both are traditionally believed to be by the same author who is said to be responsible for writing the entire work. This is something which certainly cannot be taken for granted.

The traditional story of the origin of *Sau Sākhī* is as follows. Ram Kuir Randhava, a devout Sikh of ascetic temperament, attached himself to the entourage of Guru Gobind Singh, and being deeply interested in Sikh doctrine and history he continually questioned the Guru on both subjects. He thereby acquired extensive knowledge and recorded it in a collection of diverse anecdotes concerning the Gurus. This collection was known as the *Pañj Sau Sākhīān* or 'Five Hundred Sakhis'. This collection was later used by Santokh Singh as the basis of his *Nānak Prakāsh* and *Sūraj Prakāsh*. No copies are now extant. A portion of it has, however, survived. This is the *Sau Sākhī* or *Gur Ratan Māl*. Unfortunately this portion seems to have been extensively interpolated during the Sikh rule of the first half of the nineteenth century.

After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, Ram Kuir related his various anecdotes to comfort the bereaved sangats, and as he did so Bhai Sahib Singh recorded them. The collection was completed in S. 1781 (1724) or S. 1791 (1734). Following initiation Ram Kuir's name was changed to Gurbakhsh Singh and he died at the age of 89 in S. 1818 (1761) (Padam 1976, 86–8).

After the annexation of the Punjab by the British in 1849 the *Sau Sākhī* was brought to their notice as a potentially subversive document. Certain references were held by the Namdhari Sikhs as pointing directly to their Guru, Ram Singh, and as these references explicitly referred to the impending overthrow of the British a clear connection seemed to have been established with a potentially troublesome group. An English translation was commissioned from Attar Singh, and was published from Benares in 1873 as *Sakhee Book or the Description of Gooroo Gobind Singh's Religion and Doctrines*.

In the introduction to his translation Attar Singh declared himself convinced that *Sau Sākhī* had been written in S. 1894 or 'corresponding to the Christian era 1834'.⁴ He subsequently enlarged his accusations in a second translation that he made in 1876. This was a translation from Punjabi of *The Travels of Guru Tegh Bahadar and Guru Gobind Singh*. In this he pointed to two examples from the earlier work which to him clearly established both the late date of writing and the Namdhari intentions. These were pointed references to a certain Ram Singh that occurred in sakhis 15 and 51.⁵ Ram Singh had been the current leader of the Namdharis, and according to Attar Singh there could be no mistaking the intention of references such as this.⁶

Since Attar Singh's time scholars have been hesitant to declare themselves unreservedly in his favour, but essentially the same opinion of the *Sau Sākhī* continued through the Singh Sabha period and still remains today. There are very few definite references to the *Sau Sākhī* in Ram Singh's correspondence,⁷ and although he does commend it to his disciples in a hukam-nama written in Burma he also commends the *Prem Sumārag* in the same letter (PSG 89). Kahn Singh largely dismisses it, adding that 'the Nihangs and Namdharis have both exalted the *Sau Sākhī* as a prophetic work, and treating its various parts as cryptograms have derived reassurance from their idiosyncratic interpretations' (MK 176). Macauliffe briefly

notes *Sau Sākhī*, saying that it is held in high estimation by the Namdharis 'and is relied on by them as the main authority for their heresy'. Santokh Singh, he notes, sometimes cites Gurbakhsh Singh's communications to Sahib Singh, but makes no mention of the *Sau Sākhī*. 'There appears nothing to establish its authenticity.'⁸

All this affects sakhis 8 and 65 as they are as much a part of the *Sau Sākhī* as the remainder of the work. The existence of interpolations in the entire work must be acknowledged, although this feature may be largely confined to sakhis 15 and 51. What appears likely is that the two rahit-namas offered by these sakhis were written by separate hands, and that both are actually the product of more than one author. There seems to be little point in preparing two rahit-namas when one would have sufficed, and the contents of the two offer further support for this conclusion.

The actual dates of recording these two rahit-namas vary. It is impossible to determine a date for the *Mukati-nāmā*, though the late eighteenth century is certainly a possibility. The traditional dates of either 1724 or 1734 are much too early, but the general resemblance of the *Mukati-nāmā* style to Desa Singh's rahit-nama makes possible a date prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁹ Towards the middle of the nineteenth century is an assured date for sakhi 65. This will be briefly discussed after their respective contents have been listed.

5.3.1 *Mukati-nāmā* (Sākhī 8)

Devotion

Meditate on the divine Name and recite the *Āratī*. Recite the Guru's mantra while attending to household duties. Do not sleep at dawn or at sunset. Stay close to the Guru. Serve only the Guru. Worshipping idols is prohibited for initiated Sikhs. [11, 26, 34, 35, 38, 40]

The daily discipline

Rise in the early morning. Clean your teeth, bathe, and repeat the Guru's sacred words. Recite his hymns and touch the ground with your forehead. [28]

Bathing

During the last watch of the night arise and bathe in cold water. [9]

Personal hygiene

Always wash after urinating. After a bowel motion cleanse yourself with earth and then with water. Renounce tobacco. Do not apply antimony or collyrium during the day. [8, 11]

Dress and outward appearance

Never cut your hair, nor permit a son or relative to do it. Do not sleep naked at night. [11, 31]

Family responsibilities

Keep your son and your wife away from bad company. Marry your daughter to a Sikh. Do not take a bride for a son from either your own sub-caste or your wife's. Form no marital or commensal ties with anyone who cuts his hair. [13, 14, 29, 31]

Sexual morality

Do not engage in sexual activity with your kes uncovered. Never observe a naked woman nor even think about one. Engage in sexual activity only with your own wife. [5, 6, 25]

Speech and manner of address

Never call a Sikh by half his name. [24]

Persons to be respected

Do not cause distress to any of the Gurus' descendants, to one accounted great by the Vedas, to an ascetic, a devout person, a generous man, a king, or a Brahman. [36]

Charity

Give a tithe for the Guru's needs and keep the remainder for your own purposes. [27]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Never lie nor listen to the lies of others. Follow the truth. Never touch alcohol. [3, 4, 8]

2. *Mukati-nāmā* appears to be the work of more than one author, though differences in the text may perhaps be due to interpolation. Without one or other of these explanations it is difficult to explain the conflicting instructions on caste and the Vedas that it contains.

3. Many of the items listed in the *rahit-namas* of the late eighteenth century are either absent or are treated very briefly. This, however, is understandable as the *Mukati-nāmā* is a short *rahit-nama*. Within a limited space, it covers a reasonable list of injunctions.

4. Injunctions concerning business dealings suggest that the *Mukati-nāmā* was written in comparatively peaceful times. This supports a dating in the early nineteenth century.

5. Hostility towards the Muslims shows signs of receding, though it is far from absent. This supports the same dating.

6. The favour shown to Brahmans is marked, though not nearly so pronounced as in *sakhi* 65.

7. Respect is due to the descendants of the Gurus.

There is little in this *rahit-nama* that will cause surprise. It possibly emerges in the late eighteenth century, but a date in the early nineteenth century seems much more likely.

5.3.2 *Rahit-nāmā* (Sākhī 65)

The Khalsa

He is a Khalsa who accepts no alms, who pays no heed to Muslim or Hindu, and who never touches a planet-crazed Brahman. [43]

Devotion

When an eclipse takes place a Sikh will not give alms to Brahmans. He will perform worship, repeat sacred words, hold fire ceremonies, offer sacrifices to ancestors, and bathe. [38]

The daily discipline

Arise during the last watch of the night and peruse only the Guru's sacred writings, reading them in Gurmukhi. Daily recite *Anand* and *Japū[jī]*. In the evening hear *Rahiras*, the hymn *Āratī* and then *Kīrtan Sohilā*. [9, 29, 33]

Dress and outward appearance

The false Sikh who cuts his hair is like poison. [25]

Family responsibilities

A Sikh should give his daughter in marriage to another Sikh and should not take any bride-price for her. Parents should teach their children Sikh songs. [27, 30]

Charity

A Sikh should not give gifts to a member of another faith. On a festival day give to those who have faith in the Guru or to shrines associated with the Guru. [15, 24]

Crimes and misdemeanours

Do not covet the property of a friend. Do not commit adultery. A granthi must never appropriate gifts which have been given at the time of prayer. Hypocrisy is not approved. [11, 34, 42, 45]

The sangat

Banish from the sangat the Sikh who has not taken initiation and let him beg. [5]

Initiation

Initiation can be performed either with the two-edged sword or by the foot-wash variety. The Sikh who leaves his hair uncut without undergoing either initiation is a pretender. There are three attitudes to initiation, each of which marks a person as a Sikh. There is he who takes no initiation (the Sahaji), he who takes foot-wash initiation (the Charani), and he who takes initiation of the two-edged sword (the Khand). The first cuts his hair; the second trims it; and the third leaves it uncut. A Brahman who takes foot-wash initiation should maintain the Sikh belief of a Sahaji. [4, 5, 7, 8, 12]

Caste

The Khatri custom is to eat after wearing arms. Caste is not approved. [44, 45]

Pilgrimage

At a pilgrimage centre always give food to others before eating. [23]

False teachers and enemies of the Gurus

The Sikh who strays from the Panth is a reprobate. Do not be friendly with a man from the hills. Do not worship Sitala, give charity to a false ascetic, or visit gurdwaras simply to get food. No one should worship a Sufi pir, a Sarvari, Sitala, a yogi, or evil spirits. Serve only the Guru. [6, 11, 22, 28]

Attitude towards Muslims

No Sikh should ever be the servant of a Muslim. Never bow to a Muslim nor sit and eat with one. A Muslim cannot go to heaven (*surag*). [10, 11, 40]

Attitude towards Hindus

Follow the Vedas and the Shastras, keeping away from all others as from a disease. Do not apply even half a *ṭikkā* to your forehead. A Khalsa Sikh should never hold a shraddh ceremony. A Khatri Sikh who wishes to hold a shraddh should engage a Brahman for the purpose. [10, 12–15, 31]

Sundry prohibitions

Do not learn Arabic or Persian. Read only Gurmukhi. [9, 10, 34, 35]

Certain points stand out from this listing.

1. This rahit-nama cannot be by the same author or authors as the *Mukati-nāmā*. The language is different and so too is the range of subjects which it covers.

2. More than one author is responsible for this rahit-nama. The internal contradictions make this evident. In view of the circumstances in which the *Sau Sākhī* evolved, these first two features are entirely predictable.

3. In addition to the *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* (initiation by the two-edged sword) the *charan amrit* or foot-wash form of initiation is accepted in verse 4. In verse 7 three varieties of Sikh are

explicitly recognised (the Sahajis, the Charanis, and the Khands). This is not what one expects of a rahit-nama which is meant to exult the claims of only one of those three, namely the Khalsa or Khands.

4. The threat from the Muslims has now significantly receded. They are still criticised in general terms and the learning of Persian is vigorously opposed, but there is no prohibition of Muslim meat or of smoking the hookah.

5. The most prominent feature of the rahit-nama is its treatment of the Brahmans. This is so extensive that in the interests of brevity it has been omitted from the list above.¹⁰ Its treatment possesses its share of contradictions, and the rahit-nama is strongly critical of false and fraudulent Brahmans. The overall treatment, however, is firmly in favour of the upright Brahman, particularly if he takes either form of initiation and becomes a Sikh.

6. The rahit-nama also upholds the Hindu scriptures, claiming that Sikhs should heed all that is written in the Vedas and the Shastras.

These features place sakhi 65 within the period of the Sikh kingdom, and almost certainly in the last decade of the reign of Ranjit Singh (1830–9). The society which it assumes would have been entirely congenial to the procedures followed immediately before and after the death of the Maharaja (see p. 137). It also provides the kind of rahit-nama that scholars of the Singh Sabha were to criticise so vehemently later in the nineteenth century, regarding it as seriously corrupted by the addition of numerous disfiguring interpolations.

5.4 Prem Sumarag

The stage was even more firmly set by the appearance of *Prem Sumārag*. One author claims that 'excepting the fact that the author happened to be a Sikh, it has little relevance to the actualities of the situation or the fundamental philosophy of Sikhism as enunciated in the *bāṇī*' (Gurbux Singh 1978, 74). In effect this opinion, though much exaggerated, states a Tat Khalsa point of view. The *Prem Sumārag* is, by contrast, very much a Sanatan statement.¹¹

Although the *Prem Sumārag* is obviously a rahit-nama there can be no prospect of printing a complete translation as the work contains well over 30,000 words. Instead brief extracts from its marriage instructions have been included.¹² The principal reason for its length is the style in which it is written, differing entirely from that of other rahit-namas. Whereas the others normally deliver their injunctions in a minimum of space, *Prem Sumārag* does so in a relaxed expansive narrative style, spelling everything out in detail.

The *Prem Sumārag* was available in 1844 when it was noted by Major R. Leech who subsequently included a portion of it in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1845. In 1878 Ram Singh mentioned it favourably a number of times, when writing to his followers from his exile in Burma (Jaswinder Singh 1985, 45, 330–1; PSG Intro. 89). In the Singh Sabha period, Kahn Singh Nabha referred to it, regarding it as the product of S.1880 or S. 1885 (1823 or 1828 CE).¹³ Thereafter it dropped from sight and seems to have been completely forgotten. In about 1930 Randhir Singh was told of a copy in the Lahore Public Library which he subsequently discovered had been entrusted to it by Attar Singh of Bhadaur. This manuscript is (or was) dated S. 1931 (1874 CE).¹⁴ During the early 1940s Randhir Singh took regular leave from his SGPC employment to visit Lahore in order to copy the manuscript, and this document he published (with significant editorial omissions) in 1953 (PSG 88). Since then, at least five other manuscript copies (in whole or in part) have been located.¹⁵

Randhir Singh advanced the claim that after the founding of the Khalsa Guru Gobind Singh must have had the Rahit immediately recorded as a *khālsā-simritī* or a rahit-nama. He maintained that a rahit-nama lay behind all Sikh writers of the Guru's time or immediately after, and the *Prem Sumārag* must have been a prose version of it. The author would have been a younger contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh and the *Prem Sumārag* must therefore be a work of the early eighteenth century (PSG 72, 83–93).

Since the publication of his work Randhir Singh has gathered a substantial body of support for his dating.¹⁶ Even before his book was published Mohan Singh had enthusiastically dubbed the period 1708–80 'the Age of Prem Sumarg' (Mohan Singh

1954, 121–3). Others more hesitant, felt that the *Prem Sumārag* properly belonged to the late eighteenth century.¹⁷ Yet others held the opinion that the eighteenth century period was too early, believing that it should be located in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸ Finally, there is Surjit Hans and his student Gurpreet Kaur who maintain that the *Prem Sumārag* dates from the British period that began in 1849 (Hans 1982, 180–8).

This has produced a complex argument. There is no need to enter into it, however, for the period of writing the *Prem Sumārag* seems beyond doubt. It should be placed in the eighteenth century, almost certainly during the latter part. It is true that the *Prem Sumārag* belongs to a settled period in the Sikh experience, or at least to a settled area. It may have been written in the Pothohar area around Rawalpindi. The circumstances which lie behind its numerous injunctions are not those of the stirring events of received Sikh history. There are, however, other considerations which point to the late eighteenth century. The latest group can certainly be ruled out by the appearance of a portion in Leech's 1844 note.

In some respects the *Prem Sumārag* reaches back to the eighteenth century, in particular to the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Two features stand out. One is the belief in the gods of the Hindu tradition (*PrS* 13:2; *PSG* 46). The other is the apocalyptic setting, which explains the recording of the rahit-nama drawn like that of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, largely from the Nihakalanki Avatar of the Dasam Granth. The *Prem Sumārag* description of the Guru yet to come, illustrates this.

The first will be that his body casts no shadow. The second will be that he is raised above the ground by a distance equal to the breadth of two fingers. The third will be that he neither eats nor drinks. The fourth will be that all people, regardless of where they may be standing, will find that he is facing them.... The fifth will be that every offering made [to the Guru] will be accepted and yet... will remain with the Sikh who proffers it.... The sixth will be that because the Guru's body consists of light it will be impossible to grasp it with one's hand. Touch it and you will feel nothing. It will be as if made of air. The seventh will be that he has no known parents. He will assume his incarnation by his own volition (*PrS* 2.2; *PSG* 2.2, 19).

This is strongly reminiscent of the description given in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (*ChS* 638, pp. 129–30, 199). Without

doubt the *Prem Sumārag* belongs to the traditional camp of the Sikhs, as opposed to the radical camp of the Tat Khalsa.

5.5 The Namdhari Rahit-nama

Both the Namdhari and the Nirankari movements emerged in the north-western area, during the latter years of Ranjit Singh's reign. They were certainly in existence by the time of his death in 1839. Their two histories have, however, been very different. The Nirankari movement retained its centre in the Rawalpindi area until it was compelled to move to India following Partition in 1947. Although the Namdhari or Kuka sect developed in a small way in the same north-western area, its centre was soon transferred to the village of Bhaini Raian in Ludhiana District where it exercised its major appeal amongst Sikhs belonging to the Ramgarhia caste. The founder of the Namdhari movement was Balak Singh who lived in the town of Hazro in the north-west. His first successor, and the most influential of all the Namdhari Gurus, was Ram Singh who first encountered Balak Singh while serving in the Khalsa army up in the north-west. Ram Singh was a Ramgarhia and it was he who moved the headquarters of the sect to his own village of Bhaini Raian.

Namdharis regard Ram Singh as the actual reincarnation of Guru Gobind Singh and firmly believe that he was the twelfth Guru in an unbroken line extending from Guru Nanak. It is this doctrine of the Guru which most conspicuously marks them off from the orthodox Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh, they believe, did not die in 1708. He lived the remainder of his life in secret, dying in 1812 at the age of 146. Before he did so he appointed Balak Singh as the eleventh Guru and so the line continues unbroken to the present day. In 1871–2, there was serious trouble with the British authorities that resulted in Ram Singh being deported to Burma where he died in 1885. Thereafter the Namdharis gave no serious trouble to the British. Today they can be seen in most places where Sikhs are to be found, their presence signalled by their white garments and in the case of the men a turban tied horizontally across the forehead (*Sikhism* 188–92).

The Namdharis call their sect Sant Khalsa, regarding it as the true Khalsa. Their rahit-nama, dictated by Ram Singh at

some point prior to 1871, makes this claim abundantly clear. Other Sikhs, they believe, have strayed from the path of the righteous Rahit. Namdharis by contrast follow it strictly. They are vegetarians, they abstain from alcohol, they are vigorous protectors of the cow, and in a marriage the bride and groom circumambulate (as of old) a sacred fire. There is no circling the Adi Granth in the manner of the modern Khalsa. The Namdharis also have their own version of Ardas, the Khalsa prayer, which is very different from the standard version.¹⁹

In terms of practice the Namdharis demonstrate a return to standards that were operative during the eighteenth century. Their rahit-nama expresses injunctions that seem appropriate for the pious Khalsa of the later eighteenth century, and even when these seem to pass beyond the point of rational activity they have eighteenth-century authority for doing so. An example is provided by the command to avoid fanning the fire of their *havan* by human breath.²⁰ Another is the order when taking off a kachh to withdraw one leg and put it in the leg-hole of another pair before withdrawing the second leg (*DayaS* 56).

The Namdhari rahit-nama and Ardas is translated later in the book (see Part II, no. 14, pp. 344–7).

5.6 The Nirankari Hukam-nama

The Nirankari sect was founded by Baba Dayal of Rawalpindi, gathering around him a group of followers who accepted his message concerning the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. The name Nirankari came from the stress that Baba Dayal laid on the worship of Akal Purakh as the 'Formless One' (*nirāṅkā*). Because Akal Purakh was *nirāṅkā*, there could be no question of incarnation or of Akal Purakh being worshipped as an idol. The only book that mattered was the Adi Granth. The followers of Baba Dayal were required to study it in order to absorb the teachings of Guru Nanak and his consistent stress on the divine Name. Some Nirankaris wore the kes, but for most of its history the movement has been predominantly a Sahaj-dhari one. In caste terms most Nirankaris are Khatri or Arora.²¹

Apart from their Sahaj-dhari preference the Nirankaris differ from mainline Sikhs in two respects. First, they disagree

with the use of Bhagauti as an invocation for Ardas. For them Sri Bhagauti must be treated literally and as such, they believe, the name is entirely inappropriate as an invocation (see p. 64). Only Nirankar can be invoked, never the Goddess.²² This is a minor difference, depending on the interpretation of a single word. The Khalsa will strenuously protest that they certainly do not invoke Devi. For them Bhagauti is Akal Purakh in the form of a sword (see ch. 7.3, p. 195).

A second disagreement is that whereas mainline Sikhs regard the Adi Granth as Guru, the Nirankaris believe in a personal Guru, with the line still continuing. This is the principal difference. In this respect they share a common doctrine with the Namdharis, though of course the actual identity of the human Guru differs. They also differ from the Namdharis in that whereas the Namdharis believe in an unbroken line extending down from Guru Nanak, the Nirankaris believe that a gap followed the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Only with the growth of evil and corruption did the Guru return in the human form of Baba Dayal.²³

Apart from the Adi Granth other literature was not required for worship, with the result that few documents are associated with the early Nirankari movement. There is, however, one that the Nirankaris treasure from the nineteenth century. This is the so-called *Hukam-nāmā* that records the words of Baba Darbara Singh, the first successor of Baba Dayal. The *Hukam-nāmā* is actually a rahit-nama, probably issued before 1873 and certainly before 1884 (Webster 1979, 4).

Two features are particularly evident in the Nirankari *Hukam-nāmā*. First, it sought a return to the teachings of Guru Nanak, in particular to his message of meditation on the divine Name. This involved a conscious move away from the Brahmans who had by this time made significant inroads into the practices of the Sikhs in general, including those of the Khalsa. Second, it concentrated on the rites of passage observed by the Nirankaris. Both the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* and the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* had included some ceremonies (particularly the former), but this was unusual in the eighteenth century. The *Prem Sumārag* had, however, made a feature of them and without being aware of it the Nirankaris were following their example. This stress on rites of passage was to ascend to primary importance

amongst the Khalsa leadership of the Singh Sabha movement. Both *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār* and *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* have the same ritual focus.

The Nirankari *Hukam-nāmā* is translated later in the book (see Part II, no. 15, pp. 347–51).

5.7 Vajib-u'l-Araz

Another work claiming to go back to the time of Guru Gobind Singh is *Vājib-u'l-Araz*. This purports to be ten answers given by Guru Gobind Singh to some Sahaj-dhari Sikhs who had asked him ten questions. Kahn Singh Nabha gives the full text of this deviant rahit-nama in *Mahān Kosh*, prefacing it with the comment that Mani Singh of the early eighteenth century had recorded it. The text, he continues, makes it clear that it was not by Mani Singh, nor could the answers given to the questions be those of Guru Gobind Singh (MK 815–6).

Kanh Singh Nabha appears to be justified in his opinion. The work was obviously written by a Sahaj-dhari, probably during the early nineteenth century and possibly by an Udasi Sikh. It must be labelled deviant because it flies in the face of the fundamental purpose of a rahit-nama. Far from being a rahit-nama that upholds the Khalsa, it is one that endeavours to deny values dear to the Khalsa heart. It twice stresses that having Brahmans at weddings is entirely appropriate, once to conduct them and once to be fed at the feast. They are also to be welcomed at shraddh ceremonies (*Vājib-u'l Araz* 1, 4). Much attention is given to the status of a *sir-gum*, defined (somewhat surprisingly) as 'those who preach atheism' and embracing Muslims who are 'thorough Sir-gums' (*Vājib-u'l Araz* 2). It also declares that if uncut hair is impractical for a Sikh, keeping it at an acceptable length is a satisfactory alternative (*Vājib-u'l Araz* 7).

Vājib-u'l-Araz must therefore be classified as an anti-Khalsa rahit-nama. Added to the two rahit-namas in the *Sau Sākhī* and the *Prem Sumārag*, this created a situation which was far from satisfactory, at least to the radical leaders of the Singh Sabha movement. Conservative Sikhs might approve, but not these vigorous reformers. The stage was being set for the struggle between the conservative or Sanatan Sikhs and the radicals of the Tat Khalsa.

Endnotes

1. One translated version appears in Prithipal Singh Kapur and Dharam Singh, *The Khalsa*, Patiala, 1999, Appendices II–III, pp. 136–41.

2. This revival appears to be largely with members of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha for whom iron is particularly important. Joy Barrow, 'The Akhand Kirtani Jatha', *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, 8, 1 (January–June 2001), p. 105.

3. The *Khālsā Mahimā* portion corresponds to sections 519–36 of the *Sarab Loh Granth*. See Part II, no. 10, pp. 327–9.

4. Loc. cit., p. vii. S. 1894 actually corresponds to 1837 CE.

5. Attar Singh (1975), Preface, pp. 18–19, *Sakhee Book*, pp. 38, 96.

6. Dalip Singh, the youngest son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was another person who believed that the *Sau Sākhī* referred to him.

Shortly after I ascended the throne of the Punjab it was found written in a book of Sikh prophecies called Sakheean that a man of my name would be born who, after becoming entirely dispossessed of all he inherited and residing alone for a long period in a foreign country, would return to be the eleventh gooroo or Teacher of the Khalsa or the Pure and that his prosperity then would far exceed that of his ancestors. He would also establish a new faith.

—Dalip Singh to Queen Victoria, 16.9.1884. M. Alexander and Sushil Anand, *Queen Victoria's Maharajah*, London, 1980, p. 181.

As a child Dalip Singh was proclaimed Maharaja in 1843, the third successor of Ranjit Singh. In 1849 he was dethroned by the annexing British and eventually taken to England. The sakhis that refer to a Dalip Singh are 15 and 51, the same two that name Ram Singh. Gurbachan Singh Nair (1985), pp. 25, 27, 61. See also Christy Campbell, *The Maharajah's Box*, London, 2000, pp. 58–9, and Brian Keith Axel, *The Nation's Tortured Body*, Durham, 2001, p. 61.

7. There is a direct reference on p. 15 and another probable one on p. 16 of Jaswinder Singh (comp.), *Kuka Movement: Freedom Struggle in Punjab*, New Delhi, 1985. Three sakhis which were said to have been dug from the village pool at Haripur in Sirsa District also referred directly or by clear implication to Ram Singh. Ibid., pp. 289–93. These sakhis were not known to Ram Singh. They were, moreover, forgeries.

8. Macauliffe (1909), V. 1n. The Santokh Singh to whom he refers is the author of *Sūraj Prakāsh*.

9. In *Sūraj Prakāsh* Santokh Singh has a section entitled *Mukatināmā* which Vir Singh claims is from sakhi 8 of the *Sau Sākhī*. *Shri Gur*

Pratāp Sūraj Granth, Vir Singh, ed., vol. 12, pp. 5196–5202. Vir Singh's statement is in fn*, p. 5196: 'This is the eighth sakhi of the *Sau Sākhī*.' Santokh Singh's version differs markedly from that of the *Sau Sākhī*, but he does at least deliver a rahit-nama. According to Santokh Singh it was delivered by Guru Gobind Singh to an assembly of Sikhs comprising Lahaura Singh, Nand Singh, and others. *Ibid.*, pp. 5196, 5202.

10. Brahmins appear in verses 12–14, 16, 17–21, 24, 26, 31, 36–41, and 43–4.

11. For a brief description of the Sanatan vs. Tat Khalsa controversy see pp. 158–61.

12. See Part II, no. 13, pp. 339–44. A complete translation is planned as a separate work.

13. 'Some devout Sikh, having written *shrī mukh vāk pātashāhī 10* at the beginning of this book wrote it in S. 1880 or 85 [1823 or 1828 CE].' *Idem.*, *GSudh* (4th edition 1970), p. 268n; and *GM*, I.33n.

14. Randhir Singh also claimed to have acquired a *sañchī* (portion of a book or MS) dated S. 1858 (1701 CE, *sic* 1801) but does not actually describe it. *PSG*, p. 88.

15. Shamsher Singh Ashok (comp.). *Pañjābī Huth-likhatān dā Sūchī*, Patiala, 2 vols, 1961, 1963, I. 334–5, II. 219 (three MSS). Kirpal Singh, *A Catalogue of Punjabi and Urdu Manuscripts in the Sikh History Department*, Amritsar, 1963, pp. 109–10 (two MSS, first chapter only).

16. These included works by Surindar Singh Kohli, Bhagat Singh, Gurbux Singh, Fauja Singh, and Mohinder Singh. Kohli claims that there exists a manuscript of the *Prem Sumārag* dated 1718 CE. *Pañjābī Sāhit dā Itihās*, Ludhiana, 1955, p. 216. No evidence for this manuscript has been produced. J. S. Grewal at first concluded that the work belonged to the early eighteenth century. Grewal (1972), pp. 72–83; and *Punjab Past and Present: essays in Honour of Dr Ganda Singh*, Harbans Singh and N. Gerald Barrier (eds), Patiala, 1976, pp. 165–75. In the 1982 edition of *From Guru Nanak* he retracted this opinion. Grewal published a useful summary of the contents of the *Prem Sumarg*, in Part 4, ch. iv, of his *Sikh Ideology, Polity and Social Order*, pp. 154–61.

17. Piara Singh Padam, Surjit Singh Gandhi, and Parkash Singh Jammu writing in *EncyS* III. 368.

18. Kahn Singh Nabha has already been noted. This view was also favoured by Teja Singh and the later J. S. Grewal opinion.

19. *TSSS*, pp. 130–1. See pp. 346–7. For the standard Ardas of the mainstream Khalsa see pp. 379–80.

20. *ChS* 505, pp. 111, 186. See under 'Miscellaneous injunctions', p. 112.

21. The Nirankaris who follow Baba Dayal and his successors should be clearly distinguished from the so-called Sant Nirankaris, members of the Sant Nirankari Mandal of New Delhi. *Sikhism*, pp. 203–4. For accounts of the older group see John C. B. Webster (1979) and *Sikhism*, pp. 186–8.

22. Nirankar is invoked as *satināmu*.

23. Man Singh Nirankari, 'The nature of Guruship to Nirankari Sikh tradition', in Clarence O. McMullen, *The Nature of Guruship*, Delhi, 1976, p. 117.

6

The Singh Sabha and the Years After



6.1 Sanatan Sikhs vs. Tat Khalsa

The year 1873 was an important one for the Sikhs, but an even more important year lay ahead. In 1873 a group of Sikhs, concerned by the situation in the Punjab, met in Amritsar and formed the Singh Sabha. These men were conservatives and, alarmed by the disturbances caused by Kuka Sikhs, were anxious that the orthodox Sikh community should not be blamed by their British rulers. They were also concerned at what they interpreted as the general decay of Sikh society. Sikhs were believed to be increasingly adopting life-styles which were not consistent with the faith handed down from the Gurus. There was, moreover, the expanding influence of Christian missions, and four Sikh pupils of the Amritsar Mission School had actually declared their intention of becoming Christians.

The Sikhs who gathered in Amritsar in 1873 were respectable members of the Panth, including in their number a large proportion of titled gentlemen, large land-owners, and conservative scholars. They were also for the most part conventional men, regarding their Sikh faith as part of the wider world of Hindu India. The Panth was clearly a part of this society, they believed, and it accepted a wide range of diverse doctrine including caste. It was a distinctive Panth with a warrior mission

to fight injustice and to defend the Hindus, but it was still a Panth amongst other panths. These men would have been numbered amongst those who have been called Sanatan Sikhs (Oberoi 1994, ch. 2), a term which well fits their conservative mould.

This, however, was not the only Singh Sabha to emerge. 1873 was not the crucial year. In 1879 there was established in Lahore a second branch of the Sikh Sabha that soon demonstrated how different was the understanding of its proponents from that of the original Amritsar founders. This Lahore group acquired the name of Tat Khalsa, or 'True' Khalsa, and under the leadership of some talented and energetic men soon found themselves in open opposition to the Amritsar conservatives. These men were radicals in religious terms, many of them the products of the English education which was being conveyed through state and mission schools. They essentially thought in western terms, which, contrary to the all-embracing irenic ideal, viewed allegiances in terms of distinction and separation. For them it was not possible to be both a Hindu and a Sikh. The title of a booklet issued by Kahn Singh Nabha, one of their proponents, came to be a slogan for the Tat Khalsa: *Ham Hindū nahīn*, 'We are not Hindus'.

Disagreement between the Sanatan Sikhs and their Tat Khalsa opponents became vigorous and outspoken. The numerous branches of the Singh Sabha which were founded in various towns and villages chose to ally with one or the other and in this manner two groups came into being, each with a central body and a ring of satellites. The radical organization of Lahore proved to be much the more popular. As far as it was concerned, there could be only one ideal mode for Sikh aspirations and that was the Khalsa mode. The attitude of the conservatives, which embraced a wide variety of styles, could not possibly be tolerated. Somewhat grudgingly the Tat Khalsa were prepared to admit Sahaj-dharies as Sikhs and eventually they allowed their meetings to be a part of the Chief Khalsa Divan's annual Sikh Educational Conference. This, however, was only on the understanding that they were Sikhs who were on their way to full Khalsa membership. The etymology of the term was reinterpreted to give expression to this, *sahaj* being construed as 'slowly' and the Sahaj-dhari Sikh viewed, as slowly making his way to the status of a complete Khalsa.¹

The person who made the major contribution to a new Tat Khalsa understanding of the Rahit was unquestionably Kahn Singh of Nabha. The name of Kahn Singh lives on today as the compiler of that splendid encyclopaedia, *Gurushabad Ratanākar Mahān Kosh*, usually abbreviated to simply *Mahān Kosh*. This work, originally published as a four-volume edition in 1930, is still extensively used today and will continue to be used for many more years to come. His contribution to the study of the Rahit and to the reformation of the various rahit-namas came three decades earlier. In 1901, he reissued in Punjabi a collection entitled *Gurumat Sudhākar*. This comprised various works from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that had a direct bearing upon the Sikh Panth. The collection included what purported to be the texts of most of the rahit-namas. Closer inspection reveals, however, that Kahn Singh was working according to a Tat Khalsa agenda, basing his choice of rahit-namas and his reproduction of their various texts upon worthy but misleading principles. We shall return to him later (see pp. 165–71).

In the struggle that ensued the Tat Khalsa won handsomely. The high point of their campaign was the passing by the Punjab State Legislature of the Anand Marriage Act in 1909. This act did not introduce the term 'Anand marriage' for the first time², but it certainly marked a divergence in terms of the actual ceremony. It emphasised the difference between Sikhs who practised this new order from all those who had followed a traditional method. The traditional method, as set out in *Prem Sumārag* (see Part II, no. 13, pp. 339–44), was that the couple, in the actual act of marriage, walked round a sacred fire. In contrast, the Tat Khalsa format, promulgated as the practice of the later Gurus,³ required the couple to walk round the Guru Granth Sahib. Clearly this was a significant step in the direction of total separation.

In this respect the Tat Khalsa won a significant victory, but their claims were certainly not conceded without a fight. The differences with the Sanatan Sikhs of the Amritsar Singh Sabha were to some extent papered over in 1902 by the merging of the two Khalsa Divans or offices (the Amritsar Divan and that of Lahore) in the Chief Khalsa Divan. In a limited way this worked satisfactorily, though the growing conservatism of the Chief Khalsa Divan led increasingly to it being sidetracked and

left behind. It was, however, responsible for a first attempt to produce a new rahit-nama, the *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār* issued in 1915. This manual proved to be a failure in terms of acceptance by the general body of Sikhs, but it did at least indicate the direction in which efforts were being directed. The leaders of the Tat Khalsa were concerned to devise a new rahit-nama, and one that was based on Sikh ceremonies seemed the only practicable direction to follow. Although it proved altogether too complicated and high flown for general acceptance *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār* proved to be something of a model as a result of its presentation of the Rahit in the form of rites of passage.

Victory over the conservative Sikhs, however, did not spare the attacks that came from the opposite side. Bhasaur was a village in the princely state of Patiala and in 1893 a retired canal overseer founded there a branch of the Singh Sabha. This man was Teja Singh, variously known as Babu Teja Singh, Teja Singh Overseer, or Teja Singh Bhasaur. In 1907 this branch declared itself to be the Panch Khalsa Divan (also known as the Khalsa Parliament), thus marking it out as diverging from the Chief Khalsa Diwan. And diverge it certainly did, regarding the Chief Khalsa Divan (whether Sanatan or Tat Khalsa) as hopelessly conservative. We shall return to Teja Singh of Bhasaur and the Panch Khalsa Divan later in this chapter.⁴

While the battle continued between the Chief Khalsa Divan and the Panch Khalsa Divan many Sikhs were moving away from the social and intellectual concerns which had occupied the Singh Sabhas to a markedly political style. Immediately after World War I interest focussed on control of the gurdwaras, many of which were still controlled by men who called themselves Udasis. Even if most of these mahants or heads of gurdwaras would have had difficulty in establishing their Udasi credentials they were certainly not Khalsa Sikhs. British authority had conferred legal ownership on these mahants as owners of gurdwara properties, and in spite of numerous criticisms from Sikh leaders this ownership had been maintained for several decades. In the years immediately after the war several concerns combined as a movement to free the gurdwaras and in 1920 the Akali Party was formed to give political expression to this movement.

During the next five years the Panth had little time to spare for detailed discussions of the Rahit. Sustained pressure was continued and little by little the British authorities were forced to concede that they would have to give way. Gurdwara control was not an issue that seriously affected British control and apart the loss of face which would result from the concession there was no great problem affecting their authority. In 1925 they finally gave way and the Punjab State Government passed the Sikh Gurdwaras Act.

This Act required a definition of a Sikh to be passed into law. Its definition of a Sikh was determined by a declaration which each person who claimed the status would be required to make, if there should be any doubt concerning that person's identity:

I solemnly affirm that I am a Sikh, that I believe in the Guru Granth Sahib, that I believe in the Ten Gurus, and that I have no other religion.⁵

It should be noted that no reference is made in this definition to the Khalsa. The Act certainly drew a clear distinction between Sikhs and Hindus, but it failed to continue its distinction in a manner which would define beyond doubt the ideal Sikh as a member of the Khalsa. That was yet to come.

It came in 1950 with the publication of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*. Indeed it had implicitly taken shape some years earlier. Following the Sikh Gurdwaras Act the Akali leaders, now in complete control of the Panth, declared that the elective body set up under the Act to administer the gurdwaras, would be their own Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandak Committee (the SGPC). The SGPC had been formed in 1920 to administer those gurdwaras which the Akali Party had succeeded in dislodging from their incumbent mahants, and after the 1925 Act was passed it assumed the role of the controlling Board. An early task of the newly-constituted SGPC was to commission a rahit-nama that embraced, once and for all, the Rahit enunciated by Guru Gobind Singh. For this purpose a sub-committee was appointed to draw up a definitive statement of the Rahit. The sub-committee reported in 1932 and although some changes were made to their recommendation its statement was essentially retained. It was this statement of the Rahit that was finally published in 1950. Since that time there have been objections from various groups, but *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* has stood its

ground, allowing very little in the way of change. That situation still continues today.

6.2 Avatar Singh Vahiria and the Conservative Sikhs

In the controversy between the conservative Sanatan Sikhs and the Tat Khalsa the name that stands out as the leading intellectual on the Sanatan side was that of Avatar Singh Vahiria. Born in 1848 in Rawalpindi District, Avatar Singh Vahiria came under the influence of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi, a renowned opponent of the new ideas which were then appearing within the Singh Sabha. Khem Singh Bedi was the person who in 1883 formally proposed to the Amritsar branch of the Singh Sabha that the name should be changed to Sikh Singh Sabhas, thereby permitting Sahaj-dharis to join.

Until the death of his patron Avatar Singh devoted himself wholly to editing the journal *Sri Guramat Prakāshak*, to writing his substantial works culminating in *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr*,⁶ and to preaching. In 1898, he formed the Chalda Vahir, an itinerant band of earnest preachers, whose task it was to visit towns and villages exhorting Sikhs to uphold established customs and rituals. They should never, he maintained, be misled by these new and erroneous notions that were abroad in the Panth and which were being spread by adherents of the so-called Tat Khalsa. When Khem Singh Bedi died in 1905 Avatar Singh retired grief-stricken and quietly lived the remainder of his life in Rawalpindi.⁷

At first sight it is difficult to perceive just what was the cause of the intense rivalry between the Sanatan Sikhs (represented by Vahiria) and the Tat Khalsa. The extract from *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr* (see Part II, no. 17, pp. 354–8) seems closely in accord with Khalsa views, and even though the actual order of the daily discipline is a little different from the one that was subsequently adopted that surely is matter for calm debate, rather than for fierce exchanges of polemic. Closer inspection, however, reveals two closely related and fundamental causes.

First, there was the traditional Sanatan view that the Sikh faith could be practised by a variety of modes. Vahiria was the ardent disciple of Khem Singh Bedi who had tried to open Singh Sabhas to Sahaj-dhari Sikhs, a view which Vahiria naturally

supported. It was possible to be a Sikh and at the same time to be a Udasi or a Nirmala. A Sikh would certainly accept the ranked caste structure of society, and he could also believe in the line of avatars, declaring Guru Nanak to be one such avatar (Oberoi 1994, 103). Attitudes expressed by the Sanatan Sikhs amounted to an acknowledgement that the Sikh faith was a part of the wider Hindu world, and that the Panth was merely one amongst many such panths. It was a Panth born of special circumstances, and it preached both liberation through the divine Name and the defence of just causes through armed might. Sikhs were, however, Hindus as well as Sikhs. For the Tat Khalsa this was anathema. Their view was that Sikhs were emphatically *not* Hindus.

Second, the work of Vahiria made little mention of the Khalsa. It is true that his published works did indeed incorporate the word 'Khalsa' in their titles, and at the end of the extract printed below he announces that 'this Sikh faith is the Khalsa Panth, according to ancient and unconditional law, established in the divine presence [of the True Guru]'.⁸ The body of his work, however, makes little mention of the Khalsa, and one must conclude that it rated much lower in Vahiria's view of the Sikh faith than it did in the conviction of the Tat Khalsa. Although the fourth part of *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr* is headed 'Rahit Nama Section', items that the Tat Khalsa were to include specifically in their two rahit-namas were scattered throughout the other sections of the book. Vahiria certainly had a concept of what the rahit-nama meant, but it differed from that of his Tat Khalsa opponents.

At the same time one must acknowledge that the views of the Sanatan Sikhs and those of the Tat Khalsa were not as far apart as they seem from the modern perspective. The two sides certainly parted company on the question of different kinds of Sikhs and whether or not Sikhs could be called Hindus, but their views on what constituted a Sikh were not widely separated. This becomes clear when one reads what is evidently a summary of a portion of *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr*, quoted by Falcon in his *Handbook on Sikhs* (see Part II, no. 18, pp. 358–65). It is also evident from Vahiria's presentation of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (see p. 358). Caste is certainly accepted (*ChS* 11, 121, pp. 59, 72, 150, 160; *KDS* 166, 177, items 53 and 158),

Muslims are still to be shunned to a degree thought excessive by the Tat Khalsa (*ChS* 10, 330, pp. 59, 102, 150, 177; *KDS*, pp. 166, 186, items 51 and 251), and Brahmans can still be summoned to conduct marriages.⁹ The item in the earlier *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* enjoining double consideration for Brahmans has, however, been omitted and the same description of initiation is retained, even including the cry of *vāhi gurūjī kā khālsā, vāhi gurūjī kī fate[h]* (*ChS* 90, pp. 68, 157; *KDS*, p. 173, item 116).

Today there are Sikhs with notions of the Rahit which differ just as much from the official view of the mainstream Panth. The vast majority also retain a modified form of the caste structure of society. Moreover, it must be remembered that these debates concerned a minority of Sikhs. Most were content to live without them. This narrowing of the gap should be borne in mind if we are to have a sufficiently accurate view of the controversies, which enlivened at least a portion of the community a century ago.

6.3 The Contribution of Kahn Singh Nabha

During the first quarter-century of its existence Singh Sabha works began to appear which indicated the reforming zeal of the movement. One writer who produced much of his work during this period was the Nirmala writer Gian Singh, an author who bridges the gulf between the two periods separated by the founding of the Singh Sabha. Gian Singh's impression of the delivery of the Rahit by Guru Gobind Singh at the founding of the Khalsa, appears in chapter 2 (see pp. 47–8). Many of the features associated with the reform period are present in this passage. The Five Ks have made a definite appearance and so too have the four *kurahits* (the four serious violations of the Rahit). There is in fact very little in the account with which a modern Sikh understanding of the Rahit would want to disagree.

Gian Singh's version was first published in 1892. By that time the chief intellectual protagonist of the Tat Khalsa was hard at work, preparing studies which were to have an enduring influence on many different aspects both of the Tat Khalsa and of the wider Panth. This was Kahn Singh of Nabha.

Kahn Singh was born in 1861 in the princely state of Patiala and brought up in the state of Nabha where his father was a granthi. Although he did not attend school he was able to gain education privately and developed a considerable facility in the Sikh scriptures, Sanskrit and Persian languages, and music. A chance meeting with Macauliffe in 1885 led to a life-long friendship and to the substantial help he was able to give Macauliffe in the preparation of *The Sikh Religion*. In 1887 he was appointed tutor to Ripudaman Singh, heir apparent to Nabha, and for most of the remainder of his life he served the state in various roles. His published works began with *Rāj Dharan* in 1884, continued through several other works such as *Ham Hindū Nahīn* (1898), and finally culminated in his four-volume *Gurushabad Ratanākar Mahān Kosh* in 1930. He died in 1938 and another major work, *Gurumat Māratanḍ*, was published posthumously (*EncyS* II:409–10).

There are at least three reasons why Kahn Singh was a figure of such major importance. Firstly, he faithfully reflects the Tat Khalsa view of Sikh doctrine and history. Indeed, he does more than merely reflect it, expressing through his works reformist ideas and ideals that were to become part of the philosophy and outlook of the Tat Khalsa. Secondly, *Ham Hindū Nahīn* summarised the vast importance of the Tat Khalsa contribution to the Singh Sabha movement, both by its contents and also by its title. Thirdly, his contribution as an encyclopaedist is uniquely valuable. *Mahān Kosh* and *Gurumat Māratanḍ* are indispensable aids, comprehensive in scope and clear in presentation. *Gurumat Prabhākar* and *Gurumat Sudhākar* are also very useful, the latter particularly for its footnotes. His influence has been much greater than that of Macauliffe, directly through his works in Punjabi and indirectly through the considerable influence those works have had.

In *Gurumat Māratanḍ* Kahn Singh defines the *rahit-namas* as 'those works which enunciate the Sikh code of conduct' (*GM* 796). In this definition he can be faulted on two counts. First, although *rahit-namas* are predominantly concerned with conduct they also embody doctrine. They are, in other words, manuals of belief as well as of behaviour. Secondly, his definition refers to the *Sikh* code rather than to the *Khalsa* code. In fairness it should be added to this that his version of the

authentic Sikh was virtually synonymous with a member of the Khalsa. He divides works which he regards as enunciating this code into three sections. These are:

- (a) The primary rahit-namas of the Sikh faith.
 1. The compositions contained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
 2. Those works attributed to the Tenth Guru which, in accordance with Khalsa principles, may be sanctioned as authentic.
 3. The works of Bhai Gurdas.
 4. The works of Bhai Nand Lal.
- (b) The following later works are also regarded as rahit-namas.¹⁰
 5. The janam-sakhis of Guru Nanak.
 6. *Gyān-ratanāvalī*.
 7. *Bhagat-ratanāvalī*.
 8. Material included in *Sarab Loh* which concerns the Sikh faith.
 9. *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.
 10. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.
 11. The *Prahlād Singh Rahit-nāmā*.
 12. The *Prem Sumārag*.
 13. The *Prashan-uttar* of Bhai Nand Lal.
 14. The *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.
 15. The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.
 16. *Gur Sobhā*.
 17. *Sādhu saṅgati kī prārathanā*.¹¹
 18. *Ratan-māl (Sau Sākhī)*.
 19. *Vājib-u' l-Araz*.
 20. *Mahimā Prakāsh*.¹²
 21. *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī* 6.
 22. *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī* 10.
 23. *Mukati-nāmā*.
 24. *Guru Nānak Prakāsh*.

25. *Guru Pratāp Sūray (Sūraj Prakāsh)*.

26. *Panth Prakāsh*.

27. *Guru pad prem prakāsh*.¹³

28. *Vimal bibek vāridhi, khālsā shatak*¹⁴

- (c) Many other manuals of conduct and Khalsa texts etc. can be regarded as rahit-namas, but the reader must take care to distinguish truth from falsehood (*GM* 796–7).

Kahn Singh certainly does not affirm the truth of all that is contained in section (b), as his footnote at the beginning of the section makes clear. Only section (a) is to be trusted implicitly. This does not mean that he was necessarily adopting a critical view of the rahit-namas. His words of caution relate rather to his conviction that ignorance or Hindu influences have been permitted to penetrate the rahit-namas, and that in consequence readers must be aware that where this has happened the affected material must be rejected.

His work on the rahit-namas is most conspicuously provided in *Gurumat Sudhākar*, a collection of works from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1898 the collection was first published in Hindi and then reissued in Punjabi in 1901. Subsequently it was reprinted in 1970 by the state publisher Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, with a slightly different title and a different range of footnotes.

Gurumat Sudhākar comprises extracts from 16 works or closely-allied works which Kahn Singh judged to be of major importance for an understanding of the Sikh faith. It omits the *Adi Granth* and begins with those works from the *Dasam Granth* which he believed were by Guru Gobind Singh. Then follows the second unit that consists of extracts from the *vārs* and *kabitts* of Bhai Gurdas. At the end of the list are portions taken from the two works of Santokh Singh (the *Nānak Prakāsh* and the *Sūraj Prakāsh*). Rahit-namas figure prominently in the collection. The verse rahit-namas, which provide a single unit, are the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, *Prashan-uttar*, and the rahit-nama of Desa Singh. Portions of the *Prem Sumārag* provide another unit, and selections from the prose rahit-namas of Chaupa Singh and Daya Singh supply two more. The rahit-nama of Prahilad Rai does not appear in the selection.¹⁵ The collection is preceded

by an index of important words, with page references indicating where they occur in the book.

Kahn Singh's attitude to the rahit-namas was distinctly ambivalent. As Avtar Singh comments, although he was 'not willing to completely reject them, he is equally not prepared to lend credence to them in the form these were available to him' (Avtar Singh 1970, 133). On the one hand, he makes extensive use of the rahit-namas, frequently quoting them as proof-texts for defining the various terms which he lists in *Gurumat Māratand*. In this work he cites the following:

<i>Tanakhāh-nāmā</i>	20 times
<i>Prashan-uttar</i>	8 "
<i>Prahlād Rāi/Singh Rahit-nāmā</i>	3 "
<i>Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i>	25 "
<i>Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i>	26 "
<i>Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā</i>	16 "
<i>Prem Sumārag</i>	24 "
<i>Ratan-māl</i>	2 "

Some of these he quotes at considerable length.¹⁶

On the other hand, Kahn Singh found it impossible to accept all that they contained, and felt compelled to leave many of the injunctions out of his re-issuing of the rahit-namas in *Gurumat Sudhākar*. This was done quietly, without any hint or acknowledgement.¹⁷ He evidently reasoned that the Guru could never have instructed his Sikhs to behave in the manner indicated by the excised injunctions, nor could his faithful followers have assumed that he would have done so. The only possibility must be that ignorant or malicious persons must have inserted these items in the rahit-namas. There is little evidence that the rahit-namas were treated in this way, but to anyone raised in the late nineteenth-century standards of the Tat Khalsa, there could be no other explanation. They *must* have received this perverse and distorted editing. In spite of the lack of evidence this point of view has persisted amongst scholars ever since.¹⁸

If we consider Kahn Singh's version of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* two kinds of omission stand out.¹⁹ First, all seven items concerning Muslims²⁰ have been excised, except the prohibition of

Sikhs eating halal meat. The remaining six abominate deference to Muslims (one reference) or decree the outright slaying of them (the remaining five). These commands would scarcely have been congenial to the more ordered circumstances at the end of the nineteenth century, regardless of any sense of strong rivalry between Sikhs and Muslims that still remained. It could only mean (so Kahn Singh apparently reasoned) that the items had subsequently been introduced by enthusiastic, if misguided Sikhs, as a result of the fierce battles against Muslim forces during the eighteenth century.

The second kind of omitted item, was the variety that seemed to express plain superstition. Why should one be prohibited from blowing out a lamp or from extinguishing fire with drinking-water (couplet 37a, p. 283)? Clearly, such items must have been added later by some ignorant follower of the Guru. An educated person in late nineteenth-century India would surely appreciate this. The rahit-nama author's marked abhorrence of nakedness, seems also to have been excluded for this reason (couplets 41-3).

Of those items that he retains from *Tanakhāh-nāmā* Kahn Singh sometimes glosses them in a manner which brings them into line with Tat Khalsa principles. When, for example, Sikhs are commanded in couplet 19 to marry their daughters 'in the approved way', he adds the footnote that this means they must never marry them to Monas.²¹ Guru Gobind Singh was supremely enlightened and it followed that his instructions, as mediated through the unadulterated rahit-namas, were likewise enlightened. The duty of the reformist Tat Khalsa must be to strip away later additions to the Rahit and explain features which may have become obscured since the Rahit was first promulgated.

Kahn Singh's treatment of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is also interesting. The two Rahit sections of this rahit-nama contain 455 items. Kahn Singh, however, provides only 42 items in his version of it (see p. 409). The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* receives even sparser attention, only 25 brief items being included (see p. 412). Kahn Singh's first footnote identifies Daya Singh as 'a Lahore resident who was one of the [original] Panch Piare' (*GSudh* 1901, 503n). It would obviously be impossible for Kahn Singh to accept much of the extant rahit-nama

as the work of one of the Panj Piare. If this was the Daya Singh who was one of the original five the provision of a purged version in *Gurumat Sudhākar* was therefore essential.

This was the first of the two Singh Sabha contributions to rahit-nama reform. Note that there was no question of Rahit reform in the minds of Singh Sabha scholars. To them (the conservatives as well as the Tat Khalsa) the Rahit was eternal and unchangeable. It had indeed been partially covered over by ignorance and corrupting Hindu concepts, but beneath these lay the pure Rahit. The task of the scholar was to reveal this pure Rahit by stripping away the overlay, a task that required a purging of the rahit-namas. Kahn Singh largely achieved this purpose by the publication of *Gurumat Sudhākar*.

6.4 Guramat Prakash Bhag Sanskar

The first of the two Singh Sabha objectives had been achieved at the turn of the century. The Tat Khalsa (by this time the dominant force in the Singh Sabha movement) now faced its second objective. This was the production of a truly reliable rahit-nama.

The responsibility for producing this manual was taken up by the Chief Khalsa Divan, the body that was created in 1902 to unite the divided Lahore and Amritsar Singh Sabhas. The focus was clearly on the provision of Sikh rituals. It was recognised that this would serve to emphasise differences between Sikhs and Hindus, and would at the same time provide an opportunity for specifying the belief and behaviour required of a Sikh of the Khalsa. *Amrit saṅskār*, the order for Khalsa initiation, would prove ideal in both respects. *Anand saṅskār*, the order for Sikh marriage, would also provide opportunities.

Appreciating the need, the Chief Khalsa Divan debated for many years the need for agreed orders of service for Sikh rituals. Eventually, needled by the persistent criticism of the fundamentalist Panch Khalsa Divan (Nripinder Singh 1990, 167), it appointed in October 1910 a committee comprising Babu Teja Singh, Sant Gurbakhsh Singh, Vir Singh, Jodh Singh, Takhat Singh, Trilochan Singh, and Sundar Singh Majithia, Secretary of the Chief Khalsa Divan.²² At its meeting on 17 January 1911, this committee deputed one of its members to prepare a draft.

The draft was considered by the committee in June 1912 and was circulated for comment and criticism. Following further meetings and amendments a text was finally approved in 1914 and was submitted to the Chief Khalsa Divan for approval (*GPBS* Appendices 1–3, pp. 60–76). *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār* was finally printed in 1915.

The new manual had certainly achieved one notable objective. The committee had reduced to systematic order what previously had been uncertain and inconsistent. Its overriding concern was plainly to devise ritual orders which would be distinctively Khalsa and which would be uniformly accepted by all Sikhs. It did not achieve the latter of these objectives, but clearly it attained a Khalsa understanding of Sikh ritual that was appropriate for the early twentieth century.

The focus of the manual was firmly fixed on panthic ritual rather than on individual behaviour. Orders of service were prepared for four major rites. These were the birth and naming ceremony, initiation, betrothal and marriage, and funerals. Two introductory sections preceded these. First came a declaration that all Sikh ceremonies derive in fact from the *Adi Granth*, and that the purpose of *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār* was merely to provide an agreed and uniform order for each ceremony. It was not to introduce innovation. Secondly, there was a description of elements which are common to all ceremonies. This included such features as no caste or sex discrimination, an approved text for *Ardas*, the proper method of concluding readings of the *Adi Granth*, an injunction to avoid ceremonies and practices which violate Sikh beliefs, and an approved method for preparation and distribution of *karah* *prasad* (*GPBS* 3–14).

Somewhat surprisingly the key ceremony was plainly marriage, although the relatively recent passing of the Anand Marriage Act perhaps explains this. Included in the marriage ceremony was an explicit vow to observe the *Rahit* in everyday life. Injunctions relating to everyday behaviour were thus concentrated in this particular ceremony (such requirements as the wearing of the Five Ks, the avoidance of the four *kurahits*, and the obligation to recite certain passages of scripture each day).

But *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār* failed in its primary

intention. It had been drafted with the needs of the whole Panth in mind, yet very few members of the Panth showed any enthusiasm for it. In actual practice the orders of service that it set out could never have had any hope of securing widespread acceptance. Its authors could reasonably claim doctrinal soundness and consistency, but the orders which they actually devised were much too demanding in terms of length, complexity, and the high ideals that they enjoined. They read curiously like Christian orders of service in terms of format, combining ritual action with scriptural quotation, exhortation, prayers of petition, and congregational responses. The orders reflect the intellectual perceptions of their educated authors. They were ceremonies, which might well appeal to a sophisticated elite, but which would be most unlikely to win widespread acceptance from an overwhelmingly rural constituency.

6.5 The Panch Khalsa Divan

The second objective of the Tat Khalsa was therefore unrealised, at least for the time being. Meanwhile the Tat Khalsa was facing another rival. Since the founding of the Lahore Singh Sabha in 1879 the principal controversy within the movement had been between the conservatives of Amritsar and the Tat Khalsa centred in Lahore. By the turn of the century the Tat Khalsa had won the upper hand and in the years ahead it was to make that victory virtually absolute, at least on certain major issues. That the Sikhs were no longer to be considered Hindus was the view of at least the Sikh leadership, and slowly the doctrine was to permeate the greater part of the Panth. The Rahit had been stripped of its corrupt coverings and the Tat Khalsa was striving to fashion a rahit-nama that would give clear expression to this purified Rahit. Only caste lingered on as an important feature, willingly acknowledged by the conservatives and unwillingly tolerated by at least some major figures in the Tat Khalsa.

That range of issues was the principal controversy which the Tat Khalsa confronted during its early years, the controversy that ultimately resulted in an overwhelming defeat of the Sanatan Sikhs. By the turn of the century, however, another rival had appeared. At first the disagreements between the two sides

in this later dispute produced only sniping from those who opposed the Tat Khalsa. Soon, however, the sniping turned to full frontal attacks and for some years the Tat Khalsa (or rather its mouthpiece which was the Chief Khalsa Divan) suffered the embarrassment of being constantly criticised for itself being too conservative.

This critic was the small but noisy Bhasaur Singh Sabha, founded by Babu Teja Singh. The Bhasaur Singh Sabha rose to limited prominence in the very early years of the twentieth century; launched its most telling attacks on the Chief Khalsa Divan when it was preparing *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār*; sustained its nuisance value during the early twenties; and finally succumbed to the mainstream Sikhs at the end of the decade.

Babu Teja Singh was an inhabitant of the village of Bhasaur in the princely state of Patiala. Having retired from government service he turned his attention to things religious and in 1893 founded a branch of the Singh Sabha in the village. This branch, under Teja Singh's unchallenged leadership, soon proved itself to be thoroughly fundamentalist in the strict meaning of the term. Teja Singh adhered absolutely to the literal meaning of the Adi Granth and that of the Khalsa tradition as he understood it. In 1907 the Bhasaur branch became the Panch Khalsa Divan (also known as the Khalsa Parliament), thus signalling its radical divergence from the Chief Khalsa Divan. His strict fundamentalism delivered an awkward challenge to the more realistic Tat Khalsa and its servant the Chief Khalsa Divan.

For Teja Singh, although the Sanatan Sikhs were hopelessly conservative, the Tat Khalsa was little better. In 1910, in response to his claim that nothing was being done to produce an authoritative rahit-nama, the committee was appointed by the Chief Khalsa Divan which led eventually to the issuing of *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār* in 1915. Teja Singh refused membership of the committee and maintained his vigorous opposition for nearly two more decades. Eventually in 1928, the mainstream Sikh leaders, tiring of his incessant criticism, used their control over Akal Takhat to have Teja Singh banished from the Panth. The few prominent Sikhs who had shown sympathy to the Panch Khalsa Divan abandoned the cause and it soon faded into obscurity.²³

Some of Teja Singh's doctrinal statements, although strict and allowing no qualification, were at least congenial to many members of the Tat Khalsa and secured the covert support of some of its leaders. There was, for example, his claim that only the Khalsa could be regarded as Sikhs. In his view Sahaj-dharis were definitely outside the Panth. Others included his insistence that the wearing of all Five Ks was absolutely mandatory, and that the Panth should recognise neither caste nor sect. Caste indicators must be renounced, which meant that personal names could not include them. Male names should end with 'Singh' and female names with 'Kaur'.

Other claims, however, went altogether too far. Up to a point his fundamentalism could be accepted, but beyond it no Sikh who prided himself on being reasonable could possibly go. Among the more important of these claims were the following:

1. Women must wear turbans as well as men. They should not pierce their ears or noses for ornamentation.

2. Copies of the Adi Granth currently being circulated were blasphemously faulty. The Rag-mala which occurs at its very end should be excised²⁴ and words should be linked as in the original copy. They should not be separated, as was always done in modern works.

3. There are five *kurahits*, not four. These are: (1) Disrespect for the kes. (2) Eating *kuṭṭhā* meat. (3) Using tobacco. (4) Adultery. (5) Eating with one who is not an Amrit-dhari (in other words, one who has not been initiated).

4. The Dasam Granth should not be placed on the same footing as the Adi Granth and should never be called the Guru Granth Sahib. Apart from *Jāp*, *Akāl Ustat*, and portions bearing the superscription *mukh-vāk* the remainder is a reflection of Hindu scriptures. Reading this material the Khalsa absorb Hindu ideas and fixes in their minds the notion that Guru Gobind Singh was a worshipper of the goddess Devi. The *Triā Charitr*, it maintained, also contain impure teachings, with stories of impure women.

5. By retaining the reference to Bhagauti at the beginning of Ardas the Khalsa is worshipping Devi.

6. At present the Khalsa observes Hindu festivals and Hindu customs. These should be abandoned.

7. The term *karāh prasād* should also be abandoned and replaced by the correct one which is *mahā prasād*. This name is used by Bhai Gurdas in *Vār* 20 : 10, and in *Kabitts* 175, 309, and 453.²⁵

In 1911 Teja Singh issued an approved rahit-nama for members of the Bhasaur Singh Sabha entitled *Khālsā Rahit Prakāsh*. This was not as original as it may have appeared at first sight. The fact that it comprised a selection of injunctions drawn from four of the earlier rahit-namas need have occasioned no surprise. It was rather that *Khālsā Rahit Prakāsh* was largely a copy of most of the rahit-namas contained in Kahn Singh Nabha's *Gurumat Sudhākar*. Appendix 1 illustrates this closeness in three out of the four rahit-namas chosen by Teja Singh, and even in the fourth (the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*) the two collections are not very far apart.²⁶ There is, moreover, the fact that both omitted the rahit-nama of Prahilad Rai. Clearly Teja Singh must have copied Kahn Singh, omitting a further selection of injunctions but retaining most of what *Gurumat Sudhākar* provided. The nature of the relationship between the two men is not clear, though it seems that Kahn Singh had some sympathy for what Teja Singh was endeavouring to do.²⁷

Until his banishment from the Panth in 1928 Teja Singh continued to attack both the genuine conservatives and the Tat Khalsa which he also regarded as conservative. In two respects his contribution lives on. The first is his campaign against accepting the Rag-mala in the Adi Granth, an issue which still awaits definitive settlement. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* still prints the following after instructions to conclude a complete reading of the Adi Granth 'either with the *Mundāvāṇī* or with the *Rāg-mālā*, the choice depending on local custom':

There is still division within the Panth concerning this issue (SRM 15).

This issue seems of monumental insignificance to those who are not Sikhs. To those who are believing Sikhs, however, it constitutes a very real problem. To them the Adi Granth is the Guru, and anything which involves excision of its contents is indeed a matter of great concern.

The second legacy lies in the sect which continues some of the ideals of Babu Teja Singh. This is the Bhai Randhir Singh

da Jatha, more commonly known now as the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. Randhir Singh was a considerable admirer of Teja Singh, backing away from him shortly before the leaders of the mainstream Khalsa declared him *persona non grata* in 1928. The continuing influence of Teja Singh is most obviously seen in the turbans that all female members of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha are required to wear, its opposition to dividing the words in the Adi Granth,²⁸ its conviction that the Rag-mala is no part of the sacred scripture, and its resistance to the recitation of the Rag-mala in Harmandir Sahib (Pashauara Singh and Gerald N. Barrier 1996, 160).

6.6 Sikh Rahit Marayada

Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār had failed to provide the Khalsa with what it so badly needed, namely a reliable rahit-nama. The Panch Khalsa Divan had repeatedly criticised the Chief Khalsa Divan during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and then in 1920 the energies of the Panth were fully occupied by the struggle to free the gurdwaras from their non-Khalsa owners (the mahants). This struggle lasted until 1925 when the Punjab State Government finally backed down and transferred the ownership of most of the important gurdwaras in the Punjab to the Panth. The Panth determined that its Shiromani Gurdwara Prabadhak Committee (the SGPC) should be the statutory body responsible for control of these gurdwaras, and elections were held amongst Sikhs to decide its membership. As a result of these elections the Akali Party won a substantial majority on the SGPC, one that it has never relinquished although it has from time to time suffered internal splits.

With political issues now settled the Panth could turn again to the long-delayed question of providing an agreed rahit-nama. The failure of the Chief Khalsa Divan's *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār* to win acceptance was plainly recognised and the SGPC, within a few years of its statutory establishment in 1925, moved to have a new manual prepared. The actual decision was evidently taken in 1931 when a rahu-riti sub-committee was appointed.²⁹ This sub-committee comprised 25 members and had as its convener Professor Teja Singh (a very different person from Babu Teja Singh of the Panch Khalsa Divan).

The meetings ahead provided Professor Teja Singh with his opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the composition of the long-awaited *rahit-nama*.³⁰ Also included in the membership of the sub-committee were Kahn Singh Nabha, Vir Singh, and Jodh Singh.

The sub-committee, meeting three times between October 1931 and January 1932, prepared a draft manual. It reconsidered this draft twice and on 1 October 1932 submitted a final result to the SGPC together with a report (*SRM*, Introduction, 2–4). Nothing more seems to have been done until 1936. On 1 August of that year the All-India Sikh Mission Board requested action and on 12 October 1936, the SGPC gave the draft general approval. It evidently referred the document to its Religious Advisory Committee (Dharamak Salahakar Committee) for further consideration. Presumably because India was at this time going through stirring times this committee did not meet until 7 January 1945. When it did finally meet the committee recommended further amendments and these were approved by the SGPC on 3 February of the same year (*SRM* 1). Independence and the partition of India stood in the way of printing, and it was not until December 1950 that it was finally published. Since then it has been re-issued several times.

Sikh Rahit Marayādā is a far more polished and sophisticated document than its publication as a crude pamphlet might suggest. It is in fact a highly refined and intelligent product, a robust statement of its direct Singh Sabha origins. The text is at once simpler and more comprehensive than its predecessor *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār*. It is simpler in the sense that the orders of service that it promulgates are briefer and less complex than those given in *Guramat Parkāsh Bhāg Saṅskār*; and it is more comprehensive in that it offers more detailed requirements concerning Sikh behaviour and covers a wider range of Sikh observances. It begins with a definition of who is a Sikh, demonstrating that it has partially succeeded in making up the ground lost in the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925.

A Sikh is any person who believes in Akal Purakh; in the ten Gurus (Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh); in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, other works of the ten Gurus, and their teachings; in the Khalsa initiation ceremony instituted by the tenth Guru; and who does not believe in any other system of religious doctrine (*SRM* 8).

This should be compared with the definition provided in the 1925 Act (see p. 162). In this definition from *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, the claim that the Sikh Panth should be regarded as the Khalsa Panth is reasserted. It is, however, a qualified victory. The door has still not been finally closed, for there is still no definitive assertion that all Sikhs must personally undergo the Khalsa initiation ceremony. Instead they must 'believe' or 'have faith' in it (*nisachā rukhadā*). This means that a Sikh does not have to be an Amrit-dhari. A Sikh can still remain a Kes-dhari without the initiation of amrit, or even a shaven Sahaj-dhari Sikh. The only provisos are that the Khalsa must be regarded as the ideal form of the Sikh Panth and that everyone who claims the status of a Sikh must accept that initiation should be the objective.

Sikh Rahit Marayādā does, however, mark another step along the road leading to the final merging of Sikh and Khalsa. The text bears several reminders of this, most conspicuously in the order for Khalsa initiation. The Rahit marks the Khalsa, and the tradition that all Sikhs are expected to obey is indeed the tradition of the Rahit.

The remainder of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* is divided into two sections, namely personal conduct (*shakhasī rahiṇī*) and corporate or 'panthic' conduct (*panthak rahiṇī*). The two sections are subdivided as follows:

I. Personal conduct

1. Devotion to the Divine Name

- 1.1 Scripture appointed for regular recitation. The text for Ardas (the Khalsa Prayer).
- 1.2 The gurdwara.
- 1.3 Kirtan.
- 1.4 Taking a *hukam*.
- 1.5 Ordinary reading of the Guru Granth Sahib (*sadhāran pāṭh*).
- 1.6 Unbroken reading (*akhand pāṭh*).
- 1.7 Beginning a complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- 1.8 The conclusion of a complete reading (*bhog*).
- 1.9 Karah prasad.

2. Living according to the Gurus' teachings (*guramat dī rahinī*)

2.1 General rules of conduct.

2.2 Birth and name-giving ceremony.

2.3 Marriage (*anand saṅskār*).

2.4 Funeral obsequies.

2.5 Other ceremonies (entering new house, opening new shop, etc.).

3. Service (*sevā*)

In particular service performed in a gurdwara.

II. Panthic conduct

1. Guru Panth.

2. Initiation (*amrit saṅskār*).

3. The administering of penances (*tanakhāh*) to offenders.

4. The issuing of a *guramatā*.

5. Appeals against congregational decisions.³¹

English editions of the manual have been published privately in London in 1971 (Kanwaljit Kaur & Indarjit Singh 1971), and officially by the SGPC in 1978.³²

6.7 The Present and the Future

It is difficult to determine how extensively *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* has been consciously used. By the end of 1957, a total of 1800 copies had been published, which is not a particularly large number for a small and inexpensive pamphlet. Its influence could, however, be expected to extend much further than the copies actually sold, for it is not the kind of publication that one would expect to find in every home. The question is rather one of whether or not its precepts are generally followed.

Let us remind ourselves once more of that axiom, with which this study began and which should never be forgotten when dealing with *rahit-namas*. *Rahit-namas* represent *normative* standards of Sikh belief and behaviour. They do not relate the beliefs of an ordinary Sikh, nor do they describe that ordinary Sikh's way of life. Most Sikhs will never have read a *rahit-nama*, and those who are aware of their contents will apply them with

varying degrees of loyalty. All, however, must fall short of a complete fulfillment of it. This applies as much today as it ever did. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, for example, requires every Sikh to arise between the hours of 3 and 6 a.m. and to repeat *Japujī*, *Jāp*, and the *Ten Savayyās*. It surely is unrealistic to assume that all Sikhs will discharge these instructions fully, just as it would naïve to assume that all will heed its banning of alcohol. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, like all previous rahit-namas, lays out a normative pattern, or at least a normative pattern as devised by mainstream leaders of the Panth and sanctioned by the SGPC.

This is true of all normative statements, whatever the culture or religion. Sikhs actually maintain a surprising degree of conformity to the injunctions of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, and some of them (particularly as old age creeps on) are punctilious in seeking to discharge them. No one can possibly know the precise extent to which it is obeyed, yet it seems safe to assume that the pattern it stipulates is generally followed by at least a large majority of those who regard themselves as Sikhs. This applies in particular to the various rituals which it enjoins.

Conformity, however, does not apply to all Sikhs. There are those who, in varying degrees, do not accept all that *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* prescribes. This is at once obvious in the practice of the various sects of the Sikh Panth. The Namdharis still maintain their highly visible presence and follow their own rahit-nama. This includes belief in the continuing personal line of the Gurus, a doctrine that mainstream Sikhs cannot possibly accept (see pp. 151–2). The Akhand Kirtani Jatha also observe their distinctive rahit-nama. This is Randhir Singh's *Guramati Bibek*, first published in 1946, which specifies the *keskī* in place of the *kes* as one of the Five Ks and accordingly requires women to wear turbans.³³ Sikhs of the Nanaksar movement have their distinctive practices, and so too do those belonging to the Damdami Taksal. Followers of the Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere (the 3HO movement) offer yet another variety. Their history is short, whereas the Nihangs (another sect with distinctive practices) have a history of at least 250 years. These are only some of the distinctive Sikh sects. The variety is considerable.³⁴

An illustration of this is provided by the kind of divergences, which the Damdami Taksal insists on including in the Khalsa

initiation ceremony.³⁵ There are three differences. First, the Taksal insists that for the 'heroic posture' the left knee should be laid on the ground with the right knee held upright. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* stipulates the reverse. Second, each of the five officiants for an *amrit* ceremony holds an unsheathed sword on his left shoulder with his left hand, its hilt touching the iron bowl which holds the baptismal water. His right hand is used for stirring the sweetened water with a double-edged sword (*khaṇḍā*). *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* requires each of the five officiants to keep his left hand on the rim of the bowl. Third, the Damdami Taksal recites the whole of the Mul Mantar, not simply the abbreviated form specified in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*.³⁶ To the outside observer these items may seem entirely insignificant. For committed Sikhs undergoing the rite of initiation, however, such differences can seem fundamental to the efficacy of the ceremony.

Another is the practice of the Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere, backed by the Damdami Taksal and the Akhand Kirtani Jatha, which also concerns the initiation ceremony. Whereas *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* recites only 25 of the stanzas of *Benatī Chaupai* and six stanzas of *Anand* (see p. 378), the Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere denounces this practice. All 29 stanzas of the *Benatī Chaupai* should be recited, plus all of the 40 stanzas of *Anand*. The *Benatī Chaupai* comes from the Dasam Granth where the verses form part of the section called *Pakhayān Charitr* ('Tales of the Wiles of Women'). The four omitted verses refer to the Devi, and the Singh Sabha scholars who compiled *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, were evidently concerned lest Sikhs might unjustifiably interpret this to mean that Guru Gobind Singh accepted the goddess as a reality. In the case of *Anand* the opposition to the abbreviated form is based on the convention that a mantra becomes ineffective if any of its syllables are changed. Yogi Bhajan, founder of the 3HO movement, has declared that anyone who prepares the *amrit* with a 'broken *Anand*' goes 'straight to hell' (Pashaura Singh 1996, pp. 154–6).

Others who regard themselves as mainstream in the best Singh Sabha tradition blame the Sikh politicians for this confused situation. Books and articles criticising politicians are legion, yet nothing seems to change. In 1959 Khushwant Singh included a photograph of a Sikh procession as the frontispiece

for his small paperback *The Sikhs Today*, and added the caption: 'Politics is the plague'. For many Sikhs it is not merely politics which is the plague. It is the Sikh politicians also, and virtually all of them are commonly censured for deflecting the government and the people away from the principles of the Rahit.

Others again blame the sants. These sants are not exponents of the Sant tradition of northern India, members of the Nirguna Bhakti group who believed in a formless deity (*GNSR*, pp. 151–8). The Sikh sants are men who have responded to the compelling need felt by many Sikh individuals and families to have a living guru. Sikh tradition eliminates the notion of possessing a personal guru after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the only Guru now being mystically present in the scripture and the Panth. The Namdharis and Nirankaris are the only important exceptions to this inflexible rule. Indian tradition is, however, very strong, and acting under its influence numerous Sikhs have adopted one or other of these men as, in effect, a personal guru. They cannot be called Gurus and instead the title 'Sant' has settled on them. By no means all sants are charlatans and some of them are thoroughly sound in the advice which they give. Others, though, are frauds or irresponsible or both. In between come those who sincerely believe in their role and try in their limited way to give sensible guidance.

One Sikh, hostile to the sants, describes them and their effect on the *marayādā* or tradition of the mainstream Panth as follows:

Major share of distracting Sikhs from the Sikh Rehat goes to Sants. Most of the Sikhs are associated with one or the other Sant. The main reason is that they assume that the Sant will help them here and in the next world if they listen to him and obey him. The general feeling among such Sikhs is that offering money to the Sants and reciting hymns prescribed by him (not caring about the instructions given in the Sikh Maryada) is the path to the heaven! Each Sant has introduced some practice, which is specific to his group only. For example, it may include photo worship, hymns required to be recited daily, practice of Anrit ceremony, performing Anand Karaj (Marriage), Guru Granth recitation, dress code, etc. This resulted in the practice of many Rehat Maryadas, without defining any one of them in writing, each differing from the approved and published Panthic Maryada. (Gurbaksh Singh 2000, 94–5)

This account is perhaps an exaggeration of the influence of the sants, but it does indicate a problem for those committed to a uniform observance of the Rahit by the Sikhs today.

Five principal controversies concerning the Rahit excite the modern Panth.

1. The order of service in gurdwaras (particularly the Rahiras or evening prayer).
2. The *Rāg-mālā*.
3. Details concerning the initiation ceremony.
4. Whether the kes is one of the Five Ks or whether it should be keski.
5. Vegetarianism.³⁷

In these the mainstream view is represented by the SGPC and opposed by such groups as the Damdami Taksal and the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. Yet another controversy concerns sitting on the floor as opposed to sitting on chairs. This, however, is confined to the Sikhs of the diaspora, particularly those of North America.

All sides uphold the view, of course, that the modern Rahit, as they understand it coincides with the Rahit delivered by Guru Gobind Singh at the founding of the Khalsa. A few scholars admit, however, that since the time of Guru Gobind Singh changes have been made in the Rahit (notably during the period of Singh Sabha reform) and that the pressure to make further alterations still exists. Kapur Singh was one of these. According to Kapur Singh any change in the Five Ks, in the four *kurahits*, or indeed in any Rahit item, must strip the Khalsa of its sense of cohesiveness, of its strength to hold together people of very different backgrounds and attitudes. These, he maintained, are not ethical principles such as one encounters in Semitic religions. Their power is 'daemonic' and their purpose, far from being ethical or utilitarian, is rather to hold together on a sub-conscious level a society which would otherwise split apart.

One such change concerns the *kurahit* which originally prohibited 'a sex-involvement with a Turkani' or Muslim woman. This prohibition has been changed by well-meaning Sikhs into a prohibition of any extra-marital sex relations, thereby converting the principle into a more acceptable social injunction

but robbing the Khalsa of a cohesive power of great strength. Another is provided by the Nirankari substitution of *satināmu* for *bhagautī* in the invocation to Ardas (*prītham satināmu simar ke*) (see p. 152–3). Amongst those, which some wish to change, he points to campaigns being waged by the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. As we have noted, its followers insist that the keski or under-turban must be accepted as one of the Five Ks, and they also insist that the ban on *kuttā* meat (meat from animals slaughtered in the Muslim style) should be changed to a ban on all meat regardless of how the animal may have been killed. Kapur Singh vehemently maintained that if these changes were to be accepted by the mainstream Khalsa the result would inevitably be a further diminution of strength (Kapur Singh 1978, pp. 47–50).

These are some of the issues that swirl around in the modern Panth, raising strong passions on the part of some and bored indifference on the part of others. Two issues, which involve the world beyond the Panth are the problems of the turban and the kirpan. The turban, long an issue for migrant Sikhs and only a difficulty that they encountered in western countries, has proven amenable to various negotiated settlement such as that which permitted it to be worn by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Rather more difficult is the issue of the kirpan.

The kirpan (a sword or poniard) is one of the Five Ks, and fundamentalist Sikhs insist that they can never be deprived of it. Some schools, however, have been most reluctant to permit students to wear it and likewise some airlines. For a large majority of Sikhs there is no problem. For many of them the kirpans which they carry are symbolic ones, each measuring less than two centimetres in length and fastened to the wooden combs which they wear as another of the Five Ks. This, however, is not likely to satisfy the strict fundamentalists, though they will find their task vastly harder since 11 September 2001. As a result of the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York on that day restrictions on carrying steel items on planes have been greatly increased. Any kirpans which can do damage have accordingly been firmly banned on all commercial aircraft.

Endnotes

1. The word *sahaj* means the condition of ineffable beatitude which for Guru Nanak climaxes the discipline of *nām simaran*. Sahaj-dhari meant those who were seeking this inward condition as opposed to the outward discipline of the Khalsa. See ch. 7.6.

2. The term had been used long before the Tat Khalsa took up the issue. See ch. 7.30, p. 240.

3. The method was probably borrowed from the Nirankaris. See p. 349.

4. See pp. 173–7. For a useful summary of both the Chief Khalsa Divan and the Panch Khalsa Divan see N. Gerald Barrier (2000). Professor Barrier will shortly be publishing a book on the Chief Khalsa Diwan.

5. The Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925, 2 (9).

6. In 1894 he produced his *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr: Saṁskār Bhāg*. In 1908 the text was considerably enlarged and under the auspices of Sodhi Ram Narain Singh, the head of the Anandpur Sodhis, an incomplete *Kharaṛā Khālsā Dharam Shāstr* was compiled. Finally, in 1914, *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr* was published from Anandpur Sahib. Before publication this was circulated for revisions and approval among the five takhats, traditional intellectuals, and others sympathetic to it. When the text was published it had the approval of three takhats (Damdama Sahib; Patna Sahib, and Anandpur Sahib) and several other traditional commentators. Avatar Singh Vahiria was not responsible for the whole text, but most of the work was his. Curiously none of his works are listed in Ganda Singh's two bibliographies.

7. Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, Delhi, 1994, pp. 251–2. *EncyS* I.223–4. Avatar Singh was called Vahiria after the term designating the head of a marching column.

8. *eh sikhā dharam khālsā panth dā purātāmā ale mahutibir hajūri kāmān hai*. See p. 358.

9. *ChS* 120, pp. 72, 160. *KDS*, p. 177, item 151. Additional words have, however, been introduced to make it clear that this is permissible only when the Rahit procedure is followed.

10. Kahn Singh adds the footnote: 'Injunctions which do not conflict with the four rahit-namas of category (a) may be accepted as sound.'

11. *MK* does not have an entry for *Sādhu saṅgati kī prārathanā*. A text is, however, included which appears as no.14 in *GSudh* (4th edition, pp. 306–7). It is a very brief work consisting of little more than four teachings to be avoided and the four modern *kurahits*.

12. *Khālsā Mahimā*.

13. A history of the ten Gurus in verse by Baba Sumer Singh. Dated S. 1913 (1856 CE). Sumer Singh, a Bhalla, was the Mahant of Patna Sahib. *MK*, pp. 163, 314.

14. A collection of 37 rahit-namas compiled by Pandit Bhagvan Singh (a disciple of Sumer Singh), dated 1873 CE. *MK*, p. 760. Kahn Singh adds: 'But he has mutilated Gurmat by adding his own mistaken notions.' *Ibid*.

15. Kahn Singh, in common with all subsequent writers, refers to the author as Prahilad Singh.

16. For proof texts Kahn Singh also cites *Gur Sobhā*, *Gur-bilās Pātishāhī* 6, *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī* 10, *Panth Prakāsh*, and (especially popular) *Sūraj Parkāsh*.

17. See pp. 403–11 for charts which show the omissions.

18. Jodh Singh demonstrates this same ambivalence. His *Guramati Nirāṇay*, first published in 1932 and reprinted many times, has enjoyed a considerable and well-merited success. Much of the final chapter headed 'Khalsa' is drawn from the rahit-namas, thereby demonstrating that they provide a 'canonical' source for an account of the Khalsa. This, however, was based on a selective use of them. Jodh Singh makes particular use of Desa Singh, quoting him 19 times. He also cites Chaupa Singh 11 times and Prahilad Singh 9 times. Nand Lal is quoted 11 times, but the actual source (*Prashan-uttar*) is given only once. He begins with the famous passage from *Khalsa Mahimā*, and quotes *Gur Ratan Māl* and *Sūraj Prakāsh* once each.

19. See Appendix 1, p. 405, for the omissions.

20. The author of the rahit-nama usually refers to Muslims as 'Turks'. Once they are called 'Khans' and once *malechh* ('barbarians').

21. Sikhs who cut their hair. This footnote occurs in the early editions of *GSudh* only (p. 457n). In the 4th edition it is replaced by a more general note (p. 256n).

22 Teja Singh was the leader of the Bhasaur Singh Sabha. He was 'unable to attend the committee meetings' (*GPBS*, Appx. 1, p. 62), choosing instead to launch vigorous attacks against its activities. Gurbakhsh Singh was a preacher from Patiala. Jodh Singh was Professor of Divinity at Khalsa College, Amritsar. Takhat Singh was manager of the famous girls' school in Firozpur. Trilochan Singh was a lawyer of Amritsar.

23. On 3 May 2001, his grandson Manmohan Singh Sidhu appeared with his wife Balwinder Kaur before the Akal Takhat where both were vicariously adjudged tanakhahias on behalf of Babu Teja Singh and his wife Niranjana Kaur. They were required to perform one reading of the Guru Granth Sahib and offer karah prashad to the value of Rs 101 after its completion. The Akal Takhat then performed Ardas and formally

inducted the deceased Teja Singh and Niranjan Kaur into the Sikh Panth once again.

24. At the very end of the Adi Granth on pages 1429–30 there is a list of raghs which are alleged to be used in its composition. Because of its apparent mistakes the status of the Rag-mala is undecided. See SRM 1.4.7(a).

25. These examples have been selectively chosen from *Pañch Khālsā Divān Khālsā Dhāramik Kānaphrans de Tīje Sālānā Divān dī Rīporat dā Guramate Prakāsh*, 1918–23.

26. The three which are relatively close are the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, *Prashan-uttar*, and the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.

27. It also appears that Kahn Singh must have had some sympathy for the Namdharis.

28. In earlier manuscripts of the Adi Granth there is no division of the text into separate words.

29. The term *rahu-rīt* means 'custom' or 'rite'.

30. In 1938 Teja Singh published his *Sikhism: its ideals and institutions*. This contained as chapters IX and X what was essentially the forthcoming rahit-nama, *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*.

31. For a complete translation see Part II, no. 21, p. 377–401. For an extended commentary on SRM see *Sikhism*, pp. 134–51.

32. *Rehat Maryada: A Guide to the Sikh Way of Life*. Amritsar, 1978. An abbreviated translation is available in W. Owen Cole and Piara Singh Sambhi, *The Sikhs*, London, 1978, pp. 168–79.

33. See Part II, no. 20, pp. 376–7, for an extract from *Guramati Bibek* dealing with turbans for women. The Akhand Kirtani Jatha has invested much effort in proving that the Five Ks include the *keski* in place of the *kes*. For a statement of their view see the web-site www.akj.org.uk. Click first 'Literature' and then 'Gurmat'.

34. For details of various Sikh sects see *Sikhism*, ch. 9. See also Pashaura Singh, 'Observing the Khalsa Rahit in North America', in Pashaura Singh and N. Gerald Barrier (eds), *The Transmission of Sikh Heritage in the Diaspora*, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 154–62. 'Sect' is an unsatisfactory word for describing these various groups and is only used because there seems to be no alternative. It assumes the existence of an orthodox body from which the group diverges. Strictly speaking there is no such body in Sikhism. The SGPC represents the group, which is by far the largest and as such is treated as orthodox. There is, however, little justification either for 'orthodox' or for 'sect' as descriptive terms.

35. The main centre of the Damdami Taksal is at Mehta, near Batala. Founded in 1906 by Sant Sundar Singh, it achieved prominence through its second leader, Sant Gurbachan Singh Khalsa of Bhindran Kalan in Ludhiana District. The Taksal split after his death in 1969,

one branch remaining in Ludhiana district and the other establishing itself at Mehta. The Mehta branch owes its recent popularity to the fact that its leader until his death during the Indian Army's storming of Darbar Sahib in 1984 was Jarnail Singh Bhindranvale. Ibid., pp. 158-9.

36. Ibid., pp. 159. Cf. the instructions given on p. 396. Pashaura Singh's article is an important one, providing detailed differences between *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* and the various practices of these other groups.

37. Most of these are discussed by Pashaura Singh, pp. 149-75.

7

The Issues Arising from the Rahit-namas



In this chapter we consider various issues dealt with by the earlier rahit-namas to determine, if possible, any bearing that they may have upon the corresponding prescriptions in the modern interpretation of the Rahit. Normally these prescriptions are to be found in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*. Occasionally they are represented by the common beliefs of the mass of Sikh people. Some issues will demonstrate complete identity between the earliest Rahit and the modern interpretation. Others will demonstrate a pronounced divergence.

7.1 The Sangat

One issue which demonstrates complete identity is the importance attached throughout Sikh history to the role of the sangat. The word *saṅgat* means a 'coming together' or an assembly. For Sikhs the sangat is an assembly held for a definite religious purpose and in terms of western usage the best translation would be 'congregation'. Other terms carrying the same meaning are *sat-saṅg* ('assembly of the true [believers]') and *sādh saṅgat* ('assembly of the devout'). The shortened form *saṅg* is little used by Sikh congregations.

In its early usage *saṅgat* has two closely-related meanings. One of these meanings goes back to the Gurus themselves and

is found throughout the Adi Granth where it means the importance and the joy of coming together to sing the Gurus' hymns. In the works of Bhai Gurdas the sangat is mentioned again and again as the natural centre of every Sikh's life. The short selection of translated portions chosen for this work shows the prominence that the sangat had for Bhai Gurdas (*BG* 12:1, 12:2, 28:15, 32:2, 40:11; see Part II, no. 1, pp. 261–4). This feature is carried over to the rahit-namas. For the author of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* it had a particular attraction (*ChS* 96–8, 117–18, 123, 277, 289, 302, 345, 480, 539).

The second meaning designated the individual congregation as an actual organisation. The Panth consisted of a collection of sangats, each serving a particular area. This meaning also goes back to pre-Khalsa times, as the hukam-namas indicate. For Sainapati it was the standard usage (*GSobh* 5:3, 4, 20, 24, 30; see Part II, no. 3, pp. 268–71). Congregations could also be 'false sangats', traitors to the Guru and sowers of discord within the Sikh cause (*GSobh* 5:30; see p. 270). The two usages were obviously closely related, yet served different purposes.

7.2 The Daily Discipline (nit-nem)

The daily discipline is also one that goes back to the Adi Granth. There the searcher after liberation is repeatedly urged to rise early, to bathe, and then to meditate on the divine Name. What the Gurus stress Bhai Gurdas repeats numerous times in his works.

Arising at the ambrosial hour the Gursikh bathes in the sacred pool.

Having chanted the Guru's divine words his thoughts then turn to the dharamsala.

Proceeding there he [joins] the fellowship and hears with love the Guru's sacred works. (*BG* 40:11; see p. 264).

The 'ambrosial hour' (*amrit velā*), to which Bhai Gurdas refers, is the last watch of the night, or the period 3 A.M. to 6 A.M. This is the peaceful period, the time for meditation and for repeating the divine Name (*nām japān*). The rahit-namas sustain this same injunction. Again it is the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* that

gives it the greatest prominence (*ChS* 1, 3, pp. 57–8, 149), but others also include it (*TanN* 25; *SakhiR* 15; *DesaS* 11, 101; *SauS*(1) 28; *SauS*(2) 9).

Having risen during the last watch of the night what is the devout Sikh expected to do? And what discipline is expected during the remainder of the day? At the beginning of the *Adi Granth* there is recorded a cluster of works, which seem plainly designed for specific liturgical functions (Pashaura Singh 2000, 90–102). This cluster comprises the following:

1. The *Mūl Mantar* (*AG*, p. 1).
2. Guru Nanak's *Japujī* (*AG*, pp. 1–8).
3. The *Sodar* group of five shabads (*AG*, pp. 8–10).
4. The *So purakh* group of four shabads (*AG*, pp. 10–12).
5. The *Sohilā* group of five shabads (*AG*, pp. 12–13)¹

The *rahit-namas* make it clear that *Japujī* is to be repeated in the early morning period (*TanN* 25; *SakhiR* 15; *Pr-ut* 1, 13; *ChS* 1, 337, 535, pp. 102, 113, 178, 187; *DesaS* 11, 37); that the third group is sung in the *Rahiras* or evening prayer (*TanN* 26; *PrahR* 14, 34; *SakhiR* 15; *Pr-ut* 3; *ChS* 3, pp. 57, 149; *DesaS* 37); and that the fifth group is chanted at the time of retiring.² It can also be safely assumed that the fourth group will have been bracketted with the third in the *Rahiras* liturgy. The *rahit-namas* add that the *Jāp*, attributed to Guru Gobind Singh, was also bracketted with Guru Nanak's *Japujī*, whenever the latter was repeated.³

This liturgy, however, falls short of the modern list of hymns specified by *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*. In the case of the early-morning order the modern version also adds the *Ten Savayyās*. *Rahiras* is supplemented by the *Benatī Chaupai* (also attributed to Guru Gobind Singh), *Savayyā* and *Doharā* from the *Dasam Granth*, the first five and the last stanza of Guru Amar Das's *Anand*, and Guru Arjan's *Mundāvāṇī* and shalok (see p. 378; see also *ChS*, p. 209). Only *Kīrtan Sohilā* remains as the *Adi Granth* represents it. Moreover, the order of *Rahiras* evidently differs from that which applied in the late nineteenth century. In 1876 Attar Singh provided a list of the works included in *Rahiras* in his *The Rayhit Namah of Prahalad Rai, or the Excellent*

Conversation of the Duswan Padsha and Nand Lal's Rayhit Nama, or rules for the guidance of the Sikhs in Religious Matters. These were:

1. Verses from the Asawar [*Āsā kī Vār*].
2. Soodrasa [*Sodar*].
3. Chaupai.
4. Dhore [*Dohare*] Bachitr Natak, Akal-ustat or glory to God and several stanzas from the Ramayana.
5. Anand.
6. Mandawani by Guru Arjan.
7. The prayers in the 1st paragraph of the history of Bhagwati [the invocation at the beginning of *Vār Sṛī Bhagavatī jī kī*] (see p. 276).
8. A benediction upon all gurus and temples.⁴

The current liturgy comprises the following:

1. The five *Sodar* shabads.
2. The four *So purakh* shabads
3. *Benatī chaupai*.
4. The *Savaiyyā* and *Doharā* attributed to Guru Gobind Singh.
5. Guru Amar Das's *Rāmakālī Anand*, stanzas 1–5 and 40.
6. Guru Arjan's *Mundāvaṇī* and shalok.

These two orders are not as different as they might appear at first sight. Items 7 and 8 of the Attar Singh version are obviously Ardas and, as today, Ardas is recited after Rahiras, the two orders are in this respect the same. The reference to 'several stanzas from the Ramayana' is clearly a mistake arising from a *chaupai* of the Dasam Granth, which at that time was included in Rahiras: *rām kathā jug jug aṭal sabh koī bhākhāt net*.⁵ The fact that it is excluded today, marks one difference.⁶ The *Āsā kī Vār* portion signals another. Although it is omitted from the *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* list it is included in Vir Singh's text of Rahiras where it is identified as shalok 1 of pauri 12.⁷ According to Vir Singh its inclusion derives from 'early tradition' (*purātan mariyādā*). Evidently there have been changes in the Rahiras order which have escaped the rahit-namas.

One other question that arises from the Rahiras order is why did Guru Arjan distinguish the four *So purakh* shabads from the five *Sodar* shabads in the Adi Granth? Did this mean that he envisaged a separate usage for them? There is no evidence to support this possibility, neither in the rahit-namas nor in the modern order.

Two other points remain to be noted as far as the rahit-namas' coverage of *nil-nem* is concerned. The first, is the somewhat surprising fact that the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* makes no mention of it. It does, however, make frequent use of *Japuji* and *Jāp* in certain circumstances, such as an initiation ceremony (*DayaS* 5). The second is Desa Singh's instruction that a Sikh should always have his weapons with him when he prays (*DesaS* 70). Obviously this was an instruction directed to Sikhs of the Khalsa.

7.3 Ardas

The word *aradās* is the Punjabi form of the Persian '*arz-dāsh*t', a written petition. The Punjabi version developed three distinctive meanings. One of these meanings need not delay us. During the time of Ranjit Singh (perhaps earlier) the term acquired an administrative usage designating a monetary contribution to the ruler.⁸ This meaning does not concern us. The two that remain do, particularly the one with an exclusively Sikh connotation.

Used in its ordinary general sense *aradās* means a deferential request. In Sikh tradition the term *aradās karaṇā* is used to express the act of laying a petition before the Guru, and the Gurus themselves used it as a form of address to Akal Purakh (*GM*, pp. 36–7). At some stage, however, *aradās* acquired a more specific meaning in Sikh usage. There developed the convention of prefacing requests for divine assistance with the invocation to *Vār Srī Bhagautī jī kī* (see pp. 276, 379), an introduction that calls to mind the virtues and grace of the first nine Gurus. To this was added a similar reference to the tenth Guru and the supplemented invocation came to be known as *Ardas*.

This convention almost certainly developed in the eighteenth century. Two factors account for this conclusion.

First, the choice of the goddess Bhagauti⁹ as an invocation, could only have been made before the Panth experienced the influence of the Singh Sabha reform movement. A translation of Ardas is actually available for the time of the Singh Sabha's first beginnings in 1873,¹⁰ but even so, it would be highly unlikely that the text could have been devised once the Panth came under its influence. The convention of reciting Ardas on appropriate occasions, was so deeply rooted by the late nineteenth century that there could be no possibility of depriving the Panth of it. There developed, in consequence, a conviction that the figure of Sri Bhagauti really represented not the goddess but symbolically the sword which every Khalsa should bear. The sword, in turn, represented Akal Purakh.

This is by no means a naïve theory. Bhai Gurdas had referred to Bhagauti in terms which suggested it was a sword that he had in mind (*BG* 25:6) and the sword was, after all, the prime symbol of the Khalsa. Moreover, *bhagauti* actually means 'sword' as well as the goddess's name, and in *Vār Sṛī Bhagautī jī kī* it seems that 'sword' is the meaning that should be attached to the word.¹¹ The sword was the chosen means of upholding justice and all that was good. As such it stood for Akal Purakh, and Sri Bhagauti was, therefore, another name for Akal Purakh.

Though less naïve than it might seem the theory is nevertheless difficult to accept. It seems unlikely that the Tat Khalsa reformers would have chosen this particular segment of the Dasam Granth as the invocation to their pre-eminent prayer had not the decision already been made. A more likely explanation is that faced by a *fait accompli*, they were compelled to turn their attention instead to demythologising the goddess.¹² The task was duly performed and now, with several generations of Sikhs having believed this explanation, their view of Sri Bhagauti has become the received and wholly infallible wisdom. This interpretation will be rejected out of hand by those who have been brought up to recite Ardas since early childhood, and it may also cause unintentional offence. It remains, however, a distinct possibility.

Secondly, there is the reason which points to the eighteenth century rather than to the nineteenth. This is simply that when the authors of the early rahit-namas use the term *aradās*, the meaning obviously seems to be a set-piece which would be easily

mastered by any Sikh (*TanN* 31; *SakhiR* 10, 12, 16; *ChS* 108, 376, pp. 70, 104; *DesaS* 19, 40, 108; *DayaS* 7, 14, 51, 64, 67). These authors were all writing in the eighteenth century or possibly in the very early nineteenth century. It would have required time for the convention to take a hold and so it means that even the later works (for example a rahit-nama such as that of Daya Singh) will be using a form that had developed during the eighteenth century.

Ardas, as known to the rahit-namas, will have been a much shorter form than that employed by the modern Panth, though the mandatory portion of the modern text still largely corresponds to the earlier version. This, as we have already noted, amounted only to the supplemented invocation to Sri Bhagauti, followed by a brief encomium of the ten Gurus. The two concluding lines are also mandatory, at least in the modern version.

Nanak prays that the Name may be magnified;
By your grace may all be blest.

In 1876 Attar Singh produced the text of Ardas that provides us with a comparatively early translation, one that apparently represents the much shorter earlier version.¹³ This brief text contrasts with the lengthy prayer laid down in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, most of this extended version being a review of the past trials and triumphs of the Panth. This may be further enlarged by personal or corporate intercessions whenever Ardas is being uttered for a specific purpose. All of these supplements are, however, purely voluntary. The only two mandatory sections of Ardas are the invocation corresponding to the early version and the two last lines.

7.4 The Khalsa Initiation Ceremony (khande ki pahul)

Although most Sikhs will have received the initiation ritual by means of oral tradition the testimony of the rahit-namas is still of value, in that it records how particular groups within the Khalsa at particular times interpreted it. For the first evidences of a Khalsa initiation ceremony, we must go back to *Gur Sobhā*. No account of the actual rite is given in *Gur Sobhā*, but an

initiation ceremony was certainly held (*GSobh* 5:33; see Part I, no. 3, p. 271) and the results of it are clear. Those Sikhs who elected to accept Guru Gobind Singh's invitation to join his Khalsa underwent a distinctive experience and promised to obey certain injunctions.

1. The ritual involved initiation with a two-edged sword (*khaṇḍe kī pāḥul*).

2. In accepting this new form of initiation, the Khalsa Sikh had to promise to renounce the masands (see pp. 35–6).

3. All who took initiation were to avoid contact with the unnamed *pañj mel*, the Five Reprobate Groups. Ever since this first appeared as an item in the Rahit, opinion has been divided on who constituted the excluded groups. There is general agreement on four of the five, these being the masands and groups that had gathered around three of the Guru's relatives who claimed the title of Guru as rightly theirs. The fifth has, however, remained uncertain (see ch. 7.22).

4. All members of the Khalsa were to avoid cutting their hair. The kes became the prime outward evidence of Khalsa membership.

5. All who accepted initiation were to avoid the hookah. This was an artifact recently introduced by the Muslims, and the Khalsa was to take a firm stand against all things Muslim.

6. All were to be armed (*GSobh* 5:6, 15, 21, 25, 30, 32–4).

The masands were vicars instituted by Guru Ram Das, responsible for keeping distant sangats in contact with him and for collecting the tithes, which were evidently expected of all Sikhs. Not all Sikhs were under masand supervision. Those living close to the Guru were retained under his supervision, forming what was known as the Guru's *khālsā*. This was a term, which predated the time of Guru Gobind Singh, having already been used in hukam-namas issued by the sixth and ninth Gurus.¹⁴ In using it the Gurus were merely taking over a practice followed by the Mughal empire, which for revenue purposes designated some jagirdars and landowners as within the Emperor's *khālsā* (*H-n* 25). For many years the system had worked well, but by the time Gobind Singh became Guru many of these masands had become arrogant, and largely independent and corrupt. The

Guru therefore decided to abolish the system and summon all Sikhs to join his Khalsa.

Thus was the Order of the Khalsa instituted and thus did its members receive the first rudimentary Rahit. Since these earliest days the Rahit has been considerably enlarged, but these six provisions have remained either virtually intact or no longer relevant. Two of its provisions remain completely unchanged. These are the *khaṇḍe kī pāḥul* form of the ritual and the pre-eminence of the kes. The ban on smoking the hookah has been extended to cover tobacco in all its forms. Cigarettes, pipe tobacco, and cigars are now proscribed. The obligation to bear arms is recognised symbolically, if not always practically. Many Sikhs do in fact treat this item of the Rahit literally, but many more (as we have seen) wear in their kes only miniature kirpans, measuring less than two centimetres in length and fastened to the wooden combs. And the remaining two items have long since become superfluous. Who now cares about the masands or any of these three relatives of Guru Gobind Singh?

After the appearance of *Gur Sobhā* there is a gap of at least four decades before a detailed account of the initiation ritual appears. This was in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. It is, however, a detailed account (*ChS* 178–83, pp. 82–3, 169–70). The author describes the ceremony as follows:

1. The rite is conducted by five Singhs.

2. Water is poured in a bowl (*kaṭorā*), sweetened with sugar confectionery (*patāsā*), and stirred with a knife (*karad*). While it is being stirred the Five Quatrains¹⁵ are recited.

3. A handful of the sanctified water (*amrit*) is given five times to the neophyte to drink; five times it is sprinkled on his eyes; and five times on his head.

4. The newly-initiated Singh then shouts: *Vāhi gurū jī kā khālsā! Vāhi gurū jī kī fateh!* ('Hail to the Guru's Khalsa! Hail the victory of the Guru').

5. The officiating Singhs instruct him in observance of the Rahit, repeating the *sat-nām* mantra and the obligation to bear arms.

6. The initiate receives the name 'Singh'.

7. Finally karah prasad is distributed (*ChS* 90, 178–82, pp. 68, 82–3, 157, 169–70).

The male Sikh who accepted initiation was strictly required to keep his kes uncut. Those who administered it should be devout, wise, and scrupulous in the observance of the Rahit. None of them should be one-eyed, bald, lame, or a leper, nor should he be a beardless person (*ChS* 91, 122, 183, pp. 68, 72–3, 83, 157, 161, 170).

The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* differs from *Gur Sobhā* in the reason it gives for the founding of the Khalsa order. Whereas Sainapati evidently believed that the erring masands were the cause, the *Chaupā Singh* author claims that it was to ensure that no Sikh would ever be able to conceal his true identity from the world (*ChS* 166, 178, pp. 80, 82, 168–69). In this respect, *Chaupā Singh* agrees with the modern interpretation. Six other points, however, mark a difference from the tradition as it is accepted today.

1. The bowl used for the initiation is a *kaṭorā* that is usually made from brass or copper. Daya Singh, however, was later to affirm that a *kaṭorā* could be an iron bowl.

2. The water is stirred with a knife (*karad*), not a two-edged sword (*khandā*).

3. In place of the Guru's wife, Mata Jito adding patashas to the amrit, Diwan Sahib Chand is said to have made the suggestion and Dharam Chand actually puts them in the water. Both of these men were Chhibbar Brahmans and relatives of Chaupa Singh.

4. Guru Gobind Singh initiates himself before administering initiation to the first five Sikhs.

5. The Panj Piare differ from those of the traditional five Sikhs. Chaupa Singh himself is said to be the first Sikh to receive initiation. The remaining four who follow him have different names from those of the traditional Panj Piare.¹⁶

6. The initiation of women is explicitly prohibited.¹⁷

Two of these items (number 3 and the first part of 5) can be written off as attempts to enhance the reputation of the Chhibbar Brahmans, and one of them may appear to be mistaken (number

2). We must be cautious, however, about the weapon used for stirring the amrit and about throwing out the collection of items as a whole. This, after all, is the first detailed description of the ritual that we have. Chaupa Singh may have been a Chhibbar Brahman, and the Chhibbars were obviously using the rahit-nama in an attempt to stem their failing fortunes against the rapidly-rising Jats. Even so there is in the rahit-nama bearing his name sufficient provable material to give us pause.

The *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* provides only a brief account of the initiation ritual, specifying three features which all accord with the modern understanding. A Khalsa Sikh must take *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* for which the water of initiation is stirred with a two-edged sword. He should receive it at the hands of five Singhs, and he should hear from them the demands of the Rahit (*Desā* 6–7).

The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* returns, however, to a more detailed description. The initiant is to appear before five Singhs, with his kes properly tied and wearing a kachh, turban, baldric, and sword. The leading Singh should pour water from Amritsar into an iron bowl, and then should recite *Japujī*, the *Jāp*, the *Chaupai*, and two lots of five *Savaiyyās* individually. Meanwhile the amrit is being stirred with a knife (*karad*). Then one Singh, with the permission of all gathered there, takes the bowl (*kaṭorā*) and has the initiant drink from it, while placing the knife in the initiant's turban. The initiant should place his right hand on his left and drink the amrit, uttering '*Vāh gurū jī kī khālsā! Vāh gurū jī kī fateh!*' In this way he should drink five handfuls of amrit, and he should utter the *fateh* salutation as the amrit is cast into his eyes. It is then sprinkled on his kes. Next he should be instructed in the Rahit of the Gur-mantra of Sati-nam and be given a new name from the Granth Sahib. The initiant then donates a rupee and a quarter and says Ardas. Karah prasad is distributed and the Panj Piare conclude the ritual by worshipping the chattels and weapons left by the tenth Guru (*Daya* 4–7).

It will be noted that the *kaṭorā* is in fact an iron bowl, and that the water is stirred not with a *khaṇḍā* but with a *karad* or knife. Evidently sections of the Khalsa in the second half of the eighteenth century were using a *karad* for this purpose and doubtless the practice continued right up to the beginning of the

Singh Sabha movement. Just how widespread the practice was is impossible to say. Desa Singh supports the *khaṇḍā* as the proper instrument; Chaupa Singh and Daya Singh support the *kurad*. What seems clear is that practices within the Khalsa varied, and that they did so for a hundred years or more.

As we move into the nineteenth century the Khalsa discipline becomes even more lax. The author responsible for sakhi 65 of the *Sau Sākhī* declares:

Spiritual liberation [is obtained by] an initiation [based on] the uncut hair (*kes*). This can be either by the excellent initiation of the two-edged sword (*khaṇḍe pāhul*) or it can be the foot-wash variety (*charanan kī jugatī*) (*SauS(2)* 4).

There are, he says, three varieties of Sikhs: the Sahajis (*sahajī*) who take no initiation; the Charanis who have taken foot initiation (*charanī*); and the Khands who have taken initiation with the two-edged sword (*khaṇḍ*). The Sikh who keeps his hair uncut, he affirms, is the one who sums up all three (*SauS(2)* 7).

This commentary was evidently written from within the Khalsa. There is the same insistence on uncut hair, but the rite of Khalsa initiation has lost its exclusive claim to be the only entry to the Khalsa order. This was not as Guru Gobind Singh had promulgated it, nor was it the view so insistently advocated by the Tat Khalsa.

7.5 Foot-initiation (*charan pāhul*)

Before the institution of the Khalsa order initiation was carried out by means of *charan pāhul* or 'foot initiation', a method that had a long history in Hindu India. Initiants were required to drink water in which the Guru had dipped his toe, thus signifying their total dependence on him. Guru Gobind Singh abandoned it, substituting in the Khalsa initiation that he introduced, the distinctive method of the two-edged sword. Khalsa initiation was for men only. Women only later received it and then it was with a single-edged sword. It was not until the Singh Sabha reformation that the Khalsa initiation was finally applied to women also (see ch. 7.31).

The rahit-namas should therefore have been committed exclusively to *khaṇḍe kī pāhul*. In spite of this, however, there

were the two exceptions that have already been noted. First, there was initiation for which the water was stirred not with a *khaṇḍā* or two-edged sword but with a *karad* or knife. Secondly, there was still *charan pāhul*, which makes a cautious re-entry in the later *rahit-namas*. It does not appear in the early ones, but by the nineteenth century, it is again in evidence. In the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* we read:

Those who are spiritually liberated [utter] 'Vāhi gurū', [even] those who are initiated [with water from their Master's] foot. [Your] daughter [should be given in marriage] to someone who has received initiation, whether he be Khalsa-initiated or foot-initiated (*DayaS* 78).

The author adds that those who have been initiated by *charan pāhul* are forbidden (like the orthodox Khalsa) from eating Muslim meat, the domestic pig, and other such animals as a donkey (*DayaS* 79). In the *Sau Sākhī* the author, while acknowledging that uncut hair is vital for spiritual liberation, adds that this can be obtained either by initiation with the two-edged sword or by the foot-wash variety (*SauS*(2) 4; see also *SauS*(2) 7).

Could this be a problem for Sikhs? Who should dip his toe in the water? While there was a Guru alive he could perform the function, but now there is only the mystical Guru who certainly cannot do the deed. Does the author mean one of the Panj Piare? Does he mean all of them? Sangats can choose five Sikhs for this purpose, or perhaps they would appoint someone like a modern sant. Why, then, should this man or these people not perform *khaṇḍe kī pāhul*?

Presumably the answer lies in spiritual dependence on sants who, given the state of the Sikh faith at the time, would have no difficulty in administering the *charan pāhul*. The later *rahit-namas* here reflect the condition of the Sikhs in the late eighteenth century or the early nineteenth. In so doing they also throw light on the conditions which, later in the nineteenth century, brought stern disapproval from members of the Tat Khalsa.

7.6 Sahaj-dharis

The term *sahaj-dhārī* is seldom employed by the *rahit-namas*, its usage being limited to occasional appearances in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Sahaj-dhārī Sikhs are those who have not taken Khalsa initiation and who, therefore, are not bound to

observe the *Rahit*. In the very first item after his brief prologue the *Chaupā Singh* author begins with the statement:

In the early morning the Gursikh, whether *Kes-dhari* or *Sahaj-dhari*, should bathe or perform the five ablutions.¹⁸

Kes-dhārī is used by the same author to designate a Sikh who has received *Khalsa* initiation; the *sahaj-dhārī*, one who has not received it. The term *amrit-dhārī* makes no appearance at all, neither in the *rahit-nama* attributed to *Chaupa Singh* nor in any other. It is, in other words, a comparatively modern term to denote a Sikh who has taken *Khalsa* initiation (McLeod 1997, 218–25). The introduction of the term *amrit-dhārī* has meant that *kes-dhārī* has changed its meaning to include all who keep their *kes* intact, regardless of whether or not they have received *Khalsa* initiation.

The term *sahaj-dhārī* has normally been translated by *Tat Khalsa* scholars to signify a ‘slow-adopter’ or ‘gradualist’ (*EncyS* IV.13). It is thus intended to mean someone who is moving towards a full acceptance of the *Khalsa* discipline, but who has not yet proceeded further than an acceptance of Nanak’s teachings concerning liberation. A more likely etymology relates the compound term to Guru Nanak’s characteristic use of the word *sahaj* to cover the ineffable bliss which ultimately results from the disciplined practice of *nām simaran*. If this theory is correct the term *sahaj-dhārī* should be construed to mean ‘one who accepts the *nām simaran* teachings of Nanak’, without any reference to the adoption of the *Khalsa* discipline (*EST* 35n).

The author of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, however, takes the term one small step further. It is characteristically used in contrast to *kes-dhārī* and as such signifies its opposite. Whereas *kes-dhārī* means ‘one who retains his *kes*’ (with the clear implication that he does so in obedience to the strict *Khalsa Rahit*), *sahaj-dhārī* denotes a person who cuts his hair and who thus falls short of the *Khalsa* ideal. Such a person evidently hovers on the *Panth*’s boundaries. At certain points in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (as for example the reference which occurs in the first item) he seems clearly to be included within its bounds. Elsewhere the firm insistence on the maintenance of the *kes* logically requires his exclusion (*ChS* 92, 145, pp. 68,

77, 157, 164). And elsewhere again an attempt is made to bridge the gap by requiring the Sahaj-dhari never to cut the hair of his head (*ChS* 53, 287, pp. 64, 100, 154, 176).

The rahit-namas of the earlier nineteenth century seem to have little question about him. They do not use the term *sahaj-dhārī*, but their treatment of non-Khalsa Sikhs evidently embraces them without hesitation (*SauS*(2) 7). It was the Tat Khalsa that adopted a stern line. The Sahaj-dharis were not completely excluded from the Panth, but they were required to accept that the ideal condition was that of the Khalsa Sikh and had to acknowledge that they were on a path which led to this destination. For those who are doctrinally informed this is still the situation today. It does not take account of the large and growing number of Sikhs from families with a Khalsa tradition who today trim their hair or remove their beards. That, however, is a question that lies beyond the rahit-namas.

7.7 The Five Ks

The question of the entry of the Five Ks into the Rahit is certain to be a controversial one and for that reason it will be as well to start by stating my conclusion. It is that the Five Ks are not a part of the Rahit until we reach the Singh Sabha reformation. Guru Gobind Singh did not include them in his instructions at the founding of the Khalsa; they do not appear during the following century and three quarters; and they make their appearance only when Singh Sabha reformers were convinced that the Guru *must* have introduced them. Khalsa Sikhs were certainly expected to wear five weapons (*pañj hathiār*), but these were not the Five Ks (*pañj kakke* or *pañj kakkār*). The evidence for this conclusion is as follows:

In a hukam-nama dated S. 1759 (1702 CE) Guru Gobind Singh instructs his Sikhs to wear five weapons when they come for darshan. He does not mention Five Ks.¹⁹

Banda also instructs the Sikhs to wear five weapons when they come to visit him. There is no mention of the Five Ks.²⁰

Nand Lal is said to have written the following Persian couplet:

nishan-i sikkhī in pañj haraf kāf
*hargiz nā bāshad in pañj mu'āf*²¹

The sign of the Sikh are these five [items, each beginning with] the letter 'k'. [A Sikh] should never be excused [from wearing] these five.

Two arguments may be brought against this couplet:

1. Judging by his name, Nand Lal himself was never a member of the Khalsa. It is highly unlikely that he would have penned these words without accepting initiation.²²

2. The couplet is not contained in the Persian works of Nand Lal.²³

Gur Sobhā (1711) does not mention the Five Ks, though Sainapati frequently refers to the kes and to a strict ban on cutting the hair of the head (see for example *GSobh* 5:19, 21, 24, 30).

None of the *rahit-namas* refers to the Five Ks.

Tanakhāh-nāmā, *Prashan-uttar*, and *Prahlād Rāi*: no reference.

Sākhī Rahit kī: A Sikh must be distinguished by a turban, a fine flowing beard, and an uncut kes; and he must never use a razor or remove his beard. There is, however, no reference to the Five Ks (*SakhiR* 3, 7).

Chaupā Singh: In the *rahit-nama* is inserted a couplet which begins: *kachh dadhā karab rakhan*, 'Wear breeches [and carry] a staff and a knife.'²⁴ These are not the Five Ks, nor is an item, which has been added to the manuscript later. This later addition certainly lists five objects which the Khalsa Sikh should possess and the first three are *kachh*, *kirpān*, and *kes*. The remaining two, however, are *bānī* (the sacred scripture) and *sādh saṅgati* (the congregation of the faithful).²⁵

Desā Singh: Here we come closer to the Five Ks. In verse 15, the Khalsa Sikh is instructed never to be separated from his *kachh* or his *kirpān*. Later, in verse 67, he is informed that he should bathe in the early morning and should then put on his comb (*kaṅghā*), knife (*karad*), and turban (*dasatār*) (*DesaS* 15, 67). What is this if not the Five Ks, or at least four of them? They are not the Five Ks for the following reasons:

1. Nowhere are they called the Five Ks.
2. The wrist ring is missing.

3. Separate mention of them is supplied in two different verses.

4. The term *kirpan* (verse 15) has become *karad* (verse 67).

5. In place of *kes* the word *dasatār* is used.

6. No indication is given that they are stipulated in the initiation ritual.

They are merely items that the Khalsa Sikh should certainly possess, but they are not mentioned with any intention of them being regarded as a part of the Rahit.

Dayā Singh: The same conclusion applies to references in the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Spread over eight verses the Khalsa Sikh is required to wear a *kachh*, a sword (*sṛī sāhil*), and a steel knife (*lohe kī karad*). He is also to maintain his *kes*, treating it as his most treasured possession (*DayaS* 4, 19–21, 23, 56, 58, 63). A ninth verse requires him always to have on his person a knife (*karad*) and a wrist-ring (*harā*) (*DayaS* 70). The comb (*kañghā*) is missing; different words are used for the sword and the kirpan; and the four items that are mentioned are not listed as the Five Ks. In the appended portion describing a Nīrang the word *kirpān* is introduced, but the short sword or knife is also called a *karad*. This section also specifies five weapons as being compulsory for a Khalsa Sikh (*DayaS* 94). Daya Singh's evidence can also be ruled out.

Sau Sākhī: Both rahit-namas are devoid of relevant references, except that sakhi 65 emphasises the obligation to keep the hair of the head intact (*SauS*(2) 5, 7, 20–1, 25).

Prem Sumārag: There are the usual references to individual items and mention is made of the five weapons,²⁶ but not the Five Ks.

The *gur-bilās* works make no reference to the Five Ks. In addition to *Gur Sobhā*, this applies to Sukkha Singh's *Gur-bilās Dasvīn Pātishāhī* (1798) and Ratan Singh Bhangu's *Prāchīn Panth Prakāsh* (1841).²⁷ Kuir Singh, in his *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī* 10, written in the early nineteenth century (Hans 1988, 266), refers to *kachh*, *kes*, and *karad*, grouping them in a list of five (Kuir Singh 1968, ix:40, p. 130). The remaining two, however, are *shāstar* (weapons) and *gur shabad* (the

Guru's Word), and although he refers to the *kañghā* in the following verse his statement fails to add up to the Five Ks.

Pusian works of the eighteenth century refer only to the uncut hair of the Khalsa (Grewal & Habib 2001, 107). A Persian account written by James Skinner in 1825 adds that the *kachh* 'is very common in this community' (Grewal & Habib 2001, 218).

Polier makes no mention of the Five Ks in *The Siques* (1780).

He notes merely 'wearing an iron bracelet on one arm and letting the hair of the head and beard grow'.²⁸

George Forster makes a similar report in 1783. 'They permit the growth of the hair on the head and beard, they generally wear an Iron Bracelet on the left hand' (Ganda Singh 1962, 79).

The author of *Sarab Loh Granth* (late eighteenth or early nineteenth century) stipulates only three of the Five Ks: 'To the Sikhs this teaching of the Guru is given, that these three must be your signs: *kachh*, *kes*, *kirpān*' (*KhalM* 367, 514; see Part II, no. 10, pp. 325–6).

Malcolm, in his *Sketch of the Sikhs* (1810), reports that the Akalis wear 'bangles or bracelets of steel round their wrists', but adds in a footnote: 'All *Sinhs* do not wear bracelets.' All Singhs must carry some item of steel, 'which they generally have in the shape of a knife or a dagger'.²⁹ He also reports in his description of the Khalsa initiation that Sikhs who undergo it are presented with 'five weapons' (Malcolm 1810, 285). The Five Ks are not mentioned.

Santokh Singh, in his *Sūraj Prakāsh* (1844), lists only three of the Five Ks: *kes kachh karad gurū kī tīn mudrā ih*. 'Kes, *kachh*, and *karad*: these are the three seals of the Guru'.³⁰

Cunningham makes no mention of the Five Ks in his account of the founding of the Khalsa (Cunningham 1849, 63–6) nor anywhere else in his *History of the Sikhs* (1849).

The appearance of the Singh Sabha, however, was not far ahead. In 1873, the movement was inaugurated in Amritsar. The first evidence after that date was provided by one who realised that now the various features should all start with 'k', but who limited the number to four. This was Budh Singh, whose *Khālsā*

Shatak was published in 1876. The word for a knife was still *karad*, and the *karā* was absent from his list.³¹ One year later, Trumpp carried the change one step further.

Then he gave the order, that whoever desired to be his disciple, he must always have things with him which all commence with the letter *Kakka* (i.e. K), viz.: the hair ([*hes*] which must not be cut), a comb [*kañghā*], a knife [*karad*], a sword [*kirpān*], and breeches reaching to the knee [*kacch*], otherwise he would not consider him as his disciple.³²

Trumpp was still not quite correct as he had a *karad* (knife) instead of a *karā* (wrist-ring). He did, though, record that there were five compulsory items and that all began with the letter 'k'. In 1880 Gian Singh travelled yet closer to the ultimate conclusion, affirming in his lengthy poem *Panth Prakāsh* that these five items beginning with 'k' were essential for a Khalsa Sikh to wear.³³ The five items, however, remained separate. They were not yet given as list. Only with the publication of his *Tavarikh Gurū Khālsā* in 1891 did he finally reach that goal.³⁴ The first to produce the formula was evidently Sumer Singh, author of *Khālsā Pañchāsikā* that was published in 1883.

*kacch hes kirpān priy kañghā karā sadīv/
jo dhūrat tārāt nahīn soī khālsā daīv/*

The *kacch*, the *hes*, the treasured *kirpān*, the *kañghā*, the eternal *karā*,

He who wears these will ever be steadfast; thus is the Khalsa hallowed. (*PSP* 4th edition 1989, 181)

The Five Ks had finally arrived and Sikhs were soon convinced that these five items had indeed been included in Guru Gobind Singh's announcement of the *Rahit*. Kahn Singh Nabha remained a little hesitant,³⁵ but Macauliffe was in no doubt.³⁶ From the late nineteenth century the Five Ks were definitely a part of the *Rahit*. Indeed they formed its most important part.

The number five has great significance in the Sikh tradition: five realms of spiritual development (*khaṇḍ*), five vices (*kām*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *moh*, and *hañkā*), five *ṭhags* (power, wealth, high caste, youth, and beauty), five scriptural works, five senses of knowledge, five kinds of action, five washings, five Cherished Ones (*pañj piāre*), five weapons, five Liberated Ones, five Reprobate Groups (*pañj mel*), and five *takhats*. Desa Singh adds

another five;³⁷ Piara Singh Padam claims there are five *kurahits*, not four (PSP 4th edition; 1989, 7); and Kahn Singh Nabha produces more than 200 definitions of terms beginning with either *pañch*, *pāñch*, or *pañj*.³⁸ The number five is regarded as sacred. Guru Nanak in *Japujī* speaks of *pañch paravān pañch paradhān* (AG 3), and thereafter Sikh history repeats the number five in numerous and various contexts.

And now there are Five Ks. Opinions amongst Sikhs differ and can be summed up as follows:

1. There are those who maintain that Guru Gobind Singh announced the Five Ks when delivering the Rahit to those he had initiated as members of the Khalsa, and that there is documentary proof of this.

2. Other Sikhs are uneasy about a blanket statement of this kind. They agree that there was no questioning the fact that the Five Ks were promulgated at the first initiation ceremony, but acknowledge that this incident lacks firm documentary proof.

3. Yet others are silent on the issue of whether or not the Five Ks were a part of the original Rahit, but maintain that from the very beginning all five items were a part of the Khalsa apparel.

4. The concept of the Five Ks evolved out of the original command to wear five weapons. These five gradually fell into disuse, leaving only the *kirpān* and the *kaṛā*. The Guru had already made three items obligatory (the *kes*, *kañghā*, and *kachh*), and joined to these the *kirpān* and *kaṛā* formed the Five Ks.

The fourth of these interpretations can be summarily set aside. It was tentatively suggested by Fauja Singh in an article published in 1971, and entitled 'Foundation of the Khalsa Commonwealth—ideological aspects' (Fauja Singh 1971, 209). It can be set aside because the *kañghā* is not mentioned in early sources and, contrary to Fauja Singh's view, the names of the five weapons are known. None of them would have served as a forerunner for the *kaṛā*. Fauja Singh was evidently not happy with this interpretation, and in 1975 expressed the conviction that the Five Ks were introduced by Guru Gobind Singh as highly visible symbols.³⁹ This was as a result of the cowardice of Sikhs who had concealed themselves when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in 1675. The remaining three, however, deserve closer attention.

For the first interpretation an article by Gobind Singh Mansukhani will serve as an example. This article is entitled 'Sikh-Rahat-Maryada and Sikh symbols' (Mansukhani 1989, 174–91). In it, Dr Mansukhani reproduces a copy of a hukam-nama allegedly sent by Guru Gobind Singh to the Kabul sangat dated 26 Jeth S. 1756 (23 April 1699 CE), very soon after the founding of the Khalsa order. This hukam-nama explicitly mentions each of the Five Ks by name, and if it is authentic it can be assumed that the Five Ks were certainly commanded by the Guru when inaugurating the Khalsa. The article also has quotations from the *Prahlād Rāi Singh Rahit-nāmā*, the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, and one of the rahit-namas attributed to Nand Lal. In each of these extracts the Five Ks are again explicitly mentioned by name (Mansukhani 1989, 176–8).

These claims can be easily answered. The hukam-nama is clearly spurious. It is in direct contradiction to other early sources, the hand-writing of the original (as opposed to Dr Mansukhani's copy) is modern, and it lacks the Guru's seal. These presumably, were the reasons why both Ganda Singh and Shamsheer Singh Ashok omitted it from their published collections of the hukam-namas. The quotations from Prahlād Rai, Chaupā Singh, and Nand Lal are likewise spurious. None of them appear in the older manuscripts of the rahit-namas, nor even in most of the later copies.⁴⁰ Obviously they are much later additions to the originals.

Other supporters of this first interpretation are similarly mistaken. One must assume the view has been adopted because during the last century the Five Ks have acquired an unassailable position in the understanding and affections of the Sikhs, and this position seems to point unmistakably to the actions of the Guru. It is, however, one that has no documentary support in its favour and adequate documentary evidence against it.

The second category consists of scholars who recognise that this lack of adequate documentary evidence does indeed exist, but who assume nevertheless that the Guru must surely have commanded the adoption of the Five Ks. Kahn Singh Nabha serves as a good example of this point of view. Writing in the 1901 edition of *Gurumat Sudhākar* he appended this footnote to Desa Singh's verse 15 concerning the *kachh* and *kirpān*:

When Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib dispensed *amrit* he delivered the instruction that the *kes* should be maintained, the *kachh* should be worn, and that a *kirpān* (sword⁴¹) should be carried. At the time instructions were not given that either three or five Ks should be worn. After some time it was promulgated in the Rahit that Five Ks should be maintained (viz. 1. *kes*, 2. *kachh*, 3. *kirpān*, 4. *kañghā*, 5. *karā*). Although this instruction was new there was nothing false about the Rahit promulgating Five Ks, for the old literature makes it clear that in the time of the tenth Guru the Five Ks were maintained by the Singhs. No one doubted the *kes*, *kachh* and *kirpān*, which left the *kañghā* and the *karā*. The Tenth Master, when he twice decreed the wearing of the *kañghā*, sanctioned it a fourth K. In the same way he, the wearer of the plume, gave orders that wrist-rings (*karā*) of pure iron should be worn in gatherings of the Khalsa and thus acquire sanctity (*GSudh* 467n+).

There are expressions in this footnote that indicate a degree of doubt, but Kahn Singh was relatively certain in 1901 that the Guru had sanctioned all of the Five Ks. More than three decades later, however, this assurance seems less certain. A definition, which appears in his *Gurushabad Ratanākar Mahān Kosh* reads:

traimudrā: The three symbols of the Khalsa. The symbols which Shri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, when conducting the initiation ceremony (*khaṇḍe dā amrit*), declared to be mandatory for the Khalsa to wear. *traī mudā kachh kes kirpān* (*Sarab Loh*).⁴²

In an endnote attached to this definition he states that the *kañghā* and *karā* would of course have been assumed, and that there was accordingly no questioning the fact that the Five Ks were promulgated at the first *amrit* ceremony (*MK Addendum*, p. 58).

We come now to the third category of scholars, this one requiring particularly close attention. These are the scholars who claim that, although the early documentary sources do not name the Five Ks, all five items were nevertheless a part of the Khalsa apparel from the very beginning. This is the view of Professor J. S. Grewal who is forthright about his position. In reviewing my *Sikhs and Sikhism* (McLeod 1999) he writes:

The failure to make a distinction between ‘formulation’ and substantive elements appears to have misled McLeod. The formulation of five Ks came in the late 19th century, but the substantive elements referred to in this formulation can be traced to the very institution of the Khalsa.⁴³

The answer to this comment must be as follows. There is no intention of denying that all five items may have been worn by Khalsa Sikhs since the very earliest days of the order. It is true that only the *kes*, *kachh*, and *kirpān* may have been specified, but it can still be assumed as at least probable that the *kañghā* and *karā* would have been a part of their standard dress. But this is not the subject at issue. The subject concerns the question of whether or not Guru Gobind Singh decreed these Five Ks as a part of the Rahit which he promulgated at the inauguration of the Khalsa. The answer adopted by this study is that there is no evidence that he did. Certainly he required his Khalsa followers to leave their hair uncut. Of this there can be no doubt, for it is writ large in *Gur Sobhā*. But did he command all five to be observed and were they called the Five Ks? The answers to these two questions are assuredly in the negative.

It is only with the coming of the Singh Sabha movement, towards the end of the nineteenth century that both questions come to be answered in the affirmative. The notion of the Five Ks comes to the fore at that time, having never been known before then.⁴⁴ These Five Ks are declared to have been a vital part of the Rahit since the very beginning of the Khalsa and as such to have been a part of the Guru's first instructions to the members of his new order. This, however, is a mistaken view. Prior to the establishment of the Singh Sabha there is no reference to the Five Ks nor of their inclusion in the Rahit. Only after the founding of the Singh Sabha do these five items come together and take their place as a treasured segment of the Rahit. And only then are they to be found attached to rahit-namas, having been added at this later date. Practically all of such additions date from the twentieth century.⁴⁵

This conclusion should cause no surprise. The scholars of the Khalsa had, in a sense, been prepared for it by a statement from Randhir Singh, editor of the *Prem Sumārag Granth*:

The Five Ks (*pañj kakār*) are nowhere mentioned in the rahit-namas, nor in any other 'old writings'. Instead there are references to five weapons (*pañj hathiār*) (PSG Introduction, p. 45).

There is actually very little difference between Professor Grewal's position and mine. Both of us accept the prominence given to the five weapons, and both of us agree with Randhir Singh that

there is no reference in the early writings to the Five Ks. Perhaps there is no difference at all.

7.8 Attitude Towards Hindus

In the Punjab Sikhs lived not merely among a considerably larger Muslim population, but also a wide conspectus of Hindus. As with Hindus everywhere there was a wide scope of belief and practice, partly dependent upon the various castes to which they belonged. This scope and variety comes through in the *rahit-namas*, sometimes with their authors expressing agreement with Hindu ways but more frequently expressing disagreement. On the whole the Khalsa were not to behave as Hindus behaved. It was, however, a confused and qualified disapproval, and in one important respect the early *rahit-namas* accepted a fundamental concept, which they had inherited from their Hindu forbears. This was caste, a feature which will receive separate treatment (see section 7.10).

In other respects the general pattern is one of qualified disarray. Brahmins were a particular concern for the authors of the early *rahit-namas*. Daya Singh declared roundly that no devotion should be paid to Brahmins. Desa Singh, however, maintained that it was the duty of the Khalsa to protect Brahmins, and in this respect he was backed up by one of the authors of the *Sau Sākhī* (*DesaS* 16; *DayaS* 12; *SauS*(1) 36). The author of *Sākhī Rahit kī* was ambivalent, denouncing at length corrupt Brahmins but apparently (if reluctantly) accepting the upright variety (*SakhiR* 8). Daya Singh also maintained that Brahmins should no longer conduct Sikh marriages. Chaupa Singh predictably affirms that it is the duty of the Khalsa to summon a Brahman for this purpose (*ChS* 120, pp. 72, 160; *DayaS* 91). At least they either agree or are silent on forbidding the following practices: observing Brahman rituals, repeating the Gayatri, worshipping at places sacred to the Hindus, idol worship, wearing the sacred thread, and applying tilaks to the forehead (*TanN* 45; *PrahR* 4; *SakhiR* 2, 7–11, 17–19, 28; *ChS* 20, 137, 387, pp. 60, 76, 105; *DayaS* 12, 14, 30, 44, 50; *SauS*(2) 14). Three *rahit-namas* also spurn the six 'schools' (*darashan*) of Hindu philosophy, a natural enough thing to do considering their range of village readers and hearers (*PrahR* 27; *DesaS* 34; *DayaS* 42).

Two rahit-namas stand out as particularly severe with regard to Hindu beliefs and practices. One is *Sākhī Rahit kī* attributed to Nand Lal, and the other is the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. The opposite stance is occupied by the second of the *Sau Sākhī* rahit-namas. Its treatment of Brahmans occupies much of the document, insisting that those who are properly initiated by *charan pāhul* are entirely acceptable as Sikhs (*SauS*(2) 12, 16). An insincere or fraudulent Brahman should never receive charity, but one who is honest is certainly entitled to it (*SauS*(2) 13, 16–17, 24, 37, 40, 43, 44). Brahmans belong to the highest of castes and as such are entitled to respect, provided they maintain their dignity (*SauS*(2) 17). This is not typical of the rahit-namas, and the fact that more than one hand is responsible for this contribution is revealed by the instruction that Brahmans should be avoided (*SauS*(2) 14). Clearly the second of the *Sau Sākhī* rahit-namas is unreliable.

7.9 The Shraddh Ceremony

The shraddh was a feature of Hindu practice which aroused disagreement amongst the authors of the rahit-namas. This is a Hindu ceremony performed annually on behalf of deceased forbears, the purpose being to assist their passage to whatever destination has been determined by their karma. The rite includes an offering of food to assembled relatives and Brahmans. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is one of those which supports the continuation of the ceremony by Sikhs, although it takes care to exclude the participation of Brahmans. Their place should be taken by Sikhs if the deceased was also a Sikh (*ChS* 46, pp. 63, 154). Surprisingly, in view of his usual anti-Hindu stance, the other supporter of the shraddh was the author of *Sākhī Rahit kī* (*SakhiR* 16). Less surprising was the lack of support of that author who adopted an unfriendly attitude to Brahmans and to Hindu practice generally. This was the person responsible for the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* who predictably took a firm stand against the performance of the shraddh ritual (*DayaS* 14, 91).

The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* comes at the very end of the eighteenth century or the beginning of the nineteenth. During the eighteenth century the shraddh ritual seems clearly to have been

performed by at least a segment of Panth. This likelihood is supported by the *B40 Janam-sākhī* (*B40 (Eng)*, pp. 235ff). During the nineteenth century the custom will presumably have continued and there is evidence of this in the second of the *Sau Sākhī* rahit-namas (*SauS(2)* 31). Because of its specifically Hindu nature the Tat Khalsa reformers, fortified by oblique criticism in the scriptures, mounted an attack on the observance of the custom by Sikhs and succeeded in having it largely excluded from the life of the Panth (N. G. Barrier 1970, p. 27; *GM*, pp. 472, 479; *SRM* 2.2.3(g)).

7.10 Caste

Prior to the Singh Sabha movement Sikhs in general accepted caste, and the rahit-namas reflect this acceptance. Earlier rahit-namas attributed to Nand Lal and Prahilad Rai make only passing references to caste, but in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* and thereafter caste is firmly in place. This is expressed in the following ways.

1. There are four castes (*varan* or *baran*) and it is the duty of all Sikhs to treat members of all four as brothers. Any member of the four castes may take initiation and a person belonging to any of the four can be invited to partake of karah prasad (*TanN* 57; *DesaS* 49; *DayaS* 4, 22, 66; *SauS(1)* 19; *SauS(2)* 12). This, however, does not include the Dalits, outcastes whom the various authors regard with great caution. Keep them out of your cooking-square and your langar, and generally maintain a distance from them (*DesaS* 94, 103; *SauS(1)* 7).

2. Always marry according to caste and lineage (*DesaS* 28; *PrS* 20.12).

3. Specific castes are recognised, particularly the Brahman and the Khatri (*DesaS* 69, 104, 106; *DayaS* 73, 75, 88; *SauS(2)* 31, 44).

These features of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Sikh belief should be recognised, but they should not let us overlook the fact that Sikh attitudes concerning caste were relatively enlightened during this period. 'To adopt the forms of caste is not to our taste,' wrote Daya Singh. 'It is our way of living which we like' (*DayaS* 77). Caste may be an inflexible rule among

Hindus, and Muslims should be condemned because they fail to acknowledge it in their own society. Moreover, Gursikhs must recognise it in matters of marriage. Within the Panth, however, everyone should be treated as members of the one caste (*ChS* 10, 11, 79, pp. 59, 66–7). Caste is recognised as a given fact which Khalsa Sikhs must acknowledge in their marital ties. This, after all, was the social convention followed by every Guru who married or had children wed. It is not, however, a system which within the Panth confers high status on some and low status on others. All should be equal.

7.11 Karah Prasad

The practice of preparing and distributing karah prasad presents several problems. What was the origin of karah prasad? Why did it become a distinctive Sikh custom? What is the justification for it? Why is it made with three ingredients of equal weight? Why is it prepared with such unfailing consistency? Why has it lasted so long without change?

Modern Sikhs have no trouble with the justification for the use of karah prasad.

In order to remove untouchability and to teach social equality Guru Nanak started the custom of distributing *Karah Prasad* among his congregations (Teja Singh 1951, 105).

There is no evidence that the custom was introduced by Guru Nanak, but certainly the practice (or one very like it) was current during the time of the later Gurus. Bhai Gurdas evidently referred to the sacramental food as *mahā prasād*.⁴⁶ It seems likely that the convention was significantly altered during or, more likely, shortly after the time of Guru Gobind Singh by the preparation of the prasad in a *karāhī* or iron pan. This linked it to the Khalsa veneration for iron and gave rise to the name of karah prasad. Until the time of the Singh Sabha reforms the concept which it symbolized was evidently the humble submission of the worshipper to the Guru, and the sense of comfort and reassurance which resulted (*SakhiR* 12). For this reason karah prasad would always be offered to the Guru Granth Sahib before it was consumed. In modern times, however, the institution has been interpreted as a useful device to convince

Sikhs that inequality, whether caste-based or otherwise, is no part of their religion.

There are, however, problems when *karah prasad* is considered in the light of the *rahit-namas* description of the custom. The origin of the custom is obviously the Hindu convention of offering food to an idol (*prasād*). In its Sikh form, though, the convention was transformed. It was a sacramental food consumed by the worshippers (not by the idol or the god); it was always prepared in a *karāhī*, which means a particular kind of pan (almost certainly an iron one); and it always consisted of equal quantities raw sugar, unrefined flour, and ghi. The early *rahit-namas* are emphatic about these prescriptions. A detailed description of how *karah prasad* should be prepared is offered by the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and briefly repeated by the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.⁴⁷ The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* gives a description of how *karah prasad* should be distributed, and sets out the procedure whereby other Sikhs can be invited to participate in the reverent consumption of it (*DayaS* 65ff.). Equal quantities are to be given to each participant, with fearsome penalties awaiting the person who is greedy (*DesaS* 63; *SauS*(I) 16–17). The preparation should be preceded by the recitation of *Japujī* and *Jāp* (*DesaS* 119); it should be distributed at initiation ceremonies and funerals (*ChS* 45, pp. 63, 153; *DayaS* 5, 7, 72); and if Muslims are present, they should be asked to withdraw before it is consumed (*ChS* 436, pp. 107, 182). Before it is distributed, it should be scored with a kirpan (*TanN* 36; *DesaS* 63).

Why was there a fixed recipe for the preparation of *karah prasad*? We do not know. As we have seen, the fact that it was prepared in an iron *karahi* was presumably due to Khalsa principles and imparted the distinctive name to the sacrament. But was the modern justification applicable to the eighteenth century, and if not what was the actual cause? In favour of the belief that it was indeed to eliminate inequality in the Khalsa we can cite those elements from the discussion of caste that point to equality as an ideal in the Panth. This may be so. Against it, however, there are two points to be considered. First, there is the fact that the *rahit-namas* apparently left the Dalits out of their concern for equality. Secondly, the frequency and fervour with which the sacrament was observed suggests a

cause which lies beyond a concern for equality and which finds an explanation in the need for communicating a sense of blessing and assurance to the worshipper.

We do not know the answer to this problem. Sikhs today will, of course, disagree with this conclusion and affirm that they do in fact know. The administration of *karah prasad*, they will maintain, has always been to stress the ideal of equality. This may well be the reason that is applied today. For the eighteenth century, however, some doubt must remain.

7.12 The Devi

The *rahit-namas* diverge from the *Gur-bilas* literature, in their treatment of the Devi, or Mata Devi. Devi is the Mother Goddess, consort of Shiv and variously manifested as Bhagauti, Chandi, Parvati, Kali, or Durga. In the later *Gurbilas* works she figures prominently as the one whom Guru Gobind Singh consulted before the founding of the Khalsa. Needless to say this story is a later myth, but it appears in much of the *Gur-bilas* literature, notably in the work of Sukkha Singh and Kuir Singh. One of the *rahit-namas* contains the story and that, predictably, is the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. The story it relates is as follows.

Acting on the Guru's instructions Pandit Devi Das was deputed to find Brahmans who could conduct the *hom* or fire ceremony which would summon the presence of the Devi. Eventually three such Brahmans were enlisted. These were Shiv Bakar from Kashmir, Vishan Pal from Kashi, and Kalak Das from the south. Kalak Das asked the Guru why he wished to have the ceremony performed, to which the Guru replied that it was to destroy the demons that caused his followers such injury. Rs 7500 was set aside to cover expenses, a sum that was later increased to Rs 45,000. Other Brahmans flocked to witness the ceremony which, it was claimed, would persuade Mata Devi to appear in its ritual fire. Kalak Das reminded the Guru of the rigorous discipline which must be undertaken if the ritual was to be effective, and warned him that if the Devi was to manifest herself she would do so in a fearsome form. When the Guru repeated his willingness to proceed he was told to bathe and the ritual was initiated.

On the fortieth day the goddess finally appeared, whereupon all but the four principal participants fainted. When the Devi could be descried, seated on a tiger-skin, two of the Brahmans also collapsed and even the Guru felt dizzy. Kalak Das instructed him to offer his head to the goddess. This he declined to do, suggesting that instead Kalak Das should provide the required sacrifice. The Devi vanished and the Brahmans were compelled to leave without securing the purpose of the *hom*. The episode, it is claimed, took place in S. 1756 (1699/1700 CE) at a shrine on the hill called Naina Devi.⁴⁸

In relating this story the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is an exception. The only other rahit-nama which contains a reference to the Devi is that of Daya Singh, and there she occurs in what appears to be a later addition (*DayaS2*). This failure to mention her may possibly be a result of them dealing with material that does not feature the Devi, yet it seems surprising that no reference to her ever appears in the majority of the early rahit-namas. It appears to have been a popular story amongst Sikhs of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Hans 1981, II: 51–3), and the Dasam Granth lends it support by tales about Chandi or Bhagauti (see pp. 275–9). The rahit-namas, however, offer it little backing.

7.13 Attitude Towards Muslims

From an issue that receives little rahit-nama support we pass to one that apparently receives a considerable amount at least in the early rahit-namas. This is their attitude towards Muslims, which seems to be uniformly hostile as well as frequently expressed. Some idea about both, frequency and also its hostility, can be gained by consulting the analysis of the contents of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*.

Never associate with a Muslim nor trust his word. Never drink water from a Muslim's hands, never eat his food, and never sleep in his company. Do not be influenced by anything a Muslim may say... (*ChS*, p. 42)

And so it continues. Never eat meat from animals killed in the Muslim manner. Never trust the oath of a Muslim. Never entrust the management of your household affairs to a Muslim. Never give your sword to a Muslim and then walk on ahead. The list

ends with a quotation from the Dasam Granth: 'Fight the barbarians! Destroy them all!'⁴⁹ The *Tanakhāh-nāmā* is also particularly fierce concerning Muslims.⁵⁰

The situation, however, is not as simple as a catalogue like this might imply. What do we mean when we translate a word as 'Muslim'?

First we must take care to distinguish the rahit-namas from the Sikh Gurus, and particularly from Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh was certainly not opposed to all Muslims. By his actions he made it clear that his opposition was reserved for those Muslims who were oppressors, which meant that his aversion was largely reserved for the Mughal rulers. With the rahit-namas, we move into a different range of hostility. The early rahit-namas were written during the eighteenth century when the Sikhs were confronted by determined antagonism from Muslim rulers or invaders. As a result there was a distinct hardening of Khalsa hearts.

Rahit-nama authors, in common with other North Indians in the eighteenth century, commonly employed *turak* ('Turk'), and this is the usual word which is translated as 'Muslim'. The term *musalamān* explicitly means 'Muslim' and twice appears in the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, but it is very rare in rahit-nama usage. The word *khānu* is even rarer, appearing only once and then because the author of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* needed a word to rhyme with *dānu* in the preceding line (*TanN* 440). By far the most common term is *turak*. Is this word accurately translated as 'Muslim'?

With regard to the rahit-namas the answer appears to be that sometimes *turak* does carry this meaning exclusively; sometimes it does not carry it; sometimes it simultaneously means both Muslim and an associated religious or political term; and sometimes it extends over more than two or more of these meanings. It is in fact a very complex word, one which is not easy to translate into English.

During the first half of the eighteenth century the enemies of the Khalsa were the Mughals. The original Mughals were not ethnic Turks (Babur was a Mongol), but many of their servants in India were of Turkish descent, and the word 'Mughal' was applied indiscriminately to all these soldiers and administrators. These are the people who, in certain contexts,

are unquestionably those whom the rahit-namas call Turks, and this in turn suggests that the meaning attached to *turak* in the rahit-namas must be 'Mughal'. For the early part of the growth of the rahit-namas they were the rulers of the Punjab and such instructions as refusing to bow to a *turak* (*DesaS* 16, 62) seems, without any doubt, to indicate that the word must refer to a Mughal (see also *TanN* 22a; *DayaS* 29).

There are, however, objections to doing so. In the first place the word *turak* meaning 'Muslim' as a religious identity had already entered North Indian usage. 'Turk' was the chosen word because Islam had been carried into India by Turks who had come more than half a millennium before the arrival of the Mughals. The word does not appear frequently in the *Adi Granth*, but when it does it clearly expresses this religious meaning. When Kabir says *hindū turak doū samajhāvarī*⁵¹ or *hindū turak duhūn mahi ekai*⁵² he certainly was not using an ethnic term. By Kabir's time at least the word *turak* had acquired a religious meaning and was specifically used to designate a Muslim. The same applies to Guru Nanak's *Vār Āsā* 16:1 (*AG*, p. 471), Guru Arjan's *Bhairau* 3 (*AG*, p. 1136), and other such examples. Obviously the word had entered everyday usage, at least as a term distinguishing Muslims from Hindus.

Second, the rahit-namas lay great stress on the iniquity of consuming meat killed in the Muslim manner. Sometimes this meat is called *kuṭṭhā*, a term that does not explicitly draw attention to its Muslim origins. At other times, however, it is labelled *turak kā mās*, and of this designation there can be no doubt. The meat known as *kuṭṭhā* or *turak kā mās* is forbidden because it is meat from an animal killed by the *halāl* method of the Muslims, not because it is associated with the Mughals. Other injunctions are likewise aimed at preserving Khalsa purity. Two which receive prominence are sexual relations with Muslim women and smoking the hookah (see chs 7.14, 7.15, and 7.16, pp. 223–6).

Third, the works of the later eighteenth century show that the term was still used by rahit-nama authors after the Mughals had faded from the Punjab scene. The Mughals were succeeded by the Afghans who, under Ahmad Shah Abdali, mounted a series of invasions from 1747 to 1769, and in spite of the fact that only some of the Afghans could be strictly described as

ethnic Turks it seems that the word *turak* was also applied indiscriminately to them. Obviously it was not applied exclusively to the Mughals. The word *turak* already designated Muslims generally as well as retaining its specific ethnic meaning, or its wider political meaning which referred to the hostile rulers or would-be rulers of the Punjab.

With the rise of Ranjit Singh the threat from Muslim enemies receded, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century it was virtually over. The early rahit-namas had, however, been written during the preceding century, when deep suspicion alternated with open hostility and intense fighting. Under such circumstances it was only natural that the rahit-namas should reflect the feelings of their people. These circumstances also explain why the rahit-namas lay such a strong emphasis on the need for every Khalsa to bear arms.⁵³

Under Ranjit Singh feelings slowly became more subdued and by the time the Singh Sabha emerged there was some embarrassment at the unconcealed enmity of the inherited rahit-namas. Tat Khalsa scholars, in particular viewed such anti-Muslim items as the kind of utterance that Guru Gobind Singh could never have made and quietly dropped them from their revised rahit-namas. Kahn Singh provides a clear example of this (see Appendix 1, pp. 403–12) and *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* retains few examples of this anti-Muslim past.⁵⁴ Feelings against Muslims have not entirely disappeared, but they are not emblazoned for all to see in the manner of the eighteenth-century rahit-namas.

We are left with a word, which can be very difficult to interpret in any given context. Does it require a narrow religious meaning? Does it possess a wider social meaning? Does it express an ethnic meaning? Does it suggest a political meaning? Or is it an amalgam of two or more of these meanings? In the rahit-nama translations that follow in Part 2 the form normally, if cautiously, favoured is 'Muslim' rather than 'Mughal'. The intention of making this choice is to lend a hesitant stress to the first two meanings given above, particularly the second one which affirms a religious identity. This seems to be the closest approximation that an English word can get to the meaning implied by the rahit-nama authors. At the same time it is most important to remember that the one-word translation must ultimately fail us. Although

the word *turuk* may be rendered 'Muslim' we should always remember that frequently it means 'an enemy, commonly a ruler or an official, who is also a Muslim'.⁵⁵

7.14 The Ban on Tobacco

Guru Gobind Singh evidently forbade the use of hookahs, so in this form at least the ban on tobacco was a part of the original Rahit.⁵⁶ At this stage the ban did not include cigarettes, cigars, and short pipes as the Sikhs had no experience of these articles. The ban was extended to include them during the late nineteenth century. It soon embraced snuff and towards the end of the eighteenth century it also covered chewing tobacco.

The hookah, however, remained the prime target. The author of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* tells an anecdote, which illustrates this.

A certain Sikh had kept whey for washing [his] *kes* and a crow had drunk [from] it. The Sikh came to the Guru [and said]: "Tell me Maharaj, was the whey spoilt?" [The Guru] Sahib replied: 'I knew that some hookah smoker had touched [the whey and so] I saved you from [using] it' (*DayaS* 68).

Chaupā Singh, *Desā Singh*, and *Dayā Singh* all identify the hookah as a serious menace.⁵⁷ The *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and *Prahlād Rāi* refer only to snuff, and *Dayā Singh* adds snuff to the hookah (*TanN* 17; *PrahR* 12; *DayaS* 24). The term *tamākū* (tobacco), a Spanish word of American Indian origin, presumably reached the Punjab via Arabic and Persian. The first rahit-nama to use it was *Sākhī Rahit kī*, to be followed late in the eighteenth century by both *Desā Singh* and *Dayā Singh* (*SakhiR* 5; *DesaS* 30; *DayaS* 24, 89). *Chaupā Singh* and *Desā Singh* both use the term *bikhiā*, or 'poisonous substance' (*ChS* 80, 438, pp. 67, 107; *DesaS* 25). Although this can mean 'alcohol' or 'drugs' their usage in these cases seems to point to tobacco generally or to the hookah in particular.

The ban on the use of the hookah is almost certainly because it was identified in Sikh eyes as a Muslim artifact. Tobacco had passed from America through Europe to the Middle East in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the Middle East a distinctive way of smoking tobacco was fashioned, namely the hookah. This could be a large hubble-bubble pipe, commonly smoked

by several men who passed the stem from one to the other; or it could be a smaller apparatus which normally was smoked only by one person. The hookah travelled on eastwards, to be introduced to the Punjab by Muslims who had used it in Persia or perhaps further west. It was thus entirely natural to identify it as a Muslim artifact, one that was moreover most unsuitable for the highly mobile Khalsa. Sikhs of the Khalsa would not find a cumbersome hookah at all convenient. Its apparent Muslim origins appears to be the source of Guru Gobind Singh's ban on the use of the hookah. From the hookah the ban was subsequently extended to other products made from its key substance which was tobacco.

7.15 Relations with Muslim Women

We have already seen how in 1978, Kapur Singh objected to the change which had taken place in the third *kurahit* or serious offence against the Rahit. The modern version, incorporated in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* forbids 'sexual intercourse with any person other than one's spouse' (SRM II.2(p)). This replaced 'a sex-involvement with a Turkani' or Muslim woman, thereby converting the original prohibition into a more acceptable social injunction but depriving the Khalsa of 'a cohesive power of great strength' (see pp. 184–5).

The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* offers the clearest indication of the changes that this injunction has undergone. Shortly after he begins his list, the author offers the following: *gurū kā sikh hovai turakanī sālth judh nā kare* (ChS, 10, p. 59). This can be translated: 'A Gursikh should never touch a Muslim woman.' The English word 'touch' has been deliberately chosen because it bears a dual connotation and because the purport of the injunction seems to imply both meanings. The term *judh* could be translated as 'harm' and as such would come closer to the literal meaning. As Piara Singh Padam indicates, however, the context of this particular injunction seems clearly to be warfare conducted against Muslims, with the implied opportunity to seize and violate women (PSP introduction, p. 28). The injury done to women in such circumstances would be a specifically sexual harm, and choosing 'touch' as a translation implies both physical assault and rape. Kahn Singh Nabha confirms this

interpretation. The term *turakanī nāl yudh* is, he states, a Khalsa idiom meaning *musalamānī bhogaṇī*, 'sexual intercourse with a Muslim woman' (GM, p. 358).

The use of *judh* occurs in the oldest *Chaupā Singh* manuscript, one dated S. 1821 (1765 CE). The next manuscript is dated S. 1913 (1856–7 CE),⁵⁸ and Padam's manuscript appears even more recent (PSP 68–121). Both these, in place of *judh*, give a variant reading which is *saṅg*.⁵⁹ This sustains the sexual connotation while eliminating the narrow warfare context. According to this variant reading *all* association with Muslim women is proscribed. Padam, citing Santokh Singh's *Sūraj Prakāsh* as support, suggests that the sense of the injunction should derive from a tradition concerning Guru Gobind Singh. Confronted by a claim that Muslim women should be seized as a retaliatory measure, the Guru is said to have responded with a firm denial (PSP 72). Attar Singh's translation of the *Sau Sākhī* declares with reference to this tradition that sexual contact with Muslim women is to be avoided because it is polluting.⁶⁰ In other words, the intention of the proscription is not primarily to afford protection to defenceless Muslim women, although this must necessarily be a result. The dominant purpose of the prohibition is that the male Sikh should be protected from pollution.

Kahn Singh Nabha offers another explanation for the injunction. At the time it was delivered, he suggests, most prostitutes were Muslim women, with the result that the term *musallī* (a Muslim woman of the sweeper caste) and *turakanī* (any Muslim woman) were used synonymously to mean 'courtesan'. This indicates, he claims, that the prohibition is actually directed against sexual intercourse with any woman other than one's wife and may thus be interpreted as an injunction against adultery (GM 546n; GSudh 307n; see also GPBS 26). His argument is, however, strained and the anti-Muslim context of the injunction makes it clear that the prohibition is specifically directed against sexual intercourse with Muslim women, whatever their status or occupation. It is clearly a part of the wider condemnation of polluting contact with all Muslims.

The interpretation favoured by Kahn Singh has nevertheless won through, and *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* lists it as one of the four *kurahits*. Kapur Singh has lost this particular argument.

7.16 The Ban on Kuttha Meat

Another of the four *kurahits* is eating *kutthā* meat. The word *kutthā* means 'slaughtered' and *kutthā* meat is that, which has been prepared according to the Muslim rite. Muslim doctrine requires that if the meat is to be pure (*halāl*) the animal must bleed to death (normally by having its throat cut) while the Muslim confession of faith is recited over it.⁶¹ Sikhs normally allow meat-eating, but the animal must be killed with a single blow (*jhatkā*). Whereas *jhatkā* meat is acceptable (except to vegetarians) *kutthā* or *halāl* meat is strictly forbidden. It constitutes a serious violation of the Rahit, and those found guilty of it must seek re-initiation.

This is an injunction that has come down unchanged from the early eighteenth century. *Tanakhāh-nāmā* expresses it and so too do *Chaupā Singh*, *Desā Singh*, and *Dayā Singh* (*TanN* 29; *ChS* 372, pp. 104, 179; *DesaS* 30; *DayaS* 35, 57, 59, 79). The origin of the ban is clear. Khalsa Sikhs were under repeated attacks from the persecuting Mughals, and they expressed their feelings in this provision which they incorporated in their code of belief and conduct. What is not so clear is how the provision managed to escape the ameliorating concerns of the Tat Khalsa and to have survived right through to the present day. It remains in the Rahit, a reminder of turbulent times in the eighteenth century.

7.17 Jhatka Meat Versus Vegetarianism

What are we to make of those Sikhs who insist that only vegetarianism is acceptable? According to these people there can be no meat consumed, whether *jhatkā* or any other variety. The modern Panth makes some allowance for the vegetarians, all food served in every langar being completely meatless.

From the eighteenth century, and possibly from the seventeenth also, the proponents of vegetarianism can draw a limited degree of support. In his hukam-nama addressed to the Jaunpur sangat, Banda warns his readers to avoid eating meat, fish, and onions (see p. 40). In sakhi 10 of *Pothī Bibī Rūp Kaur*, Sikhs are asked to avoid fish and meat, and in sakhi 37 of the *Granth Bhāi Paīndā*, eating meat is listed as one of the five proscribed deeds (see p. 43). Among the rahit-nama authors, Desā Singh

is clearly uneasy about the question of meat-eating. First he condemns it (*DesaS* 25), but then acknowledges that the Khalsa may eat goat's mutton. This is permissible only if the mutton is *jhaṭkā* and if the goat is killed well away from a langar (*DesaS* 32, 105). Members of a 'good family', he feels sure, will always remain vegetarians (*DesaS* 102). The author of *Sākhī Rahit kī* is also uncertain. While not explicit in his condemnation of meat-eating he implies, in his treatment of Brahmans, that it should be avoided (*SakhiR* 8).

Other rahit-nama authors, though, either permit meat-eating or else are silent on the matter. The author of the *Prem Sumārag* is quite forthright.

Include meat in your daily diet. Eat it regularly in large or small quantities as the Guru provides. If you omit it on any day the food for that day will not be acceptable [to the Guru]. It will be the kind of food which ghosts and spectres prescribe. Why is meat described thus? [It is described thus] because it smells best and gives the greatest satisfaction. For these reasons it is the noblest of foods. He who eats it shall be purified (*PrS* V.2.7; *PSG* 1965, p. 62).

This is the only conclusion, which can be drawn from the ban placed upon *kuṭṭhā* meat. Muslim meat is certainly proscribed, but *jhaṭkā* meat is allowed (see ch. 7.16). The Rahit seems quite clear about this, both the earlier rahit-namas and the *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*.

7.18 Dharamsala and Gurdwara

Early in the eighteenth century, and before, the place where a Sikh sangat assembled was called a *dharam-sālā*. This was a building or a room used for worship, congregational assembly, discourse (*kathā*) or any other religious purpose (*B40* 82n). During the eighteenth century, however, the term gradually gave way to *gur-duārā* (anglicised as 'gurdwara'). Prior to this the term *gur-duārā* was evidently limited to special places which one visited on pilgrimage in the manner that a person would (if a Hindu) visit a *tirath*. At this stage the two terms were distinct, serving different purposes. Very soon, however, a transfer was taking place, one that progressively restricted the meaning of *dharam-sālā* while simultaneously enlarging the sense of *gur-duārā*.

In the time of the Gurus *dharam-sālā* was used to designate the structure in which a local sangat gathered for congregational singing (*kīraṭan*) and religious discourse (*kathā*). The term *gurū duārā* referred at this stage not to a particular place or building but to the grace of the Guru, understood as the 'voice' of Akal Purakh. Guru Amar Das uses it in this sense in a shabad from *Sirī Rāgu*:

devaṇ-vāle kai hathi dāti hai gurū duārai pāi.

The gift [of liberation] is from the Giver and is obtained through the Guru (*gurū duārai*).⁶²

Although this was plainly the Adi Granth sense of the term it was soon to undergo change. Places associated with the Gurus acquired particular sanctity and as such imparted a special blessing. In this way the single word *gur-duārā* came to be applied to Sikh places of pilgrimage (places, which today are marked by the so-called 'historic' gurdwaras).

Meanwhile circumstances were being prepared for the shift in meaning that was to dislodge *dharam-sālā*. Two developments produced this change. The first was the attribution of the Guru's authority to the Adi Granth. When the sacred scripture received the role and status of Guru it *ipso facto* became the means whereby grace was communicated *gurū duārā*. The second development was the installing of copies of the sacred scripture in dharamsalas. This was by no means an easy task as copies of the Adi Granth had to be written by hand and such a labour, even where possible, was a very demanding one. It meant, however, that the means of grace and guidance was now located within some sangats places of assembly. Where this happened the place of assembly, formerly a *dharam-sālā*, thus became known as a *gur-duārā*.

The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* was written while this transfer was under way. This is made evident by the fact that the varying usage of both *dharam-sālā* and *gur-duārā* is found in its text, each retaining an earlier sense yet perceptibly moving towards its modern meaning. Whereas in one place *dharam-sālā* designates the sangat's place of assembly (*ChS* 1, 3, pp. 57–8, 149), the sense explicitly stated in another is that of a hospice maintained for travellers (*ChS* 144, pp. 76–7, 163). It is thus shifting from the religious centre itself to an appendage of the

religious centre. This it does in response to the presence of the sacred scripture. The intermediate phase which effectively produces this change is also represented in the *Chaupā Singh* text. References in two places specifically note the presence of the Adi Granth within the dharamsala (*ChS* 132, 498, pp. 75, 111, 162, 185), and mention of prostration in another clearly implies it (*ChS* 559, pp. 115, 189).

Meanwhile *gur-duārā* was moving into its place. In one place it bears the restrictive meaning corresponding to *tīrath* (*ChS* 111–12, pp. 70, 159). Another, however, renders it synonymous with the early meaning of *dharam-sālā* (*ChS* 416, pp. 106, 181). In this latter instance it evidently applied to the regular gathering-place of the sangat and as such acquired its normal modern meaning.

The *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* evidently occupied a similar position to that of *Chaupā Singh*. In one verse it refers to the sangat's centre as a *dharam-sālā*, and then in the following verse calls the same place a *gur-duārā* (*DesaS* 72, 73). The *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* seems, however, to have crossed the line. It refers on only one occasion to the sangat's centre and uses for it the word *gur-duārā* (*DayaS* 14).

7.19 The Langar

Surprisingly the rahit-namas make no mention of the Guru's langar⁶³ until we reach the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Even in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* there is nothing, apart from an indirect reference forbidding Brahmins to sit forward when eating and for others to sit behind them (*ChS* 499, pp. 111, 185–6,). In this respect the rahit-namas mirror the Adi Granth which refers to the langar only in the *Rāmakalī kī Vār* of Rai Balvand and Satta the Dum (*AG*, p. 967).

The *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, however, goes to extraordinary lengths in its description of the langar, the method of conducting one, and the praise that is heaped upon it. Starting at verse 90, its treatment continues until the author moves on, in verse 119, to the method of preparing karah prasad. The description is attributed not to Desa Singh but to Nand Lal,⁶⁴ and in the course of it the author makes clear his acceptance of caste along with his doubts concerning the eating of meat.

After *Desā Singh* the rahit-namas relapse into silence and there they remain until the Singh Sabha period arrives.⁶⁵ Only with *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* is there recognition of the place of the langar in the life of the Khalsa (*SRM* 1.3).

7.20 Alcohol

As with meat, the hukam-nama addressed to the Jaunpur sangat by Banda forbids the Khalsa to take alcohol and drugs. Likewise, the proscription concerning alcohol is recorded in sakhi 10 of *Pothū Bībī Rūp Kaur* and sakhi 37 of *Granth Bhūi Paindā* (see pp. 40, 43). This ban is continued through most of the rahit-namas. Before the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, there is no reference and in *Chaupā Singh* itself there is only one such injunction (*ChS* 7, pp. 58, 150). *Desā Singh*, however, preaches total abstinence (with two exceptions), adding drugs to his list of banned intoxicants; and *Dayā Singh* allows none at all (*DesaS* 30, 44, 102, 107; *DayaS* 16, 30, 52, 59).

The exceptions allowed by *Desa Singh* were, however, of some significance. In one verse he agrees that a Khalsa Sikh may take a little opium or bhang (cannabis), and in another he acknowledges that consuming alcohol before battle will definitely have beneficial results.

Intoxicating liquor may be taken before battle, but there should be no mention of it on other days. In battle the Singh should roar [like a lion]. Fighting them face to face the Muslims (*malechhan*) are defeated. (*DesaS* 45)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Malcolm reported that 'it is rare to see a *Sinh* soldier, after sunset, quite sober'.⁶⁶ Evidently they had their defenders. Later in the nineteenth century the *Prem Sumārag* also came out, rather more hesitatingly, in favour of alcohol being used. It was something better avoided, but if the impulse was too strong let it be pursued in secret when one had leisure. A recipe for avoiding the worst effects of bhang was also included (*PrS* V.5.6–9; *PSG* 67).

It was left to *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* to restore the ban on alcohol and drugs. Sikhs, it ordained, should never partake of cannabis, opium, alcohol, or tobacco (*SRM* I.2 [j], p. 387). The injunction is, of course, widely disregarded. One should remember,

however, that rahit-namas are statements of normative belief. They are not necessarily descriptions of everyday behaviour.

7.21 The Tithe

On the question of tithes, the rahit-namas are absolutely consistent, and their consistency is reflected by *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*. From *Gur Sobhā* onwards, most of the important rahit-namas insist that every Sikh of the Khalsa must subject his income to a regular *das-vandh* (*GSobh* 5:25; *TanN* 34; *ChS* 48, pp. 63, 154; *DesaS* 13; *DayaS* 14; *SauS(1)* 27); and those that do not mention it remain silent, implying that they too support the injunction. It is not merely monetary income which should be tithed. When the rahit-namas were written most Sikhs would not deal in money. A much commoner form of *das-vandh* was taking one-tenth from every heap of grain and passing it on to the dharamsala. There it could be used either for feeding travelling Sikhs and the poor or for exchanging for other goods which the dharamsala might require. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* pays specific attention to the obligation to tithe (*SRM* II.2[p], p. 398). Again, we should remind ourselves that the rahit-namas are statements of normative belief and behaviour. The injunction is, however, a firm one.

7.22 The Five Reprobate Groups (*pañj mel*)

The *pañj mel* have already been briefly covered (see p. 197). Here they will be subjected to a closer examination.

The *pañj mel*, or the five groups with which the Khalsa must not have friendly intercourse, go back to *Gur Sobhā* and thus in all probability to Guru Gobind Singh himself. In *Gur Sobhā* they are not named, being referred to in tones of marked disapproval as simply 'the five' with whom a Khalsa must never associate (*GSobh* 5:19). But who are 'the five'? Opinions have differed over the three centuries since Sainapati referred to them in these non-specific terms in *Gur Sobhā*.

First we should note those rahit-namas which make no reference to the *pañj mel*. There are six such rahit-namas: *Tanakhāh-nāmā*, *Sākhī Rahit kī*, *Desā Singh*, both rahit-namas from the *Sau Sākhī*, and *Prem Sumārag*.⁶⁷ Their failure to mention

them is perhaps surprising, but it cannot weaken the claim that *Gur Sobhā* has lodged. The author of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* calls them the *pañjī melī* and names them individually, the five groups (according to him) being the Minas, the Dhir-malias, the Ram-raias, the masands, and the followers of the masands.⁶⁸ His is the only example of a complete list from the eighteenth century. Both *Prahlād Rāi* and *Dayā Singh* indicate groups whom the Khalsa is urged to avoid, but in both cases only four are named.⁶⁹ *Dayā Singh* gives a second list in verse 62, but it only partially overlaps with his first list and this time it numbers six such groups.⁷⁰

Yet the belief in the *pañj mel* lived on, although it proved to be impossible to get agreement concerning who should belong to the list. Most include the three groups of disaffected sectors of the Sikh community, followers of members of the Gurus' Sodhi family who were passed over in the selection for the leadership of the Panth. These were the descendants of Prithi Chand (the Minas), Dhir Mal (the Dhir-malias), and Ram Rai (the Ram-raias). Ratan Singh Bhangu omitted the Dhir-malias and Cunningham the Minas, but all other important nineteenth-century sources include them (Bhangu 1962, 44; Cunningham 1918, 74). All sources also cite the masands or the masandias (the followers of the masands), a reasonable choice in view of *Gur Sobhā's* apparent conviction that it was the wayward and selfish practice of these deputies, together with their challenge to the leadership of the Guru, which led to the actual foundation of the Khalsa order. The fifth item, however, caused much disagreement.

There were three contenders for this fifth position. These were *sir-gum* (those who cut their hair), *kuṛī-mār* (those guilty of killing their female babies), and *naṛī-mār* (smokers of the hoo-kah). If a head-count is taken the *naṛī-mār* definitely come last. Apart from Bhangu, the only other supporter appears to be the twentieth-century historian Ganda Singh.⁷¹ This leaves the remaining two roughly equal. Should it be *sir-gum* or should it be *kuṛī-mār*? Probably it should be *sir-gum*, if only because this was the choice that Kahn Singh Nabha favoured. A *sir-gum* for him was not merely someone who cut his hair. He defined the word as 'someone who, having taken initiation, shaves (*munāe*) his head' (GM 350). This evidently refers to the tonsure ceremony

of Hindus. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, however, defines the word differently. As part of the modern initiation ritual it instructs the newly-initiated Khalsa Sikh as follows: 'Have no dealings with initiated Sikhs who cut their hair (*sir-gum*).' It then adds the footnote: 'Kes-dharis who have their hair cut' (*SRM* II.2[p], p. 400). The problem is not only, which offence to choose but what meaning to attach to key terminology.

What was *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* going to make of this uncertainty? The *pañj mel* have been included, but not as the five Reprobate Groups. All seven of the disputed groups are noted, plus 'other enemies of the Panth' (*SRM* II.2[q]1, p. 400). The *pañj mel* have at last dissolved, though in doing so they leave clear evidence of their notorious past.

7.23 Kuri-mar: Female Infanticide

Female infanticide has been chosen for special mention, not because there is any doubt concerning its inclusion in the *rahit-namas* but rather for the opposite reason. *Kuṛī-mār* is specifically noted alone, not merely as one of the Five Reprobate Groups. The three *rahit-namas* attributed to Nand Lal do not mention it, but the other four eighteenth-century works give it prominence (*PrahR* 6, 20; *ChS* 12, 359, 547, pp. 59, 103, 114; *DesaS* 8; *DayaS* 28, 62). This is particularly the case with the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* which numbers it as the first of three unforgivable sins committed while one is employed by a Muslim (*ChS* 80, pp. 67, 156). The fact that it receives prominence indicates that the crime was by no means unknown as a practice followed by some Sikhs of the Khalsa during the eighteenth century. Female infanticide was certainly present amongst them and was roundly denounced by most of the *rahit-namas*.⁷²

7.24 Guru Granth and Guru Panth

The doctrine of Guru Granth and Guru Panth, so cherished by modern Sikhs, is certainly present in the early *rahit-namas*, though it does not receive much attention. This doctrine enunciates the belief that the line of personal Gurus having ended with Gobind Singh, the authority and function of the mystical Guru, hitherto expressed by ten persons, passed jointly to the

scripture (the Granth) and the community (the Panth). Their relative silence comes as no surprise as the *rahit-namas* devote much more space to behaviour than to doctrine, and it is commonly necessary to extract doctrine from the actions, which give it expression.

Three of the sources leave the issue in some doubt. *Gur Sobhā* recognises only the doctrine of the Guru Panth (*GSobh* 5:41–3). The *Chauṡā Singh Rahit-nāmā*, while greatly impressed by the sacred scripture, stops short of declaring it the Guru. Its frequent quotations from the *Adi Granth* begin *sākh granth sāhib jī*, never inserting the word *gurū* into the formula. Likewise it remains silent on the issue of the Guru Panth. *Desā Singh* is also doubtful and favours the qualifications of the Granth (*DesaS* 27, 110). There is, however, no doubt about the attitude of the proto-Rahit work *Prashan-uttar*, nor of two of the other *rahit-namas*. *Prashan-uttar* spells out a doctrine which can be interpreted as saying that both the Granth and the Panth have received the role of the Guru (*Pr-ut* 6ff.); *Prahlād Rāi* is abundantly clear;⁷³ and likewise the statement of *Dayā Singh* (*DayaS* 45).

As we have seen, *Prashan-uttar* probably appeared at the end of the seventeenth century, which would mean that the doctrine was actually developing during the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh. If this is correct it follows that tradition does not reach far enough back. In a general sense, however, it can be our guide. Some of our sources support the doctrine; none seems to be actually opposed to it; and tradition firmly upholds it.

7.25 Raj Karega Khalsa and Miri Piri

Two other doctrines which Khalsa Sikhs regard with particular affection are likewise dependent on tradition. These are the brief litany, which begins *rāj karegā khālsā* and Guru Hargobind's assumption of two swords, one for *mīrī* and the other for *pīrī*.

Rāj karegā khālsā is the third of three couplets that Sikhs recite in unison immediately after the conclusion of *Ardas* (see p. 194). Professor J. S. Grewal offers the following translation:

1. Verily by the order of God the Immortal was the Panth promulgated. It is incumbent upon all the Sikhs to regard the Granth as their Guru.

2. Regard the Granth as the Guru, the manifest body of the Gurus. Those who desire to be united with God may find him in the *Śabda*, the holy Word.

3. The Khalsa shall rule and none will remain defiant; all such shall come into the fold after wandering in humiliation. All who take refuge (in the Panth) shall be protected (*EncyS* III.441).

Ardas is recited by one person with antiphonal responses from assembled Sikhs, and at its conclusion all join in this brief litany. The first verse is taken from the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit-nāmā* and the third verse from the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.⁷⁴ These three verses were evidently no part of a post-Ardas ceremony before their introduction by Tat Khalsa reformers, though that cannot be confirmed. Two things can, however, be affirmed. The first is that at least for the Sikhs of the twentieth century, this conclusion to Ardas has been a comfort in distress and a stimulus to action. The second is that we have nothing except tradition to inform us concerning its origins (Ganda Singh 1973, 173–5).

The second is the doctrine of *mīrī pīrī*. Guru Hargobind is believed to have donned two swords when he succeeded his father, one representing the spiritual tradition of his five predecessors (*pīrī*) and the other his right to wear arms and fight tyranny (*mīrī*). This story has no support whatsoever in the rahit-namas, and it too must depend on tradition for its origins. Both doctrines would appear to be myths, but in the meantime one must stop short of pronouncing them as such. Tradition can be a powerful source and for these two doctrines tradition brooks no denial.

7.26 Akhand Path

An *akhand pāth* is a continuous or 'unbroken' reading of the Adi Granth. The procedure, which takes approximately 48 hours to complete, is conducted by a relay of readers and is performed on occasions of special blessing or need. The rahit-namas provide no support whatsoever for the custom. This comes as a surprise, for this is precisely the kind of activity which concerns them. Of course they do not fail to mention complete readings of the Adi Granth. Intermittent readings, with the conclusion (the *bhog* ceremony) timed to fall on a particular date and time,

are very common and receive notice in at least the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (ChS 45, pp. 63, 153). It is the *akhaṇḍ* or uninterrupted variety which fails to attract notice.

This suggests that the *akhaṇḍ pāṭh* was not practised during the eighteenth century, a conclusion, which is very difficult to draw. If the *akhaṇḍ pāṭh* was not practised in the eighteenth century it must have developed in the nineteenth century. In that case the Tat Khalsa leaders would probably have realised its recent origins and they would find the retention of it in their revised Rahit a somewhat delicate matter. Without a lengthy history to justify the custom it would seem a superstitious practice to their late nineteenth-century understanding.

The traditional explanation goes back to the early eighteenth century when the Khalsa was being hunted by the Mughal authorities and groups of Sikhs were compelled to move frequently. This meant that they could never be sure of sufficient time to read from the Guru Granth Sahib and so there developed the practice of reading it right through at a single sitting whenever opportunity afforded. There is little evidence to support this origin⁷⁵ and as an explanation it is unconvincing. The question remains unresolved. Amongst modern Sikhs, there are those who are critical of the practice, one of whom is Harjinder Singh Dilgeer.

Ideologically speaking, Aakhand Path is not in consonance with the Sikh fundamentals as Sikhs must not read the Scriptures simply as a ritual.⁷⁶

7.27 Vah Guru

Vāh gurū is a term common in the rahit-namas, though not in the sense that it has acquired in modern times. Its usage in the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is instructive because we find therein all four phases of meaning which lead from the Adi Granth through to the modern meaning. Two of these phases are dominant, while the two remaining are of only marginal importance in the rahit-nama.

In the Adi Granth *vāh gurū* is simply an ascription of praise to the Guru.

Vāhi gurū Vāhi gurū Vāhi gurū vahi jīu

Praise to the Guru! Praise to the Guru! Praise to the Guru!
Praise to you!⁷⁷

Although rare in the Adi Granth it was later used by janam-sakhi compilers in a variety of ways, all of them retaining the same literal meaning of 'Praise to the Guru'. In many instances they followed the Adi Granth example of using it simply as an ascription of praise, frequently at the conclusion of individual sakhis. Elsewhere it was employed as a magical formula to ward off danger or work a miracle. A third janam-sakhi usage was, as an appropriate mantra for the simple unsophisticated application of the *nām simaran* technique (B40 45n).

This constituted the initial phase, one in which the two components (*vāh* and *gurū*) remained distinct and the term itself retained its literal meaning. The initial phase also produced the celebrated Khalsa salutation: *vāh gurū jī kī khālsā, vāh gurū jī kī futeh*.⁷⁸ This may be exceedingly difficult to comprehend or accept today, for the salutation has long been used with a later sense in mind. As the meaning of *vāh gurū* changed (a change marked by the coalescing of the two words to form *vāhigurū*), the precise sense of the salutation shifted with it. The coalesced form is now so firmly entrenched that reading it in any other sense can be virtually impossible for many people.⁷⁹

The first phase is represented in the *Chaupā Singh* text by an example of the janam-sakhi mantra usage (ChS 142, pp. 76, 163). The dominant *Chaupā Singh* usage, however, belongs to the second phase and marks the principal shift in the meaning of the term. There can be no doubt that for the *Chaupā Singh* compiler, *vāhigurū* carries exactly the same meaning as *gurū*. When he refers to Hazur Sri Vahiguru Puran Purakhlji it is Guru Gobind Singh whom he means. Other examples repeatedly make the same identity of meaning clear.⁸⁰ In this second phase the two components have coalesced to produce a one-word title and that title is applied to the personal Guru.

The third phase follows as a natural result of the developing doctrine of the Guru. As the doctrine of the eternal Guru ascends to primary importance the synonymous title of *vāhigurū* follows it. *Vāhigurū* thus designates the eternal Guru as well as the personal manifestation.

The fourth phase also follows as a natural development. Just as the transition from eternal Guru to supreme Creator is an easy one, so too is the corresponding shift in the meaning of *vāhigurū*. The fact that it was already under way in the mid-eighteenth century is indicated by an isolated example in the oldest manuscript of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. Dalla Brar, addressing Guru Gobind Singh, refers to *vāhigurū* in a sense, which clearly implies distinction from the Guru himself and that can only mean Akal Purakh.⁸¹ In the *Chaupā Singh* context this is an inconsistent usage, but it is scarcely surprising. It points the way forward to the modern sense, one which emphatically identifies Vahiguru with Akal Purakh, Parabraham, and Karatar.⁸²

7.28 Hell and Heaven

Hell (*narak*) enjoys a limited prominence in the rahit-namas, although little evidence is given of what the doomed Sikh should expect there. Two rahit-namas with a particular concern for the horrors of hell are those of Prahilad Rai and Daya Singh, both of whom emphasise on several occasions the fate which must await the careless Khalsa (*PrahR* 12, 23, 25, 26, 27; *DayaS* 28, 29, 30, 33, 35, 38, 39, 44, 47, 76, 83, 91).

Although their condemnations normally specify a single hell other references indicate that there are several such hells.⁸³ The imagery obviously derives from the Hindu background of the Khalsa. In particular this was from the Puranic concept with its layers of hells, each with a more frightening aspect the deeper one descends. Hell as envisaged by Muslims may also have had some influence. The concept of hell (or the numerous hells) seems abundantly clear to these rahit-nama authors. Beyond this concept, however, they offer little description of the torments there to be endured. The hell known as Kumbhi Narak subjects all unfortunate entrants to be baked as a potter's vessels, but beyond this detail there is little to be known.

Heaven (*baikunṭh* or *surag*) receives much less attention. It is assumed rather than plainly stated, and like hell it has only a vague meaning attached to it. The writers of the rahit-namas evidently had some notion of an after-life, and for the author of the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* it was, for the loyal Khalsa, plainly a paradise such as the ghazis of Islam entered when slain in

battle for the faith (*Desa* 47; see also *SauS*(2) 40). Such a reference is, however, extremely rare in the *rahit-namas* and the precise meaning attached to the notion of *baikunṭh* or *surag* is impossible to grasp. Heaven is undefined.

Such notions of hell and heaven are, of course, alien to Sikh theology of the Singh Sabha period and after. According to modern Sikh theology hell (*narak*) means separation from Akal Purakh. Heaven (*baikunṭh* or *vaiṭkunṭh*) is in the present, corresponding to the *sat-saṅg* or fellowship of true believers. In this respect theologians of the Singh Sabha period recovered the authentic teachings of the Gurus. Sikhs believe in transmigrating and in the possibility of breaking free from it by the practice of meditation on the divine Name. When in this manner they achieve liberation from the wheel of transmigration they can be said to have attained the condition which others call heaven. This is the condition, of perfect peace or *sahaj*. Remnants of the old notion, however, still linger. One finds them in Sikh funeral notices that commonly refer to the deceased going to his or her 'heavenly abode'.

7.29 Martyrdom

Louis Fenech's important study, *Martyrdom in the Sikh Tradition*, introduces a theme which one should also expect to find in the *rahit-namas* (Fenech 2000). The fact that it seems not to be there is, of course, explained by the relatively late appearance of the terms *shahīd* ('martyr') and *shahādat* ('martyrdom') in Sikh usage. Initially they were branded as despised Muslim terms, and not until the beginning of the nineteenth century do they enter Sikh literature (Fenech 2000, 12). During the greater part of that century *shahīd* simply meant one who dies for his faith. During the Singh Sabha revival, however, the meaning was redefined to cover the Sikh who in dying contributes to the overthrow of oppression and in its place the establishment of justice and righteousness for all peoples. Deliverance is not for Sikhs alone, but for all people regardless of their faith (Fenech 2000, 145–51).

The *rahit-namas* carry us back to the condition, which preceded the Singh Sabha. Unquestionably the enemy is an oppressor, and in opposing the Turks the Khalsa Sikh must be

willing to die. The catholic concern of the Singh Sabha is, however, missing from the rahit-namas.

7.30 Anand Marriage (Anand Sanskar)

In 1909 the Government of the Punjab passed the Anand Marriage Act. This laid down a separate law for Sikhs, requiring couples to walk round the Guru Granth Sahib instead of a sacred fire. The change was one ardently desired by Tat Khalsa members of the Singh Sabha movement, establishing what they emphatically maintained was a primary Sikh principle. This was that Sikhs were not Hindus. If in marriage Sikhs could circle the Adi Granth instead of the Hindu sacred fire they would thereby establish their right to be regarded as a different community. In their eyes the passing of the Anand Marriage Act established that right.

Members of the Tat Khalsa had, in the campaign that preceded the passing of the Act, maintained that ever since the recording of the Adi Granth the Gurus had always conducted their marriages in the manner, which they proposed. Only later (particularly during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) had Sikhs drifted into Hindu ways of performing them, substituting a fire for the sacred scripture. The ceremony was called Anand Sanskar or Anand Karaj because the recitation of at least the first five stanzas of Guru Amar Das's *Rāmakalī Anand* had long been a part of the ritual (AG, pp. 917–22). This title it evidently maintained through most of the period of decline. The recitation of a portion of *Anand* might indicate that the ceremony was Sikh, but certainly not the practice of sealing a marriage bond by circling a sacred fire.

Sikhs of the Nirankari sect claim that their second Guru, Darbara Singh (1855–70) first performed a marriage ceremony closely resembling the one embodied in the Anand Marriage Act and that the Singh Sabha leaders copied the idea from him (Webster 1979, 16–18). Sources (or rather the lack of them) point to this claim as at least potentially tenable. There is no evidence that circumambulating the Adi Granth was practised or sanctioned by any of the Gurus. Could it not have been promulgated in the Rahit by Guru Gobind Singh and then corrupted by Hindus or Sikhs influenced by Hindu notions? This

is one area where the voice of tradition can scarcely aid us. The Tat Khalsa leaders, by their own account, had to rescue the Panth from mischievous ideals, and traditional methods would have been restarted barely a century ago. The rahit-namas, however, are older than this. The period of the rise of the Khalsa and then of alleged Hindu corruption is covered by them. What do they say?

With one exception references to marriage ceremonies are very rare in the rahit-namas. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* devotes two items to marriages which are grudgingly accepted by Sikhs of the Khalsa.

A Gursikh should not give his daughter [in marriage] to a man who has his hair cut (*monā*), though he may take a girl [from a *monā* father. In such instances the girl] should receive initiation. 15

Have the Sikh girl and her Sahaj-dhari [bridegroom] join their hands in marriage and then initiate them [as follows]. Wash the Granth Sahib lectern [with water] in which confectionery has been dissolved. Recite five stanzas of *Japujī*, followed by five stanzas of the *Anand*, and give them buttermilk to drink. 16

Advice is occasionally given to fathers about who should receive their daughters (*TanN* 19; *DayaS* 31–2, 76, 78; *SauS*(1) 13; *SauS*(2) 27), but apart from these there is only one other reference to a marriage. *Dayā Singh* has a single brief sentence. 'Do not celebrate a marriage without using the Anand order.'⁸⁴

There is, however, one prominent exception. The *Prem Sumārag* devotes a lengthy chapter to the detailed procedure, which should be followed in conducting a Khalsa marriage (*PrS* Part II, no. 13, pp. 339–44). This procedure includes several features which would be anathema to modern Sikhs. It involves superstition; it takes account of caste; *Anand* is not recited; the physical circumstances for the ritual are alien; it has a sacred fire fed by ghi; and the *lāvān* are performed around this fire instead of around the Guru Granth Sahib. The dismayed feelings of Tat Khalsa reformers would be quite understandable.

Is this chapter from the *Prem Sumārag*, sufficient to enlighten us concerning marriage practices among the Sikhs during the period extending from the creation of the Khalsa to that of the Singh Sabha? Assuredly it is not enough. The *Prem Sumārag* dates from the early nineteenth century, a time when the Panth was subject to Hindu influences, and it stands alone

in communicating procedures of this nature. If we take into consideration the testimony of *Chaupā Singh* and *Dayā Singh*, we may conclude that the form of the modern ceremony goes too far in asserting the independence of Sikh ritual from Hindu. The modern ceremony, in other words, leans strongly towards Singh Sabha principles rather than towards historical precedent. Our conclusion must, however, be strictly tentative, based as it is on thoroughly inadequate source material.

7.31 The Place of Women in the Khalsa

The first thing to note with regard to the status of women in the Khalsa is that the *rahit-namas* are (with one possible exception) addressed exclusively to men.⁸⁵ This is made abundantly clear in such places as item 53 of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. The one exception ('Women's duties' of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* (see pp. 108–9) is arguably addressed to male members of the Khalsa for passing on to their women. Until the reforms of the Singh Sabha movement the Khalsa was definitely a male order. Women should be regarded as companions, worthy of respect if earned, but they were only appendages to the men who fought the battles and protected their families. A woman's place was in the home. Her duties (according to the *rahit-namas*) consisted of cooking meals, raising children, attending the *dharamsala*, and providing her Khalsa man with his due service.

Only with the coming of the Singh Sabha movement did the men of the Khalsa finally acknowledge that a woman might fully belong to the order in terms of equality, and only in recent times did that acknowledgment show real indications of being translated into practice.⁸⁶ The Khalsa order held up the just war as an ideal, and its symbols were largely based on weapons. Women did not fit into this pattern and those men who wanted them to do so had great difficulty in matching ideal with practice (Jakobsh 1999, 285–6). This should cause no surprise. Western countries might regard themselves as being in the vanguard of women's rights, yet they too still have a considerable distance to go in fully implementing those rights.

The *rahit-namas* communicate five notions concerning women. These are as follows:

1. Women do not belong to the Khalsa. This is nowhere stated, but the treatment accorded to women make it a reasonable assumption. They are expected to act as loyal supports for their husbands, but they are not to receive the double-edged sword baptism (*khande di pāhul*). It is true that the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* does record the need for a bride to be initiated (see p. 241), but it seems that in this case a different form of initiation was required. The author of *Chaupā Singh* is, after all, the one who declares unambiguously that women should never receive sword baptism (*ChS* 506, pp. 111, 186). The only other possibility (a remote one) is that here we have conflicting evidence from two separate authors.

2. A Sikh of the Khalsa should respect his woman, bestowing on her the same treatment that he renders to his mother. For a Punjabi man that means a considerable reverence. He should also refrain from touching the feet of any woman except his mother. A weapon should never be used against a woman and a respectable woman should never be cursed (*Granth Bhāi Paīndā*, sakhi 25; see p. 43; *ChS* 192, 343, 443, pp. 84, 103, 108; *DesaS* 13).

3. A Sikh of the Khalsa should never look with lust nor fasten his affections on another's wife. This injunction receives a considerable volume of support from the rahit-namas and taken together with the frequency of the warning against prostitutes suggests that it was, for the Khalsa of the eighteenth century, a real problem. Wayward desires evidently needed curbing (*BG* 32:12; *Granth Bhāi Paīndā*, sakhis 24, 25, 37; *TanN* 32, 39, 46, 47; *SakhiR* 23; *ChS* 11, 102, 341, 370, pp. 59, 69, 102, 104; *DesaS* 14, 44; *DayaS* 11, 16, 39, 89; *SauS*(2) 34).

4. Sikhs of the Khalsa should keep away from prostitutes. These would probably be Muslim women, in which case Khalsa Sikhs would pollute themselves by consorting with them (*TanN* 38; *PrahR* 4; *DesaS* 25; *DayaS* 35, 59; see pp. 224–5).

5. Women should never be trusted. They should be regarded as inherently deceitful, and Khalsa Sikhs must never confide in them nor rely on them (*SakhiR* 23; *ChS* 100, pp. 69, 158).

Apart from these there are individual warnings, which concern women. Never eat a woman's leavings (*ChS* 342, pp. 103, 178). The *Granth Sahib* must not be read by women in

dharamsalas (*ChS* 538, pp. 113, 187). Women must not seek the company of men other than those of their own families (*ChS* 555, pp. 114, 189). Beware of certain evil women (*DayaS* 29). The author of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* is the one who is most concerned about women, about their needs, and about their failings. In a section headed 'The duties of a Sikh woman' he deals with several characteristic features of the wife of a Khalsa, a woman who should always maintain 'a placid and dutiful disposition' (*ChS* 550–67, pp. 114–16, 188–90).

This seems to have been the case in the eighteenth century and into the time of Ranjit Singh. Writing in 1849, Cunningham reports some progress.

Women are not usually, but they are sometimes, initiated in form as professors of the Sikh faith. In mingling the sugar and water for women, a one-edged, and not a two-edged, dagger is used. (Cunningham 1918, 346)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a Sanatan point of view was stated by Khem Singh Bedi. Falcon paraphrases Khem Singh Bedi's *Sanškār Bāgh* as follows:

The ceremony of pahal for a Sikh woman is much the same as that for a man, except that sugar is used instead of patasia, if a khande, or two-edged dagger is used for stirring the amrit, the handle is used and not the blade, or if a sword, the back; the oath taken is in this form, 'Bol wah Guru Sat nam,' instead of the longer one used by a man. (Falcon 1896, 58; see Part II, no. 18, p. 363)

Evidently some advance had been made towards admitting women to the Khalsa, but it was certainly not sufficient for the Tat Khalsa. Women, they declared, were entitled to equal rights of entry and in 1900 the annual meeting of the Singh Sabha in Firozpur expressed this in the form of a motion (Jakobsh 1999, 291). This has taken many years to implement. *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* is, however, emphatic. Women do not merely receive the same initiation as men, but can be numbered amongst those dispensing it (*SRM* II.2[b], p. 397).

Tat Khalsa leaders were, it seems, responsible for another change in custom. This was their insistence that, just as all male members took the name 'Singh', so should all female members of the Khalsa bear the name 'Kaur'. The *Prem Sumārag* had

delivered a different message. In the section dealing with the birth of a daughter it required the following:

Administer sword initiation (*pāhul khaṇḍe kī deve*). Name the child, adding 'Devi' to the [chosen] name. Pierce [her] nose and ears. (PSG 25)

This involved baptism of the two-edged sword for females (if at a date that later Sikhs would regard as altogether too young), but it certainly did not indicate that Kaur should be the name. The name was Devi. Doris Jakobsh argues persuasively that, though the name occurs in earlier times (for males as well as females), it was only during Singh Sabha times that it became compulsory for all female members of the Khalsa and indeed for most female Sikhs. It was the determination of men such as Vir Singh and Kahn Singh Nabha to break loose from, what they regarded as the Hindu hold on the Panth that prompted them to introduce this change. There could no longer be any question of Sikh women bearing the name of a Hindu goddess (Jakobsh 1999, 294–315).

7.32 Penalties for Infringement of the Rahit (tanakhah)

The word *tanakhāh* has already been defined in the first chapter, together with the associated term *tanakhāhīā*. In that preliminary definition *tanakhāh* was explained as meaning a penance or fine imposed by a sangat on any member of the Khalsa who violates the Rahit. The person so convicted was defined as a *tanakhāhīā* (see pp. 10–11). How is a *tanakhāh* imposed on a *tanakhāhīā*?

Only one of the rahit-namas gives practical help in this respect. The three rahit-namas attributed to Nand Lal offer no assistance, neither do those of Prahilad Rai and Desa Singh. The *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* does at least provide a lengthy inventory of those who should be regarded as *tanakhāhīās*, most of the items from 287 to 547 concluding with the formula *so tanakhāhīā*, which means 'he is a transgressor' or 'he should be required to perform a penance'.⁸⁷ There is, however, no indication of the *tanakhāh* or penance which should be required for any of these lapses. The one rahit-nama which does stipulate

the penances is that of Daya Singh. These it usually specifies exactly, ranging from a copper coin for knocking a turban off accidentally, to death for showing disrespect for one's own kes (fortunately suspended in return for less demanding penances) (*DayaS* 49, 58). A rupee and a quarter was a common *tanakhāh*.

It is therefore, difficult to know just what the eighteenth-century Panth did concerning penances, and how easy or difficult it was for sangats to enforce their will against offenders. The situation is little different today. Some prominent leaders have been declared *tanakhāhīās* for allegedly sectarian views or, more commonly, for performing political deeds which a majority of those in the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (the SGPC) subsequently decided were contrary to the Panth's interests. They were declared *tanakhāhīās* and either penances (*tanakhāhs*) were imposed on them or they were actually banished from the Panth. In 1928, as we have seen, Teja Singh of the Panch Khalsa Divan was 'excommunicated' for his views on the Guru Granth Sahib. Master Tara Singh, once the dominant politician in the Panth, went on a fast in support of Punjabi Suba or a separate Punjabi-speaking state in 1961. The fast lasted for 48 days, but when he ended it he was held to have violated a solemn oath, and was widely photographed cleaning the shoes of visitors to Darbar Sahib as part of his penance. Giani Zail Singh was charged with being a *tanakhāhīā* for having permitted, while President of India, the invasion of Darbar Sahib in 1984. Appearing before the Akal Takht in Amritsar he was able to defend himself, however, and so was exonerated. Two others who were also charged were less successful and were duly banished from the Panth (*EncyS* IV.306).

The custom is therefore by no means dead, though there may be real difficulties in implementing it. In spite of the provision in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* local sangats have no part to play in the process, everything being channelled instead through the SGPC in Amritsar (*SRM* II.3, p. 401). Because the decisions come from the SGPC through Panj Piare who are dependent on it many Sikhs do not trust the judgements that are made. The SGPC is an elected body, and its decisions are inevitably mistrusted or clearly opposed by many of those who would gladly see the Panth's affairs in other hands. At present, though,

there appears to be no alternative. The Panth functions with the SGPC as its supreme authority and as long as this continues it will be the SGPC which makes the decisions.

Endnotes

1. *Sodar* and *So purakh* are the words of the first hymns in their respective groups. The word *sohilā* ('paeen') occurs in the second line of the first hymn in its group.

2. *Granth Bhāi Paṇḍā* 37. *TanN* 26. *ChS* 3, pp. 58, 149. *DesaS* 38. *SauS*(1) 11.

3. *Jāp* appears in all the *rahit-namas* listed in the text except the *TanN*.

4. Loc. cit., Lahore, 1876, p. 4 of the Nand Lal section, note*.

5. *Rām avatār*, *DG*, p. 253. I owe this reference to Pashaura Singh.

6. This portion of the *DG* is still to be found in the liturgy of the Nanaksar tradition.

7. *AG*, p. 469. Vir Singh (ed.), *Pañj Granthī Saṭik*, Amritsar, 1966, pp. 73–5.

8. Indu Banga, *The Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 159n.

9. Durga, Devi, Chandi.

10. Attar Singh (1978), p. 5 of Nand Lal section, note*.

11. In stanza 53 this is obviously the meaning of *bhagautī*. See p. 279.

12. The Nirankaris and the Panch Khalsa Divan believed that Sri Bhagauti was the goddess, not a symbolic sword, and for this reason the Panch Khalsa Divan at least argued vehemently that the words should be abandoned. See pp. 153, 175.

13. Attar Singh, op. cit. Attar Singh also explicitly interprets Bhagauti as the goddess, p. 5n.*

14. For an example of a *hukam-nama* issued by Guru Hargobind see Ganda Singh (1967a), pp. 66–7. For the ninth Guru see Fauja Singh (1976).

15. It is not clear what these are.

16. *PSP*, pp. 90–1, gives the five their traditional names.

17. *ChS* 178–81, 506, pp. 82–3, 111, 169–70, 186. In the last item (the ban on female initiation) the *PSP* text inserts the negative adverb *na* before the verb, thereby reversing the injunction. *PSP*, p. 105. This is obviously a later gloss, reflecting the understanding of the period following the introduction of Singh Sabha ideals.

18. *ChS* 1, p. 57. The 'five ablutions' are the washing of hands and feet and the rinsing of the mouth.

19. Ganda Singh (1967a), p. 179. The *hukam-nama* is no. 59.

20. Ibid., no. 66, pp. 192–3.

21. *Lectures of Maskeen Ji*, ed. Anokh Singh, Amritsar, 1977, p. 142. My attention was drawn to this example by Louis Fenech.

22. It is claimed that Nand Lal did take initiation. Preface to *Sāchī Prītī*, ed. Haribhajan Singh and Vidhata Singh 'Tir', Amritsar, 1967, p. 11. There is no evidence of this.

23. In the chapter which contains this Persian couplet Sant Singh Maskeen also quotes in support of the Five Ks a Punjabi couplet attributed to Nand Lal and one from Desa Singh (pp. 145, 151). Neither is in the early versions of the rahit-namas attributed to Nand Lal or Desa Singh.

24. *ChS* 251, p. 92, read *kachh daḍhā' karab rakhaṇ* which I translated: 'Wear breeches, bangle, and a knife.' *ChS*, p. 173. To this I added the note:

The translation assumes that *daḍhā'* must have the same meaning as *kaṛā* and that *karab* should read *karad*. (*ChS*, p. 232)

I have now revised this opinion with regard to *daḍhā'*. As an alternative *daḍhā'* (staff) seems much more likely.

25. *ChS* 7a, p. 58. The fact that the item disrupts the numbering sequence of the text means that it must be a later addition.

26. Randhir Singh (1965), p. 15.

27. Pashaura Singh, 'Observing the Khalsa Rahit in North America' in Pashaura Singh and N. Gerald Barrier (1996), p. 164.

28. Colonel A. L. H. Polier, 'The Siques', 1780, in Ganda Singh (ed.), *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, Calcutta, 1962, pp. 63–4. See pp. 72–3 for a discussion concerning the inclusion of the Five Ks by *Gurū kīān Sākhīān*.

29. John Malcolm (1810), p. 253 and note+.

30. Loc. cit., *rut* 2, *aṁsū* 20:9. *Srī Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth*, ed. Vir Singh, Amritsar, 4th edition, 1965, p. 5060. See also 13: 21–2, Vir Singh, p. 5029. Harpinder Jit Kaur, 'The idea of Sikh Rahit in *Srī Gurpartāp Sūraj Granth* by Santokh Singh', Guru Nanak Dev University, PhD, 1996, pp. 155–6.

31. *PSP* (4th edition, 1989), pp. 51, 186. Budh Singh's work was not included in the 1st edition of *PSP*. It appears in the 3rd edition.

32. E. Trumpp (1877), p. xci. Trumpp may well have been preceded in listing the Five Ks, with *karad* replacing *kirpān*. Pashaura Singh and Louis Fenech discovered a manuscript in 2002 which may be older than 1877. This is MS. 115786 in the Punjabi Reference Library, Patiala. The manuscript is entitled *Gur-pranālī* and was in part written by Natha Singh, a pujari at Tarn Taran in the mid-eighteenth century. This does not mean, however, that the Five Ks were recorded by Natha Singh. The manuscript is a composite product and it is only to the opening contribution that the date S. 1833 (1776 CE) applies. This colophon occurs

on f. 12b, following which the first contribution terminates, and it must be assumed that Natha Singh's portion ends there. The second contribution proceeds only to f. 13b, following which ff. 14a–51b are missing. A new hand begins on f. 52a and it is here that the Five Ks are explicitly stated on f. 56b. Clearly this portion is not by Natha Singh for ff. 58a–b mentions his descendants. A reference to the *Prem Sumārag* also occurs in the same hand on a folio which is numbered both 77 and 79. This places it in at least the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. It can, however, be convincingly placed between 1850 and 1877.

33. Loc. cit. (1st edition 1880, 2nd ed. Patiala, 1970), p. 233.

34. Loc. cit. (1st edition 1891, 2nd edition Patiala, 1970), vol. 1, p. 860. See pp. 47–8.

35. *MK*, p. 593. *GM*, p. 81. In *MK*, as a part of the item *akhārā*, Kahn Singh describes the founding of a Nirmala akhara (centre or retreat) in 1862 CE and mentions that all the mahants were required to wear the Five Ks. *MK*, p. 29. The establishment of the akhara was a comparatively minor affair and Kahn Singh was writing almost 70 years later. It is, however, possible that this should be regarded as the first mention of the Five Ks being mandatory. I owe this reference to Pashaura Singh.

36. M. A. Macauliffe (1909), V.95. Also idem, 'The Sikh religion under Banda, and its present condition', *The Calcutta Review*, vol. 66, 1881, p. 162. Cited by Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*, Delhi, 1994, p. 31n.

37. *Desa* 44: 'Taking another's woman, gambling, speaking untruth, theft, and consuming alcohol: these are five vices which the world produces. The sensible Singh will avoid them all.'

38. *MK*, pp. 570, 590–4. All three words mean 'five'.

39. Fauja Singh, 'Vision, achievements and impact', in Fauja Singh and G. S. Talib, *Guru Tegh Bahadur: Martyr and Teacher*, Patiala, 1975, p. 111.

40. Mansukhani uses as his source for all these quotations an article which appeared in the April–May 1980 edition of *Guramat Prakāsh*, a journal published by the SGPC in Amritsar.

41. Note that Kahn Singh's addition of 'sword' in parentheses was apparently felt to be necessary, thereby demonstrating that *kirpān* was not familiar to many of his readers. More familiar was *karad*.

42. *MK*, p. 456. Kahn Singh also quotes *Sūraj Prakāsh* which gives *kachh kes karad*.

43. J. S. Grewal, *Seminar*, April 1999, p. 70.

44. Pashaura Singh suggests that it was as a result of the British ban on carrying weapons that the Singh Sabha replaced the 'five weapons' with 'five religious symbols', that is with the Five Ks. Op. cit., p. 164.

45. An example is the edition of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* published in 1922 by Lala Maghi Ram Sant Ram of Bazaar Mai Sevan, Amritsar, together with its usual companion, the *Prahlād Singh (Rāi) Rahit-nāmā*. The text is generally the same for the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* as MS 234 of the Languages Department, Patiala, of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* and both rahit-namas are very similar to the 1876 translation of Attar Singh. It adds, however, a *doharā* and a *chaupai* at the end of each rahit-nama explicitly upholding the Five Ks.

46. *Vār* 20:10 and *Kabitts* 175, 309, and 453.

47. *TanN* 10ff. *ChS* 430–3, pp. 107, 182. *DesaS* 120 and *SauS*(1) stress the three ingredients.

48. *ChS* 205–35, pp. 85–90, 172–3. Macauliffe demythologises the story in Macauliffe (1909), V, ch. viii.

49. *Pakhayan Charitr* 405:396. *DG*, p. 1387. The word *malechh* ('barbarian') normally designates a Muslim in traditional Sikh terminology.

50. *TanN* 15, 22a, 29, 44a, 51, 58. For the opinion of other authors see the heading 'Attitude towards Muslims' in the analysis of each rahit-nama. *PrahR* 23 is also probably aimed at Muslims.

51. Kabir, *Āsā* 13, *AG*, p. 479.

52. Kabir, *Āsā* 29, *AG*, p. 483.

53. See the heading 'Weapons and warfare' in the analyses of individual rahit-namas.

54. A prominent exception is the case of the continued proscription of *kutthā* meat.

55. The meaning of *turak* in the rahit-namas is actually held by some to have no reference to Muslims and to mean instead 'an oppressor' regardless of his religious identity. This is certainly carrying the deconstruction of the term altogether too far.

56. See *CSobh* 5: 21, 30, Part II, pp. 267, 269. Banda also testifies to the ban on tobacco in the hukam-nama addressed to the Jaunpur sangat. See p. 40.

57. *ChS* 84, 432, pp. 67, 107, 157, 182. *DesaS* 30. *DayaS* 33, 57, 68. In 438, p. 107, *ChS* is also presumably referring to the hookah.

58. Guru Nanak Dev University holds this second manuscript as part of the composite manuscript 1018.

59. MS 1018, f. 6b; *PSP*, p. 72; *Parachian Sevā Dās* also uses the expression *turakanī sāthi saṅg*. Kharak Singh and Gurtej Singh (1995), p. 142. For Seva Das intercourse with a Turkani automatically means conversion to Islam.

60. Idem., *Sakhee Book*, Benares, 1873, sakhi 32, pp. 66–7.

61. The Kalima ('There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Prophet').

62. M3, *Strī Rāgu* 17–50, *AG*, p. 33.

63. The refectory attached to every gurdwara from which food is served to all regardless of caste or creed.

64. *DesaS* 91. There is a strong Sikh tradition that Nand Lal used to oversee the finest langar in Anandpur. *Sāchī Prītī*, ed. Haribhajan Singh and Vidhata Singh 'Tir', Amritsar, 1967. pp. 10–11. I owe this reference to Louis Fenech.

65. This at least appears to be the case. Note, however, that in his edition of *Prem Sumārag Granth*, Randhir Singh has omitted five sections of *dhiān pañjvān* (chapter 5). This chapter is entitled *prasād khāne kī bidhi-jugati rahit dā* ('The prescribed method for preparing food for eating'), the very chapter which might be expected to describe the langar. Randhir Singh omits the relevant verses on the grounds that they 'seem unnecessary'. From his brief description of them they almost certainly do not contain references to the langar, but because they dealt with Muslim meat (*kuṭhā*) they are most unlikely to be uninteresting.

66. John Malcolm (1810), pp. 263–4.

67. *Prashan-uttar* of course does not refer to them either.

68. *ChS* 6, pp. 58, 150. For a brief explanation of these various groups see pp. 110, 197. For a longer explanation see *HDS*, p. 159; and for a much longer one see *ChS*, pp. 210–12. See also Jeevan Deol, 'The Minas and their literature', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 118.2, April–June 1998.

69. For *PrahR* the four groups are the Minas, the followers of the masands, those who cut their hair (*monā*), and those who practise female infanticide (*kuṛī-mār*). *PrahR* 6. For *DayaS* the four are Dhir-malias, Ram-raias, the followers of the masands, and those who shave their heads (*sir mundaṭ*). *DayaS* 10.

70. *DayaS* 62. The six groups are those who undergo the tonsure ceremony (*bhadani*), those who practise female infanticide, the followers of Dhir Mal, the masands, the followers of Ram Rai, and those who use colour prepared from red ochre or the kusumbha flower.

71. Bhangu (1962), p. 44. Ganda Singh (1967b), p. 22n. The *naṛī* is the stem of a hookah.

72. Female infanticide was an aspect of bride price and of caste. Boys were always eagerly sought; girls were frequently regarded as a disaster. The death of a female baby could be effected by pressing her face into the placenta so that she suffocated in her mother's blood. Midwives were sometimes instructed to do this. Ved Mehta, *Daddyji*, London, 1972, p. 12. See also Paul Hershman (1981), pp. 156, 178–9.

73. *PrahR* 30. Note though that this occurs in a portion of the *PrahR* which may subsequently have been appended.

74. *PrahR* 30. *TanN* 62. Surprisingly Kahn Singh Nabha does not include the *TanN* couplet in his text of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

75. Pashaura Singh believes that a symbol dated S. 1784 (1727 CE) written at the end of a Banno copy of the *Adi Granth* may indicate that an *akhand pāth* was read from this manuscript in that year. The symbol is evidently the same as the *bhog* mark written into copies the *Adi Granth* after the completion of an *akhand pāth*. The manuscript, written by Bhai Harijas, is a copy of an original written in S. 1702 (1645 CE), apparently made late in the seventeenth century. Pashaura Singh (2000), pp. 218–19, 290.

76. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *The Sikh Reference Book*, Edmonton, 1997, p. 40.

77. *Savāie mahale charuthe ke*, AG, p. 1402–4. The formula is used several times in this portion of the *Adi Granth*.

78. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Malcolm evidently understood the term in this first phase. Op. cit., pp. 220, 255, 285.

79. The note in B40, pp. 45–6, suggests that *sri vāhigurū jī kī fateh* can only mean ‘Victory to Sri Vahiguru ji’. This is correct only if the honorific ‘Sri’ is retained. The usage adopted by *ChS* and other *rahit-namas* always omits it.

80. See for example the interchanging use of the two terms in the brief note on the plenary *sangat* which occurs in *ChS* 568 (p. 116) or the similar interchange in 587 (p. 120). An early example occurs in *ChS* 25. See also 274, 279, 596, 643, 645. The same identity is also indicated by variant meanings in different manuscripts.

81. *ChS* 589, pp. 120, 193. The manuscript is dated S. 1821 (1765 CE). The fact that this usage occurs in the Dalla Brar anecdote probably means that this story represents a later addition to the *rahit-nama*. Its placement at the end of the *rahit-nama* also supports this possibility. This would mean that the actual *rahit-nama* must be definitely older than 1765.

82. For the *Akhand Kirtani Jatha* the word *vāhigurū* is the *gurmantra* which every believing Sikh must have ‘installed on the breath’, thus rendering the practice of *nām simaran* automatically performed with every breath that is taken. Joy Barrow, ‘The *Akhand Kirtani Jatha*’, *International Journal of Punjab Studies* 8.1, January–June 2001, pp. 101–4.

83. *Prit* speaks of ‘wandering from one hell to another’ in its Introduction. *TanN* 37 mentions ‘a thousand hells’. *PrahR* 5 refers to ‘the worst of hells’. *DayaS* 24, 42, 69 singles out the ‘hell of Kumbhi’ as particularly fearsome.

84. *DayaS* 80. Daya Singh’s use of the term *Anand* does not mean that he had in mind the modern *Anand saṁskār*. It means that he was referring to a ceremony which included the recitation of a portion of *Anand*.

85. This topic, ‘The place of women in the Khalsa’, is extensively

covered in Doris R. Jakobsh, 'Relocating Gender in Sikh History: transformation, meaning and identity', PhD, Asian Studies, University of British Columbia, 1999.

86. 'For the first time in more than four centuries Sikhism's holiest shrine—Amritsar's Golden Temple—will witness women *rāgīs* (hymn singers) performing the daily *kīrtan* inside the Harimandir Sahib sanctum sanctorum. After many years of unsuccessfully petitioning an intensely patriarchal and male-dominated clergy and gurdwara management, Sikh women seeking equal position and status in the performance of religious rites have finally found a champion in Bibi Jagir Kaur, who herself is the first woman to be appointed president of the all-powerful Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.'—*The Sikh Review* vol. 48:6, June 2000, p 74. Jagir Kaur was deposed from the SGPC presidency in November 2000. Another woman, Kiranjot Kaur, is General Secretary of the SGPC.

87. The variant form *su tanakhāhīā* is also sometimes used, and occasionally the offender is declared a *pakkā tanakhāhīā* (a 'grievous offender'). The word *pakkā* though seems to be used indiscriminately. Once the term *bhallā tanakhāhīā* is employed.

8

Conclusion



Ever since the Khalsa order was founded the Rahit has occupied the prime position in the affections and the loyalty of Khalsa Sikhs. As we have seen, the Rahit was certainly not an unchanging institution. Before the time of Guru Gobind Singh there existed an informal Rahit. At the time of the inauguration of the Khalsa order a formal Rahit was promulgated. This, however, was a smaller Rahit than the one which was to grow during the eighteenth century and then shrink during the period of the Singh Sabha reforms. During this latter period the Rahit of the Khalsa was partially remodelled according to the rationalist principles which were prevalent in the educated India of the time. The Rahit which emerged from the Singh Sabha period is essentially the Rahit that is acknowledged today. Some groups within Khalsa society preach altered aspects of it, but in general it is a Rahit which is accepted by a large majority of the Panth. Most Sikhs might know only an abbreviated version of it, but at least they acknowledge the requirement to wear the Five Ks and to refrain from smoking. Even when they do not obey this abbreviated version they will normally cite it as the basic prerequisite of the Sikh faith.

We have seen how during the early and middle years of the eighteenth century the Rahit grew considerably. This enlargement was particularly in response to Mughal campaigns and later to the Afghan menace, and it produced injunctions that

were clearly aimed at protecting the Khalsa from enemies who were seen to be Muslims. Others regulated relations within the Khalsa community, prohibited association with errant groups, or denounced those who practised such customs as female infanticide. These were added to injunctions concerning reverence for the kes, the obligation to bear arms, and the ban on the hookah which were present in the Rahit proclaimed at the inauguration of the Khalsa. A pattern of worship had already been established by followers of the Gurus. In this respect the rahit-namas did little more than confirm the pattern for members of the Khalsa.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Singh Sabha period produced significant changes in the Rahit, eliminating many that expressed hostility towards Muslims and introducing an ordered system into what had hitherto been predominantly a random collection of injunctions. These changes were produced by educated leaders of the Tat Khalsa sector of the Singh Sabha movement, and to these leaders the Panth owes a considerable debt. The Tat Khalsa deserves commendation for eliminating superstition, granting at least theoretical equality to women, opposing most caste differences, calming feelings towards Muslims, and reducing the jumble of inherited traditions to a systematic pattern. Kahn Singh Nabha stands out as the most notable contributor to this programme of reform and reordering, and the credit due to him is substantial. The programme was not carried through to its logical conclusion, leaving in the Rahit some provisions, which might well have been abandoned. It was, however, a considerable achievement and to the efforts of these members of the Tat Khalsa the Panth should ever be grateful.

What is the attitude towards the Rahit today? Sikhs are showing an increasing interest in the Rahit as currently recorded, at least as far as those who live in western countries are concerned. Experiencing a significant growth in education, and living in societies which depend largely on the written word for social control, they are taking an increasing interest in *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*. Assistance for local disputes (particularly in North America) is enlisted from Amritsar, and *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* forms a basis for different appeals.¹

This, however, concerns only a small minority of Sikhs,

though the results of such disputes may be either gratifying or uncomfortable for those who are directly involved in them. A large majority of Sikhs still live in the villages of the Punjab and for them the Rahit is fulfilled as it has always been fulfilled. They wear the Five Ks (often somewhat erratically) and they generally refrain from smoking, but for the men at least the amount of alcohol consumed is usually impressive. Sangrand, Puranmashi, and Amavas are regularly celebrated by Sikhs as well as by Hindus. What this means is that the Rahit is obeyed only as far as it does not interfere with cherished habits or customs. The fact that a particular belief or action is contrary to the Rahit rarely or never occurs to them. Tradition for them is the source. They act in accordance with how they were brought up and how others around them behave. The printed word of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* makes little or no impression on them.

We must remind ourselves yet again, though, that *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* represents a *normative* statement of the Khalsa belief and way of life. It represents the ideal situation. No one will seriously maintain that it portrays Khalsa belief and action as it is actually practised. Those who have a compelling concern to protect the Khalsa way of life can appeal to it as an essential standard to which all Sikhs must defer, and their appeals sometimes have the desired effect. When this happens items in the recorded Rahit are sustained. It provides a model for the Khalsa and in general this model is maintained in at least a rudimentary sense.

What then will be the future of the Rahit? Two things can be said, one of them with assurance and the other much more hesitatingly. The simple one is the assurance that the Rahit will gradually change over time as there are shifts in theology or the circumstances of the Panth change. These alterations will be neither numerous nor radical.

The other one is much less certain, at least as far as the actual results are concerned. What can be positively affirmed is that the Panth will experience a progressive increase in education and in the sophistication of those Sikhs who at present lead comparatively simple lives. Needless to say this is not a description which applies to all Sikhs, some of whom have attained extremely impressive levels of learning and sophistication. Moreover, the Panth as a whole is a community that compares

very favourably with others around it. The description, however, still applies. It applies to the many Sikhs who, by reason of their village environment, caste, or financial insecurity, live in relatively restricted circumstances. Just what effect an increase in education (whether formal or informal) and in global understanding will have on this large segment remains to be seen. Sikh leaders will still make the running, but we must wait to see the direction in which they travel.

Endnote

1. N. Gerald Barrier, 'Controversy among North American Sikhs: implications of conflicting views of tradition and power for scholarly discourse', *International Journal of Punjab Studies* 6.2, July–December 1999, p. 224; See also Barrier, 'Authority, politics, and contemporary Sikhism: the Akal Takht, the SGPC, Rahit Maryada and the law', forthcoming in *Sikhism in the Light of History*, ed. Pashaura Singh and N. Gerald Barrier.

PART II

Translations of Proto-rahit Compositions, Rahit-namas, and Other Rahit Material



No translation of any portion of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* appears in this section. The oldest Gurmukhi version with a complete English translation will be found in W. H. McLeod (1987).

1. A Selection from the Vars of Bhai Gurdas

Vār 12

- All praise to those Gursikhs¹ who have beheld the presence of the Guru.
- All praise to those Gursikhs who, touching the Guru's feet, take their seats in his congregation.
- All praise to those Gursikhs who, receiving the Guru's teachings, speak [only] words of kindness.
- All praise to those Gursikhs who value a brother in the faith even higher than a son or a friend.
- All praise to those Gursikhs who love to serve the Guru.
- All praise to those Gursikhs who cross life's ocean, carrying others with them.
- Associate with such Gursikhs and evil deeds shall flee away. 1

- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who arise in the last watch of the night.²
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who at that ambrosial hour find water (*sarī*) and bathe.
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who with total devotion repeat the Guru's [sacred Name].
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who proceed to the sangat and join [it in worship].
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who daily sing or hear the Guru's Word.
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who join with others of like conviction.
- I humble myself before those Gursikhs who in pious devotion celebrate the anniversaries of the Gurus.
- By serving the Guru they reap the rewards and go on to further fulfilment. 2
- I bow to the one³ who, though he is strong, yet knows that [before the Guru] he is powerless.
- I bow to the one who, though exalted, yet regards himself as feeble.
- I bow to the one who, though he is wise, yet accounts himself as artless.
- I bow to the one who loves the Master's will.
- I bow to the one who treasures the path of the Guru's follower.
- I bow to the one who, regarding himself as a transient guest, is ever ready to depart [from this world].
- He it is whose plea is upheld, both in this world and in the hereafter. 3
- I humble myself before that person who, accepting the Guru's teaching, lives a humble life.
- I humble myself before that person who is not attracted by another's wife.⁴
- I humble myself before that person who does not lay hands on another's wealth.
- I humble myself before that person who, hearing evil spoken of another, turns away.
- I humble myself before that person who believes and practises the teachings of the Satiguru.
- I humble myself before that person who sleeps and eats but little.

Such is the Guru's disciple, ever absorbed in mystical union
(*sahajī*). 4

For such a person I would gladly be quartered,⁵ he who perceives that the Guru and God (*paramesar*) are one.

For such a person I would gladly be quartered, he who permits no access to a sense of distinction.⁶

For such a person I would gladly be quartered, he who when evil is inflicted on him yet construes it to be for the good.

For such a person I would gladly be quartered, he who never speaks ill of another.

For such a person I would gladly be quartered, he who for the good of others is prepared to allow himself to be cheated.

For such a person I would gladly be quartered, he who takes delight in deeds performed for others.

In the divine court the humble person receives honour,
He who believes the Word of the perfect Guru. 5

Vār 28

Waking during the last watch of the night, he practises the three-fold duty of meditation, giving, and bathing (*nām dān isanān*).

He speaks gently, walks modestly, and finds pleasure in giving;

Sleeping little, eating little, speaking little, as the Guru's teaching decrees.

He labours for his food and performs noble deeds, and though he may be admired he prefers this to remain unspoken.

Gathering with the fellowship of the devout (*sādh-saṅgati*) [he joins in their] singing, proceeding [to its meeting-place] every night and [every] day.

Delighting in the divine Word's enveloping presence, his mind is absorbed by the Satiguru's love.

In the midst of desires he remains [ever] detached. 15

Vār 32

Immersed in meditation, he is ever watchful for a glimpse of the divine, ever aware of the presence of the Word, [ever] wise.

Conscientiously he performs his three-fold duty (*nām dān isanān*), holding in perfect balance his mind, his speech, his actions.

A Sikh of the Guru speaks little, sleeps little, eats little. Scorning another's woman (*tan*) and another's wealth, he refuses to listen to slanderous tales.

The presence of the Guru he perceives equally in the Guru's divine Word and in the fellowship of the devout (*sādh-saṅgati*).

Piously he worships with mind wholly concentrated, all else expelled save [the Guru's] sweet will.

Powerful the Gurmukh [when facing the world], yet powerless [is he when confronting his Master]. 2

Vār 40

Arising at the ambrosial hour (*amrit vele*) the Gursikh bathes in the sacred pool.

Having chanted the Guru's divine words his thoughts then turn to the dharamsala.

Proceeding there he [joins] the fellowship and hears with love the Guru's sacred works (*gurabāṇī*).

All doubts are driven far away as [devotedly] he serves his fellow Gursikhs.

By honest labour he performs duty's calling, and from what it yields distributes food,

Giving it [first] to [other] Gursikhs and then feeding himself upon what remains.

Light has shone in the dark age of the Kaliyug, the Guru a disciple and the disciple a Guru.⁷

This is the highway which the Gurmukh travels! 11

2. Prashan-uttar Attributed to Nand Lal

Three texts have been used for this translation of *Prashan-uttar*. They are the versions given in the 1901 edition of Kahn Singh Nabha's *Gurumat Sudhākar* (*GSudh*); Ganda Singh's *Bhāi Nand Lāl Granthāvalī* (*BNLG*); and Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme* (*PSP*). The differences are not great.

Rahit-nāmā Bhāī Nand Lāl

He who abandons the knowledge of the Guru and follows a different way,
In neither world shall he ever find rest, wandering from one hell to another.
These are the people who fill Yam's abode, suffering always by day and by night.
Endlessly they continue the round of rebirth while again and again Yam consumes them.¹

The Guru speaks:

Chaupai

'Hear, my friend, the pattern of behaviour (*rahit*) which should be observed by a Gursikh. Arise with the dawn and with love subdue your mind. Repeat the sacred words 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāhi gurū*). Having bathed recite both *Japujī* and *Jāp*'. 1

'Come [mystically] into my presence; meditate with reverence and with love. When the third watch of the day² has passed listen to katha, still with your mind fixed lovingly on the Guru.' 2

'At sunset join in Rahrās. Hear both kirtan and katha, and join in praising God. The Sikh who regularly observes this discipline shall be brought to eternal joy.' 3

'He who practises this five-fold discipline³ shall ensure deliverance for all his descendants, even up to the twenty-first generation; and they who are thus delivered shall no more suffer the round of death and rebirth.' 4

Nand Lal speaks:

Dohā

'You say that we should behold your presence, O Master. Tell me where we are to find you.' 5

The Guru speaks:

Dohā

'Listen attentively, Nand [Lal]. I am manifested in three ways:

the formless or invisible (*nirgun*), the material or visible (*sargun*), and the divine Word (*gur-shabad*).⁴ This I shall explain to you. 6

Chaupai

'The first of these transcends all that is material. It is the *neti neti* of the Vedas, the spirit which dwells in every heart as light permeates the water held in a vessel.' 7

'The second is the sacred scripture. This you must accept as part of me, treating its letters as the hairs of my body. This truly is so.' 8

'Sikhs who wish to see the Guru will do so when they come to the Granth. He who is wise will bathe at dawn and then will walk thrice around [the sacred Granth]. 9

*Doharā*⁵

'Come with reverence and sit in my presence. Humbly bow and hear the words of the Guru Granth.

Chaupai

'Hear the Word with devout affection for the Guru. Hear the Guru's Word of wisdom and read it that others may also hear. The person who wishes to converse with me should read the Granth and reflect on what it says.' 10

'The person who wishes to hear my words should devoutly hear and reflect on the Granth. Acknowledge the Granth as my visible presence, rejecting the notion that it is other than me.' 11

'The third form is my Sikh, that Sikh who day and night is immersed in the words of sacred scripture (*gurabāñi*). The Sikh who loves and trusts the Word of the Guru is an ever-present manifestation of the Guru.' 12

'Such a Sikh is the one who hears the Guru's words of wisdom and reads them so that others may hear. Attentively he reads both *Japuji* and *Jāp*, visiting places sanctified by the Gurus (*guradavāran*) and strictly avoiding adulterous liaisons.' 13

'The Gursikh who is faithful in service will find himself cleansed from all sense of self-dependence. He who is scrupulous in

performing these obligations is the Sikh in whom I am made manifest.' 14

Doharā

'Worthy is the Sikh who serves with devotion, expressing his obedience to me in the generous offerings, which he makes.' 15

'Such is the service which I receive from a Gursikh. Hear me, Nand [Lal]. Giving himself he finds the deliverance which carries him to Paradise (*baikunṭhe*).' 16

Nand Lal speaks:

'You have told me of three forms, Master: the invisible, the visible, and the Guru's Word. The invisible form we cannot see, and the visible is the obedient Sikh.' 17

Chaupāī

'How can we comprehend the infinity of your invisible form? The universe is your form, you whom we call Master, and your presence mystically pervades every heart. [How then can we perceive you?]' 18

The Guru speaks:

'You are a devout Sikh, Nand Lal. Hear this divine message which I impart to you. See the Guru as a visible presence in his Sikhs and first you must serve me by diligently serving them.' 19

'Next you must serve me by singing the divine Word, accepting it as truly a sign. He who accepts the scripture as the [Guru's] Word shall come to an understanding of [his] infinite being.' 20

'And so I conclude this homily, Brother. He who reads or hears it and pays careful heed to it will find himself the object of much admiration, his spirit mystically blended in mine.' 21

This message of comfort and joy was delivered on the ninth day of the waxing moon in the month of Maghar, S. 1752 [4

December 1695 CE]. Let the Guru's praises be everywhere sung, declares Nand Lal.' 22

Doharā

'Remember the Guru by repeating 'Praise to the Guru', meditating on these sacred words. The Gursikh who truly has faith in his heart shall assuredly win deliverance.' 23

3. A Portion of Gur Sobha

The source for this translation is a portion of *Kavī Saināpati rachit Śrī Gur Sobhā*, Ganda Singh (1967b).

Śrī Gur Sobhā

Chapter 5

A Splendid Discourse

Doharā

While in Anandpur Guru Gobind Singh delivered this sermon,
There amongst mountains without number, by the bank of the
Satluj river. 1

The month of Chet had passed and countless people had
gathered for a splendid fair;

Baisakhi Day had come and the Satiguru had made a resolve.¹ 2

The sangat had come for darshan, from towns and cities afar;
There they received gracious darshan of him, from him the
Almighty Creator. 3

Gobind Singh was pleased [with them]; the sangat was overjoyed.

Then it was that he revealed the Khalsa, [the Khalsa] that would
answer every doubt. 4

The whole sangat was gathered, a multitude of them, there on
the banks of the Satluj.

So many had joined the Khalsa after news had reached them,
so many were impatient [to know more]. 5

'Abandon the masands; meditate on the one Lord': this was the
command, which was issued at that time.

The Satguru became one with his servants, like a fish which
lives in water... 6

Doharā

The Satiguru decided that the world should be redeemed.
Keep far away from all masands; thus the world shall be
pure. 15

Chhapai chhand

When the world is purified the word [of the Guru] will be
heard;
And when they hear that the Khalsa has appeared evil-doers will
take fright... 16

Chaupai

Few were they who had recognized the [Guru's] word;
They who received [his] compassion would [be the one's who
would] know.
The Guru gave this command to his Sikhs,
That in public the Sikhs should [proudly] stand out. 18
Do not consort with those who shave their heads (*sir guman*);
Avoid all dealings with the [despicable] Five.²
When weddings or deaths occur in their family
No Sikh will stand with them. 19

Doharā

He who weeps when someone dies will not be known as a Sikh.
This is the Creator's word which every sangat should
receive. 20

Chaupai

Scorn the hookah, sing God's praises;
The food you desire is the nectar of the Name.
Abandon the shaving of the head after death (*bhaddar*³),
brother.
Let all Sikhs hear this command. 21
If your mother and father should die,
Do not shave your head, even at that time.
[Do not worry, for] God (*gobind*) is our mother and father.

Worldly relations merely extend this falsehood. 22
 Make no mistake about this tonsure performance;
 Rather take hold of this preaching of the truth.
 The ceremony is false and is no part of our belief (*dharam*).
 This is the faith which a *sant* will maintain. 23

Doharā

Hear me, O sangat, this tonsure ceremony should never be
 performed; no razor should ever touch one's head.
 Though one's mother and father may die [and be gone] the
 Satguru will [always] give guidance (*hadīth*). 24

Chaupai

Keep your offering and tithes (*das-vandh*) in a charity-box at
 home;
 Abandon the masands.
 Your gift belongs to the Satguru,
 And should be offered in his presence. 25
 By such a custom we broadcast [knowledge of our] way of life
 (*rahat*),
 And pious folk, observing it, find happiness in their hearts.
 Within the congregation the faithful receive [the Guru's]
 darshan,
 And beholding [him] they are filled with joy. 26
 This [sight] has the power to obliterate [countless] births;
 Such [is the result of] a darshan of the Satguru.
 If an offender has darshan.
 A single glimpse will carry him across [the ocean of exist-
 ence]... 27

Kabitu

When the Satguru, the Almighty Creator, proclaimed that all
 [true] Sikhs, without exception, are my Khalsa,
 Those who accepted the command became his [Khalsa] Sikhs,
 whereas those who did not accept it remained as they were.
 All those who were Khalsa [Sikhs] separated themselves from
 the five false sangats, joining themselves in love to the

sangat that was true. Cultivating compassion and righteousness they abandoned all desire.

They did not smoke a hookah nor cut their hair or beards, and uttering 'Praise to the Guru' they became the Guru's Khalsa. 30

Doharā

Granting them darshan he then bade them farewell, leaving them the *mantra* of the only Lord.

Calling them [his] Khalsa he conferred on them a knowledge that was divine. 31

Arīl

The Almighty Creator issued this command,
That the Khalsa should [always] remain far from the masands.
If they obeyed they would find fulfilment,
Breaking free from the net of Yam through the nectar of the Name.

That which you purposed, O Lord, has surely come to pass. 32

Doharā

The Creator, the only Lord, bestowed [on the Khalsa] initiation by the two-edged sword.

Throughout all ten regions of the world there was none to equal the Khalsa. 33

Arīl

By administering the two-edged sword initiation he magnified the glory [of the Khalsa].

Powerful he made them as Singhs; this command he issued [to all].⁴

He who had the [appropriate] fate inscribed on his forehead gained [by obeying this command],

[Whereas] a blind and misled churl could never grasp its power.

Such people have no control on their lives, [their actions] predestined from the very beginning. 34

Dohirā

Do not keep company with the messengers [of Yam];⁵ let your
false imaginings be burnt [to cinders].
Your command, [O Guru,] is wholly true; they who accept it will
never end up in hell. 35

Arīl

On occasions of death and marriage have no dealings with
those who cut their hair.
Do not keep company with those who practise any of the five
[vices].⁶
Avoid deceit and immoral deeds, wrongful actions which can
consume [a person];
The glorious company of truth will save one from hell.
All that you command is true, [O Guru,] the truth that brings us
happiness. 36

Chapter 18

The Death [of Guru Gobind Singh]

Chaupāī

The previous day, seeking a reason,
The Singhs had put a question to him:
'What form will our Master assume [after his death].
Give us your reply and so enlighten us.' 40
The Guru then gave this answer:
'The Khalsa will be my form;
The Khalsa is my one desire.
[Transferring my authority to] the Khalsa I have blessed it with
[that] robe [which is my body].' 41

Dohirā

'The Khalsa is my form and I dwell in the Khalsa.
From the beginning of time, to all eternity, glory shines in the
Khalsa.' 42

Loṭan chhand

The Kḥalsa is chosen [and all its members have] hearts which
harbour no illusion.
Devoid of fantasy and all pretence, the Kḥalsa is our one true
Guru.
Beyond measuring is our Satguru, the Word like riches be-
stowed upon the poor.
Treasuring the spoken words of scripture (*bāṇī*), with spirits
stilled they meditate upon them in their hearts.
Boundless wisdom, immeasurably extended, none may describe
the Word.
Your light shines in every place, the refuge of all by sorrow
oppressed. 43

4. A Portion of the Dasam Granth

The Dasam Granth

The Dasam Granth opens with *Jāp*, a work which is attributed to Guru Gobind Singh and, which bears the imprimatur *sṛī mukh vāk pātashāhī 10*, 'from the mouth of the Tenth Master'. This imprimatur is rarely used in the Dasam Granth and it is generally believed that where it occurs the work is unquestionably by Guru Gobind Singh. There is little in the poem which answers the needs of grammatical form, most of it being a heaping up of divine features or qualities. The opening stanza of *Jāp* is as follows:

No visible sign, neither caste nor lineage; no colour to describe,
neither features nor attire. You are the Eternal One, self-
enlightened, and of infinite power. Immortal One above all
others, Emperor of all and Ruler of the three worlds; Eternal
Creator, supreme over all beings, demon, human, and divine;
your nature affirmed by the mantle of the forest, your infinity
proclaimed by every blade of grass. Who can recount your
names, Eternal One? Your deeds alone reveal you to the wise.
(DG 1)¹

In this way the poem continues through a total of 199 brief
stanzas, communicating a lengthy catalogue of descriptive
terms. The poem concludes:

Around us lies your dwelling-place, your joyous being suffusing all. Self-existent and supremely beautiful, you dwell as a Presence in all creation. Birth and death flee by your power, by compassion made manifest in all your being. You are one with all your people, reigning in glory for evermore. (DG 10)

Jāp is followed by *Akāl Ustat*, a sustained hymn of praise to *Akāl*, the Eternal One. This work lacks the full imprimatur, being prefaced only by the brief formula *pātashāhī 10*. Most Sikhs, however, accept it as the work of Guru Gobind Singh. One portion of the poem is particularly famous.

There is no difference between a temple and a mosque, nor between the prayers of a Hindu or a Muslim. Though differences seem to mark and distinguish, all men are in reality the same. Gods and demons, celestial beings, men called Muslims and others called Hindus—such differences are trivial, inconsequential, the outward results of locality and dress. With eyes the same, the ears and body, all possessing a common form—all are in fact a single creation, the elements of nature in a uniform blend. Allah is the same as the God of the Hindus, Puran and Qur'an are one and the same. All are the same, none is separate; a single form, a single creation. 16.86

As sparks fly upwards in their thousands from a fire, each separate and distinct, then reuniting with its source; or earth when pulverised to fine-ground dust ascends as a cloud of particles and then subsides again; as waves rise endlessly in the ocean's vastness, their water one with all around them; so from the natural world the living and inanimate emerge, and having thus appeared return to it again. 17.87 (DG 19–20).

The Dasam Granth then moves on to *Bachitar Nāṭak*, a poem traditionally believed to be Guru Gobind Singh's autobiography prior to the founding of the Khalsa. The contents of *Bachitar Nāṭak* certainly demonstrate close awareness with those events and the poem is headed by the full imprimatur *srī mukh vāk pātashāhī 10*. It is, however, impossible to believe that the Guru could ever have related his pre-birth experiences and an alternative suggestion that the poem was written by some person close to him must be accepted as proven (Hans 1988, 229–34). The following *chaupai*, where Guru Gobind Singh relates his

pre-birth experiences, must surely have been written imaginatively by a follower:

And now my own story I will tell, how from rigorous austerities I was summoned; called from the heights of Hem Kunt where the seven peaks so grandly pierce the sky.

Sapat Sring is the name they bear, the place where the Pandava king practised yogic rites. There I performed harsh austerities.¹

Through constant practice of these strict austerities my being had merged in the spirit divine. My parents too had followed this path, devoutly serving the ineffable Lord.

Such was the piety of the devotion they performed that the Lord was pleased [and heeded their cry]. Receiving thus the divine command I was born in this Age of Darkness.

Akal Purakh commanded, yet I was unwilling, for my mind was immersed in the bliss of contemplation. But Akal Purakh insisted, and speaking thus despatched me into this world. (DG 54-5)

Following *Bachitar Nāṭak* come the two poems about the goddess Chandi or Durga, the *Chandī Charitr*. In Sikh sources the goddess is usually called Devi, though not in these two works. Near the conclusion of the first *Chandī Charitr* occur the following verses.

Savaiyā

The consorts of the gods all praise Chandi and light the lamps for Arati worship.

Flowers, perfumes, and rice they bring, and choirs sing songs of victory.

They light the censers and sound the conch, and with bowed heads they say:

'Mother of the world, Giver of all comforts, all praise to you for you have slain Sumbh!'² 228

Chandi, blissfully happy that she had thus restored the kingdom, And with it the sun and moon in all their grandeur, then vanished from sight.

At that moment there was a brilliant flush of light in the sky, As if Chandi had washed clean with her radiance all the filth which had gathered there. 229

Kabitt

First, O Mighty Maiden, you slew Madhu and Kaitabh,³ and then
 you dispatched Mahikhasur.⁴
 Then there was the demon king Dhumarlochan, and Chand and
 Mund⁵ whom you cut in pieces.
 You are the one who by drinking his blood overcame Rakat-vij,⁶
 and then you fiercely fought with Sumbh.
 You are the one who slew Sumbh and all the demons, proclaim-
 ing your triumph everywhere. 230

Savaiyā

Strengthen me, Shiv, that I shrink not from righteous deeds;
 That freed from the fear of my enemies I should resolutely fight
 and win.
 The wisdom that I crave is the grace to sing your praises.
 When this life's allotted course has run may I meet my death in
 battle. 231⁷

The second *Chaṇḍī Charitr* is followed by *Vār Sṛī Bhagautī jī kī*.

1 Oaṅkār

*Hail the Guru's victory
 May Sṛī Bhagautī Jī assist us
 Vār Sṛī Bhagautī Jī⁸
 Pātashāhī 10⁹*

First remember Sri Bhagauti, then turn your thoughts to Guru
 Nanak;
 Angad Guru, Amar Das, each with Ram Das grant us aid.
 Arjan and Hargobind, think of them and Hari Rai.
 Dwell on Siri Hari Krishan, he whose sight dispels all pain.
 Think of Guru Tegh Bahadur; thus shall every treasure come.
 May they grant their gracious guidance, help and strength in
 every place. 1

Paurī

First you fashioned the sword that was double-edged; then you
 created the world.

Having brought Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiv into being you,
bestowed creation on them for playing out their roles.
The oceans, mountains, and level ground you created and set in
place the sky without any means of support.
Demons and gods you also created, setting them in conflict one
with the other.
And then you created Durga that she might destroy the demons.
From you Ram acquired the strength which enabled him to kill
the ten-headed Ravana with his arrows,
And so too did Krishan who, holding Kans¹⁰ by the hair, cast
him down.
Many the great sages and gods who have sought to understand
you, Yet none have fathomed your extent. 2
The Satiyuga passed, moving into the Tretayuga which could
achieve only half.¹¹
Disagreements gathered like clouds over every head because of
the influence of [the rishi] Narad.
To humble the pride of the gods you created Mahikhasur and
Sumbh,
Who were victorious over them and established their rule over
the three worlds.¹²
Great warriors they called themselves, raising royal canopies
over their heads.
Indra they cast out, who then looked longingly towards Mount
Kailash.
In dread of the demons he was smitten with fear,
And so he came to Durga. 3
One day, when Durga was going to bathe,
Indra, approaching her, told her of his unhappy plight.
'Demons have taken our land,
And their writ runs in all three worlds.
They have conquered Amaravati,
Causing all the gods to flee.
Since none can defeat this demon Mahikh[asur]
We have sought your protection.' 4
Hearing Indra's difficulties Durga laughed aloud.
She sent for the lion which devours demons,
Assuring the gods that they need not be worried.
The Great Mother, filled with wrath, would strike down these
demons. 5

Doharā

The powerful demons entered the field of battle, spoiling for a fight.
Swords and spears shone so brightly that the sun was blotted
out. 6

Paurī

The two armies faced each other, with beating drums and
conchs blown,
Demons armed with swords and clad in armour.
No thought of turning their backs occurred to the warriors
As loudly they shouted on the battle-field. 7
The command to begin the battle was given and the drums
thundered.
The demons advanced, their swords swinging and banners aloft.
The sound of the drums inspired the warriors,
And Durga and the demons clashed in battle.
Shafted by spears the warriors suffered like plums on a tree.
Some suffered death by blows of the sword while the injured
writhed in agony.
Those who had hidden in bushes were dragged out and killed,
as sand is separated from gold.
Blows with maces, tridents, spears and arrows were exchanged,
Biting like black cobras, and spelling the end for many a brave
warrior. 8

The fierce battle continues for another 12 stanzas, resulting in victory for Durga and death for Mahikhasur. Durga then departs. The victory, however, is not complete. Sumbh and Nishumbh, devotees of Shiv and warriors for Durga, now planned to invade the stronghold of Indra for whom the battle just ended had been fought. Battle again was joined, gods against demons, and this time the gods under Sumbh and Nishumbh were worsted. Durga once more came to the rescue and again the battle was resumed. Again Durga, armed with her two-edged sword, was successful. But the demons did not give up. Battle began once again and this time Durga slew Chand and Mund. These were old demon friends of Sumbh and Nishumbh who turned against Durga. This time a mighty battle followed, extending over 22 stanzas.

Both armies faced each other; mighty drums were beaten.
 Durga lunged with her fire-eating sword (*bhagantī*),
 So that it might drink Sumbh's blood.
 Sumbh fell from his horse,
 And when the sword was withdrawn it was drenched in blood,
 As when a princess in scarlet robes emerges from her
 palace. 53

The battle and the war conclude with stanza 55. Sumbh and Nishumbh have both been killed, the demon army flees in total disarray, and Indra is once again installed on his throne. The praises of Durga resound in all the fourteen regions of the earth.¹³

After this work comes *Giān Prabodh*, another poem attributed to Guru Gobind Singh; then follows the lengthy *Chaubīs Avatār*, the 24 incarnations of Vishnu; and so on until, after 1428 pages in the modern printed edition, the conclusion of the Dasam Granth is finally reached.

5. Tanakhah-nama Attributed to Nand Lal

Six texts have been consulted for this *Tanakhāh-nāmā*. One of them has been used to provide the structure of this translation. This is a modern text provided in Ganda Singh (1968), pp. 195–9 (*BNLC*). Verse numbers given after each couplet correspond to verse numbers in this edition. Three early texts have been used. They are MS 770 of the Guru Nanak Dev University Library, dated S. 1775 (1718–19 CE); MS 234 of the Languages Department, Punjab, in Patiala, dated S. 1882 (1824–5 CE); and Shamsheer Singh Ashok (1979). There are frequent differences between these early texts, and substantially more between the early and modern texts. The modern texts are represented by Kahn Singh Nabha (1901); Ganda Singh (1968); and Piara Singh Padam (1974). *GSudh* omits the following verses: 1, 15, 41–3, 45–6, 51–2, 54ff. Occasional differences appear within the modern texts, but they are not nearly as numerous nor as important as those separating the modern from the early. Only the more important variations are noted in footnotes.

*Tanakhāh-nāmā*¹

Questions asked by Bhai Nand Lal and responses given by Sri Guru Gobind Singh.

Doharā

Nand Lal [once] asked the Guru a question. 'Tell me,' he said, 'What deeds are approved [for a Sikh] and what are to be spurned?' 1

Doharā

'Listen to what I say, Nand Lal,' [replied the Guru]. 'These are the deeds required of a Sikh:
Let him perform only those, which are in accordance with the threefold rule of meditating on the divine Name, giving charity, and bathing (*nām dān isanān*).' 2

Chaupai

'Let him who does not regularly attend the satsang be regarded as a grievous offender (*tanakhāhadār*). 3
He who attends but lets his mind wander will find no peace in this world or the next. 4
He who talks while listening to the singing of the praises of God (*harī*) is bound for Yam's abode,² ' declares Gobind Singh. 5
'He who refuses to have a poor person sit beside him should be roundly condemned as an offender. 6
He who utters the divine Word without understanding gains nothing.³ 7
He who neglects to bow after completing a reading from the sacred scripture will find himself cut off from God (*jagadīsh*).' 8

Doharā

'If he who distributes [karah] prasad is greedy, [keeping a large portion for himself],
Or if he serves unequal portions, he will eternally regret his transgression.' 9

Chaupai

'Hear now the method to be followed when preparing karah [prasād], how the three ingredients are to be mixed in equal quantities. 10

The place where it is to be prepared must be swept and plastered,⁴ the cooking-vessel scoured and then washed clean. 11

Bathe yourself so that you come to the task unpolluted, uttering nothing save 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāhi gurū*). 12

Fill a new pitcher with water, confident that Gobind Singh will bless the undertaking. 13

When it is ready place it on a four-legged stool and sitting around it sing kirtan.' 14

Doharā

'He who accepts a Muslim (*turak*⁵) as his master or who touches iron with his foot,⁶

Says Gobind Singh, 'Hear me, [Nand] Lal,⁷ [such a person will transmigrate eternally], dying again and again.' 15

Chaupai

'He who never attends an assembly (*dīvān*), who distributes [karah] prasād without paying heed to the approved procedure (*rahit*), 16

Who clothes himself in red (*sūhā*)⁸ or who uses snuff (*nasavār*) will be desolated by Yam,' says Gobind Singh. 17

'If he looks with lustful eyes on women who enter the sangat, 18

If he, a Sikh, gives way to anger or fails to marry his daughter in the approved way,⁹ 19

If he should accept a price for his daughter's or sister's hand, then shall Yam torment him,' says Gobind Singh. 20

'The Sikh who goes unarmed will be doomed to endless transmigration. 21

His prayers and austerities will all be wasted if he forcibly deprives a wayfarer of his belongings.¹⁰ 22

The Sikh who goes unarmed, who forcibly deprives a wayfarer of his belongings, or who meeting a Muslim (*turak*)¹¹ salutes him, shall suffer as an offender in hell.' 22a

Sorathā

'Use a comb twice a day and retie your turban afresh each time
you remove it.'¹²

Clean your teeth every day, [Nand] Lal, and thus you shall not
suffer.' 23

Doharā

'He who does not give a tithe (*das-vandh*) to the Guru, and he
who utters lies,

The word of Gobind Singh, [Nand] Lal, is that you should never
put trust in him.' 24

Chaupai

'He who does not use cold water for bathing,
Who takes [karah] prasad without reciting *Japujī*, 25

Who lets the evening pass without joining in Rahiras,
Who retires at night without reciting Kirtan [Sohila], 26

Who disfigures his actions by slandering others—
Such a person was born for disgrace, his duty ever
neglected. 27

He who gives his word but fails to honour it,
Shall find no resting-place,' says Gobind Singh. 28

'He who eats meat prepared by Muslims (*turakan*),¹³
Who sings any songs other than those which the Guru has
composed, 29

Who delights in the songs which women sing,
Hear me, [Nand] Lal, to Yam's kingdom he will go.' 30

Doharā

'He who calls himself a sadhu should never be trusted if he
does not adhere to the Rahit.

To deceive people, [Nand] Lal, he keeps impressively silent.' 30a¹⁴

Chaupai

'He who begins any undertaking without Ardas, who eats without
setting aside a portion for the Guru, 31

Who consumes anything that is proscribed,¹⁵
 Who lies with any woman other than his own wife, 32
 Who gives nothing when he sees someone in need—
 Such a person will gain no honour [when he appears] before the
 divine Court. 33
 He who does not listen attentively to kirtan or katha,
 Who speaks ill of a pious Sikh, 34
 The slanderer, the gambler, the one who steals—
 Kal will bring them great suffering. 35
 Do not listen to anyone who defames the Guru;
 Take a sword and slay [him].¹⁶ 36

Doharā

'He who does not keep a charity box (*golak*) or who conducts
 trade deceitfully,
 'Hear me, Nand Lal,' declares Gobind [Singh], 'he shall suffer
 a thousand hells.' 37

Chaupai

'He who blows out a lamp [instead of extinguishing it with his
 fingers],
 Who extinguishes fire with water from which he has been
 drinking, 37a¹⁷
 Who eats without saying "Praise to the Guru",
 The Sikh who visits a prostitute, 38
 Or who shows affection for another's wife,
 Says Gobind Singh, 'I hold no affection for that Sikh. 39
 He who seduces the Guru's wife,¹⁸ he who is deceitful,
 Know him as a grievous offender [against the *Rahit*]. 40
 He who abandons the Guru and follows another,
 Who sleeps at night naked from the waist down, 41
 Who engages in intercourse while naked,
 Or who bathes while naked,¹⁹ [let him be regarded as a grievous
 offender].' 42

Doharā

'He who stretches himself out naked,²⁰ who eats bare-headed,
 Or who thus distributes *karah prasad*—treat any such person as
 a grievous offender.' 43

Chaupai

'He is a Khalsa who refrains from scurrilous talk;
 He is a Khalsa who in fighting never turns his back. 44
 He is a Khalsa who gives gifts as charity;
 He is a Khalsa who slays Muslims.²¹ 44a²²
 He is a Khalsa who triumphs over the five [evil impulses];²³
 He is a Khalsa who despises the rituals [of the Brahmins]. 45
 He is a Khalsa who abandons pride;
 He is a Khalsa who avoids another's woman.²⁴ 46
 He is a Khalsa who does not look covetously on another's wife
 or property;
 He is a Khalsa who repeats the divine Name. 47
 He is a Khalsa who loves the hymns of the Guru;
 He is a Khalsa who fights face to face.²⁵ 48

Doharā

'He [is a true Khalsa] who recognises that the creation is the
 Creator's and for this reason does not cause it harm.
 If anyone should cause harm to the creation, Nand Lal, the
 Creator is filled with wrath.' 49

Chaupai

'He is a Khalsa who supports the needy;
 He is a Khalsa who destroys the oppressor. 50
 He is a Khalsa who repeats the divine Name;
 He is a Khalsa who fights his enemy.²⁶ 51
 He is a Khalsa who is absorbed in the divine Name;
 He is a Khalsa who breaks free from that which binds him.²⁷ 52
 He is a Khalsa who knows how to ride a spirited steed;
 He is a Khalsa who is always fighting battles.²⁸ 53
 He is a Khalsa who carries weapons;
 He is a Khalsa who smites the Turks.²⁹ 54
 He is a Khalsa who upholds his dharam;
 He is a Khalsa who bears a canopy over his head!³⁰ 54a

Doharā

Akal [Purakh] cries, 'Let slander cease!

Everyone will flee away, down rivers or into mountains, but he
[who does not engage in slander] will cross over [the ocean
of the world and find there liberation from the torments of
human existence].’ 55

Chaupai

‘Hear this truth, Nand Lal.
I shall establish my rule. 56
I shall merge the four castes into one.
I shall have people repeat ‘Praise to the Guru’. 57
[My Sikhs shall] ride swift horses and fly like hawks.
Muslims (*turak*)³¹ once sighted shall be defeated. 58
One [Sikh] will confront a host of 125,000 (*savā lākh*),
[Spiritual] liberation awaits that Singh who fights [for
me]. 59
Banners shall wave, grand elephants [shall parade];
Music shall resound at every gate. 60
The mighty host (*savā lākh*) shall discharge their guns.
When they do the Khalsa shall arise and all enemies of the
truth shall be overthrown!’ 61

*Doharā*³²

The Khalsa shall rule, no traitor³³ shall survive.
All who endure privation shall be shielded by [the Guru’s]
protection.³⁴ 62
Here [ends] the manual of instruction (*nasihat nāmā*) which
issued from the mouth of the Tenth King.
*Vāh gurūji kā khālsā! Vāh gurūji kī fate[h]!*³⁵

6. Prahilad Rai Rahit-nama

This translation of the *Prahilād Rāi Rahit nāmā* follows the older text provided by Lala Maghi Ram Sant Ram (1922) and by Shamsher Singh Ashok (1979). These two occasionally diverge. There are rare instances where the PSP version uses words or spellings that seems more appropriate for particular words. On other occasions (also rare) PSP has words or spellings which seem plainly to be wrong.

Rahit-nāmā Bhāi Prahilād Rāi

A conversation between the Tenth Master [Guru Gobind Singh] and Bhai Dariai of the Udasi order.¹ The True Guru [spoke as follows].

Doharā

Sitting in Abchalnagar² the Guru, having reflected inwardly, spoke—he the True Guru and image of the Creator. 1

Hans Rai the Brahman was sent to summon Prahilad Rai.³

Calling him near the Guru embraced him. 2

'By the grace of Guru Nanak the Panth has been established here on earth. Now listen, Bhai Prahilad, while I instruct you in the Rahit to be observed by the Khalsa. 3

Chaupāi

If a Sikh wears a topi⁴ he shall seven times die as a leper. The Sikh who wears a sacred thread around his neck, who plays at dice, or enjoys a prostitute, 4

Shall be born as a dog a hundred thousand times, for the evil seed which he sows produces its evil fruit. And the Sikh who removes his turban while eating goes to the worst of hells. 5

Doharā

The Sikh who has dealings with [the following] shall at [his life's] end be [utterly] desolated: Minas, the followers of masands, those who cut their hair, and those who kill their daughters. 6

The shameful person who meditates on something other than the mantra 'Praise to the Guru', is definitely no Sikh. Such is the Guru's pronouncement. 7

He who does not obey my commands and refuses to help other Sikhs, shows himself to be a despicable creature (*malechh*). 8

Chaupāi

The Guru does not approve of the person who understands his

command but does not obey it, who deceitfully conceals the [contents of the Guru's] charity-box, [using them for his own purposes], or who misappropriates pious offerings which have been made to secure particular wishes. 9

Caught in the net of Maya,⁵ wandering in illusion through 84 lakhs of existence—hear me, wise Bhai Prahilad, and know [thus the fate of] such a despicable person. 10

He who has been a Khalsa of the Guru from birth but loves worldly things, that shameful hell-bound person produces only evil through them. 11

He who wears red clothing (*sūhe*) or inhales snuff (*nasavār*) up his nose⁶ will be beaten about the head and thrown into hell. 12

He who eats food without first reciting *Japujī* and *Jāp* is [worth as much as] a worm's excrement, and has wasted [the opportunity afforded by his human] birth. 13

Chaupai

Recognise him as a spurious Sikh who does not sing the Guru's songs early in the morning or eats food before participating in Rahiras. Treat all his actions as deceitful. 14

Through 85 lakhs of existences he will transmigrate, born in the world to die yet again. Punishment in the [divine] court awaits those who disobey the Guru. 15

Doharā

He who forsakes Akal Purakh and follows some other god shall wander through birth after birth, never finding a place of peace. 16

That miserable fellow, ever without the Guru, who worships a stone and fails to treat a Sikh with respect, shall be struck down by God (*sri jagadish*). 17

Anyone who claims to be equal to those whom I have established with my own hands will suffer,⁷ together with all his descendants. 18

*Doharā*⁸

[I am present within] the families of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad,

and Guru Amar Das [as well as that of the Sodhis].⁹ I am present within those commands (*hukam*) which I gave in written form. 18a

Those who see [an obedient] Sikh and chase him away will find that their works come to nothing, [whereas] those who show respect will earn liberation and adoration. The Lord [God] will banish [all belief in] other gods. 18b

Doharā

The Sikh who promises to make an offering and then hesitates will ever remain a miserable sinner, hideous to behold. 19

He who accepts food from a killer of daughters, a masand, or a Mina will waste [the opportunity afforded by] human birth. 20¹⁰

He who abandons the Sikhs and joins instead some other religious community (*panth*) will find only misery both in this world and the next, for such is the fate of those who betray the Guru and the Sikhs. 21

Chaupai

That shameful person who worships at cremation-grounds, tombs, or in temples containing idols, or who speaks highly of a religious community other [than the Khalsa], is no Sikh of the Guru. He will be caught and become a slave of Yam. 22

The Sikh who bows to someone wearing a topi¹¹ is certainly bound for hell. Serve only Akal Purakh, for thus a Sikh will carry all his descendants with him across [the Ocean of Existence]. 23

Doharā

Accept the Khalsa as Guru, as the Guru's visible body. The Sikh who wishes to find me should seek me in its midst.¹² 24

Have absolutely no faith in either a Kanphat yogi¹³ or in a Muslim (*turak*). The Sikh who shows no love [to the Guru] is bound for hell. 25

He who repeats something other than songs of the True Guru

will be struck down by the Creator¹⁴ and transported to a fearsome hell. 26

Chaupai

He who believes in the six darshans¹⁵ will go to hell with all his descendants. Apart from the Guru the service which a Sikh performs to any other gods is futile. 27

This is the visible figure of Akal Purakh, taking bodily form in the Khalsa. Not a particle of what I say is wrong, as Guru Nanak and Guru Angad bear witness.¹⁶ 28

Doharā

Have dealings [only] with the Khalsa; to honour the gods of others is a sham. To pay homage to these gods is like sand running through one's fingers. 29

The [Khalsa] Panth was founded at the command of Akal Purakh. Every Sikh is bidden to accept the Granth as Guru. 30

It has been delivered to the world and everyone must bow before it.¹⁷ Apart from the mantra 'Praise to the Guru' all singing is futile. 31

When one Sikh gives another amrit¹⁸ he imparts [blessing] equal to innumerable horse sacrifices (*asumedh*). He who sings the Guru's songs obtains something precious for his life's redemption. 32

I am greatly impressed by a Sikh who, as a devotional gesture, massages another Sikh. I am likewise impressed by the Sikh who, having prepared food, gives it to other Sikhs to eat. 33

Doharā

When it comes to the time of the Rahiras, the Guru's command is that you should recite it with love in your heart. He who with love uses his tongue shall find that [the Guru] appears in the words that he utters.¹⁹ 34

The Sikh who trusts in the promise of faith shall [assuredly] get his reward. The Guru's promise is the Guru's assurance. He [who trusts it] will secure all pleasures, liberation, and [just] desires. 35

He who lives according to the Rahit is my Sikh. He is my master; I am his disciple. Putting his trust in Akal Purakh he escapes the net of transmigration. 36

Sat Akāl Sṛī Vāhigurū: this shall be known as the basic mantra. Repeating [the divine Name] is wholly contained in repeating [this mantra, everything] from the beginning to the end.²⁰ 37

Sambat 1752 has arrived, that blessed occasion which falls on Sunday, the fifth day of the dark half of the month of Magh.²¹ 38

7. Sakhi Rahit ki Attributed to Nand Lal

Early copies of *Sākhī Rahit kī* are invariably found attached to manuscript copies of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. This translation is of the earliest of all such copies, MS. 6124 dated S. 1821 (1765 CE), which was destroyed during the Indian Army's assault on Darbar Sahib in 1984. The Gurmukhi text is reproduced in W. H. McLeod (1987), pp. 133–8. This is a slightly revised version of the translation that appears there on pp. 204–6.

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru

Sākhī Rahit kī

An account of how the Tenth Master [expounded] the Rahit

Bhai Nand Lal once asked [the Guru]: 'Master, what rituals and duties should a Sikh perform?' [1]

'He who is my Sikh should believe in none save the Khalsa,' answered Guru Gobind Singh. 'He should offer worship only in the presence of the divine Word, [the sacred scripture]. He should not visit tombs or cremation grounds, nor should he believe the teachings of Brahmans, Hindu teachers, Muslims, or mahants.¹ Believe [only] the teachings of the Guru. And he who is my Sikh should observe no religious ceremony other than [that which is authorised by] the divine Word. [He should specifically renounce the following ceremonies:] head-shaving rituals (*bhadaṇ usatrā*), reciting the Gayatri, making a water offering (*tarāpan*), worshipping an idol. He should never put on a dhoti, nor eat with head uncovered; and he should never sit before one of those

bare-headed Brahmans.² A Gursikh should avoid such [external] practices, [for the eternal] Guru is spirit. [2]

'He who is my Sikh should never use a razor. Any Sikh of mine who has used a razor and removed his beard is like one who commits incest with his daughter.' [3]

'[Take care never to provoke a sant.] Your objective may be legitimate, but [if you persist in asking you may try his patience and] provoke the kind of curse from him which turns even amrit into poison. [Sants possess divine power.] As Nanak Bedi has declared, the glory of a [true] sant is plainly manifest and [by the power of God] he achieves that which he wishes to perform. In obedience to the will of God (*paramesar*) he does whatever must be done.' [4]

The Guru declares: 'No Sikh of mine should smoke tobacco, nor should he use it as snuff (*nasavār*). Tobacco should be avoided with the same [loathing] as beef.' [5]

The Guru commands: 'My Sikhs must heed my words. He who is inattentive to what I say will not obey [my] commands, whereas he who faithfully heeds them shall find rich fulfilment.' [6]

'Wearing the sacred thread is a Hindu custom, [not a Khalsa one]. The emblem which has been conferred on the Khalsa will make a Sikh easily recognisable amidst a hundred thousand Hindus or a hundred thousand Muslims. How can he conceal himself when he wears a turban on his head and has a fine flowing beard and an [uncut] kes?' [7]

'To accept a sacred thread from a Brahman who smokes tobacco and eats meat would be a most grievous sin. What difference is there between smoking tobacco and eating beef? They are equally [heinous]. A Brahman,' says the Guru, 'should possess a noble character, not an unworthy one. [He should be] an upright person, not a rascal. This means that he should never commit evil deeds. These would plainly indicate that though he be a Brahman by birth he is a Chandal in terms of behaviour. What sort of Brahman is he who never reads the Vedas? He is no follower of the Guru. Never accept guidance from such a Brahman. Whoever gives gifts to a Brahman of this kind will be reborn as a dog, for his gift will have been grievously misdirected. It will be put to a corrupt use and the result will be ruinous [for the giver].' [8]

'Krishan once told Udhav that keeping an Ikadasi fast,³ feeding a hundred thousand Brahmans, and giving a hundred thousand cows [to a hundred thousand Brahmans] earn less merit than affectionately feeding a single fellow-disciple. The latter will earn four times the merit [of the former], for a brother in the faith is like the Guru [himself] in that service rendered to a fellow-believer is service to the Master. Guru Nanak has also spoken [about this], how the Guru [speaks through] the Sikh and the Sikh who spreads the message does so as the Guru.

'When the Guru speaks and the believer responds with faith, then shall it be seen that the Guru sets him free.⁴

'He who accepts [another Sikh as] as a brother in the faith shall thus grasp the opportunity afforded by human birth to secure release from the round of birth and death. [9]

'People, however, are like sheep. Where one sheep goes there the others follow. Most people do likewise. Evil men who perform religious ceremonies or have worship offered on their behalf achieve nothing but a worldly ritual. [Their piety is futile], for having made a religious offering they proclaim their deed for all to hear. If this is done the effect is nullified. Gursikhs, on the other hand, [follow the practice of] distributing and eating the Guru's [karah] prasad together. This they do after first reciting the Guru's *Anand*⁵ and offering Ardas, accepting it all as the gift of the Guru. [10]

'Ceremonies thus performed achieve complete fulfilment. Whether there be one or many each becomes an [effective] rite, the effects whereof reach our forbears⁶ and thus produce [their intended] benefit. People accept and encourage the practice of offering pious gifts because they are like sheep, [following where others lead]. Because they are like sheep they recoil in fear whenever they encounter any difficulty [and run to the Brahmans]. He who is my Sikh will never seek the services of a Brahman. The ceremonies ordained by my Panth were ordained by the Satiguru, by Akal Purakh. [11]

'If anyone encounters an obstacle [in any endeavour] he should serve [karah] prasad to five Sikhs. When these five Sikhs have eaten the prasad and recited Ardas his purposes will all be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. [12]

'He who obeys a brother in the faith obeys the Guru; and he who rejects one rejects the Guru. [13]

'All that the Guru says should be accepted as true. He who follows the Guru's teachings shall find rich fulfilment, whereas he who does not accept them will flounder helplessly (*gotā khāṇā*). [14]

'During the last watch of the night a Sikh should arise, bathe, and after cleaning his teeth should read both the *Japujī* and the *Jāp*. He who is unable to read should recite [from memory] two stanzas of both *Japujī* and the *Jāp*. When dawn breaks he should proceed to wherever a religious assembly (*divān*) is being held. There he should touch the ground with his forehead and [taking his place in the assembly] listen to [the singing of] the divine Word. He should then go about his daily business. At midday he should wash his feet and hands, and having done so he should recite both *Japujī* and *Jāp*. An hour before the close of day⁷ he should recite the *Sodar Raharūs*.⁸ Hold the divine Word in loving remembrance throughout the entire 24 hours of the day. Whoever observes this *Rahit* shall obtain bliss both in this life and in the hereafter. [15]

'On the occasion of a shraddh ceremony prepare the tastiest of food and having done so summon [the local members of] the Khalsa. Read *Anand*, recite *Ardas*, and feed the Sikhs [who have assembled at your invitation]. He who does this shall have his offering accepted, and the benefit will have been communicated to his forbears. [16]

'Idol worship, [Brahmanical] ritual, wearing the dhoti, and leaving the head bare are duties that were required during past yugas, [not during the present]. During the Kaliyuga the proper duty to observe is that which binds disciple to Guru. Each yuga has its own Veda. For the Kaliyuga it is the *Atharva Veda*. According to the *Atharva Veda* he who [lives in] the Kaliyuga and obeys the word of the Guru shall find rich fulfilment, whereas he who does not obey it will sink [in the Ocean of Existence]. [17]

'Freedom [from the cycle of death and rebirth] is not obtained by reading the Shastras, the Vedas, or the Purans. The ladder, which leads to freedom is the divine Name (*nām*). He who reads, hears, or repeats the divine Name shall be freed [from the transmigratory round of births and deaths]. Without the Guru there can be no release, though one search the Vedas and the Purans. Hear, O Khalsa,' Gobind Singh declares, 'In the Kaliyuga the divine Name is supreme. [18]

'Anyone who believes in the Brahmans consigns his family to hell. Abandon the Guru to serve Brahman masters⁹ and you shall find no resting place in the hereafter. The Guru has truly said, "He who reverences Brahman teachers or worships at cenotaphs (*maṛiā*) or cremation grounds shall be separated from me." [19]

'Perform all [approved] ceremonies [punctiliously], for there are many details to be observed if one is a Gurmukh. Accept whatever the Satiguru says as the supreme truth. If you do so you shall find rich fulfilment. He who refuses to believe it shall struggle helplessly. [20]

'If the Guru wishes, then evil turns to good and good to evil. As he wishes, so he acts. He acts as need dictates and [inexorably the intended result] follows. He who obeys the [Guru's] command shall find the door [to freedom], whereas he who rejects it shall continue to suffer the torment of rebirth. Glory abundant is [the reward of] obedience.' [21]

One day [Guru] Gobind Singh said, 'Trust nothing save the divine Word (*shabad*), for he who bestows his affection on anything other than the divine Word shall be cast into hell. Read the divine Word, hear the divine Word, earn the merit bestowed by the divine Word. Apart from the divine Word there is nowhere to go. Without the divine Word one suffers fearsome punishment.' The *bāṇī* is the Guru, the Guru the *bāṇī*, and amrit permeates all. When [the Guru] utters *bāṇī* and the believer responds with faith, then shall it be seen that the Guru bears him to freedom.¹⁰ [22]

Guru Gobind Singh has said that Sikhs should follow the path of renunciation while yet remaining householders. A Sikh should never trust a woman, nor should he seek to probe her inner thoughts. Do not cast lecherous eyes on the women of another man's family, for this is a very serious offence. Do not steal another's property. Do not be mean and miserly. [23]

There is medicine for all illnesses, but none for the slanderer. Because he has told lies the slanderer will be struck down in the Master's court. [When, after death, he must stand and give an account of his deeds] he will receive a [sorry] surprise, and when he cries [for mercy] none will listen. Everyone must die; no one lives forever. [Remember this and] do not turn away from the Guru. No one else has paid the deposit [on your posthumous travel] expenses so how can you cross [the Ocean of Existence]?

With the assistance which is available from the Court of God (*hari*) secure the deposit [which is gained by fulfilling the requirements] of your duty (*dharam*). The deposit [secured by discharging the obligations] of *dharam* is earned by service to those lacking food and clothing. [24]

He who puts the spirit of service into actual practice finds happiness in the present, and [in the hereafter] receives it at the divine Court. Learn how to serve both strangers and brothers. Never ask whether one is a Brahman or a Khatri, and accept him even though he be a yogi or a sanyasi. Do not accept them as guests [simply] because they wear orange robes and matted hair. [25]

Serve a brother in the Sikh faith as you would serve the Guru [himself] and treat him with the reverence [you would show the Guru]. Guru Gobind Singh Sodhi has decreed that the merit earned by feeding a brother in the faith is greater than that earned by feeding someone else. Serve him as generously as your wealth permits. The more you serve a brother in the faith the greater the merit you secure. [26]

Let all proclaim: 'Hail to the victory of the Guru!' (*bolo bhāi vāh gurūji kī fate[h] hai*) Hear me Sikhs, sons and brothers! Accept the word of the Satiguru as the truth and you shall encounter no obstacle in the divine Court. He who lodges the Satiguru's word in his heart (*manahu*) shall suffer no impediment when he appears in the divine Court, nor he who receives the Satiguru's greeting [when he makes his appearance therein]. [27]

The Guru has declared: 'He who is my Sikh will spurn [Brahmanical] ceremonies, [using] a razor, [reciting] the Gayatri, [making] water offerings, and [other such] hypocritical practices. A Sikh's affections should be directed to nothing save the divine Word of the Guru. To love anything else means consignment to hell.' [28]

8. Desā Singh Rahit-nama

Two texts have been used for this translation of the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā*: the versions given in the 1901 edition of Kahn Singh Nabha's *Gurumat Sudhākar* (*GSudh*) and Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme* (*PSP*). *Khālsā Rahit Prakāsh* of the Panch Khalsa Divan (*KRP*) has also been consulted.

Rahit-nama Bhai Desa Singh

I bow before [my Guru] Gobind Singh and then prostrate myself before him.¹ [Having done so] I narrate the pure Rahit of the Singhs, [the Rahit which] I requested the Guru [to deliver to us]. 1-2

In my heart I believed [that you would heed my request] and standing up faced the Guru, [he who was] resplendent in great glory. 3

Nand Lal then asked the question: 'Hear me, O blessed Master (*dev guradev*). Tell me the nature of the Sikhs' Rahit.' 4

[Guru] Gobind Singh answered: 'Hear me, [my] dauntless one, [as I relate] to you the Rahit of the Singhs in words simple yet serious. 5

Sorathā

'The first injunction of the Rahit, you understand, is to take initiation with the two-edged sword (*khaṇḍe kī pāhul*). The Singh who takes it will be superior to anyone who takes any other form of initiation. 6

'He should bow his head and receive initiation from the five Singhs who dispense it. Then he should hear the Rahit as it is delivered by the five [Singhs], and fix it firmly within his heart (*man*). 7

'Keep well away from those who slay their daughters or commit other such deeds. Every day show your love for the sacred hymns (*bāṇī*). [Keep clear of] tale-bearing, slander, and [casting covetous eyes on] the property of others. 8

'The first item in the Rahit is initiation (*pāhul*). This the Singh is instructed to take. Any other rahit is inferior. In future explain this [to the Singhs].² 9

'Every day utter "Praise to the Guru" (*vāh gurū*). Hold [this mantra] "*vāh gurū*" in your heart. If you happen to meet a Singh coming towards you [greet him], saying "Hail the Guru's victory" (*vāh gurū kī fateh*). 10

'Arise at daybreak and, having bathed, recite *Japujī* and *Jāp*. Give gifts as your resources permit, for thus you will be accounted a supremely wise Singh. 11

'He to whom the Guru has been gracious recognises [the importance of] the practice of the Name, almsgiving, and bathing

at dawn (*nām dān prāte isanānā*). Having had darshan [of the Granth Sahib] proceed to work and thus acquire money for household expenses. 12

'The Singh who donates a tenth of his income to the Guru shall be acclaimed by all. Regard another's daughter [as your own] and treat another's wife as your mother. 13

'He who sleeps [only] with his own woman is a Singh who is obedient to the Rahit. Lust, anger, pride, drunkenness, and covetousness are enemies which cause much grief to the *man*.³ 14

'He who resists these [practices] lives a [fulfilled] life. Sustain within your *man* compassion (*dayā*), obedience to your duty (*dharam*), and mortification (*tap*). Never be separated from your kachh or your kirpan. In a fight never turn your back or flee from the field of battle. 15

'[The Singh] protects cows and Brahmans, and smites Muslims (*turakan*) with immense vigour.⁴ A Singh obedient to the Rahit is one who refuses to bow when he meets a Muslim (*turak*). 16

'Anandpur is a place of supreme peace; Amritsar is splendid, appealing to the hearts of all. That which is in [Gurdwara] Harimandir in Patna is also in Abchalnagar⁵ in the south. 17

'Wherever there is any place associated with a Guru—east or north or west or whatever direction—[go] there and reverently walk around it (*parakaramā*). Make an offering as you are able. 18

'Recite Ardas and bow your head. Meditate within on the supreme Guru. Wherever you happen to find a Khalsa sitting greet him with "*Vāhi gurū kī fateh*". 19

'He who, whenever he meets [a Khalsa, greets] him with affection does not have to cross the Ocean of the World again.⁶ He will never be the servant of Muslims (*turakan*) and he will never greet (*salām*) one. 20

'He will never trust Muslims (*turakan*) and he will have no friendly dealings with any of them. He is the servant [only] of the Khalsa. They who meet such people find much happiness. 21

'Beholding these [Sikhs of the] Khalsa obliterates all evil. With happy hearts they know no dread. The Khalsa is the Guru

made manifest, from whose service one obtains great joy.' 22

Doharā

'If one is not able to obtain employment [with a Khalsa] one should seek some other service. One should practise a profession which does not involve any violation of the Rahit. 23

'Work in the fields, in trade, or in handicrafts—in anything, which gives you pleasure. Work hard and earn a living so that you are not tempted by stealing or highway robbery. 24

'Avoid prostitutes, poisonous substances (*bikhyā*), and gaming. Fish or flesh—he should never go after these things. If any Singh who is a renunciant comes to his house you should serve him in every way possible. 25

'Bathe his feet and give him food. Treat every person as if he were God (*han*). 26

Doharā

'Wherever a passage is being read from the Granth or when God (*han*) is being proclaimed (*kathā bakhān*), speak of nothing else. Let your attention be concentrated on hearing.' 27

Chaupāi

'Your father-in-law should always be from the same caste (*baran*) as you. Marry a girl from that caste (*kul*) and cherish her with love and affection. 28

'A Singh should show no affection to a Musalli woman,⁷ a Dum woman, a woman who procures other women (*dūtī*), a woman who follows some Hindu divinity or Muslim pir, a woman of loose character who wanders around alone,⁸ or any woman who belongs to a different caste (*varan*) [from his own]. 29

'If you show any of them affection you will do harm to your caste (*kul*). And he who is wise will avoid the following:

meat from an animal slain according to Muslim ritual (*kuṭṭhā*), the hookah, cannabis (*charas*), tobacco (*tamākū*), hemp (*gāñjā*), the tobacco bowl on a hookah,⁹ toddy, and other intoxicating things. 30

'He who never looks at them is a strict Singh who obeys the Rahit. He may take a small amount of opium or bhang which he can certainly consume. 31

'Apart from these he should not take other intoxicants, for that man will know [only] grief if he does. He is permitted to eat mutton when the goat has been killed with a single blow (*jhaṭkā*), but he should never look at any other meat. 32

'He who is a Khalsa obedient to the Rahit should never be without a weapon. [Beware of] those [ascetics such as] Sanyasis, Bairagis, Udasis, yogis, 33

'[Avoid] Shaivite mendicants (*jaṅgam*) or Tantrics (*bāmū*) and never eat the food which they have defiled. [Those who believe in any of] the six [Hindu] systems [of beliefs] may follow these beliefs, but do not accept [any of] them as Guru.¹⁰ 34

The supreme truth lies in following the Guru, from whom many virtues are obtained. All [the Gurus] are worthy of worship. Act with love and give [in their name]. 35

A Singh should learn the letters of the Gurmukhi alphabet from another Singh. If there is other knowledge to be obtained he should learn it from others [too]. 36

Doharā

'Arise at dawn and having bathed recite both *Jāp* and *Japujī*. [At the end of the day] recite the four portions of *Sodar*.¹¹ Do not be lazy about this. 37

'When the first watch of the night has passed recite the *Sohilā* order (*Kīrtan Sohilā*). Each day select some portion from the text of either Granth, [the Adi Granth or the Dasam Granth], and commit it to memory.¹² 38

'Celebrate as festivals the birthdays of all the Gurus, from the tenth back to the first.¹³ Prepare on these occasions some food and cooking it in an iron bowl (*kaṛāhi*) feed it to Khalsa Sikhs. 39

'Give as much as you can afford when offering Ardas. Never go

to worship with an empty hand. A Singh who is a raja should care for poor Singhs. 40

'[The raja should] show affection to the poor Khalsa. Give him money or a horse, for thus his attachment will become stronger. When he sees Singhs who are away from their home territory let him give them special treatment. 41

'He who bids farewell to someone, bestowing on him affection or money, will forever retain his goodwill. He who speaks sweet words earns the goodwill of all. Keep only Singhs as [your] servants. 42

'A Singh should always show affection to another Singh. Banish rancour from your heart. A Singh must never wield a weapon against another Singh. See him as the Guru. Fear the Khalsa.' 43

Doharā

'[Taking] another's woman, gambling, speaking untruth, theft, and consuming alcohol: these are five vices that the world produces. The sensible Singh will avoid them all. 44

'Intoxicating liquor may be taken before battle, but there should be no mention of it at other times. In battle the Singh should roar [like a lion]. Fighting them face to face he defeats the Muslims (*malechhan*). 45

'In battle let [the Khalsa] never be defeated. He should forget sleep, [remaining ever alert] to fight the Muslim (*turak*). Let him with determination do the deeds of a Kshatriya, crying "Kill! Kill!" [as he fights] in the battle. 46

'Fear not, for many are fearlessly fighting. Sustain the spirit [which declares]: "I shall kill the enemy!" Those [Khalsa] who die in the course of a battle shall certainly go to paradise. 47

'He who defeats the enemy in battle will find his glory resounding the whole world over. Stand firm, therefore, in the fiercest of conflicts. Never turn and flee from the field of battle. 48

'If anyone fears fighting in battles let him earn his sustenance by such activities as agriculture. May as many people as there are from the four castes (*varan*), absorb this understanding through preaching. 49

- 'He who makes people Singhs should never be proud of his achievement. Do not attach yourself wholly to your family. Continuously love and serve the Guru.¹⁴ 50
- 'Accept the destiny (*prārabadh*), which has been given to you. Stop yourself from [developing] a thirst for excessive wealth. Behold the pattern (*lālā*) which unfolds of its own accord....¹⁵ 51
- 'If one has great faith grace¹⁶ will follow. He who is fierce on the battlefield will be calm at home. Simple of speech, with an upright spirit (*man*) and sweet words, he will be seen to be devoted to the Guru.¹⁷ 52
- 'It is the grace of friendship to show eternal love. Never forsake the spirit of humility. Flee from him who is evil. 53
- 'There is no peace in the fellowship of evil people. Reflect on this within your heart. Lust, anger, covetousness, drunkenness, and pride: very sparingly will the wise person ever resort to these. 54
- 'Firmly uphold humility, true understanding, and duty (*dharam*). Never utter a frivolous word.' 55

Doharā

- 'With children he can be friendly and with young women he can have frequent conversations, but how can one be happy in the company of evil people? 56
- 'Faith in the Guru brings firm devotion. Such is the condition always of [a Sikh of] the Khalsa. Wealth, renown, and a peaceful rule will flourish, with a woman, sons, and knowledge gained. These things will come to him in abundance. 57
- 'Know these things to be the gift of the Guru; never become proud of them. [Say to yourself:] "Remaining ever obedient to the Guru, I can never claim anything as my own." 58
- '[What can you achieve] when you are feeble, brother? What is the use of putting rings (*mūnd*) in your ears if you lack strength? 59
- 'They who listen to slander of the Guru shall bring great blame on themselves. So says the Veda. Do not defame any of the panths [which are to be found] in the world. 60
- 'Every panth is the dwelling-place of God (*harī*), wherein abides

the Name of God. All these things—slander, misrepresentation, envy—are great calamities. 61

'Keep your mind well away from such things and do not dwell on them.¹⁸ A Muslim (*turak*) must not be acknowledged as master, nor are Muslims to be greeted with a salaam.¹⁹ 62

'Whenever [karah] prasad is prepared do not consume it without performing the ceremony of touching it with a knife (*karad*). He who distributes the [karah] prasad should ensure that it is dispensed in equal amounts.²⁰ 63

'Do not give [unequal shares], some less and some more. [Giving equal shares] is the way of the Singh who follows the Rahit. It is not lawful to take a bribe, nor is it right to lie about it.'²¹ 64

Doharā

'He who begins to eat food should ensure that his hands are purified [by washing them]. Do not eat alone. Give some to others also. 65

'Gather many Singhs and give them food. Earn glory by providing such a fine feast (*jag*). Whenever a Singh goes out to defecate he should carry a vessel filled with water. 66

'After [the function has been completed] splash on the water and rub with earth. Then he can put on his weapons. Early in the morning, he should scrupulously bathe and should don [his] comb, knife (*karad*) and turban. 67

'When there are four *gharīs*²² remaining in the day, perform the five acts of washing.²³ Then deck yourself [again] with comb, knife and turban. This [procedure will] appeal to the Singh who obeys the Rahit.²⁴ 68

'After a fortnight (*pākh*) wash your kes in whey. Dry your kes in sunshine (*dhūp*). This is the seal of the Guru's approval. 69

'Have your clothing washed after 20 days. Take food when you are hungry. This teaching the Guru has delivered [to you]. Do not pray without having your weapons with you. 70

'The Singh who obeys the Rahit will manage his wealth prudently. Thus he provides for the needs of his household. Never does he neglect worship (*pūjā*).²⁵ 71

'One should not expect any favour from a dharamsala without earning it. The Guru declares this to be a serious mistake

to make. If [the dharamsala attendant] who conducts worship is a Singh, he should never use much of the money, which is offered [in the dharamsala] for his own private purposes. 72

'In order to live he should take some [of it]. If there is a surplus he should devote it to various causes. If there is much he should use it to feed [visitors or the hungry]. Otherwise he should spend it on [the maintenance of] the gurdwara. 73

'These religious offerings (*brat*) should be applied to everyone's benefit. He should not keep them for his wife and children. If the pujari retains them for his own use a true sense of religious obligation (*dharam*) can never take root.²⁶ 74

'When tragedies occur then grief will be the result. When a person violates the Rahit and is insincere, taking initiation will [merely] earn him an adverse karma (*kukaram*). Do not mix with such people (*varatan*). Find peace by having no dealings with them.'²⁷ 75

Doharā

'There are many kinds of people in the Khalsa. How can I begin to describe them? One can recognise all Singhs by their obedience to the Rahit.' 76

Chaupai

Where there is a concourse of Singhs, where thousands of Singhs obedient to the Rahit gather, where there is a large gathering of Singhs, where all those Singhs observe the Rahit. 77

One should remain there for five years, serving [other] Singhs in many and various ways. One should be firm of mind (*man*) and ever devout. Thus one will achieve the fulness of the Rahit. 78

When [Akal Purakh] first fashioned the whole of creation, man with a body was made. Upon this body's head hair (*kes*) was provided, this body's [special] adornment. 79

The Lord (*prabhū*) made it with beard, with moustache, with hair on the head, sternly ordaining that it should be so. He who disobeys this command and shaves his head, how can he find God (*harī*) in this world? 80

A man without his kes is like a bird without wings, like a sheep without its wool, like a woman without clothing. 81

When a man retains his kes he appears in his full stature.

Keeping a kes he observes the Rahit and his glory is beyond all describing. 82

Without the Veda a twice-born (*dij*) knows no joy. Children will not like their mother if she is not gentle. What use is a horse if it is not swift? Without the Rahit, the kes is rendered impure. 83

It is futile to wash a donkey or drape on its forehead garlands of flowers. Nothing is thereby added to its elegance. Everyone sees it as fit only to be mocked. 84

How can someone who flouts the Rahit attain an attractive reputation merely by maintaining a kes? [Observing] the Rahit is the greatest ornament which one can show for the kes. Without [observing] the Rahit, hair on the head brings only grief. 85

If there is any Singh in this world who observes the Rahit the Guru's people will follow his example. He who lives according to the Rahit is my Sikh. He is my leader (*thākuru*); I am his disciple.²⁸ 86

If one follows the Rahit that disease [which is separation from God] progressively diminishes.²⁹ The Rahit is the religious duty (*dharam*) of the Singh. Without the Rahit there can be no access to truth. Without the Rahit none can be accounted virtuous. 87

Devoid of the Rahit none can be regarded as a Singh. Without the Rahit one suffers punishment at the divine court. Without the Rahit one wanders lost in this world. Without the Rahit a man goes to hell. 88

'Without the Rahit one is treated as a *tanakhāhūā*. Without the Rahit one is regarded as a thorough demon (*bhūt*). Without the Rahit one knows no happiness. Therefore hold fast to the Rahit.' 89

The method [of holding] a langar

Sorathā

'Tell me briefly what is that religious duty (*dharam*) [which is] the Rahit, Nand Lal, and then describe the [correct] method of [administering] a langar.' 90

- Nand Lal replied: 'Listen how a langar is conducted, brother. Listen and I shall tell you. First purify the ground. Have [all] filth and refuse cast away. 91
- Next mark out a cooking-square, raising boundaries on all four sides. Place [in it] a vessel (*gāgar*) filled with water and also procure a water-pot (*kumbh*) that is new. 92
- Scour all the vessels and then begin preparing the langar. Use dry wood. Strike a flint and start a good fire. 93
- [In the vicinity of your cooking-square beware of] shoes, a leather bucket, a water-carrier's leather bag, a cat, a dog, a Muslim,³⁰ a crow, and a Chandal. Try to keep well away anything filthy or ill-omened which approaches. 94
- Bring ghi, some sweet item, and uncooked food. Mix them in the cooking-pot [together with such things as] pumpkin and turnip, lentils (*mūṅgī*), pulse (*moṭh*), other produce, black grain (*uradī*), and pounded pulse (*baṛī*). 95
- Use in the langar such items as spinach and mustard greens (*sāg*) as may be available. [Take] sweet peppers, such as the heart desires. Add more salt according to taste. 96
- Curds, milk, rice, and pickles—prepare everything [for eating]. If the langar stores can supply a full maund of grain add to it two and a quarter seers of ghi. 97
- If there is more so much the better. Take into consideration whether it is dry [or moist]. Do it to the best of your ability and do not worry. 98
- This is the Guru's glorious [langar where the] *deg*³¹ rules supreme. [Do the work] with love and its benefits will increase. If he is a wise Singh, observant of the Rahit, he will know every way of [preparing] food [for a langar]. 99
- The compassionate one who has learnt this method will understand the langar procedure completely. [As you distribute the food] let not your mind dwell on wicked thoughts. Favour everyone with an equal share. 100
- He who is supremely kind bears no desire in his heart (*man*). He has no desire for the love of sons and wife. Always he rises at dawn and bathes. 101
- He who has taken birth in a good family (*utam kul*) will never consume alcoholic liquor or meat.³² He will keep his cooking arrangements unpolluted and will not permit others [who cause pollution] to enter [his cooking-square]. 102

Do not permit barbers (*nāī*) and Jhivars³³—those who shave heads—weavers (*korī*), potters (*kunabi*), [those tribals] who are called Gonds,³⁴ and others of low caste to participate [in your langar].³⁵ 103

Those of the Brahman caste (*barāṇ*), those who perform the six deeds [of Brahmans],³⁶ a person from a good family, and he who does not go near bhang or tobacco can all prepare food [in the langar]. 104

Do not slay a goat in [the langar], not even by the *jhaṭhā* method; and do not permit other meat in the langar. If you want [meat] have [the animal] killed well away [from the langar] and distribute it there [where it is killed]. 105

Everyone can share food in the langar—Brahmans, Khattris, and all lovers [of the truth]. But listen to this teaching: never cook meat in the langar. 106

If a Singh is obedient to the Rahit he forsakes greed. Acknowledge him as one in the form of the Guru. Never consume alcoholic liquor or eat meat.³⁷ 107

He who has been born into a good family should share the contents of his langar. When the langar is ready say Ardas and make an offering. 108

Doharā

First perform the ceremony of marking [karah] prasad with a knife.³⁸ Obtain pure [well-washed] vessels. Use only those, which have already been used in a langar.' 109

Chaupai

When food is ready think within of the form of the Guru. If the Guru Granth is present prayer should be offered in its presence. 110

Next summon [members of] the Khalsa and in the langar seat them in lines. With kindness give to each his share, never holding any doubt in your heart (*man*). 111

He who discriminates [among the people sitting] in the line will suffer great distress, as the ancient scriptures (*bed*) say.³⁹ One should distribute [the langar] equally where low and high [caste] eat the same [food]. 112

Sit on the purified ground [of the langar] to receive the food.
Never eat it sitting on a bed (*khaṭīā*). After the meal is over
Shudras and traditional servants can sit on beds for their
[share of the] meal. 113

Singhs should not act in this way [like these low-caste people,
for it is contrary to their] religious principles. Pure or
impure [such a person] is helpless. If any other person
comes seeking food, whether man or woman, give provisions
from your langar. 114

Let him have [items prepared from] grain. Do not let anyone
depart unfed. Making use of his langar in this way [a Singh]
will gain the same result as giving a *yagya*. 115

Nand Lal [said]: Listen, brother, I have told you something
about langar ritual. Apply it rigorously. I say [to you], accept
it as [an essential part of] the eternal Rahit. 116

When a prince [who is] a Singh prepares a large amount of
food for his poor subjects he should always follow this
ritual. His wisdom as a Singh will [thus] shine
brightly. 117

Sorathā

'Listen, I respectfully ask you Nand Lal, tell us how to conduct
a langar, one that earns great acclaim by being run in this
[particular] way.'⁴⁰ 118

Chaupai

'In explaining the method of administering a langar, I have not
said anything about karah [prasad].'⁴¹ Having recited *Japujī*
and *Jāp*, select [the three items required for making it]
and prepare [the karah prasad] by boiling them
[together]. 119

'Something sweet, ghi, and flour from wheat—mix these three in
equal parts. [In this manner the karah prasad is] pre-
pared. 120

Doharā

'This splendid Rahit, which I have described, is worthy of the
highest praise. That which is opposed to it must be under-
stood as a *kurahit*.'⁴² 121

This is what Guru Gobind Singh propounded. With rapt attention
Nand Lal heard him, bowing his head again and
again. 122

Supremely pure is this Rahit, deserving the highest praise,
which for the benefit of all Gobind Singh proclaimed. Nand
Lal cherished it within his heart (*man*), every doubt driven
far away. 123

[Desa Singh's] own story

I bow my head before relating this auspicious tale. Listen with
belief in your heart, for I tell only what is true. 124

I am the disciple of Gobind Singh. Desa Singh is my name. In
Amritsar stands a bunga⁴³ known by the name
Moralivala. 125

In it resided Jassa Singh Kirpal,⁴⁴ dwelling there in peace for a
lengthy period. I too spent time there, growing old as the
years passed. 126

I then travelled to Patna and beheld (*darashan pāe*)
Harimandir.⁴⁵ For twenty days I remained there, enthralled
by the delectable food prepared in the langar (*amrit prasād*
deg). 127

Onwards I travelled and beheld other rewarding places.

Doharā

One day when I was proceeding on my way I felt tired. I spread
out my blanket and peacefully dropped off to sleep. 128

When I fell asleep on my blanket Gobind Singh came to me in
a dream. In the dream he appeared in a splendid form, and
seeing him my heart was filled with love. 129

With arm stretched forth, his body beautiful, [he stood before
me] in wondrous radiance of surpassing glory. His shoulder
[bore] a bow, and with quiver [fastened] elegantly to his
waist he [stood forth] as beauty incomparable. 130

On his wrist (*kar*) a falcon, on his back a shield, fair of com-
plexion and with a wondrous radiance spread around, in
yellow garments and mounted on a horse, by his presence
(*tan*) he shone forth in splendour. 131

On his brow [he wore] a plume, at his waist a sword most rare,

Gobind Singh, the King of kings, a figure so splendidly beautiful which draws the hearts of all. Accompanying him were five Singhs, brimming with joy. 132

Thus he appeared to me in a dream and spoke to me directly: Hear me, [my] Singh, for this is my message [to you]. First I delivered *Jāp*. 133

Then came *Akāl Ustati* a work which is the equal of the *Veda*.

Next I composed *Bachitar Nāṭak*, the reciting of which gives joy to those of the Sodhi lineage.⁴⁶ 134

I then wrote the two [works entitled] *Chaṇḍī Charitr*, inwardly pleasing to every heart (*man*). [Next] I inscribed the wisdom of *Gyān Prabodh*, that glorious text, which holds forth the word of God (*harī*). 135

Then [I told] the story of the *Chaubīs Avatār*,⁴⁷ relating it so everyone might understand. I named the gurus of Dattatreya⁴⁸ and then composed the *Pakhayān Charitr*.⁴⁹ 136

I explained a whole volume of these [works] so that even a fool will acquire wisdom when he reads them. Having composed the blissful *Shabad Hazāre*, I narrated the account of all the kings [in *Pakhayān Charitr*]. 137

And so out of love I uttered these works, and although I had not included the *Rahit* my compositions were at an end. I had delivered 400 *charitr*⁵⁰ in which I revealed the wiles of women. 138

I showed their fraudulent methods and recorded it all in the [Dasam] Granth. Then I propounded the *Rahit* of the Khalsa, the *Rahit* without which [you remain] untutored. 139

I promulgated the *Rahit* for [my] Singhs, but I have not included it in my Granth. This is my command. [Inscribe it] on your heart. I have promulgated the *Rahit*. Now you record it.' 140

When the Guru thus had spoken I answered him as follows:

'Merciful One (*dīn dayāl*), hear me my Lord. You, the supremely gracious One, know the inmost thoughts [of all]. 141

'I am supremely foolish and ignorant. How can I record the sacred *Rahit*? I do not know a single letter [of the alphabet]. In truth, I can write nothing on blank paper.' 142

When he had heard what I had to say Gobind Singh once more spoke. 143

‘Remain silent. I shall do the dictating. Tomorrow you shall do it and you shall write with my authority.’ 144

Having said this the Guru departed and [then, the dream over,] my eyes opened. There was neither the Guru on his horse, nor a learned Singh. 145

Struck with wonder I arose and searched in every direction. 149

The rahit-nama written by Desa Singh concludes.

9. Daya Singh Rahit-nama

This translation of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* relies largely on the text provided by Piara Singh Padam in *Rahit-nāme* (PSP). The brief portion contained in the 1901 edition of Kahn Singh Nabha’s *Gurumat Sudhākar* (GSudh) has also been used. Shamsher Singh Ashok (1979) has been consulted for the attachments at the end of the rahit-nama. Almost all of the *Rahit-nāmā Bhāi Dayā Singh* is in prose and is not divided into convenient units. For ease of reference, the translation given below has been arbitrarily divided into such units.

Rahit-nāmā Bhāi Dayā Singh

[On one occasion, when] the Tenth Master [Guru Gobind Singh] was sitting [in his place] in Anandpur, Daya Singh put the following question to him. ‘Maharaj ji, deliver [to your Sikhs] the rahit-nama, that hearing it we may be liberated [from the round of birth and death].’ [1]

[The Guru] answered: ‘When the Goddess¹ appeared and the Panj Piare were standing attentively, all [the host of] gods appeared. The Goddess (*sakati*) pronounced Guru Nanak’s mantra “*I of ñkār*] *satināmu*” and Mohan performed the “*vāhi gurū*” spell. Varuna gave the water of immortality in order to steady the mind, Indra bestowed confectionery to make sweet the intelligence, and Yamaraj the iron vessel for preparing the *amrit* [of initiation]. Kal gave the steel knife (*sarab loh kī karad*) for [fighting in] battles, Chandi presented the *kes* and Hanuman

the soldierly *kachh*, [Guru Nanak] delivered the message of liberation which is the *Japūjī* (AG 1–8), Guru Amar Das gave the *Anand* (*Rāmakaḷī Anand*, AG 917–22) for peace of heart, and I myself (*srī mukh*) communicated the *chaupai* [and] *savaiye* for [calming the] minds [of my followers and of nerving them for] battle.² [2]

[The gods] gave four³ things to the Sikhs [who received] *khaṇḍe kī pāhul*. Vishnu gave sugar, Mahadev provided pure flour, and Brahma bestowed ghi. From these three constituents *karah* *prasad* is made. If any of these three ingredients is under weight the Guru will not accept [the *karah* *prasad*]. When *amrit* is administered do not serve [*karah*] *prasad* made with coarse sugar (*gur*). [Use only the refined variety.] In this way all the gods gave something [for administering the rite of *amrit* *saṁskār*]. [3]

[If any member of] the four castes takes *amrit* [that person] will achieve spiritual liberation, and likewise those whose status is lowly.⁴ Wherever the Khalsa (*sarabat khālsā*) is gathered keep there in their midst the Granth Sahib. Let five Singhs assemble and instruct the candidate for initiation. [He should] first put on a *kachh*, have his *kes* tied in a topknot, and wear a turban, baldric and sword (*srī sāhib*). [He should then] stand with palms together. [4]

Place a vessel for *karah* [*prasad*] before him. The leading Singh should pour *amrit* [taken from the pool] of Amritsar into an iron bowl. First he should recite the entire *Japūjī* from beginning to end, the *Jāp* from beginning to end, the *chaupai*, two lots of five *savaiye* individually. [The opening words of some of the *savaiyas* are:] 1. *srāvag*, 2. *dīnan kī prutiṭpāl*, 3. *pāp sambūh bināsan*, 4. *salī sadaiv sadā brat*. [Then follow] five verses (*paurī*) of *Anand* [*Sāhib*]. [5]

[Meanwhile] the *amrit* is being stirred with a knife (*karad*), [the *amrit*] being drawn towards [the stirrer with each stroke]. Then one Singh, with the permission of all [gathered there], should take the bowl (*kaṭorā*) [in his hands] and have [the initiate] drink from it, placing the knife in [the initiate's] turban. The initiate should place his right hand on his left [with the palm upward] and drink [the *amrit*]. He should utter: 'Vāh gurū jī kā khālsā! Vāh gurū jī kī fatih.' In this way he should drink five handfuls [of *amrit*], and he should utter the *fatih* [salutation]

as [the *amrit*] is cast into his eyes. It is [then] sprinkled on his kes. [6]

[Next] he should be instructed in the Rahit of the Gur-mantra of Sati-nam⁵ and given a [new] name [from the Granth Sahib. The initiate then donates] a rupee and a quarter and says Ardas. At that time all should take *karah prasad* [from the same vessel], and then afterwards take it separately from their own individual containers. [Finally] those who have administered the *amrit* ceremony should worship (*kari pūje*) the equipment and weapons of the Guru. [7]

[In this manner the Guru], the incarnation of Akal Purakh, has revealed the Khalsa. The names of the five sons of Singhs⁶ who are [known as] the Truly Liberated (*mahān mukate*) are the following: Ram Singh, Fatih Singh, Deva Singh, Tahil Singh, [and] Ishar Singh. These are the five Singhs who perform the *amrit* initiation, for they have been appointed by the Guru to administer it. [8]

The servants of the Guru who perform *amrit* initiation [should possess the following qualities]: 1. [They should be] imbued with the noble quality of truth, as was Shukdev. 2. [They should] demonstrate that *tamas* is predominant in their personalities (*tamagunī*), as with Durbasa.⁷ 3. [They should be] hard-working⁸ and skilled in political activity like Krishan. 4. [They should] resist greed, as did Vasisht. 5. [They should forsake] pride like Vishvamitra. 6. [They should] follow ritual prescriptions punctiliously, as did Beas. 7. [They should] remain ever in a state of deep meditation, like Kapil. 8. [They should be] dependent on the generosity of others.⁹ 9. [They should] put their trust in Hindu rituals, like Jaimini. 10. [And they should be as alert as] the shesh, like Patanjali.¹⁰ [9]

According to the Rahit [loyal Singhs] should have no dealings with the following: 1. Followers of masands. 2. Dhir-malias. 3. Ram-raiyas. 4. Those who have undergone the tonsure ceremony (*sir munḍat*). This is the Singh's duty: to repeat the Word (*shabad*), to learn how to wield weapons, to enshrine [the mantra] '*vāh gurū*' in his heart, repeating it with every breath in and every breath out, thereby fixing it within his inner being (*man*). [10]

Do not lie. Keep away from another's woman. Avoid anger, pride, greed, slander, violence, and falsehood. Do no wrong, keeping your eyes firmly on the end [of life]. Inflict no pain.

Speak agreeably. Keep your heart pure. Free yourself from both happiness and sadness.¹¹ [11]

Perform your duty both to your faith (*dharam*) and to your occupation (*kirat*). Do not worship at the cenotaph (*Marhi*) of some other panth or [religious] way. [Pay no heed to any Hindu] temple, religious vow, place of pilgrimage, goddess, god, fasting, [Hindu] worship, devotion to an image, mantra, a [Muslim] pir, or a Brahman. Do not make libations to the gods, [repeat] the Gayatri, nor [offer] evening prayers of whatever kind.¹² [12]

Akal [Purakh] is joined to the Khalsa in faith.¹³ He is a Khalsa who has totally surrendered himself to Guru Akal Purakh.¹⁴ [13]

Never wear a sacred thread nor hold a shraddh. For every [important] deed recite Ardas according to the Guru's tradition. Keep your mind focussed on the Guru, share [with others] when eating, and be helpful to all. The Guru will be content if you give a tenth part of what you receive [for his work]. Obey [his] commands and do not be arrogant. Let the Singh ever be chanting the sacred words. If when going to the gurdwara he preserves his purity, [thinking no lustful thoughts,] all his wishes will be fulfilled. If he says Ardas inwardly all that he does will be approved. [14]

Do not go where the Guru is no longer remembered. Neither consume too much grain nor wholly abstain from it. Do not sleep too much, neither speak excessively. By worshipping the Granth you worship God (*parameshar*).¹⁵ Make the Guru glad by performing your duty (*dharam*). Sikhs serve; the Guru gives. [15]

There are five deeds which are not to be performed if you aspire to spiritual liberation (*mukat*). They are embezzlement, [taking] another's woman, slander, gambling, [and] drinking alcohol. [16]

Do not enter a sangat empty-handed, [having nothing to offer]. Hear kirtan and participate in singing it. Give to the poor. If anyone's [daughter] has not become engaged [to marry] diligently seek out someone [suitable] for her and perform [the marriage]. If [the person chosen] is not a Sikh have him become one so that [the married couple] should not feel sadness nor cause trouble to others. [17]

A Sikh is known by [his faith in] the divine Word. He should be recognised by [his devotion to] the Rahit which he inwardly

observes. Let him drink the *amrit* of the divine Name [and] put on the kachh of restraint. Let his shout of victory (*fate[h]*) be for triumph over his own wayward self. [18]

Put on the Guru's sacred words (*bāṇī*) as your weapons and firmness of intellect as your kes. The kes merits great respect, the noblest of all features.¹⁶ Where water falls from the kes the body [on which it descends] is assuredly rendered pure. [Likewise,] when the water from Singhs' foot-washing is poured out [on a corpse Yam] backs away [from such a deceased person, and that person] finally obtains spiritual liberation (*ant ko gatī*). [19]

The top-knot should be kept in the centre of the head and the turban neatly tied. The kes should [always] be covered. Twice a day hair should be combed and [then] the turban should be gathered in folds and tied. [20]

The kachh should be made from 2½ to 5 *gaz* [of cloth]. Every fourth day wash the kes. For changing his kachhihra (the kachh) he should have a length of cloth measuring 2½ *gaz*. [21]

Any member of the four castes can take *amrit* initiation. This is the real nature of my belief (*dharam*) that, whereas it is [as exalted] as [Mount] Sumeru, any other is as [insignificant] as a tiny seed. The world is [like] an ocean and the Guru carries [his followers] across. [22]

Carry a steel knife (*lohe kī karad*) [in your turban] on your head. Wear clothes which are coloured [in one of the following hues]: 1. [dark grey like] collyrium; 2. white; 3. yellow; 4. green.¹⁷ Do not wear clothing which is coloured red.¹⁸ [23]

In accordance with the hukam-nama¹⁹ offer a gift [in the gurdwara], placing it in the poor-box. Do not use either snuff or tobacco. Wash [your hair] in whey, milk, [and] ghi, drying it in the sun and decorating it with flowers. Protect it from dust. Then tie your turban and take food. He who bathes naked will suffer in the hell of Kumbhi. Do not apply oil to your kes. [24]

Wear a close-fitting garment, which fastens with tapes (*kūdarā taṇī vāla*).²⁰ Do not take food or water from the hands of a Kanphat yogi. If you shout '*Fate[h]*' first you will get twenty times the value of what you wanted. If you shout it afterwards, you will receive only ten times the value. [25]

The son whose father has him initiated will gain [the benefits of that action]. If, however, the father, [having been initiated] is a Singh and [yet] does not have his son initiated, he will get nothing in the world to come. [26]

He who calls a Singh by only half of his name²¹ is a serious offender [against the Rahit] (*tanakhāhīā*). Do not touch the feet of anyone who is not one of the Guru's Khalsa Sikhs. Think of every Singh as a brother and an equal. Wash the hair [of others] and clothe them. Certainly touch the feet of Singhs. [27]

Let clothing touch the Granth and then wear it. If outwardly a man is a Sikh yet evil lurks within he will go to hell. He who kills his daughter or marries her to a person who cuts his hair (*monā*) will go to hell. [28]

[Any Khalsa who] eats food [prepared for] a Kanduri festival,²² [who makes a votive offering of sweets to a Muslim] holy man, [or who manufactures] highly intoxicating liquor from sugar will go to hell. He who having been initiated by *khanḍe kā amrit* bows to a Muslim (*turak*) is a despicable creature (*malechh kā bīraj*²³). [29]

He is an offender [against the Rahit] (*tanakhāhīā*) who wears a sacred thread round his neck, feeds a clean-shaven person, worships a stone image of a god, believes in an earthen image, or deserts his own [Guru]. He who gambles or drinks intoxicating liquor goes to hell. [30]

Doharā

When a Sikh gives his daughter [in marriage] to a Sikh it is like mingling nectar with nectar. If he gives his daughter to one who is clean-shaven [it is like] giving nectar to a snake. 1 [31]

When a Singh gives his daughter to anyone other than a Singh it is like giving a goat to a butcher. That Sikh is a slave to Yam and will seven times be reborn as a crow. 2 [32]

Taking the hookah in his hand he lets a little smoke out through his nose. Dreadful is the hell he will suffer. Dharam[raj] (Yam) will inflict on him a [fearsome] punishment. 3

He has lost [all hope of] liberation both in this world and the next, and will not find it anywhere. [33]

That which is given to a Singh is received by me. This is [true] love. [34]

The person who consumes meat killed in the Muslim manner (*turak kã mās*) and he who enjoys a prostitute will go to hell. Do not associate with the evil company of those who mix with Muslims (*turakon*). In the end such a person goes to hell. [35]

If a Singh wears a hat (*topi*) he will be [reborn] a leper. Do not abuse a Singh. Do not bow [to anyone] except those who are Sikhs. Accept those who have been blessed by the Guru and you will receive everything. [36]

He who carries the Guru Granthji on his head will spend as many years in heaven (*surag*) as the number of steps which he has taken [while carrying it]. It is futile [to believe in the merit of] the day of the new moon (*tith*), the tenth day of the lunar fortnight (*dasamī*), the fifth day of the lunar fortnight (*pañchamī*), etc. [37]

Those who wear loin-cloths or white dhotis around their waists, or who leave their kes uncovered, swindle the Guru and will suffer in a fearsome hell. [38]

Anyone who has intercourse (*saṅgat*) with another Sikh's wife, daughter, sister, or mother will go to a horrible hell. [39]

The person who slanders the Guru should be beheaded. [Face him bravely and] do not run away. Where the Granth resides, there one obtains spiritual liberation (*mukati*). Do not pierce your ears or your nose. One acts as one's *man* dictates. [Remain] wholly pure. [40]

It is in accordance with neither one's duty nor the Rahit to worship (*pūjā kare*) members of the Bedi, Bhalla, or Sodhi subcastes.²⁴ [41]

He who eats without wearing a kachh is [as filthy] as excrement. Put no trust in such people as yogis, Jains, those who are clean-shaven, and Muslims (*turak*). He who recites the hymns (*bānī*) of anyone other than the Guru will fall into the hell of Kumbhi. Do not follow the teachings of [any of] the six darshans. [42]

The Guru's Khalsa is the image of Akal [Purakh] manifested [to the world]. Believe this and you will end the [wearisome] round of death and rebirth. [43]

If you wear a tilak [on your forehead], a sacred thread [round your neck], or a necklace made of wood²⁵ you will destroy your faith and be plunged into a fearsome hell. [44]

When Sri Akal Purakh uttered the command the wondrous Panth appeared.

Believing that the Guru was present in both Granth and Panth entire families crossed over [the Ocean of Existence and thereby attained] spiritual liberation. [45]

The duty of a Singh is to repeat the Guru's hymns day and night. Achieve spiritual liberation by massaging the feet or by pressing the limbs [of other Singhs]. [46]

[Maintain proper relations between a father and his son.] If a father who is a Singh does not give advice to his son he should be censured. If the son who is a Singh gives his father advice he saves him from hell. [47]

He who finds shelter with the Guru will be spared the arrow of Yam, [the God of Death]. You may consume what the Guru leaves, but take no one else's [leavings].²⁶ [48]

When five Singhs meet to determine [an issue] arising from the Rahit they can remove the blame by imposing a penance (*tanakhāh*). If in a brawl a turban falls off [the offender] should pay a fine (*tanakhāh*) of one *takā*. If he [deliberately] knocks it off, he should pay two *takās*. [49]

If [a person,] under the impression that his duty is fulfilled by earning a particular *karma*, wears a sacred thread around his neck, a *tanakhāh* of one and a quarter rupees should be imposed on him. [50]

If a Singh first visits other pilgrimage centres such as Jagannath and afterwards proceeds to [Sikh holy places] such as Abchalnagar, [when he arrives in the latter] he should receive a *tanakhāh* of 25 rupees. He who is initiated at a *takhat*²⁷ should donate one and a half rupees [for purchasing *karah prasad*]: If anyone visits Darbar Sahib [in Amritsar]²⁸ and departs without asking the Sikhs [for blessing and without] offering Ardas he is a grievous offender [against the Rahit] such as only the Guru can forgive. According to his means he will have to give as *tanakhāh* a hundred thousand, a thousand, or 200 mohurs²⁹ or 25¼ [rupees]. [51]

If anyone has taken [Khalsa] initiation and then engages in gambling, thieving, or drinking alcohol he too should receive a *tanakhāh* of 25 rupees. [52]

For having sexual relations with a minor (*bālak*) [the *tanakhāh* is] one and a quarter rupees. [He who has intercourse with] a

Muslim woman³⁰ or a Brahman woman is a grievous *tanakhāhīā*. [He who has intercourse with] a girl from his own lineage (*kul-putrī*), a sister, or some other relative has committed a *tanakhāh* which will not be forgiven [without undertaking the following penance]. He must bathe in [the pool at] Amritsar and all the other sacred places [of the Khalsa], and offer at each of them a *tanakhāh* of one and a quarter rupees.³¹ [53]

The Sikh who has not bathed at Amritsar is as impure as unwashed clothes. You cannot obtain knowledge of the Sikh faith (*sikhī*) without visiting Anandpur and Kesgarh.³² [54]

If [a Khalsa] bathes without a kachh, or with his kes uncovered instead of having a turban properly tied, he should incur a *tanakhāh* of one and a quarter rupees. [55]

If [a Khalsa] dies without [being attired in] a kachh he does not achieve spiritual liberation. It is said of a Singh that whenever he takes one leg out [of his kachh] he must always have the other leg in [another kachh].³³ [56]

He who eats meat killed in the Muslim (*turak*) manner is a gross *tanakhāhīā*. [The Khalsa] whose kachh conceals his knees is a gross *tanakhāhīā*.³⁴ If [a Khalsa] smokes a hookah he should receive, [in addition to a *tanakhāh* of] 25 rupees, 50 strokes with a cane and then be re-initiated. [Then his record] is clear. [57]

If anyone shows disrespect to [his own] kes [by cutting it] the *tanakhāh* is death. In [his] profound mercy the Guru showed compassion [to his followers] the Khalsa. [Therefore let the offender be spared death. Instead he should receive the following punishment.] He should receive 50 strokes of the cane as previously mentioned; he should be re-initiated; he should read aloud the rahit-nama; and for 40 days he should [undergo the discipline of] repeating *Japujī* innumerable times. [58]

They who commit the evil deeds of consorting with prostitutes, drinking alcohol, consuming the meat of Muslims (*turak*), [or] gambling shall endure great torment at death. [Because] they suffer so much at death³⁵ give them the *amrit* of initiation. [59]

At a birth, marriage, death, [or] cremation donate one and a quarter rupees as an offering.³⁶ [60]

He who [arranges] to have the Guru Granth Sahib read,³⁷ who affixes a tilak [to his brow, or], who bows in reverence to the cenotaph or tomb [of some dead person] should receive a

tanakhāh of one *ṭakū*. If one takes food provided at a hair-cutting ceremony (*munḍit*) he is a *tanakhāhīā*. [61]

Those who undergo the tonsure ceremony (*bhādanī*), killers of daughters, the followers of Dhir Mal, the masands, the followers of Ram Rai, or those who use colour prepared from red ochre or the kusumbha flower³⁸ should all pay a *tanakhāh* of a rupee and a quarter. [62]

Do not cut any of your body hair. Cut your finger-nails in such a way that they do not fall into your food and render it dirty. Wash your hands and feet and sit in a clean place to eat. In your earthen cooking-square cook over a wood fire, [not a dung one]. [63]

[*Procedure for holding a Khalsa service of worship:*]

The mantra 'Praise to the Guru' (*vāhi gurū*) should be repeated continuously. Keep an unused pot filled with water inside [your house]. Five seated Singhs should sing from the scripture (*shabad*). [A Singh] then says Ardas, including the *satināmu* mantra and other such words. Finally, he recites '*kām krodh ādi anhamēv*',³⁹ says [another] prayer, and splashes water in the eyes [of all present]. [64]

He then rinses his mouth and distributes [karah prasad in the following order]: first to the [Singh] who is in attendance on the Guru [Granth Sahib], then to the five sons of Singhs,⁴⁰ and [finally] to the [other] Singhs. Do not prepare the karah [prasad] with coarse sugar. [Use refined sugar.] It is permissible to distribute only coarse sugar. Give to each Singh an equal share, for thus you shall be spared fear both in this world and the next. [65]

How to serve [karah] prasad:

[A Sikh] should first help other Sikhs to wash [their] kes and in the evening should invite them to take prasad at his place early in the morning. He should then plaster his cooking-square with earth according to regulation and prepare karah [prasad]. Spread a striped blanket [as a mat]. Next he should assist Sikhs to bathe and then after they have bathed Sikhs from all four castes should be seated on the mat. [66]

A hymn [from scripture] (*shabad*) should be sung. Then [one of them] should place a cloth on his shoulders. After being helped with washing their hands and rinsing their mouths they [all] stand and say Ardas. When food is to be dispensed karah

prasad should be distributed first. If there is none available give raw sugar or sweets [made from raw sugar]. Do not distribute the kind made from refined sugar. If you repeat sacred words or sing any hymns they must be from the Granth. The homily (*kathā*) which you narrate should be in the words of the tenth Master [Guru Gobind Singh]. [67]

A certain Sikh had kept whey for washing [his] kes and a crow had drunk it. The Sikh came to the Guru [and said]: 'Tell me Maharaj, was the whey spoilt?' [The Guru] Sahib replied: 'I was aware that some hookah smoker had touched [the whey and so] I saved you from [using] it.' [68]

A certain Khatri in the Panth, one who performed all religious duties, wore his sword-belt over his shoulder.⁴¹ He later announced that he would also be wearing a sacred thread around his neck. As an initiated Sikh [this Khatri] will be condemned to tumble into the hell of Kumbhi for existence after existence. [69]

Do not be without a kachh. [Always have on your person] a knife (*karad*) and a wrist-ring (*karā*) as insignia (*chhāp*). [70]

The Sikh who remains a violator of the Rahit (*kurahit*) will suffer at life's end. [71]

When a Sikh dies put on him a new kachh, bathe him, and tie a turban on his head. Recite *Japujī* continuously at that time. Sing Guru Arjan's *Mārū*:

My destiny is revealed, the Master has shown mercy; I sing the name of Hari (Guru Arjan, *Mārū* 6, AG 1000).

Prepare karah prasad and distribute it to Sikhs.⁴² [72]

A Khatri without a weapon is useless; a Brahman without knowledge is useless; and a Shudra who possesses learning is useless. Keeping an abandoned woman is reprehensible. This too is good for nothing. [73]

Do not make friends with a child.⁴³ Do not falter in battle. Do not trade in grain, straw, wood, or hides.⁴⁴ Do not quarrel excessively. Do not abandon your Rahit. [74]

A Khatri should not mount a mare. [Only a stallion is acceptable.] A Brahman should not ride a bull. [75]

When you observe someone who follows the Rahit give your daughter [to him]. Bind [the hair] of a woman's head in a knot, leaving none of it hanging down [the back]. He who engages in any of the following goes to hell: offerings to ancestors, [Hindu]

evening ritual, bride-price, worship of the sun and planets, worship of gods, idol worship. [76]

He who bears false reports of anyone is not my Sikh. Obliterate the authority of [both] the Muslim (*musalamān*⁴⁵) and the Hindu. Do not fast on such occasions as the eleventh day of the lunar month (*ikādasī*). To bear weapons and consume [karah] *prasad*—this is the religious duty (*dharam*) of Khatri. To adopt the forms of caste is not to our taste. It is our way of living which we like. [77]

Those who are spiritually liberated [utter] '*vāhi gurū*', [even] those who are initiated [with water from their Master's] foot (*charan*). [Your] daughter [should be given in marriage] to someone who has received initiation, whether he be Khalsa-initiated or foot-initiated. [78]

Both those who have been initiated by the two-edged sword, (*khaṇḍe pāhulīā*) and those who have received foot-initiation (*charan pāhulīā*), must eat neither Muslim meat (*kuṭṭhā*) nor domestic pig, neither should they touch [the flesh of animals] such as the donkey. [79]

Do not apply antimony [to the eyes] during the day.⁴⁶ Do not sleep naked at night. He who calls a Sikh by half his name is a *tanakhāhīā*. Do not drink water in which you have washed your hands. Do not celebrate a marriage without using the Anand order. Do not have sexual intercourse in the evening or early morning. Do not eat with your kes uncovered. If a Sikh dies do not weep. Do not eat while standing. [80]

Land which has grown tobacco is polluted. If you touch tobacco you must bathe in the pool at Amritsar. If you chew it then everything is totally ruined. [81]

Do not place your turban on your knee. Do not speak until you are spoken to. In battle display dignity before an adversary. Do not have intercourse with a menstruating woman. [82]

Take special care of horses and weapons. Do not make friends with a Muslim or a hillman.⁴⁷ If you are greedy and scorn [another's] food you will go to hell. If you feed a hungry person [the food] will be equal to a feast (*jag*). Damdama is the Guru's Kashi.⁴⁸ When a Singh feeds a Hindu [the food] is equal to a feast. [83]

A Muslim (*turak*) is an enemy and should be slain with the sword. [84]

Be sincere in all that you say. A family man can remain pure though there be many Khalsa [Sikhs] living in his house. A Bihangam Sikh⁴⁹ must remain alone to stay pure. [85]

He who maintains his kes uncut without receiving the double-edged sword initiation [of the Khalsa], is an impostor. [86]

Learn to read the scriptures in Gurmukhi. Do not desire to learn Persian⁵⁰. Having become a Singh do not seek to become versed in the [Hindu] scriptures (*shāsatrī*). You will immediately be involved in the futile concerns of the Brahmans and will abandon the Guru's hymns (*bānī*). First teach [the Guru's hymns to] him who has become a Singh and [you will see that this learning] will bear fruit. [It is acceptable to have first] studied the [Hindu] scriptures and then [subsequently to have] become a member of the Khalsa. [87]

Those who [as Khalsa] have taken the *amrit* initiation of the two-edged sword should have nothing to do with either a Brahman or with a Sarvari faqir.⁵¹ If the Brahman does not maintain his kes uncut and has not been initiated [into the Khalsa] do not accept food from his hands and do not give him anything [as an offering]. [88]

If a person spurns tobacco [you should fall at his] feet and worship (*pūje*) him, even though he may look like a rishi with matted hair. Wherever it is proffered do not take food from, or give anything to, anyone who sleeps with another's woman. [89]

If a Sikh reads Persian I am not his [his Master] and he is not my [Sikh]. Do not drink water from that Sikh's hand. Do not trust anyone who reads Persian. [90]

Do not consume the food of anyone who observes the shraddh ceremony or has a marriage performed by a Brahman. [The Sikh] who does not perform the Guru's rituals (*rīti*) is a *tanakhāhīā*. He who reads Persian is a *tanakhāhīā*. Those who worship (*pūjai*) Shankar[acharya], Datta[treya], Ramanuja, Gorakh[nath], or Muhammad will go to a horrible hell. [91]

Read the sacred scriptures every eighth day.⁵² Read it and read it correctly. He who bathes at Muktsar is spiritually liberated (*mukat*). Do not trust a Muslim (*musalamān*) [any more than] a step-son.⁵³ [92]

There are five expressions of Sikh belief (*sikhī*). First there are [those for whom it means] trade or employment (*dhande*).

Secondly, imitation (*dekhādekhī*) [is the reason], doing what many others do. Thirdly, there are the greedy, taking whatever they can. Fourthly, there are those who believe by faith. And fifthly, there are the truly devout.⁵⁴ [93]

*The word of Sri Satiguru*⁵⁵

An Akali⁵⁶ is known by the blue garments he wears.
 He repeats the name of the One whom the Guru has called
 Akal, arming himself with weapons of steel. 1
 With weapons of steel, he plies both quoit and knife (*karad*),
 Neither ear nor nose pierced, according to the tradition of the
 Satiguru.
 Five weapons⁵⁷ adorn him, his kirpan suspended in a baldric.
 He will not eat without first scoring his food with his knife
 (*karad*),⁵⁸ thus declaring the intention of Akal.
 A Muslim woman shadows her eyes with such cosmetics as
 antimony.
 He avoids such a woman and [instead] spends his time on
 unbroken meditation.⁵⁹
 [An Akali] uses an iron vessel to impart a delectable taste;
 He eats food that has been cooked over wood, and his blue
 garments are traditional clothing.
 [He wears] a white kachh and a turban of blue; [faithfully] he
 repeats [both] *Japujī* and *Jāp*.
 He knows by heart *Srī Akāl Ustati* and *Chandī [kī Vār]*.⁶⁰
 The hair covering his body he protects and never will he
 participate in a shraddh.⁶¹
 He loves the Guru Granth and spurns the five evil impulses.⁶²
 Cenotaphs, gods, and tombs he avoids; no other panth he
 worships.
 He does not dye the hair of his kes; both lust and anger he
 forswears.
 With skill he fights if fight he must, ever loyal to the beliefs of
 his faith.
 His kachh is made from cloth measuring two and a half *gaz*⁶³
 and so too is his turban.
 Three ages (*kal*) he measures by repeating [the divine
 Name], sundering thus [the snare of endless] death
 and rebirth.

With lofty peak (*bungā*) he embellishes [his turban], sagely
 [adopting] the title of Nihang.⁶⁴
 As an Akali he performs his deeds; give ear and listen, O Sikh.
 On his person he carries weapons, his unsheathed sword (*teg*) in
 his hand.
 He should wear [Khalsa] apparel [to distinguish him from the
 enemy], fearing not [the cycle of] death and [re]birth.
 On his turban (*sīs*) he carries a kirpan, the lofty peak raised
 high;
 On [the turban] a plume, noble emblem of the Panth; to him has
 the Satiguru shown mercy.
 He eats from an iron vessel, his garments coloured blue and yellow.
 The ornaments he bears are [all] of iron and he regards
 Amritsar as equal to countless Gangas.
 The army, clerks, vazir and diwan—all are Khalsa and [thus]
 the faith expands.⁶⁵
 He does not consume [food] without [first] scoring it with a
 knife; and he should be a family man, not a celibate one.
 But apart from his spouse he does not share his bed with
 another; [his spouse's] faith will strengthen him.
 Do not extinguish your faith, nor ever deceive the Guru.
 If a person should extinguish a fire with water, which has been used
 [for drinking], how can he ever find peace in this world?⁶⁶
 He gathers [with others] in Amritsar on Baisakhi and Divali, on
 Hola in Anandpur;
 And proceeding to Abchnagar he ferries his whole family
 [across the dread Ocean of Existence].
 That Sikh of mine who lives according to the Rahit is [a person]
 made in my likeness.
 Whether it is he or I, there is no difference between us. [94]

Now a Definition of a Bihangam

[A Bihangam living] in the world severs all ties with worldly
 things (*māyā*). He never runs after women. He does not desire
 wealth. He wears a kachh made from one and a quarter *gaz* [of
 cloth], and carries a small pot made of iron.⁶⁷ He meditates on
 the One alone. He does not pass semen as a result of sexual
 intercourse.⁶⁸ He does not live in towns and he does not ride
 on anything, [always travelling by foot] as he proceeds from one

gurdwara to another. He utters no reproach against a Bhalla, a Bedi, a Trehan, an Udasi, or a Sodhi.⁶⁹ He does not touch intoxicants or any meat. He sets renunciation above all else, abandoning [the pleasures of] eating, drinking, and merriment. Pleasure or pain, he abandons all those things, which earn for the Khalsa⁷⁰ an [unsatisfactory] destiny in the three cosmic ages. He practises four-fold perfection. He has [only] two blankets. He flees from the sight of a woman. He forsakes red clothing. He keeps his inner self (*man*) under control. He will not accept food or water from a woman. [95]

The duties of the four ashrams⁷¹ are specified in this book. You must take care to understand them. [96]

With the aid of Sri Vahiguru.

10. Khalsa Mahima (portion of Sarab Loh Granth)

This portion of *Sarab Loh Granth* is a translation of the Khari Boli text given in Piara Singh Padam's *Rahit-nāme*.

Praise of the Khalsa

By the command of [A]kal Purakh [the Khalsa] took the form of the most exalted of sages, with matted hair from the top of its head to the smallest nail of its toe. By keeping company with the divine it achieved true purity, acquiring the noblest of forms which is that of the truly devoted (*bhagat rūp*). Dharam-raj bestowed on it the rank of ruler supreme, setting its place far above all that others can reach. From heaven he established its [paramount] rule, from the furthest shore to the uttermost limit. 366

By his command the Lord created that Panth which is the Khalsa. The earth was cleansed of refuse, both demons and malechhs. The sacred and pure Panth multiplied, walking in the way of truth and piety. Kachh, kirpan, and kes—these three signs made followers of the Guru the servants [also] of God (*rām dās*). 367

Worshippers of [A]kal and followers of the Kshatriya way, he turned into those who wielded swords in battle. From forty men, five leaders of the Khalsa emerged. They were the beloved Ajit Singh, Jujhar and Fateh Singh, and Zoravar Singh. The fifth

leader of the Khalsa who completes the total was the Satguru [Gobind Singh], he who revealed this noble Panth. 368

Forty men were the seed of the Khalsa, powerful Singhs who won liberation. Bhagavati was their mother, [A]kal Purakh their father, specially nurtured by them. Separated from all illusion they became his people, repeating 'Satinam', that most powerful of mantras. They chanted it themselves and taught all others to chant it. Great devotees they were in the Kaliyug.... 369

On them was conferred the status of Guru Khalsa, and the Granth became the Satguru. They chanted the word of the Satguru, repeating the Name of God (*gobind*) as their regular conversation. Singing kirtan became a religious rite and they became virtuous by praising God, whether standing or whether sitting. The pure Panth, which was the Khalsa came into being, that glorious Panth with four castes and [four] ashrams. To behold it is to behold the Satguru. [Its members] repeat the Guru's Word from the Guru Granth. In twelve forms the Satguru appears, just as twelve rays of the sun reflect the light of God (*pārabraham*).¹ The visible power of God is manifested in the Khalsa as [the doctrine of the Guru] Granth and [that of the Guru] Panth. Gobind is the servant of the victorious Satguru, he who reveals himself as the Khalsa and as the Guru Granth.... 371

God has blessed the Khalsa with virtues such as those of bhagats, gianis, raj yogis, Kshatriyas, those who perform religious rites for others, worshippers of one God, those who live apart from others, ascetics, warriors, masters who bestride the world. Hearing what God (*paramesar*) tells them in the scriptures, in the noble words of the [Bhagavat] Gita and the Upanishads, they follow the auspicious, avoiding what is evil, and live as devout and knowledgeable people. 513

The Khalsa attained purity, as great as the One who is above every stain (*nirāṅkār*). To the Sikhs this teaching of the Guru is given, that these three must be your signs: kachh, kes, kirpan. Let this be your agreed way of life, the ten chief aims of the Khalsa: mercy, charity, preparedness, forgiveness, bathing, gentleness, purity, truth, loving regard. Sadhs, siddhs, and gods regard devotion (*bhagatī*) [as the supreme virtue]. 514

The ten to be avoided

Actions to be avoided [are those arising from] violence, pride, idleness, parsimony, [the exercise of harsh] authority, cruelty, sloth, criticism of others, corruptness, and [eating] meat [prepared by a Muslim with the recitation of] the Kalima. These are the characteristics of unbelievers. Thus there are ten aims and ten things to be avoided. The Khalsa is described as wise, acquiring a purity, which is equalled only by the One who is above all stain. 515

The spirit wanders free within it, the evil god becomes a good god.² Rare is the privilege of attaining the status of the Khalsa. Thus it is called God's people. A wave is no different from the water [it contains]. A spirit is seen as Brahma or God (*paramātam*). Brahma is the spirit and the spirit is Brahma, just as the ocean is contained in a drop [of water] and the drop [is contained] in the ocean. 516

What a marvel is the being of God (*harī*)! How does one obtain the condition of the Satiguru? The condition of a Sikh is double the weight of both, based on the spirit's gain. I sing aloud of its greatness, limited in intellect and discernment though I be. Hear me, O Sant! Hear the glory of the Khalsa's condition and from it take strength. 517

In the [Bhagavad] Gita Sri [Krishan] has described the exalted status of the devotee to Arjan: 'The devotees—the wise man and the brave—belong to my own caste (*barānā*) since they all have attained the true status of their soul.' Commentators have attributed the views of devotees to the Khalsa. All have conferred the highest praise on the Khalsa; exalted it is above all. 518

The Khalsa is my special embodiment; I dwell within the
Khalsa.

The Khalsa is my mouth and limbs; always I live within the
Khalsa. 519

The Khalsa is the object of my devotion; the Khalsa proclaims
my reputation.

The Khalsa is my wings and my feet; the Khalsa is the offspring
in whom I delight. 520

The Khalsa is my encouraging friend; the Khalsa is my parents
who give me joy.

The Khalsa is my virtuous delight, ever tied together in friendship with me. 521

The Khalsa is my virtue and honour; from the Khalsa I took birth.

The Khalsa is my source of supply; through the Khalsa I have performed every deed. 522

The Khalsa is my friend and family; the Khalsa works my redemption.

The Khalsa is the breath of my body; the Khalsa is my very life. 523

The Khalsa is my duty (*dharam*) and my destiny (*karam*); the Khalsa is my deepest secret.

The Khalsa is my perfect Satguru; the Khalsa is my family of the noble brave. 524

The Khalsa is my learning and intelligence; on the Khalsa I constantly reflect.

No other body is there which can be compared with the Khalsa, none which may reach its furthest limit. 525

If I had the tongues of Shesh[nag] and the knowledge of Devi (*shārad[ā]*) yet would I fail to praise it adequately.

No falsehood have I uttered, as God (*pārabraham*) and Guru Nanak are my witnesses. 526

If one had as many tongues as the hairs on one's body, yet they would still be insufficient to sing the praises of the Khalsa.

I am the Khalsa, the Khalsa is mine; the relationship is as the ocean and its individual drops of water.

The Khalsa is the army of Akal Purakh;

The Khalsa emerged as the joy of God (*paramātam*)! 527

All my wealth, stowed in storehouse and treasury, is due to the grace of the Khalsa.

Like a kingdom, with its wealth and mansions, its men and their wives each perform their appointed tasks. 528

Though I be an army's chief leader, yet I am the lowliest servant of all.

Friends, family, wealth, mansions, riches, and mercy—all come by the grace [of the Khalsā]. 529

Leading the household, command over all, body and soul, my physique and my breath—

Gifts, greatness, and honour, all I receive, are due to the grace of the Khalsa. 530

The whole of the Khalsa, to which grace has been given, makes me worthy of honour and glory.

Penniless and without leaders are people without number who [without the Khalsa] like me are astray in this world. 531

Serve the bounty of the Khalsa, worship it with gifts.

Praise its gifts, greatness and honour; worship it in the approved sixteen ways. 532

False service is fruitless, here on earth or in the other world.

Fruitless service lacks effect, sometimes happy, sometimes sad. 533

Religious offering and worship is [my duty to] my Khalsa; mighty it is and worthy of worship.

The servant of Gobind [Singh] proclaims the victory of the Khalsa, the sight and touch [of which] wipes every sadness away. 534

My own and trusted [one is] the Khalsa, [worthy of] worship and meditation.

The sight and touch of the Khalsa confers liberation and truth on the soul. 535

Only he who knows its true depths is [a member of] the divine Khalsa.

Between the Lord, myself,³ and it⁴ no trace of difference exists. 536

11. *Sau Sakhi, sakhi 8: Mukati-nama*

The source for this translation of the *Sau Sākhī, sākhi 8* is Gurbachan Singh Nair (1985), pp. 14–17. Significant variants in the *PSP* text are noted.

Doharā

‘Hear [me] Sikh of the Guru. These are the precepts which bring spiritual liberation to every Sikh. He who does not follow these teachings of the Guru brands himself as heedless and corrupt. 1

‘Take no loan, but if you must [take one] repay it willingly.

Be kind to your wife and show her the way of virtue. 2

‘Never lie nor listen to the lies of others; do not love untruth.

Follow the truth and [always] observe it in the company of others who are truthful. 3

'Be a truthful merchant, a truthful warrior,¹ a truthful pundit, seeking ever the truth. Cultivate the land honourably. Be truthful in your vocation, and take pleasure in seeing that truth directs all. 4

Chaupāī

'A Sikh should not eat the leavings of others. A Sikh should be free from the temptations of wealth. Before eating a Sikh should share his food. With kes uncovered he should not engage in sexual activity.'² 5

Doharā

'He should repeat the Guru's name before eating and he should recite *Jaṃu[ḡ]* before he takes any food. He should never observe a naked woman, nor let his thoughts dwell on one. 6

'He should never touch another's wealth and he should keep his distance from a person of low caste.'³ He should not eat meat killed in the Muslim style, nor should he consume the pork of domestic pig. 7

'He should not touch alcohol, recognising [abstention] as the superior way; and after urinating⁴ he should always wash. After a bowel motion cleanse yourself with earth and then with water. 8

'If you bathe with cold water in the last watch of the night and share with others what you eat, then,' says Guru Gobind Singh, 'the angel of death cannot ensnare you. 9

'Do not mix with others, though you should still do your business within the wider society. Renounce tobacco, the world's polluter,⁵ and do not wear saffron. 10

'Do not apply antimony or collyrium during the day and do not sleep naked at night. If you meditate on the divine Name and recite *Āratī*⁶ [before retiring for the night], the Guru will wipe away all wretchedness.'⁷ 11

'The Sikh who takes the Guru's initiation and from the Granth learns the way he should follow (*rahit*) will serve faithfully⁸ and spread no doubts [within] the Panth. 12

- 'He should eat with a Sikh of the Guru and he should marry [his] daughter in the house of a Sikh.⁹ Freely and with sincerity he should discharge the duties laid down by the Veda. 13
- 'He should keep his son away from bad company, and likewise his wife also. Recite the Guru's mantra (*vāhi gurū*) while attending to regular tasks around the house. 14
- 'A Sikh should consume nothing offered at the worship [of other gods. Instead], he should daily consume *karah* [prasad], accepting the Guru's sustenance proffered by the Ardasia. 15
- 'The Ardasia must distribute [*karah*] prasad equally. The jealousy [which arises from an unequal distribution of *karah*] prasad can only cause disunity [in a *sangat*]. 16
- 'He who seeks the greater share of [*karah*] prasad will be gobbled up by Yam. He who by deceit obtains [more than his fair share of *karah*] prasad will be afflicted by illness, injury, and the loss of all his worldly goods. 17
- 'While eating [a meal which he has not finished] a Sikh should not stand up and leave his place, either for worship or for sleep. If he leaves he should not consume [what he has left when he returns. Obey this instruction and] the Guru¹⁰ will reward you with happiness and wealth. 18
- 'Avoid all Muslims, male and female (*turak turakanī*). A Muslim can never be a Sikh. Treat all four castes as your brothers in the faith, giving and taking food from each.¹¹ 19
- 'Do not sing the songs (*bāṇī*) of those of pretended piety, and avoid food offered to the goddess Sitala. Abstain from food over which the Kalima¹² has been pronounced. Treat all Muslims as a disease. 20
- 'Shun a deceiving Brahman, a false Sikh, and a quarrelsome woman. All are without honour and no Sikh should trust them. 21
- 'After bathing and in a place that is pure prepare *karah* [prasad] from the three [specified] components. After Ardas [offer the *karah*] prasad to the Guru. There will be no joy in it if you do it naked.¹³ 22
- 'Perform those deeds, which demonstrate your affection for the Guru, doing them in complete devotion. In this world your total faith will be known and in the next [there awaits] total happiness. 23

'The fool who calls a Sikh by [only] half of his name is a *tanakhāhīā*. He who like the Muslims (*malaichhī*), is wilfully perverse [will go to hell] and dwell in the abode of Yam. 24

'Listen [my] Sikhs,' says the Guru repeatedly. 'He who engages in sexual pleasure with anyone other than [the wife he has wed by] the Anand ceremony is no Sikh of mine. 25

'Do not sleep at dawn nor at sunset; stay away from others' leavings and all that is impure. The Sikh who stays ever close to the Guru dwells in the company of gods! 26

'The Gursikh should not eat with his hair hanging free. Instead it must be knotted. Give a tithe for the Guru's needs and keep the remainder [of your earnings] for your own purposes. 27

'Rise in the early morning. Clean your teeth, bathe, and repeat the Guru's sacred words. Recite his hymns and touch the ground with your forehead.¹⁴ Form relationships with [other] Gursikhs. 28

'Following the teachings of the Guru, he must avoid taking a daughter in marriage from his own sub-caste or that of his mother.¹⁵ In this way he honours the conventions of his maternal and paternal houses. The Satiguru will bestow a gift on such a saintly person.' 29

Savaiyā

'Do not weep endlessly for a Sikh friend who has died. Prepare *karah* [prasād], read *Anand*, and abandon all grieving [for the deceased] Sikh. Women should not beat their breasts, but [instead] hear sacred hymns read. The entire gathering of devout people (*sant sambuhan*), [both] Brahmans and Sikhs, should be fed and given gifts.¹⁶ Do not follow the Vedic ceremony.¹⁷ Do not cremate the [deceased] Sikh in accordance with it. 30

'Treat as a wrongdoer the person who removes his hair¹⁸ from his head, the insignia of the Guru bestowed on him at his initiation. He who has his son undergo the tonsure ceremony by force and removes this seal [of the Guru] shall suffer agony and be perceived as an evil fiend. Do not form

marital or commensal ties [with such a person]. Show him favour and you will be branded a reprobate. [I.] Gobind Singh, have no hesitation in declaring that such a wrongdoer should be avoided. Why make evil your aim?' 31

Doharā

'The Sikh who learns the Muslim [language of] Persian for the sake of his livelihood [or] who trusts in the friendship of a Muslim (*turak*), is eternally an offender against the Guru. 32

'[On the occasion of] a marriage, the birth of a son, or a death a *tanakhāh*¹⁹ should be made [to the local sangat]. Recognise him as the Guru's Sikh who does not eat the food of a Mona. 33

'An initiated Sikh should not worship an idol, nor should he drink the water [with which] an idol [has been washed].²⁰ He who abandons [belief in] the four-fold system of castes (*baran āsram*) is a Sikh who is truly free.²¹ 34

'In this life there are many duties to be discharged on behalf of one's father, grandfather, god (*dev*). That Sikh is my [true] servant who does not accept any other than those [performed] for the Guru. 35

'Do not cause distress to any of the Gurus' descendants, to one accounted great by the Vedas, to an ascetic, a devout person, a generous man, a king, or a Brahman. 36

'He who reads the Veda without understanding its mystery, who commits evil, who is cursed by the Guru, or who has contracted a chronic disease must surely weep. 37

'He who has entered my house²² is not²³ charmed by the Guru's divine Word. He who hears and follows the Guru's teaching scrupulously lives a blameless life. 38

'I shall forgive him [his wrongful deeds] and carry him across [the ocean of this perilous life]. I shall raise him to the status of the divine, a status beyond that of Shankar[acharya], Datta[treya], Ramanuja, Gorakh[nath], or Muhammad.²⁴ 39

'As the rain in the rainy season brings abundant blossom to the land, so is all true belief (*dharam*) the fruit [which bursts forth] when the Guru commands it so to do. 40

'Read this *Mukati-nāmā*. Bathe in the pilgrimage-centre of Muktsar. Thus when you die you will shed [the effect of] evil deeds (*karam*) and enter the abode of the Guru. 41

'Hear [me, my] Sikh, the outcome of these 42 couplets, which have been delivered to you, will free you from twice the number in lakhs of births²⁵ [as easily] as air can turn to fragrance.' 42

Then the Guru said, 'Be of good cheer, my young fellow! Be joyful! Live according to the Sikh Rahit. Do not listen to [the blandishments of] the world. Never believe them.'

The eighth sakhi is finished.

Cry 'Praise to the Guru!'

12. Sau Sakhi, sakhi 65

The source for this translation is Gurabachan Singh Naiar (1985), pp. 76–80. Significant variants in the *PSP* text are noted.¹

Once when Sri Guru [Gobind Singh] was sitting in quiet contemplation, he said to the Khalsa [who were standing round him]: 'In the Kali[yuga] hold fast to me. 1

'For my devotees I am incarnated (*avatarai*) in every age. When the Khalsa lives a noble way of life it is [like] a crown upon my head.' 2

With loving respect [his] Sikhs [then] asked him: 'Tell us about this way. What are we required to give? How do we follow it? With what circumspection should we behave [towards others]?' 3

The Guru replied: 'Hear me, my Khalsa. Spiritual liberation [is obtained by] an initiation [based on] the uncut hair (*kes*). This can be either by the excellent initiation of the two-edged sword (*khaṇḍa pāhul*) or it can be the foot-wash variety (*charanan kī jugati*). 4

'The foolish Sikh who wears his hair uncut without undergoing this initiation merely pretends [to be my follower]. Never will he witness me. Banish the reprobate [from the sangat] and let him beg. 5

'It is sensible to adhere to one religion (*majab*). No one can remain in two. He who is called a Sikh yet strays [into another fold] is a reprobate. 6

'There are three varieties of my Sikhs. [First, there are] the Sahajis, [those who take no initiation, yet seek mystical union through the Guru's hymns (*sahajī*). Secondly, there are] the Charanis, [those who have taken foot initiation (*charanī*). And thirdly, there are] the Khands, [those who have taken initiation with the two-edged sword (*khaṇḍ*)]. The Sikh who keeps his hair uncut firmly sums up all three. 7

'One [of these three, the third] is known as "kesi";² the second as "partially kesi"; and the third as "without a kes", those who have been to a barber. The Guru loves the kes.'³ 8

The Guru's Gracious Message

Chaupai

'[A follower of] mine who lives according to the Rahit will arise and bathe during the last watch of the night. He will peruse only the Guru's sacred writings (*bāṇī*), reading them in Gurmukhi. All others will he spurn. 9

'[Instead of obeying] the Vedas and the Shastras he will follow the Guru's command, keeping away from all others as from a disease. Do not learn Arabic or Persian. A Sikh of mine should never be the servant (of a Muslim⁴). 10

'Never bow to a Muslim,⁵ nor sit and eat with one. Do not covet [the property of] a friend. A Sikh should not be friendly with a man from the hills.⁶ 11

'This is my commandment, [my] Sikhs, that [members of] the four castes should behave as follows: A Brahman who takes foot-wash initiation should maintain the Sikh belief of a Sahaji. 12

'My Sikh should separate himself from all other [Brahmans]. Never give charity to an insincere Brahman. Avoid the covetous Brahman and keep well away from him. My Sikh will never look upon him face to face.⁷ 13

'Avoid a Sarvari, a Shakta, or a Brahman. Do not apply even half a *ṭikkā* to your forehead.⁸ The Brahman who abuses a Sikh is an evil person who should take poison and die. 14

'[A Sikh] who has been initiated by the two-edged sword should never hold a shraddh ceremony.⁹ [If he does] the food

[which he offers to] his forbears will be turned to sand.¹⁰ [If he wishes to offer anything] let it be clothing and money, giving them to all [who assemble on the occasion. However,] a Sikh should not give [such gifts] to a member of another faith.¹¹ 15

'Do not give alms to a Brahman who is not a Sikh of mine. If, [however,] he is a Brahman who belongs to my Panth and has taken foot-initiation welcome him with love. 16

'When a Brahman takes initiation but does not keep his hair uncut keep well away from such an impostor.'¹²

Doharā

'If any Sikh of mine adopts a disguise in order to gather alms¹³ he abandons those sages who preserved their hair. What a fraudulent reprobate he is! 17

'The Brahman is greater than the three other castes, his appearance is that of the gods. If he changes his faith or worships a pir he, the Brahman, should be cast into a well. 18

'Originally he was like the rishis of old, with matted hair displayed. Let him take foot-initiation and affection for him will increase by another half. 19

'A deceiving Sikh may wear his hair uncut, yet worship some trivial god. Never give water [to such a person]. Serve [only those who are] my Sikhs. 20

'An insincere person may wear his hair uncut for the benefits it brings to his livelihood. [Such a person] resembles a Chandal with hair uncut, and it is useless giving him charity.'¹⁴ 21

[Chaupai]

'[A person who claims to be] my Sikh yet worships Sitala takes charity as a mere pretender,¹⁵ or visits various [gurdwaras], eating food [in each of them], is never my Sikh. 22

'I shall abandon that Sikh who, without understanding, worships [these other] gods. [I shall] forsake [him]. When a Sikh of mine visits a pilgrimage centre he should give to [other] visitors before eating his own meal. 23

'If he wishes to give charity out of respect on a festival day, let him give to those who have faith in the Guru or to shrines associated with the Guru. Do not look out for the kind of Brahmans who frequent pilgrimage centres. They are false and make a show of their position. 24

'[A Sikh] should live alone and not be concerned about the opinions of others. Daily he should meditate on me, [his heart ever] full. He should feed other Sikhs—my very own Sikhs. The false one who cuts his hair is as poison to me.' 25

Doharā

'It is certainly according to my intention that you should have dealings with an [honest] Brahman who cuts his hair. He is acting like Beas (Vyas), and you may give him charity. 26

'A Sikh should give his daughter [in marriage] to [another] Sikh and should not take any bride-price [for her]. He who does this is [truly] my Sikh and will be welcomed into my abode. 27

'Let no one worship (*sev*) a Sufi pir, a Sarvari, Sitala, a yogi, or evil spirits (*bhūt*). Serve only the Guru, for thus you will arrive at my gate [and be admitted]. 28

'A Sikh should daily recite *Anand* and *Japu[ī]*,¹⁶ sometimes less and sometimes more. [In the evening], as his [daily] alms [to the Guru], he should hear Rahiras, the hymn *Āratī* and then Kirtan [Sohila]. 29

'When a Sikh and his wife sit together to discuss all manner of things every day they should teach their children Sikh songs, singing them over and over again. 30

'When a Sikh of a Khatri family¹⁷ wishes to hold a shraddh to honour his ancestors he should have a Brahman Sikh prepare it, but nothing more [should be required of the Brahman]. 31

'Let no Sikh of mine give to charities which land the recipient in hell. The result is that all your good [works] are turned bad.¹⁸ 32

'Put your trust in the Guru and do not depend on anyone else, whether for this world or the next. Always bathe and meditate. A Sikh without [these] customs knows only grief.¹⁹ 33

'[I will have nothing to do with] a Sikh who commits adultery or learns Persian. I will take nothing from him, nor give him anything. Never drink water [from his hands]. 34

'Never accept anything from the house of one who reads Persian. Never trust him. Do not touch his food, for he has strayed from the path of duty (*dharam*). 35

'My Sikh who, [being a Brahman,] derives his income from two [sources, namely] conducting shraddh ceremonies and marriages, is a deceiver and a reprobate, allowing no recourse to others. 36

'The Brahman who fraudulently sells stories based on planet worship, on [the meaning of] the Gayatri, or on gifts received at the time of eclipses goes straight to hell. 37

'When an eclipse takes place he will perform worship, repeat [sacred words], hold fire ceremonies, offer sacrifices to ancestors, and bathe. Freed from [the necessity of] giving alms at an eclipse my Sikh knows the [true] value [of such charity]. 38

'[The Brahman] who accepts charity at the time of an eclipse is a fool, short of spiritual understanding. My Sikh should throw him into a deep well. 39

'He may be of good family, but if at an eclipse he receives charity a Brahman, like a Muslim (*malechh*), cannot go to heaven (*savarag*). 40

'Keep away from those who accept bride-price for their daughters, who take charity at eclipses,²⁰ or who eat food offered to gods. The Sikh [who spurns them] will be welcomed into my abode. 41

'If I have a Sikh who is a granthi and he appropriates for himself those gifts, which have been given when Ardas is being offered he is a fraudulent sneak and no servant of mine.' 42

Chaupai

'He is a Khalsa who accepts no alms, who pays no heed to Muslim or Hindu, and who never touches a planet-crazed Brahman. That is the company I keep.' 43

Doharā

'It is the Khatri custom to eat after wearing arms. Giving

charity to a contented Brahman is right. He is a friend who is [thereby] sustained and who [devoutly] sings [praises to God]. 44

'Hypocrisy does not meet with my approval, nor does caste. It is [living according to] the Rahit and to trusting faithfulness, which I cherish.' 45

This way of life the True Guru has related for his Sikhs, with affection and with solicitude. Whoever reads or hears [the record] will find joyful faith and, spiritually liberated, will [in the world to come] dwell with the Guru. 46

The sakhi is finished.
Cry 'Praise to the Guru!'

13. Prem Sumarag, Chapter 4

From Randhir Singh (1965).

By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru

Chapter 4

Marriage

1

The procedure is as follows. When a girl reaches a suitable age for marriage her parents should endeavour to arrange a marriage for her. During [the present age of] the Kaliyuga it is preferable for a girl to be married young. With what kind of family (*kul*) should one make a marriage arrangement? [Look for a family] that follows the teachings of Sri Akal Purakh. Let it be a Khalsa [family], whether poor or successful. [With such a family] one may unhesitatingly arrange a marriage. [Such people] are bound to Sri Akal Purakh, caring nothing for wealth and possessions. Put your trust in the Guru (*guru nīraṅkāṛ*) and arrange the marriage. If the Guru so wills the girl will find much happiness and bring joy to her parents. 1.1

2

The rite of marriage, which others call *biāh*, has come to be known as *sañjog* [or 'union'] within the Khalsa. Do not conduct a marriage after the manner of the worldly. First, make the

necessary arrangements so that the ceremony may be held on the fifth day of the light half of a month. How should this be done? A month and a half before the date of the marriage send the bridegroom money, sugar-candy (*misarī*), a suit of clothes, and weapons, together with a sword-belt of gold chain. Send whatever you are able to afford. If you cannot afford gold then let it be steel, but it must at least be gilded. 1

Send the bridegroom's mother clothing, a coconut, and a set of bangles. Spend whatever you are able to afford on these items. The catering for the wedding should likewise be decided in accordance with your means. Follow the instructions given here and do not try to imitate [the expensive ostentation] of those who are worldly and proud. The father of the bridegroom should determine his expenditure as follows. He who possesses assets amounting to only 100 rupees should restrict his spending to 25 rupees; whereas he who has been blessed by the Guru to the extent of assets worth 1000 rupees can afford to run to 250 rupees. Each thus remains within approved limits. 2

The father of the bridegroom should ensure that his arrangements are made within the appointed month and a half. The father of the bride should ensure that within the month and a half all business dealings within his family have been completed. 3

When only five days remain before the marriage, the bride's diet should become dal and rice with ghi. She should not eat bread (*rotī*). Custom decrees that she should be given [only] soft foods. She should be clothed in red garments and for five days [her skin] should be rubbed with fragrant ointment (*baṭanā*). Before sleeping and when she awakes she should recite the following [prayer]: 'Sri Akal Purakh, grant me your protection. This marriage is in your hands. Grant that it may be duly celebrated.' She should make this petition [regularly]. During this period she should not worship any god or goddess. 4.2.

3

On the actual day of the marriage the bride should arise during the late morning. She should then be given karah prasad and a small meal. 1

Let the actual wedding ceremony be performed during that

most delectable period, the last watch of the night. First smear wet earth (*pochā*) on the ground. Within this area excavate a shallow pit, one and a quarter *gaz* in length, a quarter of a *gaz* wide, and a quarter of a *gaz* deep. Bring two low stools made of wood and place them on either side of the pit, one to the north and one to the south. 2

Clothe the bride in a new gown (*cholā*) and embroidered shawl (*chop*), apply henna to her hands and feet, spread a new quilt on the stool which has been placed at the southern end of the pit, and seat the bride on it, facing north. 3

On each side of the stools fix two spears in the ground, each of them one *gaz* in length. The stools will thus be flanked by spears. Between the spears on opposing sides, stretch over the two stools a canopy made from red threads. 4

Weave a thread head-dress (*maulī*), apply saffron to it, and place it on the bride's head. 5.3

[Section 4 concerns the preparation of the bridegroom.]

5

The order to be followed for the wedding ceremony

When, with the last watch of the night the hour of the actual ceremony arrives, seat the bridegroom on the northern stool, having first spread a new quilt [on it]. The boy should sit facing the south, opposite his bride. 1

Unsheath a sword (*bhagautī*), apply red lead to it, and drape flowers [over its hilt]. Lay it along the western side of the pit. 2

Stretch a screen of red cloth (*sālū*) along the bridegroom's side of the pit, separating the bridegroom and the bride. 3

Deck the bride with her ornaments and seat her on the southern stool, facing the bridegroom. Keep the screen of red cloth between them. 4

The bride's people should sit on her side [of the pit]; and members of the groom's wedding-party on his. 5

All who are present should wear garlands of flowers around their necks. 6

A Sikh of Sri Akal Purakh's Khalsa should then take his seat [before the gathering]. He should be one well versed in the scriptures, a lover of the Guru's word, literate, firm without

being overbearing, a man who has reached the age of prudence, one who entertains no foolish desire for worldly wealth, a loyal follower of the Guru (*guramukh*). Such a person should be seated and invited to conduct the marriage ceremony. Let him conduct the ceremony. 7

He should proceed as follows. First he should address the bride:

‘[Before you is a young man] named.... [He is] the son of...and the grandson of.... His caste is...*jāti* and...*baran*.¹ His complexion is...in colour, and he is...years of age. He is a Khalsa of Sri Guru Akal Purakh and in accordance with the command of Sri Akal Purakh he has come here to marry you. [He is sitting] to the north in front [of you].’

[The marriage proceeds with responses required from a Gurmukh on the bride’s side, from the bride herself, and from a male member of the bridegroom’s side.]

Next, kindle a fire of dhak wood in the pit and pour on ghi. [The officiating Gurmukh] should say:

‘Lord of the Fire! Sri Bhagautiji!² Sri Khalsaji! In accordance with the will of Sri Guru Akal Purakh the daughter of...and grand-daughter of....by name, of...complexion colour and...caste (*baran*), has by the command of Sri Akal Purakh and at this auspicious time been married to the son of...and grandson of....by name, of...complexion colour and...caste (*baran*). May both enjoy happiness forever. Let all [who are gathered here] bear witness.’

This should be said seven times, and seven times ghi should be poured on [the fire]. Thus should prayer (*aradāsi*) be offered before Sri Bhagauti and the Khalsa. Join palms when repeating, ‘Let all [who are gathered here] bear witness.’ Let everyone, of whatever status, pour ghi on the fire.... 15

Both stools should then be moved to the west so that the bride and bridegroom are seated beside each other. They should sit facing the east with the bride on the groom’s right. Tie the groom’s sash to the bride’s shawl, inserting a cardamom in the knot. 18

The place where the marriage is performed [should be kept fragrant throughout the ceremony] with smoke from a fire of aloe-wood. Keep the fire in the pit burning by adding ghi. 19

[With the bride thus linked to the groom] perform the *lāvān*.³

The bridegroom should precede the bride as they walk around the pit, keeping it on their right. 20

When they return to their stools the [officiating] Gurmukh declares: 'Bear witness you three—Khalsa, Sri Bhagauti, and Lord of the Fire. The first circuit has been performed!' 21

Then sing the [first] *lāv* [stanza] as recorded in the scriptures. When one circuit has been completed the first *lāv* should be sung. [The four *lāvān* are recorded as the four stanzas of the hymn in] *Sūhī* rag by the fourth Master.

[There follows the complete text of Guru Ram Das's *Sūhī Chhant* 2.4] 22

When the second circuit has been completed the second stanza should be sung. When the bride and groom return to the stools [a second time the officiating Gurmukh] says: 'Bear witness, you three! You are subject to the command of Sri Guru Akal Purakh.' 23

Whenever a circuit is completed cast ghi into the fire and say: 'Bear witness that a circuit has been completed in the marriage between..., the daughter of..., grand-daughter of..., and..., the son of...and grandson of...' 24

The four *lāvān* circuits of the marriage ceremony are thus performed, amidst a continuous wafting of smoke from the aloe-wood. Then extinguish the fire. 25

The bride should then be seated on the left stool where previously the bridegroom was seated; and the bridegroom should sit in the bride's place. 26

Near the stools and in an elevated position place *karah* *prasad* sanctified to the Guru, and offer this petition: 'In accordance with the command of Sri Akal Purakh these two persons have been wed. May the Eternal Guru (*gurū bābā abināsi purakhu*) keep them in comfort and happiness.' 27

Let the bride and bridegroom then receive the initiation by the two-edged sword (*pāhul khaṇḍe dī*). 28

[*Karah prasad* is distributed, the family servants receive their dues, wedding songs are sung, and the bride's father serves a sumptuous breakfast.]

8

The procedure to be followed on the 'night of connubial bliss' (*suhāg rāti*) [is as follows].

[The procedure for the consummation of the marriage is specified: The age of 17 is declared to be suitable for marriage. After the marriage is over it is quite proper for the bride's parents to visit and eat with the couple. There follows a lengthy discussion concerning the relationship of caste to marriage.]

12

With whom may a marriage be arranged? The first requirement is that within each caste (*baran*) all should be regarded as equal. All Khatri should be regarded as equal. Do not entertain notions of high and low castes (*jāti*) amongst yourselves. 1 ... Within the Khalsa of Sri Guru Akal Purakh, no sense of separateness should be permitted. All become members of a single caste (*baran*) [within the Khalsa]. 9 If, however, this proves to be impossible then let [marriage] alliances be arranged according to caste (*baran*)—Khatri with Khatri, Brahman with Brahman, Sud with Sud, Arora with Arora, Suniar with Suniar, Bhatia with Bhatia, Rajput with Rajput, Lohar and Tarkhan as one, Jat with Jat. Arrange marriages within the various castes (*jāti*) and give no further consideration to the matter. 10 ... The people of Sri Guru Akal Purakh are all one. If all are in fact one there should never be any discrimination within the Panth, [the community of] those who follow his path and are able to say: 'I am a Khalsa of Sri Guru Akal Purakh.' 20.12

14. Namdhari Rahit-nama and Namdhari Ardas

For this translation of the *Nāmdhārī Rahit-nāmā* the Punjabi text used is contained in *Nām-dhārī Nit-nem* (Sri Bhaini Sahib, 9th ed., S. 2035, 1978 CE), pp. 113–17. The Namdhari Ardas is also recorded in *Nām-dhārī Nit-nem*, pp. 671–3. Footnotes, which appear in the Punjabi text are marked below with asterisks.

The Rahit-nama [issued by] the Twelfth Master
By the grace of the Eternal One, the True Guru.

From Ram Singh and the Khalsa of Bhaini to all members of the Khalsa. Accept our greeting: *Vāhigurū jī kā Khālsā, Sī*

Vāhigurū jī kī fateh. This *rahit-nama* has been written for the benefit of all sangats and has been issued from Bhaini. [1]

Rise during the last watch of the night and taking a pot of water [for cleansing] go into the fields to relieve yourself. When you return scour the pot twice, remove the clothes that you were wearing while in the fields, clean your teeth, bathe, and recite [the prescribed portions of] sacred scripture. If you do not already know these by heart you should learn them. Everyone should do this, including women both old and young. Commit both *Japujī* and *Jāp* to memory, and also *Shabad Hazāre*. [2]

You must also learn *Rahirās* and *Āratī Sohilā* by heart. All should lead a life of restraint and contentment. Offer praise to the Guru, [the Lord] of Truth, throughout the day and night. [3]

Respect the daughter or the sister of another man as you would your own. The Guru has told us how we should regard the rights of others. [4]

Violating another's rights, Nanak, should be treated with the same abhorrence as a Muslim would feel for eating a pig or a Hindu would feel for killing a cow.¹ [5]

He who fails to take initiation from the Guru and who utters the Guru's mantra without first receiving it from him shall have his face blackened in this world and the next. [6]

Let no one speak maliciously of another. Be forgiving towards others, taking no account of what they may say about you. Even the person who strikes you must be forgiven. The Guru is your Protector. [7]

Always conceal your own good deeds from others. Gather to sing the sacred hymns regularly. Sing passages from the scripture daily. [8]

When a *jag* (*yajña*) is to be performed purify the place where it is to be held by plastering it. Bring earthen vessels that have not previously been used and wash your feet before entering the *jag* square. There perform the *havan*, or *hom*. Use wood from either the *palāh* or the *ber* tree. Do not [fan the fire by] blowing it with human breath. During the course of the ritual fire service, [five officiants] should read the following from copies of the scripture: *Chaupai*, *Japujī*, *Jāp*, *Chandī Charitr*, and *Akāl Ustat*.² A sixth officiant should meanwhile pour incense³ [on the fire] and a seventh should [intermittently] sprinkle a few drops of water on it. [9]

Do not admit to religious assemblies anyone who commits an evil deed such as adultery or theft. If the culprit happens to be a powerful person all should pray that he will be rendered unable to enter the congregation. [10]

But my understanding is limited. You yourselves know all that one needs to know. Let all stand reverently before the Almighty One (*paramesar*) with palms joined and pray: 'Sustain our faith, O Lord.' [11]

Always wear the approved kachh. When taking off a kachh withdraw one leg and put it in the leg-hole of another pair before withdrawing the second leg. Never conceal an evil deed committed by another person. Do not sell or barter a daughter or a sister. Constantly repeat the Guru's name. Never eat meat nor drink alcoholic liquor. Continue always in the fear of the Almighty One.⁴ [12]

*The Nāmdhārī Ardās*⁵

Victory to Vahiguru the Eternal One⁶

May Sri Bhagauti⁷ grant assistance

[In the name of] the Twelfth Master⁸

First remembering Sri Bhagauti turn your thoughts to Guru Nanak; Angad Guru, Amar Das, each with Ram Das, grant us aid. Arjan and Hargobind, think of them and Hari Rai. Dwell on Siri Hari Krishan, he whose sight dispels all pain. Think of Guru Tegh Bahadur; thus shall every treasure come. Grant us, Guru Gobind Singh, help and strength in every place. Remember Guru Balak Singh, he who has shown us the way to truth. Remember Satguru Ram Singh, Master of our faith, and he who directs our worldly actions, he who knows our inmost thoughts, Sri Akal Purakh who sets us free from the grip of death. Remember Guru Hari Singh, light incarnate, he who heals and restores; and Satguru Pratap Singh who in this present Age of Darkness has preached perfect piety, purity, the practice of repeating the divine Name and recitation of the scriptures. May they grant us help and strength in every place.

Remember the Master's four sons, the Cherished Five, and the Forty Liberated. Remember all martyrs to the faith; they who were faithful in their remembrance of the divine Name and generous to others; they who gave their heads for their faith,

steadfast in their loyalty to the true teachings of Sikhism and defending their uncut hair to their last breath; they who fearlessly spoke the truth; they who for their faith wielded the sword and shared their sustenance with others; they who were blown away from guns,⁹ condemned to the horrors of transportation¹⁰ or to hanging, and who yet clung to their faith in the Satgurus. Meditate on the greatness of these stalwart disciples and call to mind the divine Name.

Guru and Master, we who are miserable sinners, having heard how you wondrously raise the fallen, cast ourselves at your door. Bestow on us, by your grace, the blessing of the Guru's teachings. Grant that we may be found only in the company of your faithful servants, never with the proud and worldly. May the commandments which you give as Guru in the Granth Sahib always be obeyed. Grant me the gift of faith in your commandments wherever I may be. Save me, Lord, from wavering in my faith. Grant that my love may be bestowed on none save only you. Preserve me ever, O Lord, from loss of faith in you.

All in this assembly pray that you will mercifully reveal yourself in all your glory. Bring to an end the killing of the poor and the cow, extend the true faith over the earth, free all who are imprisoned, destroy those who are evil, and exalt your True Khalsa (*sant khālsā*).

Our sins, O Lord, are many. Regard not our sins but mercifully bring us into your care and protection.

In your name we pray, and in the trust that we may behold your presence. Forgive the shortcomings of our prayer. Dwell within all our hearts that we may continue to sing your praises to eternity. May your Sikhs be victorious in all places and may they who have heard and sung your praises be sustained in all their deeds. Grant that we may behold your most sacred presence. May the name of Satguru Ram Singh be magnified and by your grace may all be blessed.

15. Nirankari Hukam-nama

This document is entitled a hukam-nama, not a rahit-nama. It is in fact both a hukam-nama (an order given by the Nirankari Guru Darbara Singh) and also (and more particularly) a rahit-nama. The source of this abbreviated

translation is contained in Baba Surindar Singh (1951), pp. 157–69. For a complete translation see John C. B. Webster (1979), pp. 83–99.

Sri Satiguru Dayal once visited the realm of Nirankar.¹ There he found an assembly in session attended by Guru Nanak and the nine Gurus who succeeded him. The assembly stood and Nirankar issued this command: 'Man of Nirankar, go forth and preach the Rahit to all Sikhs. All who acknowledge the authority of the ten Gurus are now entrusted to your care.' Satiguru Dayal humbly replied: 'My Lord, what strength have I to perform this task?' Nirankar reassured him, saying, 'He who obeys you will attain deliverance and find a dwelling-place in heaven (*sach khand*). The Brahmans have been misdirecting everyone along the path which leads to hell. Show them the path of the divine Name.' Having thus received his orders from Nirankar himself Satiguru Dayal returned to the world of men.

Once Sri Satiguru Darbara Singh was sitting in a religious assembly. While the scriptural discourse was in progress a Sikh arrived from the Punjab. Entering the assembly he said, 'My Lord, the Brahmans have entangled us in a net of futile rituals and ceremonies. Please explain to us the scriptural ceremonies of birth, death, and marriage. Tell us what the Guru has commanded.'

The Satiguru addressed the sangat, saying, 'There is but one answer for all Sikhs and it is that all should repeat the Name of Nirankar. If anyone should deny this refer him to Nirankar's sacred scripture where at the very beginning it is recorded in *Japuḥ Sāhib*: 'The dwelling place of Nirankar is the Realm of Truth, the ineffable home of eternal bliss; there watching over all creation, imparting grace and bestowing joy.'

'In the presence of the assembled congregation of Sikhs who acknowledge Satiguru Baba Dayal and the Guru Granth Sahib, in its presence say, "Glory, glory be to Nirankar!" (*dhan dhan nirankār*). Repeat these words again and again: "Glory be to Nirankar!"

'There now follow the usages decreed by the Guru Granth Sahib.

'Whenever a child is born, whether it be a son or a daughter, we sing the Guru's hymns. When the birth takes place we distribute the Guru's karah prasad. Do not believe that the mother

should be regarded as polluted following childbirth.... After 40 days, the mother should bring the child into the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib and the Guru's *karah prasad* should there be offered. A name taken from the Guru Granth Sahib is then bestowed on the child. This is the ritual to be observed following a birth.

'The child is betrothed when it is old enough to understand what is taking place.... When the marriage is to take place, the Guru's blessing is invoked by singing his hymns. Women as well as men sing the third Guru's *Anand* in *Rāmakaḷī* rag.... We should never invite a Brahman to conduct a marriage. Brahmans encourage superstition in order to satisfy their own greed....

'Celebrations should be held in the house during the course of the ten days preceding the departure of the marriage party.... When the marriage party sets out the Guru Granth Sahib should be carried in a palanquin, protected by a canopy and by the use of a whisk.... When the party reaches the bride's house with the Guru Granth Sahib a carpet is spread on the ground, a canopy is suspended above it, and a screen erected around it. The Guru Granth Sahib is then set within the enclosure on a stool. After *Ardas* has been recited the ends [of the sashes worn by the bride and groom] are tied to each other and the couple walk four times around the Guru Granth Sahib while we recite Guru Arjan's hymn in *Sūhī* rag.² ...After the couple have been seated the *lāvān* are recited in *Sūhī* rag, composed by the everlasting and omnipotent Sodhi king, Satiguru Ram Dasji.³ ...We then sing more hymns and after reciting *Anand Sāhib* we serve *karah prasad* in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. The couple then proceed to their home, escorted by others singing hymns. We do not demand a dowry, brother, as this is forbidden by the Guru....

'We sing the Guru's hymns or listen to them during the course of our daily round, brother. Whenever a Sikh is about to begin an [important] task he offers *Ardas* before the Guru Granth Sahib. He then prostrates himself and [as a token of humble submission] cleans the shoes [of others who have assembled before the Guru Granth Sahib]. It is not our custom to ascertain auspicious times for such activities.... All the years, months, and days given by the Guru are suitable, brother. The Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, tells us that a Gursikh should

simply invoke the Guru's name and set about his business, even though the omens may all appear bad. Even tasks which seem impossible can be performed with the Guru's aid. Such is the power of the divine Name.

'When by Nirankar's grace life draws to its end, when the call comes and a Sikh departs this life, we cover the corpse with a white shroud and either cremate it or commit it directly to flowing water, singing hymns as we do so. We do not weep and wail. Whether the deceased be a child, a young person, or one advanced in years we simply wrap him in a white shroud.... When we cremate a Sikh we recite *Anand* and *Kīrtan Sohilā*. We then serve karah prasad and fried cakes (*luchī*) as our means afford, and return to the Guru Granth Sahib, reciting hymns antiphonally as we go. When we arrive we inaugurate a reading of the complete scripture. This is Guru Nanak's rite, brother, restored again by Satiguru Dayal. It is the scriptural rite and Sikhs should observe it....

'When Brahmans conduct the shraddh ceremony commemorating a death, brother, they claim that the ancestors of Khatris have become crows, dogs, snakes, cows and frogs! They also insist on being given feasts. Gursikhs should have nothing to do with such practices. For them the only path is the divine Word. Do not engage in mourning for a deceased person, brother.... When anyone departs for the realm of Nirankar, brother, then humbly submitting to the will of the eternal Satiguru we clothe ourselves in pure white garments and go about our normal business. We do not spread [mourning] mats. The only other thing we do is gather the bones and ashes after five days and commit them to flowing water. As we do this we sing hymns....

'The traditional rituals and ceremonies are all spurious. What you should do, brother, is repeat the divine Name. Take no account of astrological predictions. "A host of suns shine when the Name is repeated, banishing the darkness of ignorance." This hypocrisy, brother, is entirely due to the greed of the Brahmans. What difference can it make if a star is ascending or declining!...

'Attend the sangat, joining with others in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, and [acknowledge your submission to the sangat by humbly] washing their feet. We already observe the

practice of signifying our submission to Nirankar by cleaning the shoes of those who assemble in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. This we do because Guru Nanak has told us to do it....

‘There are three other precepts to be observed, all of them taught by the immortal Guru Nanak and by Satiguru Dayal. 1. Sing songs of praise to Nirankar. 2. Serve your parents. 3. In obedience to Nirankar live by your own labours and renounce all evil. As Kabir says in shalok 233: “He who consumes bhang, fish, or liquor shall surely go to hell, regardless of all his pilgrimages, fasts, and disciplines (AG 1377).” The purpose of these three precepts is as follows. We sing Nirankar’s praises in order to bring the round of transmigration to an end. We should serve our parents because a mother carries the child in her womb for ten months, and once Nirankar has brought it to birth parents must assume complete responsibility for it. And we should earn our own keep because one should not be dependent on others. Do not believe anyone who violates any of these three principles. They have been delivered by Satiguru Nanak himself and by Satiguru Dayal...’

The Sikh who received this homily [from Satiguru Darbara Singh] fell at his feet and asked to be initiated as a disciple. He was told that his prime duty must be to worship none save the Guru’s divine Word and to devoutly repeat the name of Nirankar.

16. Vajib-u’l-Araz, the Sahaj-dharis’ Rahit-nama

From Kahn Singh Nabha (1960), pp. 815–16.

Vājib-u’l-Araz

A Written Petition

The Rahit-nama of the Sahaj-dhari Sikhs

(1) [Some Sahaj-dhari Sikhs once asked Guru Gobind Singh:] ‘At the time of a wedding we called a learned Brahman and had him read the portion [of scripture] for a marriage. Now, however, the Sikhs [of the Khalsa] say: “Conduct the marriage by reading *Anand*.[†] Do not call the Brahmans.” True King

(*sachche pātashāh*), what is your command?' [The Guru's answer] bore his specific imprint: 'First read *Anand* and after it pronounce the Ardas. Then always have the Brahmans conduct [the marriage ceremony]. Do not doubt [that this method is acceptable for you].'

(2) [The Sahaj-dharis then asked:] 'The commandment of the revered [Gurus] is that you should never have dealings with these Five [Reprobate] Groups (*pañjān melān*): the followers of Dhir Mal, the followers of Ram Rai, the Minas, the masands, and those who shave their heads (*siragum*). Who is a Siragum?' [The Guru] replied: 'Siragums are those who preach atheism. The followers of Nandachand² are Siragums. The Muslims are thorough Siragums.' The Sikhs [then] asked: 'A [member of one of these groups] may be a trader and another may be in a clerical profession. Observing their business how can we recognise that they are [members of one of the five and are] guilty of underhand dealings?' [The Guru's answer] bore his specific imprint: 'First establish friendly relations by asking [questions]. If it turns out that you have made a mistake say Ardas.'

(3) 'True King, we Sahaj-dharis are your Sikhs. When parents die it is the custom of all around us to shave their heads (*bhaddan*) and so we did likewise. But the [Khalsa] Sikhs say: "Vahiguru has established the Khalsa and so you, [being Sikhs,] should not follow the custom of those around you." True King, what is your command?' [The Guru's answer] bore his specific imprint: 'Do not shave your head. Ask forgiveness for other mistaken customs that you may copy from the people around you [and it will be granted].'

(4) 'True King, at weddings or shraddh anniversaries we used to feed Brahmans. The [Khalsa] Sikhs say that a Sikh should be fed, [not a Brahman.]' The Guru decreed: 'Everyone should be lovingly fed—Sikhs, Brahmans, unexpected visitors, [everyone].'

(5) 'True King, on the occasion of bestowing the sacred thread (*janeū*) we shaved a son's head (*bhadar*) with a razor. [In future] we shall do as you command.' [The Guru] commanded, [the answer] bearing his specific imprint: 'Initiate the sons of Sahaj-dharis.'³

(6) 'True King, previously we despatched the bones [of our dead] to the Ganga. Now the [Khalsa] Sikhs forbid it. What is your command?' [The Guru] answered, [the answer] bearing his specific imprint: 'Take the bones where you wish. A Sikh who fights in the battle of truth does so, [as it were,] at Kurukshetra, ['the field of action']. His ashes should be laid in the dust at the feet of a group of faithful followers (*sādh-saṅgati*) who come from all around Amritsar. For him this will mean liberation [from the round of transmigration].'⁴

(7) 'We Sikhs whose business takes us to the courts had our beards and hair cut off with scissors. What would you now have us do?' [The Guru] decreed, [the answer] bearing his specific imprint: 'It is excellent for you who are Sahaj-dhari Sikhs to maintain the appearance of Kes-dharis. If that is not possible then you should [at least] keep [your hair] at an acceptable length. Should a Kes-dhari do this, however, he is not a Sikh.'⁵

(8) 'True King, it is your command that Siragums [should be regarded as] one of the five reprobate groups and we should never become familiar with them. If any of us in our daily routine should become familiar with them what are we to do?' [The Guru] commanded: 'What the Guru desires is a pure heart. What does it matter if you become familiar [with them]? It is business dealings that are forbidden.'

(9) '[Sahaj-dhari] Sikhs go to bathe in the Ganga. While they are returning how should they respond to those whom they meet?' [The Guru] replied: 'They should show love and affection, brother Singhs,⁶ and should not cause unreasonable trouble. There is laid upon you my command not to associate with members of the Five Reprobate Groups because by associating with them your faith in the Guru decreases. If, [however,] any of them wishes to have contact with you then allow it. Tell him the Guru's teachings, sing songs [together], fulfil your religious duty and share your food [with him]. This is the way of Sikhs.'

(10) 'True King, previously we were permitted to summon [Brahman] pundits to read the Garud Puran and conduct the Dasagatra. But now the pundits do not come. They say: "If you wear a sacred thread and a loin-cloth for the Dasagatra we shall come." [What can we do?] We shall do as you command.' [The Guru] replied, [his answer] bearing his specific imprint: 'Be

strong in your faith. At the conclusion of the Granth the fifth Master has recorded the Sahasakriti shaloks for the Sikhs to hear. [Hearing them] will place a person in the Khalsa. Be wise. There is nothing to equal faith and the divine Name.'

17. Portion of Avatar Singh Vahiria's Khalsa Dharam Shastr

4. *Rahit Nāmā Section*

The fourth section of the rahit-nama opens with (1) Guru Ram Das's shalok 11:2 from *Gaurī kī Vār* (AG 305-6) and (2) Bhai Gurdas's *Vār* 6:3. It then continues:

The Method of Practising the Daily Discipline

(3) The Guru loves that Sikh who is firm in maintaining the daily discipline (*nit-nem*). The *nit-nem* is essential for a Sikh. He who does not practise it is a slave to sin. The *nit-nem* serves as a watchman for us. If the watchman remains alert for the appointed time the precious goods of worship, remembrance, and respectable behaviour will be protected. If, however, this watchman during the time of the *nit-nem* is not alert one fears that the goods will be stolen. *Nit-nem* should be as firm as can be. It should be as natural as the daily actions of eating and drinking. Just as failure to eat at the appropriate time leaves one disturbed, so should failure to perform *nit-nem*. If it is not performed it will leave you with a [spiritual] hunger such as the physical hunger which comes from not eating and drinking. You should understand that if you do not gain the earnings of *nit-nem* you must remain unfulfilled.

Bathing

(4) The first rule is that you should bathe early in the morning (*prabhāt*). A Gursikh has two kinds of life. One is his spiritual life and the other is his mundane life. The mundane life is needed so that his spiritual life is maintained, wherein liberation is gained and the true life is lived. The spiritual life is for gaining knowledge of the world hereafter, and the mundane life is to know the present world. Every day begin this spiritual life by bathing.

(5) The Guru's Sikhs should bathe in the early morning. The fourth watch of the night is the time for worship, when dawn is breaking and the sun's first rays appear. This is the special time, when the mind is concentrated and one is rapt in meditation. Then sleep is banished. The cares of the previous day fall away and the time for the business of the coming day has not yet arrived.

(6) The earlier one bathes in the morning the more beneficial it will be. If the rule of early morning rising is maintained sleep will depart. Determine the time of rising by estimating the stars or else by a clock. This will not mean that the time of rising varies every day. At the appropriate time sleep departs and shedding all drowsiness you arise awake. Go out to some wasteland to perform bodily functions and while you squat there you should not speak. With water and earth cleanse your hands and feet. Your hand is fit to apply water and earth, cleansing and making your private parts pure. Use soap if it is available, but it is not necessary for purity.

(7) After washing your hands rinse your mouth and clean your teeth. For this purpose do not use a twig without water. Keep some water for this purpose. Having taken a twig out of your mouth after cleaning your teeth do not put it in your mouth again. Washing [your mouth] with this water. Clean your teeth in private with a twig. After using a twig it should be thrown away. You should then clear your throat.

(8) If you are able to bathe at Amritsar count it as a special privilege. If you cannot make it to Kaulsar² [first], then bathe in well water and then in the pool at Sri Amritsar, thus sanctifying your kes with amrit.

(9) If you must bathe outside Ramdaspur³ or in some distant place let your mind dwell on the lake [of peace which is] Amrit[sar]. If for any reason bathing is impossible, perform the *pañj ishanān*⁴ and merely splash some water on your body. The meaning of the saying 'He who bathes dips in Amritsar' is also that having bathed one should go and sit in a sangat which is like the lake of Amritsar. The sangat is like the lake of Amritsar wherein Sikhs of the Guru find their home wherever they may be, there where *kīrtan*, *kathā*, *shabad*, *bāñī*, etc., are brought together and daily performed everywhere.

(10) The sign of a virtuous people is as follows. Those people who bathe in the early hours will be perceived as such, even when it is obscure, and will certainly be amongst those excellent people who attend satsangs for worship and readings of the scripture. The people who ostentatiously make a great show of listening to sermons but who do not observe the rule of early-morning bathing will not be trusted by virtuous folk.

(11) This early-morning bathe serves both your spiritual and your mundane lives. Worldly people who spend the delectable hours of the early morning in sleep or in sloth uselessly waste their time. The Guru's Sikhs, discharging their daily discipline, also fulfil some mundane needs, while worldly people have little time left after bathing. And just as the early-morning bathe is beneficial for the spiritual life, so too it is effective for one's health. It also keeps you alert in mundane matters. Therefore strive to keep the rule concerning the early-morning bathe.

The Liturgical Order for Morning Recitation

(12) Having bathed chant *Japujī*. The Guru's command is that he who recites *Japujī* with his faculties alert will be honoured by the world.

(13) After you have chanted *Japujī* meditate on the Name of God (*harināmu*). Taking the teaching of the Guru (which is the divine Name mantra), with the hymn that you have just uttered in mind, meditate in your heart with every breath you take. In other words, one's conscious understanding must be completely absorbed in the divine Word. In the process the Word is mingled with an understanding of the Word. As a rule understanding does not dwell in the Word because of confusion and obstacles. Try to get rid of these obstacles. The kind of meditation which you seek causes you ecstasy through every pore of your body. The errors of your previous births are annulled and the gains of this human birth are the result. The meaning of the Word (*shabad*) is that as understanding begins the inner being unfolds, and as a result the unreal is abandoned and essential things take root. This experience amounts to the same thing as the [Vedantic] precept 'That you are'. After this you should complete the process by reciting this delectable mantra in a low tone (*madh[ya]mā bāñī*).⁵

(14) Thus it is that by hearing and chanting the Guru's *bāṇī* aloud we obey the final rule. *Japujī*, *Jāp*, *Shabad Hazāre*, *Āsā dī Vār*, *Sukhamanī*, and other such works fulfil the rule. If possible, obey the rule by chanting all of the Guru's *bāṇī* on the same day. If for any reason some of the recitation has to be delayed let it be done on the following day. *Sukhamanī* has 24,000 letters in it, and chanting this successfully you sanctify the 24,000 breaths of your life that you take during a day and a night.⁶ The person who understands it will reap the benefits of *Sukhamanī* which inscribes great blessing in its final stanza.

(15) After the morning order the mundane part of a person turns his thoughts towards his work. Meditation on the Guru's divine Word should not cease with all the ups and downs of the world's activity but should continue with every breath that a person takes. Do not count your business as wasted time if you can repeat a small portion of the divine Name. Your business may require all the attention of your physical senses, but your breaths can have no business other than repeating the Name. Your breath should not be allowed to escape without the Name. This is what in Gurmat is called the real 'exercise of breaths', [the *prāṇāyām* of yoga]. The description [of *prāṇāyām*] can be as a part of *Uttarī Mīmāṃsā*.

The Evening Order

(16) Chant or listen to Sodar Rahiras. Sing in the measure of the *Āsā* rag's *dukh dārū sukh rog*. After chanting the five hymns, which begin with *Sodar* and the four with *So purakh*, proceed to the *bāṇī* of the Tenth Master. Beginning with *pun rāchhis kā kālā sīsā* chant the two *Benatī chaupāī* (up to *chūk hoi kab lehu sudhāro*). After this repeat the savaïyas from *kabi bāch doharā*, *jo nij prabhu moso kahā*, and various other savaïyyas according to your preference. Next, repeat the *rām kathā* and the chaupai *jo eh kathā sunē ar gāve*, and then that symbolic work *Anand*. And then after *Mundāvaṇī* and the verse *tithai tūn samarath* complete the recitation by saying Ardas.⁷

(17) After this, if time permits read *Āratī* from the Guru Granth Sahib. Alternatively sing (or chant) *Āratī* with some other hymns.

(18) Each person must actually chant *Japujī* and *Jāp Sāhib*. For Rahiras and Kirtan Sohila, however, the rule is obeyed if one person chants while the remainder of the sangat listens. In Rahiras if any member of the sangat enters before the recitation of *Anand* his duty will be understood to have been discharged.

The Night Order

(19) *Kīrt[an] Sohilā* actually comprises only five hymns, which are chanted without effort at the time of retiring for the night. It is permitted to chant a hymn in *Sorath* rag (*gur kā shabad rakhavāre*) and one in *Bilāval* rag (*tati vau na lagai*) before *Kīrtan Sohilā*, but not afterwards. *Āratī Sohilā* is the day's terminal hymn, the final lock on the door. And in the morning the first verse of *Japujī* is the key [that opens it]. After *Āratī Sohilā* and the recitation of Ardas repeat *Satinām Vāhigurū*. With the hymn that you have just uttered in mind breathe regularly. Senses will come together and you will fall into a dreamless sleep....

An Announcement

(20) The Rahit that is set out in the following pages, in whatever form it is expressed, is correct. This Sikh faith is the Khalsa Panth, according to ancient and unconditional law, established in the divine presence [of the True Guru]. We have no right to reject it, nor is it within our authority to do so. To help understand it some notes have been added.

[Then follow portions of Bhai Gurdas's Vārs 12 and 28, a short passage from his Kabitts, two sections from the Dasam Granth, and almost all the Rahit sections of the Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā.]

— Avatar Singh Vahiria (1914), pp. 149–98.

18. Extracts from the Sanskar Bagh of Baba Khem Singh Bedi

The following are direct quotations from R. W. Falcon (1896). The numerous printing, spelling, and grammatical mistakes are in the original. This version, attributed to

Khem Singh Bedi, derives from the 1894 edition of Avatar Singh Vahiria's *Khālsā Dharam Shāstr*.

A translation of a modern Rahitnama from the Sanskar Bagh of Baba Khem Singh Bedi, may be usefully added here for purposes of comparison and to give an idea of the modern adaptation of Sikhism, as upheld by the strictest of present-day Singhs.

- 'Never to be without the five Kakkes, or signs of a Singh, from the time of taking the Pahul to day of death; not to put them off day or night.'
- 'Not associate with the Minia, Dhirmullias, Ram Raie, Masands, Jains, Kurimars and Gangushahi.'
- 'Not to wear saffron coloured cloth.'
- 'Not to tell lies.'
- 'Not to call a Singh by half his name, *i.e.*, by the first half of his name, without the addition of Singh.'
- 'Not to abuse other Singhs.'
- 'Never to keep the head bare, especially when eating.'
- 'Not to gamble, to swear, or associate with prostitutes.'
- 'Not to cut the hair of the head with scissors or razors.'
- 'Not to eat the flesh of animals whose throats have been cut.'
- '(i) Not to smoke or take snuff.'
- '(ii) Have nothing to do with female Muhammadans.'
- '(iii) Not to show disrespect to the kes of other Singhs.'
- '(iv) Not to eat vermin. (Should he break any of the four last rules, he must take the Pahul a second time, paying a fine of Rs 5 at the same time.)'
- 'To read various prayers—(the jup of the Adi Granth, the jup of the Granth,¹ in the morning; the Raharas at night, & c.).'
- 'To learn the use of arms, learn to read Gurmukhi, and how to ride.'
- 'To give alms.'
- [']To serve one's father and mother.'

—Falcon, p. 10.

In his opening chapter Falcon describes the procedure for the administration of *pāhul*. Although this is given in his own words it seems likely that this also depends on Baba Khem Singh Bedi and Avatar Singh Vahiria. He describes it as follows:

The Pahul, i.e., the gate, the oath of initiation and baptismal ceremony of the Sikhs who follow Guru Govind Singh, originated with the earlier Sikh Gurus, some say with Nanak himself, and in its earlier form consisted in drinking water, the washing of the Guru's feet (to be accurate, of the toes), and saying:- 'Wah Guru,' 'Hail Guru,' or in drinking some sherbet with two other disciples and repeating 'Wah Guru';—this is known as the charan ka pahul, or foot baptism, the water used being called the charamat: it gradually fell into disuse, but is not obsolete, as will be shown in a later chapter. Guru Govind Singh re-introduced this in a new form, and the true Sikh or Singh does not become a Singh until he has been initiated by taking the Pahul, or as they call it 'Amrit Chaka,' i.e., drink of the amrit or nectar; Sikhs believe there is a potent virtue in this amrit, by which even cowards are inspired to deeds of bravery. A Sikh is thus not born a Singh but becomes one by initiation. The form of taking the Pahul varies slightly at different temples it is called the 'Khande ka pahul' or sword (more accurately two-edged dagger) baptism.

The form used at the Akalgarh, part of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and a very favourite place of initiation, being the place of deposit of weapons once belonging to some of the Gurus, (including Guru Govind Singh) is as follows:- The candidate at the appointed time, (any convenient time,) having put on the kach (short Sikh drawers reaching nearly to the knee), he may, if he desires, wear his pajamas over them, and his kurta and pagri, but he must not wear the Hindu dhoti, or any other Hindu symbol such as thread round the throat, etc.,—stands up before the Mahant (the Granthi in ordinary places) with his hands together in supplication. The performing priest takes up a batti or iron bowl filled with patasa or purified sugar dissolved in water, stirs the mixture with a two-edged dagger called a khanda (this is the amrit or nectar), recites a short prayer, then takes up some of the amrit with his hand from the bowl and drops it into the hands of the candidate, which he holds together in a cup shape ready to receive it. This he drinks up while the priest says:- 'Bol wah Guru ji da khalsa Siri wah Guru ji di fate,' i.e., say the Khalsa of the wah Guru (God) victory of the holy wah Guru. This is repeated five times, after which the candidate turns his face upwards, and the amrit is sprinkled on it five times and then

upon his kes (uncut hair) five times. The bowl is then handed down to the candidate, who carefully drinks up the rest of the amrit. He is then instructed as to the observances he is to keep, after which the kara parsad, which is sugar, flour and ghi mixed into a lump, is put into the bowl and the candidate sits himself down cross-legged and eats it up. When finished he again stands up as before and repeats a final 'fate' that is to say, the Sikh salutation, as before, after the priest, and then goes off to bathe in the sacred tank. The Khalsa means 'God's elect,' i.e., the Sikhs of Govind Singh. The kara parsad would be eaten by as many candidates of any caste as took the Pahul together, each eating from the same lump, and is the communion of brotherhood, representing the abolition of caste. The candidate pays certain fees varying according to his means, which includes the price of the patasa and kara parsad. The amount of kara parsad for each time, irrespective of the number of candidates, must not be less than Rs 1-4: it is therefore a saving for many candidates to take the Pahul together. The fees include Rs 1-4 to the Granthi—something for the temple treasury and other offerings, and the feeding of other poor Sikhs, which in the case of a well-to-do Sikh would amount to some 200 or 300 rupees.

—R. W. Falcon, pp. 4-6.

The following brief extracts from the Sanskar Bagh, or Book of Observances of Baba Khem Singh Bedi, are here added to show the attempt made by modern Singhs to draw up rules for birth, marriage and death rites, based on the Adi Granth and the Granth [*sic* Dasam Granth], which shall be suitable for Singhs and Sikhs (i.e., Keswalas who take the khande ka pahul and Sajhdharis who take the charan ka pahul) and shall do away with the use of Brahmins....

When a Singh hears the news of a birth of a child to him, he should if possible wash himself entirely: if this is not feasible, wash both his hands, both his feet and face (panje asnan, or washing of the five parts), and put on clean clothes: then read the Japji, if a boy is born (Bhajungi or Sikh boy child) read the Bhagat Govind ka janua putr ka sabad eleven times, then the Bhagoti sabad eleven times² and repeat the names of the ten Gurus: then pray as follows: 'O God, by thy will a man Sikh has been born: may he be a doer of good works, be healthy and

skilled in arms, pious, maintaining the Khalsa religion; in all things worthy of his ancestors, and continue the worship of the Guru;’ for a girl the following prayer—‘O! God, by thy will, a girl child has been born, may she be good, pious, free from all wicked deeds, chaste, modest, sensible and charitable,’ then wash the feet of the *manji* or stand on which the Granth is kept, catching the washing in an iron cup, mix into it some patasia, for a boy, and sugar for a girl, and give to the child as its first food—read certain verses—the child is now a Sikh, as he or she has taken the charan ka pahul and can now be embraced.

Write in large characters on a piece of paper the first verse of the Japji and fix to the wall in front of the mother (with any weapons which may be at hand if the child is a boy,) and put over the child’s head on the wall the first line of a Sabad ‘Sir mastak rakhin pur bhram’—the mother’s duty being to gaze at these various verses.

On the fifth day after birth wash the child, collect together two or three good Singhs, wash their toes, mix in the washing some patasia or sugar, each Singh in turn to read some of the Japji, after which some of the Charamat or washing is to be sprinkled over the forehead and mouth and hair of the child and his mother, the rest to be drunk by them. After which the Singhs are to be fed with parsad and dismissed with due respect. On the thirteenth day, as many Singhs as possible having been collected, the child is brought in dressed in good clothes and is named from the Granth in the same way as described further on in renaming a Singh, various sabads are then read, more charamat made as above and the same ceremony gone through.

On the fortieth day repeat again. The Singh is warned not to feel any objection to the birth of a girl, but to take every care of her and be satisfied with the Guru’s will.

I have introduced the above in detail to show the use still made of the charan ka pahul.

The child cannot eat with his father until he has taken the khande ka pahul. This should not be taken until the child is old enough to understand the keeping of the rahitnama, and not before 11 years of age. Should the father, for reasons of poverty, or other valid reason, desire the child to eat with him, the child may take the khande ka pahul at an earlier age, the father being responsible that the boy keeps the observances properly.

The rules for marriage are much the same as those already enumerated for the Hindu, except that the Granth takes the place of the Hindu scriptures and a Singh officiates for the Brahmin. The father or chief living relation of a girl has to look for a suitable boy, to be if possible five years older—this is the mangni. Then comes the engagement day, or kurmai; on a suitable day, as many Singhs as possible having been collected together, the sagan, or formal betrothal certificate, is drawn up. On this is written the caste, name, age and pedigree of the girl, who is now betrothed to such and such a boy; here follows caste, name, age and pedigree of the boy, read out to the assembly and the Guru's approval is asked. Date and year is noted along with names of any suitable witnesses. The paper is sprinkled with 'kesar' and yellow powder, and then handed to the boy's family together with certain other articles, after which the usual feeding of the assembly follows.

When the boy and girl are grown up and a suitable day has been fixed, the girl's family writes the saha or intimation letter and sends to the boy's family. The ceremonies are the same as those for Hindus, prayers from the Granth being substituted, the usual feasting follows.

The only points of difference worth mentioning in the ceremonies of death and burial are, that the dead man's kes having been carefully washed, his other four kakkes are taken off and four fresh ones put on and burnt with the body. The phul after collection on the fourth day may be thrown, after the expiry of the thirteenth day, into any branch of the Ganges, or into the Ganges. Or after being ground into powder thrown into the chaugird or promenade of the Durbar Sahib at Amritsar, or of any other Gurdwara, as may be convenient or preferred, the Ganges not being counted absolutely essential to the dead person. A complete set of clothes and four kakkes is presented to the Akal Bungah. The mourner, too, does not shave his head, as in the case of Hindus.

The ceremony of pahul for a Sikh woman is much the same as that for a man, except that sugar is used instead of patasia. If a khande, or two-edged dagger is used for stirring the amrit, the handle is used and not the blade, or if a sword, the back; the oath is taken in this form, 'Bol wah Guru Sat nam,' instead of the longer one used by the man.

The woman's rahits are to consider her husband as god and obey his orders, keep him cheerful, not to associate with other men, to pay respect to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, not to wear blue pajamas, not to join in the women's mourning ceremony (of beating the breast and wailing), to give alms, not to worship Muhammadan or Hindu shrines, etc., to be modest and worship the one God.

When a Sikh takes the pahul and becomes a Singh, should his name be unsuitable and he requires to be given a new name, it is done as follows:- The Granth having been closed, the bhagoti is read, the Granth is then opened and whatever place it happens to open at, the first letter of the first verse at the bottom of the page is taken and whatever suitable name can be made is given... [I]f the letter is unsuitable because no good name can be made from it, or because other relatives have the same name, the next letter is taken; if more than one man requires renaming, the first letter is given to the right-hand man, the next to the next man and so on.

If a Singh breaks any of the rahits, he should take the pahul again and is called tunkhai (one desiring forgiveness); his cup should be separate to that used by other candidates, the ceremony is the same, if he committed his fault knowingly, he must pay Rs 5 as a fine, at once, or by instalments according to his means: if the fault was committed unwittingly, he pays 5 takas ($\frac{1}{2}$ anna pieces) 5 pysas and 5 annas.

Those who take the pahul together are called Gurbhais.

Outcasts (those who are not of the four castes of Brahmin, Chatri, Vaisya, and Sudra) must have a separate cup and eat apart from the four castes mentioned at the ceremony of taking the pahul.

When a candidate appears to take the pahul, no Hindu signs, such as strings round the neck, etc., are to be allowed.

In the book quoted above, the difference between Sajhdharis and Keswalas, or Sikhs and Singhs, is stated to be as follows:- Both are of the khalsa, but the Singh worships God with tun (body), mun (heart), and dhan (wealth), i.e., with tun, because he leaves his face untouched as God made it, wears no janeus, tikas (on forehead), dhوتي, bodi, earrings; does not clip the centre of the moustache as a Mahammadan does; mun, in that he does not worship Devis and Deotas, but God only; and dhan,

in that he gives alms to ziarats, shrines, etc., it is in the name of the wah Guru; whilst the Sikh or Sajhdhari, though of the khalsa, worships God with mun, and dhan, but not with tun, and is in so much wanting as compared with the Singh.

The above, as being the opinions of one who may be considered the head, from a religious point of view, of the Singhs, and as having been compiled with other Sikh authorities, is worth noting.

—Falcon, pp. 56–60.

19. Portion of Guramat Prakash Bhag Sanskar

This translation follows the text of the 8th edition of *Guramat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṁskār*, published by the Chief Khalsa Divan, Amritsar, in 1952. Footnotes which appear in the Punjabi text are marked below with asterisks.

Amrit Saṁskār

The Initiation Ceremony for Entry into the Khalsa

At the opening of the Guru Granth Sahib there should be present at least six Singhs. At the beginning one of these should read with [due] respect a hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib, while [the other] five should prepare *amrit*. The person seeking initiation¹ who is desirous of joining the Guru's community [with its] service, love, and noble qualities, who possesses the [necessary] qualifications, and whose character is pure, should stand before the Guru Granth Sahib with palms together. He should be wearing clean clothes and the Five Ks, with a sword (*srī sāhib*), a kirpan, etc. handsomely suspended at his waist on a baldric. His clothing at this time should consist of simple garments and he should wear no insignia of another religion. The initiant should continually repeat '*Vāhigurū*', and with respect and humility he should direct his inner thoughts to the Satguru. Then in [the assurance of his] faith he should bow his forehead to the ground and standing up, in the presence of the Guru, should shout the Fateh.²

The sangat then sings stanza 16 of Guru Arjan's *Jaitasari Vār*.³

The Singh who has been appointed leader (*jathedār*) of the Panj Piaras⁴ the occasion reads the first verse of Guru Nanak's *Sorathi* 9.⁵ [He continues]: 'Man cannot free

himself from the effects of deeds performed in the cycle of transmigration. The Siddhs asked Guru [Nanak] a question recorded in the Guru's *Rāmakaṭī Siddh Goṣṭi* 19 (AG 598). To this [Guru Nanak] gave the answer recorded in his *Rāmakaṭī Siddh Goṣṭi* 20.⁶ The seeker must take birth in the household of the Satiguru, and this new birth is received by the grace of the sat-sangat. The Guru himself puts this question from the refrain (*rahāu*) of Bhagat Ravidas's third hymn in *Malār* rag:

By means of what devotion (*bhagatī*) can I find my Beloved, the Master who sustains life.⁷

'[And the Guru] provides the answer:

Associating with the assembly of the devout (*sādh saṅgati*) one achieves the supreme status (AG 1293).

'Is there [such a thing as] an assembly of the devout in which, born in the Guru's household, one can achieve the supreme status? The Satiguru speaks words of reassurance in stanza 9 of Guru Arjan's *Gaurī kī Vār* (AG 320). In a meeting (*dīvān*) of the assembly of the devout a thirst for a vision (*darashan*) of Akal Purakh is thus aroused and is [wholly] satisfied.'

The leading Singh then addresses the initiate [directly]: 'The Guru's teachings require one to abandon worship [of Hindu gods], caste, and pride in one's lineage. What is required is love and devotion of the one Akal Purakh, with brotherly affection for all living creatures, love of the sacred scripture (both in reading and contemplation of it), and submissive devotion to the Guru.⁸ The satsang is necessary for gaining access to Akal Purakh. To gain access to Akal Purakh requires helpful service to the sangat and the Panth, together with a spoken remembrance of the divine Name. Are you willing to accept, in joy and with complete satisfaction, this way of belief (*dharam*)?'

The initiate replies: 'I am.'

The leading Singh [then] says: 'The Rahit of the Sikh faith comprises the Daily Rule (*nit-nem*),⁹ reading the sacred scripture, bearing the Five Ks, forswearing the four evil deeds (*kurahitān*), and amongst your religious works apportioning a tithe for religious expenses. Do you joyfully accept this Rahit?'

The initiate replies: 'I do.'

The sangat sings verse 4 of Guru Ram Das's *Āsā Chhant* 15 (AG 449). The leading Singh [then] asks the sangat: 'Is it your will that this person should be granted initiation?' The granthi

or some other person in good standing should reply on behalf of the sangat: 'It is the will of Vahiguru.'

When the leading Singh takes his place, sitting [on the floor] before the [raised] Guru Granth Sahib, the other four Piaras, properly clothed and armed (*tiār baratiār*), seat themselves beside the bowl [which is to be used for the initiation]. Each must wear a sword or kirpan on a baldric, there in the presence of the Guru [Granth Sahib]. Deeply concentrating, with minds completely absorbed, they repeat '*Vāhigurū, Vāhigurū*'. Devoutly the leading Singh and the other four Piaras recite verse 1(1) of Guru Arjan's *Rāmakālī kī Vār* (AG 957).

The leading Singh with the sangat then stands and in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, he makes the following intercession:

'Matchless and most benevolent Satiguru, in your presence this person, thirsting for [the nectar which is] *amrit*, presents himself for initiation. The Panj Piaras, having read your most sacred words (*bānī*), are willing to prepare *amrit* in your presence. If you grant your most sacred permission *amrit* will be prepared.'

Turning to the sangat he then says: 'Assembly of the devout, do you grant permission for *amrit* to be prepared?' On behalf of the sangat the granthi answers: 'It is the will of the Satiguru.'

The leading Singh takes the bowl, spotless and made only of pure iron, and places it before him. In it he pours clean water, adding sugar pellets (*patāshe*). Adopting the heroic posture (*bīrāsān*) he places one hand on the bowl¹⁰ and the other on a two-edged sword (*khaṇḍā*) with which he stirs [the contents of the bowl]. With mind concentrated and with the assurance of divine blessing he meditates on Akal Purakh, concentrating [on the stirring as he would] when churning curds and thus preparing the *amrit*.¹¹ Slowly and with devotion [he recites]:

(1) *Japujī*.

(2) *Jāp*.

(3) The *Ten Savayyās*, beginning with 'Scrupulous Jains and hosts of Siddhs'. After he has recited the *savayyās* [each of the other] four Piaras should recite them in turn. When one [Piara] passes the sword to the next the sword must not be left without a hand on it, nor should it be withdrawn from the *amrit*.

(4) *Benatī Chaupāī*, from 'Extend to me your guiding hand' to 'say once a *chaupāī*' from *Rahīrās*. Then the leading Singh [again assumes conduct of the ceremony].

(5) He recites the first five stanzas and the last stanza of *Anand Sāhib* and then, standing up, he offers this prayer of intercession:¹²

'[We remember] the [five] Cherished Ones of the Guru, the faithful, the martyrs, those who shared with others, who repeated the divine Name, who earned their living through honest means, who practised charity as a part of their belief, who wielded their swords [in a noble cause], who without faltering gave their heads for their faith, who counted their fate as sweet. Reflect on their merits and say *Srī Vāhigurū*.'

[He recites] the 55th stanza of Guru Arjan's *Gaurī Bāvan Akharī* (AG 261-2). [He then continues:]

'Kinsman of Believers, Forgiver of the Guilty, Lover of the Devout, Akal Purakhji! With your leave and by your grace this *amrit* has been prepared and this initiate who desires it by your sacred will is to receive it. By your supreme grace grant that from this day, believing in your teachings, he may be born again and that he may abandon such former illusions as caste, religion, and lineage. Let him cling to your sacred feet, firm in his awareness of a single community, and let him find a home with the sacred scripture and the divine Name conferred by the *amrit* ceremony. True King, by your leave this Sikh is [being initiated by] taking *amrit*. He is accepting the Sikh faith (*jahāz charhadū jā charhadī/charhade han*). Grant him an awareness of your greatness and, ever with him, be his help at all times. Confer on him such a vision of your grace that his confidence, faith, and trust will ensure that he holds to you¹³ until the very end.'

The leader then declares the *Mūl Mantra* to the initiate:

There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality, the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity, immortal, never incarnated, self-existent, known by grace through the Guru (AG 1).

Five times the initiate utters [the *Mūl Mantra*] after the leader. Then the leader, his attention focussed on the True King Sri Kalgidhar¹⁴ Guru Gobind Singh, instructs the initiate to adopt the 'heroic posture'. [The initiate,] with [cupped hands,] his right hand over his left, receives five palmfuls of *amrit* to drink. [The

leading Singh] repeats after [the delivery of] each palmful: 'Say *Vāhigurū jī kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū jī kī fateh!*' [Each time] the initiate will respond: '*Vāhigurū jī kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū jī kī fateh!*' [The leader] then sprinkles *amrit* on the [initiate's] eyes five times. In like manner he applies *amrit* to [the initiate's] kes.¹⁵ As before, each time [*amrit*] is applied to the eyes and kes the initiate declares after the leader: '*Vāhigurū jī kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū jī kī fateh!*'. According to this tradition (*marayādā*) [the remnant of] the *amrit* which remains in the bowl should be used for completing the initiation. If there is a substantial amount remaining all initiates should drink it from the bowl together.

Then the Rahit is proclaimed. The leading Singh says:¹⁶

'As from today your spiritual father is Guru Gobind Singh and Sahib Devi¹⁷ is your spiritual mother. Your birthplace is Kesgarh Sahib and your home is Anandpur Sahib. Because you have taken *amrit*, and because you are the children of your spiritual father, all others who have received *amrit* initiation (*amrit-dhārīn*) are your spiritual brethren. You must put aside former notions of caste status, birth, country, and religion, regarding instead all Singhs as members of the same brotherhood as yourself. Every day you should recite at least the following passages from scripture: *Japujī*, *Jāp*, *Savaiyye*, *Rahirās*, *Sohilā*. Meet [regularly] with the assembly of the devout (*sādh saṅgat*). Celebrate the Gurus' anniversaries (*gurapurab*). Be present for [hearing] *katha* and [singing] *kirtan*. Honour the teachings of the Sikh faith. Do your religious duties. Give to the Guru a tithe [of all you earn or receive]. Perform the Daily Rule (*nit-nem*). Read or hear the Guru Granth Sahib and bow down (*darashan*) before it. Speak the truth.

'Always have the following Five Ks (*pañjān kakkhān—kakārān*) on you, never being without them: (1) Uncut hair (*kes*), (2) a comb (*kaṅghā*), (3) a sword (*kīrpān*), (4) breeches (*kachh*), (5) a wrist-ring (*karū*).

'There are five groups of people with whom you must not associate: (1) Minas, (2) Masands, (3) Dhir-malias, (4) Siragums, (5) Ram-raias.¹⁸ Avoid also the company of those who smoke hookahs (*naṛīmār*), killers of daughters (*kuṛīmār*), and any who slander the Guru.¹⁹ You must also abstain from lying, gambling, robbery, drunkenness, etc., refraining from all obnoxious actions. Shun matted hair.²⁰

'Four cardinal sins (*kurahitān*) are particularly serious. Committing them brands a person an apostate (*patil*) and requires him to be re-initiated. [They are]: (1) Eating the meat of an animal, which has been slaughtered according to the Muslim rite. (2) Keeping company with 'a Chuhra [woman] who has become a Muslim'.²¹ (3) Showing disrespect to one's hair [by cutting it]. (4) Taking a poisonous substance.²² It is right to avoid these four [actions].

'The Guru Granth Sahib is the [visible] form of the ten [personal] Gurus and must be treated as [your] Guru. Join in fellowship (*saṅgat*) with Sikhs of the Guru and lovers of the sacred scripture (*gurabāṇī*).

'To the best of your ability perform with enthusiasm duties at the takhats, gurdwaras, and other places associated with the Gurus. Be ever ready to serve the Panth. You should certainly read Gurmukhi and read it to others. Show respect to your parents and serve them. If you are an initiated woman you should respect your husband's wishes.

'If at this time your name should be changed hear what the Guru Granth Sahib has to say.'²³

The Panj Piare then stand in the presence of the Guru, with the initiants following suit. The leading Singh recites Guru Angad's shalok 27(1) from *Vār Mājh*.²⁴ [He then speaks as follows:]

'One needs no other instruction when, by his message, the Guru calls forth such an intense love from his Sikhs. Today you, the devoted children of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh, have become by this instruction Singhs and Singhnis. You have taken *amrit*. This *amrit*, bearing within it the nectar of the Satiguru, has transformed you. Carrying with it [great] benefit it has brought you to your true home.

'By means of this agreement the Satiguru has conferred the following [on you]. You have come under the shelter of the one Akal [Purakh]—the One who takes no form, ever awake, the Creator light, everywhere omnipresent, never incarnated, immortal, ever filled with grace, and the acme of love. [Akal Purakh] is without fear, as you know by your devotion. [And Akal Purakh] is without enmity, as you have learnt by meditation. He is [your] Father and [you should] look upon his creatures as members of the same brotherhood. He is the Giver and for this

reason he is gladdened by service and kindness. You should know of his joy in this way. Without qualities and as proof against the temptations of *māyā* he is [pure] spirit. By worshipping him in spirit you express only love and total devotion. The distance, which [seems to] exist between him and us is only the veil of error. He is everywhere present, knowing all things, but we have misunderstood him and hung before ourselves this veil of delusion. Make the destruction of this veil your prime objective, achieving it by remembering²⁵ this loving God (*parameshar*) and by singing his praises,²⁶ and thus finding an eternal understanding in his presence.

'The method is to recognise the Daily Rule, [the singing of] sacred scripture (*gurabāñī*), and abundant repetition [of the divine Name]. This should be performed in addition to frequent reading [or hearing] the Guru Granth Sahib. Let time pass by, remembering 'Vāhigurū' with every breath. This is the *Gurmantar*, and by doing this (if you [already] do it) you will now be granted by Vahiguru, in the company of [his] marvellous nectar, the gift of remembrance. If you have not done this before then gradually concentrate all your senses and meditate on this mantra. You will remember this discipline, and through it concentration on the presence of God (*parameshur*) will be developed.

'This is the epitome of love, which drives doubt away and brings you to the divine court. In this way calmness, peace, mystical union, and freedom will be established. [Your] senses will ascend [higher and higher], so much so that one day your mind will enter the house of the divine Name. Then the divine Name will carry you into the Realm of Fulfilment.²⁷ In this state you will always remain, your heart blessed in the midst of the satsang which comprises true followers of the Guru. Obstacles, dangers, snares will remain far from you in this condition, and with honour you will proceed to your [one true] home.'

The initiate says: 'In truth, may the Satiguru be ever with me.' The leading [Singh] replies: 'Yes, the Satiguru will always be with you.' [He recites] the last two lines of Guru Arjan's *Gaurī Sukhamanī* 22(7) (AG 293). The sangat [then] sings Guru Arjan's *Vadahañsu* 1.²⁸ [They also sing] Guru Arjan's *Sārang* 74 (AG 1218-19). The leading Singh [then] offers this prayer: 'O Vahiguru, we give you boundless thanks that you, by your grace,

have admitted this brother/sister to your family.' Guru Arjan's *Bilāvalu* 33 is sung (AG 808-9). Finally karah prasad is distributed and the ceremony (*divān*) comes to a close.

Note:

1. If the initiants number more than one and include older women, then in preparing the *amrit*, and subsequently in administering it, female and male should sit in separate lines (in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib) and therein should receive *amrit* and karah prasad.
2. If any person with an infectious disease wishes to be initiated, he should be separately initiated.

Kuramai and Anand Sanskar

The Betrothal and Marriage Ceremonies

After a [successful] search for a suitable bridegroom for a girl [has been concluded] the betrothal ceremony is held. The girl's family should gather leading figures from amongst their relations and friends at their house and offer the following prayer:

Akal Purakh, by your benevolent gift a suitable bridegroom has been found for this fortunate girl, and now the offer of betrothal is being sent to him. By your grace grant us the strength of understanding that we may, with your grace, bring this event to a satisfactory conclusion. May these two remain together, may husband and wife love each other, may they dwell together for many years, may they impart to all the Sikh faith, and may they uphold the Khalsa in every place.

A rupee, a kirpan, and some sweets are then sent to the boy's family, carried by some trusted friend. The boy's family then hold a service in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, and gathering their relatives, friends, and others [they sing the second stanza of] Guru Ram Das's *Sūhī Chhant* 1 (AG 773) [and the first stanza of] Guru Arjan's *Sūhī Chhant* 10.²⁹ Having sung the preliminary hymn of blessing the following prayer is recited:

O Satiguru, in your presence and in the house of your servant...the betrothal of his daughter...with..., son of..., is being conducted. May the boy and the girl receive the gift of love, may they have a long life together, and may both families prosper.

After the girl's family have placed welcoming gifts in the boy's lap prayer is said and *karah prasad* is distributed.

When the ages of the girl and the boy are deemed sufficiently advanced the two families should determine a day for the wedding. If, at an appropriate time, the boy's family should initiate in their house an [unbroken] reading [of the *Guru Granth Sahib*] when it is concluded the following prayer should be recited:

Akal Purakh, the *sangat* is making preparations for the marriage of your servant. . . . Grant your protection to [the members of] the marriage party as they make their way here, singing your praises. Grant that [the preparations for] this event may be completed satisfactorily.

With his friends, the number of which should be kept as small as possible, [the bridegroom] should then approach the house of the girl's parents. The girl's people should gather together to welcome [the party, singing] the first stanza of *Guru Nanak's Sūhī Chhant* 2 (AG 764), the first stanza of *Guru Nanak's Sūhī Chhant* 3 (AG 764–5), the first stanza of *Guru Ram Das's Āsā Chhant* 16,³⁰ *Guru Arjan's Sūhī* 54 (AG 748–9), and *Guru Arjan's Jaitasari Dupade* 4 (AG 700). Both groups should participate in these hymns or in others which like them can be used as suitable for commencing a religious ceremony. By singing these hymns as greetings the girl's people can appropriately demonstrate their deep esteem and love one for another.

At the ambrosial hour³¹ the gathering should assemble in the presence of the *Guru Granth*, and *ragis* or members of the *sangat* should sing *kirtan*. When the *kirtan* is finished the boy and the girl, neatly clothed, should be seated in the presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.³² The girl should be seated on the left of the boy. After taking permission from the *sangat* the celebrant should ask the parents or grandparents of the couple to stand and should begin the marriage (*anand*) by uttering the following prayer of petition:

'Akal Purakh, Father of all, source of love, merciful to the [first] Panj [Piaras]! Today, in accordance with the sacred tradition which you have provided, [these] two persons whom you have created, by your command:

They are not regarded as wife and husband when they [merely] sit together.

When a single light shines in two bodies, only then they are regarded as wife and husband.³³

‘[O Akal Purakh,] may these two persons embody a single spirit and remain ever united, leading a pure life based on love. May they both see you as their only Husband, regarding themselves as your spouses and leading a life of devotion and dedication based on trust and faith.

In the form of a woman I am like [your] serving maid; without you, [my] Master, I can pretend to no beauty.³⁴

‘As a woman one enters a spiritual unity and seeks shelter with you. Merciful Lord,³⁵ within the sangat bring about the unity of these [two persons]. By your holiness and goodness, fasten the marital knot so that it may tie them in one mind. At this time “the Lord God dwells in the sangat”. According to your command, perform your tasks and grant us this hope that “[you your]self perform [your] tasks; wretched man can do nothing”.³⁶ Protector of the poor, grant us this gift.’

The Singh who is granthi, now reads a hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib. All touch the ground with their foreheads and then sit. The sangat, some respected person (*bhāī*), or a ragi then sing the twentieth stanza of Guru Ram Das’s *Sirī Rāgu kī Vār* (AG 91) and the first verse of Guru Arjan’s *Sūhī Chhant* 10 (AG 783). If the people are cheerful more hymns of rejoicing can be sung.

The celebrant then delivers this faith of householders (*grahasat dharam*), according to the teachings of the Guru (*guramat*), to the boy and the girl. The celebrant says:³⁷

Marriage according to Gurmat is no mere business exchange, nor is it only for the propagation of children or for physical satisfaction. The purpose of marriage is instead as follows:

They are not regarded as wife and husband when they [merely] sit together.

When a single light [shines] in two bodies, [only] then they are regarded as wife and husband.³⁸

By means of mutual love you will shine as a single light and, with that love ever growing, your relationship together will merge with Akal Purakh. You should therefore listen carefully to this explanation and put this faith of householders into practice. You will both:

1. Remain firm in the Sikh faith and live your life in accordance with the Guru's teachings (*guramat*).

2. Believe in accordance with the Guru's teachings that Akal Purakh is your God (*parameshar*). Consecrate yourself to the divine Name and to Akal Purakh, and apart from the ten Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib worship no other Guru. Renounce such things as magic, charms, amulets, cenotaphs, etc., believing their worship to be fraudulent.

3. Abandon pride in caste, lineage region, etc. Mingle in friendship with the Panth and separate yourselves from those who belong to reprobate groups.

4. Upholding the ideal of marriage you should share in mutual love and responsibility for important decisions, each taking the advice of the other.

For you Brother:

5. In every circumstance tenderly care for and protect this sister who from this day will be your wife. Share your income with her. Vow to remain faithful to her.³⁹ Pardon and regard with love any mistake she may make. Pay the same respect to her parents as you would to your own.

And you Sister:

[6] Remain contented with the honest earnings of this person who today is appointed your husband (*sirtāj*). In sadness and joy, wherever he may be, remain true to him as your faith dictates. Serve him always with tenderness, ever ready to obey, and treat his parents as your own.⁴⁰

When the homily is finished, the bridegroom and bride signify their acceptance by touching the ground with their foreheads. Then the girl's father or guide places the hem of the boy's garment in the girl's hand⁴¹ (that is to say the girl is given the edge of his clothing) and at his or their command the celebrant says: 'Sister, today you have been entrusted to this husband, [your] master.'⁴² The sangat or a ragi sings Guru Arjan's shalok 14(1) from *Rāmakalī kī Vār* (AG 963). More hymns of this kind may be sung by the sangat or the ragi, [for example] Guru Arjan's *Āsā* 95 (AG 394) or his *Bilāvalu* 114 (AG 827).

The granthi Singh then sings the *lāvān* from the Guru Granth Sahib, being Guru Ram Das's *Sūhī Chhant* 2.⁴³ After each *lāv* has been sung the couple walk around the Guru Granth Sahib, the bridegroom preceding the bride who holds his hem. [This they do] four times, [after each of the four verses of the hymn has been sung]. While they are making their circuits [the verse of] the hymn should be tunefully sung [again], corresponding to their procession [around the Guru Granth Sahib]. This should be done by the ragi or by the whole sangat, the relations, or the granthi. After four circuits have been completed the bridegroom and bride should resume their seats and the celebrant sings the first five and the fortieth verses of *Anand Sāhib*.⁴⁴ At its conclusion he says a prayer [of thanksgiving and] then Guru Ram Das's *Sirī Rāgu Chhant* 1 (2),⁴⁵ Guru Arjan's *Mājh* 11,⁴⁶ and the fourth verse of his *Vaḍaḥansu Chhant* 1⁴⁷ [may be sung].

Singing hymns of rejoicing such as these and reading from the Guru Granth Sahib brings proceedings to an end. After Ardas is said and karah prasad is distributed the gathering comes to a close.

Note:

1. The following practices are all forbidden: choosing an auspicious date for the marriage by consulting a Brahman; invoking the blessings of gods or ancestors through religious rites; tying a red cord around the wrist in order to signify that a person is ready for marriage; putting one's foot in watered milk to signify entry into the world of fertility; the Hindu ritual of the fire ceremony; planting four wooden sticks around the fire, representing the four Vedas; harlots dancing, etc.

2. If a dowry is given to the bride it must not be put on display.

3. According to Gurmat it is forbidden to have children married.

20. Extract from Guramati Bibek

From Randhir Singh, *Rahit Bibek* (a portion of *Guramati Bibek*).

Several people concerned about the Rahit—their comforting words pious, adorned, and ardent—say that there is nothing in Gurmat which requires Singhanis to wear turbans. In defence of this position, they offer the distinctly hollow argument that

even if Gurmat does expect Singhanis to wear turbans there is a general ignorance within the Panth of any such rule, with the result that Singhanis do not in fact wear them. Using this same hollow argument [these people] may also say that if Gurmat is clear concerning the practice of the divine Name, and we now preach it in every home, the households of Singhs ensure that, in general the practice of the divine Name must be widely carried out in the Panth. Yet in truth the practitioners of the divine Name are very few in the Panth. The argument amounts to this, that the practice of the Name, the divine Name worthy of all praise, is merely something we sing about, not a rule of Gurmat. [Clearly they are wrong.] The precept, which Gurmat upholds—the face and foundation of the quintessence of knowledge—is [indeed] worthy of all praise. Wearing turbans for the protection of the kes is absolutely essential for both Singhs and Singhanis.

—Randhir Singh, *Guramati Bibek*, Ludhiana, 5th edition, 1993, *Rahit Bibek* portion, ch. 43, p. 220.

21. Sikh *Rahit Marayada*

Two English translations of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* exist, both published under the title *Rehat Maryada: a guide to the Sikh way of life* (London, 1971, and Amritsar, 1978). Neither adheres strictly to the Punjabi text. The translation given below closely follows the Punjabi text of the 14th edition of *Sikh Rahit Marayādā* (Amritsar, 1979). Footnotes which appear in the Punjabi text are marked with asterisks.

The Khalsa Code of Conduct

Definition of a Sikh

A Sikh is any person who believes (*nisachā rakhadā*) in Akal Purakh; in the ten Gurus (Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh); in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, other works of the ten Gurus, and their teachings; in the Khalsa initiation ceremony instituted by the tenth Guru; and who does not believe in any other system of religious doctrine.

The Sikh way of life may be viewed from two perspectives, the personal and the corporate or panthic [viz. his/her behaviour

as an individual and his/her responsibilities as a member of the Panth].

I. Personal Discipline

This involves three aspects: (1) The practice of devotion to the divine Name as it is recorded in the sacred scripture. (2) Living in accordance with the Guru's teachings (*guramat*). (3) Service.

1. *The devotional discipline*

1.1 A Sikh should rise during the 'ambrosial hour' (3 A.M. to 6 A.M.) and having bathed should meditate on Vahiguru (*nām japn*).

1.2 Each day a Sikh should read or recite the order known as the 'Daily Rule' (*nit-nem*). The Daily Rule comprises the following portions of scripture:

[Early morning, 3 A.M.–6 A.M.:] *Japujī*, *Jāp*, and the *Ten Savayyās* (the *savayyās* beginning with 'Scrupulous Jains and hosts of Siddhs').

[In the evening at sunset: *Sodar Raharās*.] This selection comprises:

– The nine hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib that begin with 'Where is the place where you view your creation', and conclude with 'in shame I seek shelter and grace'.

– Guru Gobind Singh's *Benatī Chaupai*, from 'Extend to me your guiding hand' to 'shield me from my foes'.

– The *savayyā* that begins 'Here at your feet I pledge my homage'.

– The couplet that begins 'Spurning every other door'.

– The first five stanzas and the final stanza of *Anand Sāhib*.¹

– *Mundāvaṇī* and shalok of Guru Arjan: 'Blind am I to all your deeds'.

At night before retiring: [*Kīrtan*] *Sohilā*.

1.3 At the conclusion of the selections set down for early morning and evening (*sodar*) [the prayer known as] *Ardās* must be recited.

(a) The words of *Ardās* are as follows:²

Victory to Vāhigurū,³ the Eternal One

May Sri Bhagautī Jī⁴ assist us

The Tenth Master's Ode to Sri Bhagautī Jī

First remembering Sri Bhagauti, turn your thoughts to Guru Nanak;

Angad Guru, Amar Das, each with Ram Das grant us aid.

Arjan and Hargobind, think of them and Hari Rai.

Dwell on Siri Hari Krishan, he whose sight dispels all pain.

Think of Guru Tegh Bahadur; thus shall every treasure come.

May they grant their gracious guidance, help and strength in every place.⁵

May the Tenth Master, the revered Guru Gobind Singh, also grant us 'help and strength in every place'. The light which shone from each of the ten Masters shines now from the sacred pages of the Guru Granth Sahib. Turn your mind to it and utter *Vāhigurū!*

The Panj Piaras, the Master's four sons,⁶ and the Forty Liberated;⁷ all who were resolute, devout, and strict in their self-denial; they who were faithful in their remembrance of the divine Name and generous to others; they who were noble both in battle and in the practice of charity; they who magnanimously pardoned the faults of others: reflect on the merits of these faithful servants, O Khalsa, and utter *Vāhigurū!*

Those Singhs and Singhnis who gave their heads for their faith; who were hacked limb from limb, scalped, broken on the wheel, or sawn asunder; who sacrificed their lives for the protection of hallowed gurdwaras, never forsaking their faith; and who were steadfast in their loyalty to the uncut hair of the true Sikh: reflect on their merits, O Khalsa, and utter *Vāhigurū!*

⁸Remember the five takhats and all other gurdwaras, and utter *Vāhigurū!*

This is the first and foremost petition of the Khalsa, that Vahiguru may dwell eternally in the thoughts of the entire Khalsa, and that by this remembrance all may be blessed with joyous peace. May your favour and protection be extended to the Khalsa wherever its members may be found. Uphold it in the

exercise of charity, sustain it in battle, and grant it victory in all its undertakings (*deg teg fateh*). May its name be exalted and may its enemies be subdued by the might of the sword. Call again, O Khalsa: *Vāhigurū!*

Grant to your Sikhs a true knowledge of their faith, the blessing of uncut hair, guidance in conduct, spiritual perception, patient trust, abiding faith, and the supreme gift of the divine Name. May all bathe in the sacred waters of Amritsar. [May your blessing eternally repose on those who] sing your praises, on the flags [which proclaim your presence], on all places [which provide shelter and sustenance] (*chauṁkiān jhande burge*), ever immutable throughout all ages and glorifying the faith. [Again] utter *Vāhigurū!*

⁹May Sikhs be humble of heart yet sublime in understanding, their belief and honour committed to your care. Akal Purakh, eternal Aid and Protector of the Panth, grant to the Khalsa continuing access to Nankana Sahib, and to other gurdwaras and places associated with the Gurus, from which it has been separated.¹⁰ Grant to its members the right to behold these sacred places and to care for them in the service of love. Vahiguru, pride of the humble, strength of the weak, defence of the helpless, and our true Father (*pīlū*), we come before you praying that... [Refer here in appropriate words to the passage from scripture which has been read or to the purpose for which the gathering or the sangat has assembled.] Forgive us for any errors committed during the reading of the sacred scripture, and grant to all the fulfilment of their due tasks and responsibilities.

Bring us into the company of those devout souls whose presence inspires remembrance of your divine Name.

Nanak prays that the Name may be magnified;
By your grace may all be blessed.

(a) After the recitation of Ardas has been completed all members of the sangat who are present should reverently bow before the Guru Granth Sahib, touching the ground with their foreheads. They should then stand erect and proclaim: *Vāhigurū jī kī Khālsā! Vāhigurū jī kī fateh!*¹¹ All should then shout a triumphant *Sat Sī Akāl!*¹²

(b) While Ardas is being recited all who are present, both men and women, should stand with palms together. The person

who is seated behind the Guru Granth Sahib should rise and continue to fan the sacred volume with the whisk used for this purpose.

(c) The person who leads in the reciting of Ardas should do so facing the Guru Granth Sahib and with palms together. If the Guru Granth Sahib is not present he may face any direction while reciting Ardas.

(d) When Ardas is recited on behalf of any person or persons present in the sangat only such persons need rise. Others may remain seated.

1.4 Congregational worship

1.4.1 THE GURDWARA

(a) The influence of the Gurus' words is best experienced in a religious assembly (*sādh sangat*). Each Sikh should therefore join in sangat worship, visiting gurdwaras and drawing inspiration from the sacred scripture in the sangat's presence.

(b) In each gurdwara the Guru Granth Sahib should be opened daily. Except when there is some special purpose, which requires that it should be kept open it should not be left open at night. Normally it should be closed and put to rest after the evening liturgy (*raharās*). If, however, a granthi or gurdwara steward (*sevādār*) can remain in attendance and there is no risk of sacrilege the Guru Granth Sahib may be left open for any persons who wishes to read from it or pay it their respects. It should subsequently be closed and put away to ensure that it is not treated irreverently.

(c) The Guru Granth Sahib must be treated with great reverence while it is being opened, read, or closed. When it is to be opened it should be laid under a canopy (*chandnī*) in a place that is clean and tidy. It should be set on a stool or lectern (*mañjī*) over which a clean cloth covering has been spread. Cushions should be used to support it while it is open and a mantle (*rumāl*) should be provided for covering it when it is not being read. A whisk (*chaur*) should be provided for use when it is open.

(d) No articles are used apart from those that have been specified above. Such practices as burning incense, lighting and

waving lamps, offering food as to an idol, igniting lights, or ringing bells are contrary to Gurmat. It is, however, permissible to use such articles as flowers or incense to provide a fragrant atmosphere. The room should be lit with oil lamps (kerosene or ghi), candles, or electricity.

(e) No other book may be given the same reverence in a gurdwara as that which the Guru Granth Sahib receives. Idol worship and other rituals or ceremonies contrary to the teachings of Gurmat are proscribed in gurdwaras; and no festival, which contravenes Sikh belief may be celebrated therein. Gurdwaras may, however, be used for preaching Gurmat on appropriate occasions.

(f) [Superstitious] practices such as the following are proscribed: clasp[ing] the legs of the lectern on which the Guru Granth Sahib sits; rubb[ing] one's nose against the wall [of a gurdwara] or the dais [supporting the Guru Granth Sahib], or clasp[ing] [the dais]; plac[ing] water beneath the lectern; install[ing] or retain[ing] idols within gurdwaras; touch[ing] the ground with one's forehead before pictures of the Gurus or those of revered Sikhs.

(g) Ardas should be offered before the Guru Granth Sahib is moved from one place to another. The person who carries it on his head while it is being moved should normally be barefoot. If, however, circumstances require that shoes should be worn, this may be done.

(h) Ardas should be offered before the Guru Granth Sahib is opened [for the first time during the day]. A shabad chosen at random¹³ should then be read.

(i) Whenever the Guru Granth Sahib is moved every Sikh who is present should show respect by standing, regardless of whether or not it has previously been opened [for the day].

(j) To maintain purity shoes must be removed before entering a gurdwara. Feet, if unclean, should be washed. When walking around the Guru Granth Sahib or a gurdwara one should proceed in a clockwise direction.¹⁴

(k) People of all nationalities, faiths, and castes are welcome to enter a gurdwara for a darshan [of the Guru Granth Sahib], provided only that they do not carry any item (such as tobacco), which Sikh doctrine prohibits.

(l) Whenever a Sikh enters a gurdwara his first duty must be to bow before the Guru Granth Sahib, touching the floor with his forehead. He should then greet the assembled sangat (the replica of the Guru) with a courteous *Vāhigurū jī kī Khālsā, Vāhigurū jī kī fateh*.

(m) When seated in a sangat there should be no distinction between Sikh and non-Sikh, nor any discrimination based on untouchability, caste, or status.

(n) In the presence of an open Guru Granth Sahib or in a sangat no individual should be specially honoured by the provision of a cushion, chair, couch, or any form of privileged seating.¹⁵

(o) No Sikh may sit bareheaded in the presence of a sangat or an opened Guru Granth Sahib. It is contrary to Gurmat for women to observe purdah or wear a veil in the presence of a sangat.

(p) There are five seats of temporal authority (*takhat*) within the Panth:

1. Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar.
2. Takhat Sri Patna Sahib.
3. Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur.
4. Sri Hazur Sahib, Nander.
5. Damdama Sahib, Talvandi Sabo.¹⁶

(q) Only initiated Sikhs, loyal in their observance of the Rahit (both Singhs and Singhanis), are permitted to enter those parts of the *takhats*, which possess a particular sanctity. Apart from apostate Sikhs (*patit*)¹⁷ and those judged guilty of a breach of the Rahit (*tanakhāhie*) anyone, Sikh or non-Sikh, may offer prayer at a *takhat*.

(r) The Khalsa flag (*nishān sāhib*) shall fly from an elevated position above every gurdwara. The colour of the flag may be either saffron or dark blue. It shall be surmounted by a steel spear or a two-edged sword.

(s) Each gurdwara shall possess a large drum (*nagūrā*), to be beaten on appropriate occasions.

1.4.2 KIRTAN

(a) Within any sangat, kirtan may be sung only by Sikhs.

(b) Kirtan consists of singing passages from the sacred scriptures (*gurbāṇī*), each in its appropriate raga.

(c) Within a sangat the only works that may be sung as kirtan are those that are recorded in the sacred scriptures or the commentaries on sacred scripture composed by Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal.

(d) When shabads are being sung responsively or when a shabad's raga is being developed those who are participating must adhere strictly to the original text of the work which is being sung.

1.4.3 TAKING A *HUKAM*

(a) To bow before the Guru Granth Sahib placing your forehead on the ground, to participate with reverence in the sangat's service of worship, to read from the holy scripture or to hear a passage read from it are all activities that involve a personal encounter (*darushan*) with the eternal Guru. It is wrong to imagine that by removing the mantle from a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib without reading a portion of the text (*vāk*) one can have that encounter oneself or share it with others.

(b) A sangat should participate in only one activity at a time—either kirtan or sermon, the reading of the scriptures or their exposition.

(c) While the sangat is engaged in worship the person who sits in attendance on the Guru Granth Sahib should be a Sikh (male or female).

(d) A sangat's service of worship should be conducted only by a Sikh. A non-Sikh may, however, read from the scriptures for his/her own personal benefit.

(e) For the purpose of 'taking a *hukam*' ('order') from the Guru [the Guru Granth Sahib should be opened at random and] the first shabad appearing on the upper portion of the left-hand page should be read from its beginning. If its beginning appears on the preceding page turn back and read the complete shabad. If the passage happens to be part of a *vār*¹⁸ the complete stanza with its associated shaloks should be read. Read through to the line or couplet which includes the name 'Nanak'.

(f) A *hukam* should be taken in this manner at the conclusion of a worship service. A *hukam* should also be taken following the Ardas, which ends a complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib (see I.1.4.7).

1.4.4 ORDINARY READING OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB

(a) If possible, every Sikh should set aside a special place in his house exclusively reserved for the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib.

(b) Every Sikh (man or woman, boy or girl) should acquire a knowledge of the Gurmukhi script and learn how to read the Guru Granth Sahib.

(c) Early in the morning (*amrit velā*), before eating, every Sikh should 'take a *hukam*' from the Guru Granth Sahib. If he fails to do so at this time he should ensure that later in the day he reads from the Guru Granth Sahib or hears a portion read. If for any good reason such as the inconvenience of travel he is unable to discharge this responsibility he should not feel that he has done wrong.

(d) A practice to be commended is for each Sikh regularly to read right through the entire contents of the Guru Granth Sahib (*sādhāran pāṭh*), planning his daily instalments in such a way that he completes the task in four to eight weeks (or whatever period may be convenient for him).

(e) When a complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib is initiated it should begin with the appointed portion of *Anand Sāhib* (the first five stanzas and the concluding stanza), followed by Ardas and the taking of a *hukam*. The reading should then commence with *Japuṭī Sāhib*.

1.4.5 UNBROKEN READING OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB

(a) An unbroken reading of the Guru Granth Sahib (*akhand pāṭh*) may be held in time of distress or to mark an occasion of particular joy. Such a reading takes approximately 48 hours, the actual reading continuing without interruption.¹⁹ During unbroken readings the participants' enunciation should remain clear and the text should be correctly read. The reading should not be conducted at such a speed that hearers are unable to follow its meaning, a condition, which amounts to disrespect for

the sacred scripture. Every letter and symbol should receive its due attention, thus ensuring a clear and accurate reading. This should be done even if it means that the intended time will be exceeded.

(b) The family or *sangat* which arranges an *akhaṇḍ pāṭh* should also provide the relay of readers, with relatives and friends invited to participate. There is no stipulated number of readers. If anyone is unable to participate in the actual reading he should at least listen while a skilled reader is performing his share of the task. No reader should be left alone, with no member of the sponsoring *sangat* or family present. Those who serve as readers may be rewarded with gifts of food or clothing according to the sponsor's means.

(c) While readings are in process (whether *akhaṇḍ pāṭh* or any other variety) such items as water-pots, lamps, and coconuts should not be superstitiously kept [in the presence of the sacred scripture], nor should any other scripture be introduced or read in conjunction with the text of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

1.4.6 BEGINNING A COMPLETE READING OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB

Before an ordinary reading is begun [karah] *prasad* should be brought [into the presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The following sequence should then be observed.] The six appointed stanzas of *Anand Sāhib* should be read, *Ardās* should be recited, and a *hukam* should be taken. The actual reading should then begin. The same procedure is also followed when commencing an *akhaṇḍ pāṭh*.²⁰

1.4.7 THE CONCLUSION OF A COMPLETE READING (BHOḠ)

(a) A complete reading of the *Guru Granth Sahib* (whether an ordinary reading or an *akhaṇḍ pāṭh*) should conclude either with the *Mundāvāṇī* [and attached shalok] or with the *Rāg-mālā*, the choice depending on local custom. (There is still division within the Panth concerning this issue. It must, however, be noted that no one should copy or print the *Guru Granth Sahib* without including the *Rāg-mālā*.) [The six appointed stanzas of] *Anand Sāhib* should then be read, the concluding *Ardas* recited, and *karah prasad* distributed [to all those who are present].

(b) Following the conclusion [of an *akhand pāth*] it is appropriate to donate such items as a mantle, whisk, or canopy if these should be required for the Guru Granth Sahib [which has been used], or to make an offering for the work of the Panth. This should be done as one's means permit.

1.4.8 KARAH PRASAD

(a) Karah prasad that has been prepared in the prescribed manner will be approved by the sangat.

(b) The prescribed method for preparing karah prasad is as follows. Equal portions [by weight] of wholemeal flour, sugar (the best available), and ghi should be mixed in a clean iron bowl while passages from the sacred scriptures are sung or recited.²¹ The preparation should then be covered with a spotless cloth, brought into the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, and placed on a clean stool. The first five verses and the concluding verse of *Anand Sāhib* should be read in a clearly audible voice to the sangat gathered in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.²² Ardas should then be recited, and finally the karah prasad is touched with a kirpan to signify that it has been duly sanctified.

(c) After this has been done but before the karah prasad is distributed to the sangat a portion should be given [to five worthy Sikhs] in commemoration of the [original] Panj Piaras. The remainder should then be served to the assembled sangat, first to the person sitting in attendance behind the Guru Granth Sahib²³ (who should receive it in a bowl or cup) and then to the other members of the sangat. No form of preference or discrimination should be observed while this is done, neither between Sikh and non-Sikh nor between high caste and low. No one should despise any other member of a sangat because of his caste or through any belief in untouchability.

(d) At the point in the proceedings where the karah prasad is touched with a kirpan an offering should be made, even if only a copper coin.

1.5 Exposition of the scriptures (kathā)

(a) Only a Sikh may expound the sacred scriptures in a sangat.

(b) The purpose of katha must be to inculcate an understanding of Guramat.

(c) Katha may deal with the works of the ten Gurus, those of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal, any other work that has panthic approval,²⁴ or historical works that have been written in accordance with the principles of Gurmat. It should not concern the works of other religions except that illustrations may be taken from the teachings of other great men and books which possess sound spiritual quality.

1.6 Sermons or lectures

Sermons or lectures, which present material in conflict with Gurmat may not be delivered in gurdwaras.

1.7 The service of worship

The usual order of worship in a gurdwara will be as follows: the ritual opening of the Guru Granth Sahib, kirtan, katha, sermon, *Anand Sāhib*, Ardas, the 'Victory' salutation,²⁵ *Sat Sri Akāl*, and a final *hukam*.

2. Living in accordance with the Guru's teachings

2.1 Each Sikh should live and work in accordance with the principles of Gurmat. The definition of Gurmat is as follows:

(a) To worship only the one Akal Purakh, spurning all other gods and goddesses.

(b) To accept as the means of deliverance only the ten Gurus, the Guru Granth Sahib, and the works of the ten Gurus.

(c) To believe that the same spirit was successively incarnated in the ten individual Gurus.

(d) To reject caste distinctions and untouchability; magical amulets, mantras, and spells; auspicious omens, days, times, planets, and astrological signs; the ritual feeding of Brahmans to sanctify or propitiate the dead; oblation for the dead;²⁶ the superstitious waving of lights; [traditional] obsequies; fire sacrifices; ritual feasting or libations; sacred tufts of hair or ritual shaving; fasting for particular phases of the moon; frontal marks, sacred threads, and sanctified rosaries; worshipping at tombs, temples, or cenotaphs; idol-worship; and all such other superstitions.

Only those places, which have been hallowed by association

with the Gurus should be revered, never the pilgrimage centres or edifices associated with other religions.

A Sikh should not believe in Sufi preceptors (*pīr*), Brahmans, soothsaying, vows, the superstitious offering of sweets, the Vedas, the Shastras, the Gayatri, the Bhagavad-gita, the Qur'an, the Christian Gospels, and other such scriptures. It is, however, permissible to read such scriptures in order to acquire ordinary knowledge.

(e) Although the Khalsa must be perceived as distinct from all other religious systems no offence should be caused to those who believe in other faiths.

(f) Prayer should be offered to Vahiguru before any [important] task is undertaken.

(g) A knowledge of Gurmukhi is essential for Sikhs. Other forms of knowledge should also be studied.

(h) It is the duty of every Sikh to impart a knowledge of the Gurus' teachings to his children.

(i) Do not cut a boy's hair. Let him retain his hair²⁷ and let him be named a Singh. Sikhs should leave the hair of their sons and daughters unharmed.

(j) Sikhs should not partake nor use cannabis, opium, alcohol, tobacco, etc. Consume only food.

(k) Sikh men and women should not pierce their noses or their ears.

(l) A Sikh must never engage in female infanticide, nor should he associate with anyone who commits this crime.

(m) A Sikh should live on money that has been honestly earned.

(n) A Sikh should regard gifts to the poor as charity bestowed on the Guru himself.

(o) Theft and gambling are forbidden.

(p) Look upon another's daughter as your own,
And another's wife as you would your own mother.
He who loves only his own wife,

Is the Guru's Singh, obedient to the Rahit.

In the same way a Sikh woman is bound to only one man.

(q) The Guru's Sikh should observe the code of behaviour prescribed by the Guru throughout his entire life.

(r) When Sikhs meet they should greet each other by saying 'Vāhigurū jī kā Khālsā, Vāhigurū jī kī fateh'. This is the correct form for both men and women.

(s) Sikh women should not observe purdah, nor should they wear a veil (*ghund*).

(t) A Sikh must wear a kachh and a turban. Apart from these garments, he may wear whatever he chooses. The turban is optional for women.

2.2 Rituals²⁸

2.2.1 BIRTH AND NAMING CEREMONY²⁹

(a) Following the birth of a child in a Sikh home the family and relatives should visit their gurdwara as soon as the mother is able to rise and bathe. (There is no particular period fixed for this purpose.) They should take karah prasad with them or arrange to have it prepared on their behalf. While they are in the gurdwara they should celebrate the event and give thanks by singing such hymns as Guru Arjan's 'God (*paramesari*) has broken every barrier' (*Sorath* rag), and his 'The True Satiguru has sent this wondrous gift' (*Āsā* rag).³⁰ If a complete reading of the Guru Granth Sahib has been undertaken [to mark the occasion] the concluding *bhog* ceremony should be performed [at this time]. A passage should be chosen at random and the officiating granthi should propose a name beginning with the same letter as the first word of the randomly-chosen shabad. If the suggested name meets with the sangat's approval it shall be the name bestowed on the child. To a boy's name 'Singh' should be added, and to a girl's name 'Kaur'.

After the six prescribed stanzas of *Anand Sāhib* have been read the child's birth is celebrated with an appropriate Ardas and the distribution of karah prasad.

(b) No period of domestic defilement should be observed because of a birth in the family.

Birth and death are divinely ordained, both [man's]
coming [and likewise his] going.

Pure is our food and pure our drink, both of them given
[by you].³¹

(c) The practice of making a garment [for the infant] from the mantle covering the Guru Granth Sahib is contrary to the principles of Gurmat.

2.2.2 THE ANAND MARRIAGE CEREMONY (ANAND SAṆSKĀR)

(a) Marriages between Sikhs should take no account of caste or sub-caste.

(b) A Sikh girl should be married to a Sikh husband.

(c) A Sikh marriage should be solemnised in accordance with the Anand rite.

(d) Sikhs should not be married as children.

(e) A Sikh girl should be married to some worthy Sikh in accordance with the Anand rite when she has reached a sufficient maturity of body, mind, and character.

(f) It is not essential for a betrothal to take place prior to the actual marriage. If, however, there is to be a betrothal, the family of the girl should assemble with [her] *sangat* [and the family of the prospective husband] in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, and having offered *Ardas* they should present to the prospective husband a *kirpan*, a wrist-ring (*karā*), and some sweets.

(g) When the date for the marriage is being determined, no account should be taken of auspicious days, nor should there be any consulting of horoscopes. The only consideration should be the convenience of both parties.

(h) Traditional customs which are to be avoided in the conduct of Sikh weddings include the following: the wearing of chaplets (*siharā*), crests or diadems; tying red threads to the participants' wrists; worshipping ancestors; dipping the foot in a concoction of sweetened and diluted milk and water (*kacchi lassī vich pair pāunā*); [showing the physical strength of the bridegroom by] cutting a jujube or jand tree (*berī jān jāṇḍī vadḍhaṇā*); filling a small pitcher [with water]; feigning displeasure; having female relatives of the bride insult the bridegroom; burning ritual fires (*havan*); erecting altars; dancing by prostitutes; the drinking of alcohol.

(i) [When the time comes for the marriage] the groom should proceed to his future father-in-law's house, accompanied by a

group [of family members and other companions] not exceeding the number specified by the father-in-law.³² Hymns from the sacred scriptures shall be sung by hosts and guests, and the meeting shall conclude with the 'Victory' salutation (see I.1.3(a), note 11).

(j) At the time for the actual marriage the congregation should assemble in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib and kirtan should be sung, either by the sangat or by professional singers (*rāgī*). The bride and bridegroom should be seated in front of the Guru Granth Sahib, the bride on the groom's left. Having first secured the consent of the assembled sangat the Sikh (either man or woman) who is to conduct the marriage ceremony should instruct the couple to stand, together with their parents or guardians, and should then recite the Ardas with which the ceremony begins.

The celebrant should then instruct the couple in the teachings of Gurmat concerning the duties of marriage. First he/she should address them jointly, explaining the meaning of the 'rounds' (*lāvān*) which are to be made in accordance with the nuptial hymn from *Sūhī* raga. In so doing he/she should encourage the couple to model their love for each other on the loving relationship which subsists between man and God (*paramātmā*). He/she should instruct them to love each other in the scriptural sense. They should love each other as 'two bodies yet one spirit',³³ performing their duties as householders and wholly obedient to their common Lord who is Akal Purakh. Both should vow to travel life's road together and to bring their journey to a successful conclusion. Both should be shown that their union is the means to a life of purity lived in accordance with the Guru's teachings.

The celebrant should then address the bridegroom and bride separately, explaining to each their distinctive duties within the matrimonial relationship.

To the bridegroom he/she should stress how the bride's parents have chosen him as the worthiest of husbands and how, regarding his wife as one with himself, he should love her in all circumstances and share all things with her. He must be the protector of her body and her honour, ever remaining scrupulously loyal to her; and he should show the same respect to her parents and relatives as he would to his own.

To the bride it should be explained how she will be committing herself to her husband in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib and the sangat. She should reverence him, accepting him as a master worthy of all love and respect. In all places and all circumstances she should remain steadfastly faithful to him and minister to all his needs. His parents and relatives she should accept as her own.

To signify their assent to these injunctions the couple should bow before the Guru Granth Sahib, pressing their foreheads on the ground. The bride's father or senior relative should then place in her hand the hem of one of the garments worn by the bridegroom.³⁴ The person serving as reader then chants the *lāvān* hymn, Guru Ram Das's *Sūhī Chhant* 2.³⁵ After each of the four stanzas the couple walk around the Guru Granth Sahib, the bridegroom followed by the bride who continues to hold his hem. While they are thus proceeding around the Guru Granth Sahib either the ragis or the entire congregation repeat the appropriate stanza. After completing each of the first three rounds the couple bow before the Guru Granth Sahib, pressing their foreheads on the ground, and then stand erect to hear the next stanza. Following the fourth round they bow and resume their seats. The ragi or another person appointed for this particular purpose then chants the first five stanzas and the last stanza of *Anand Sāhib*. After *Anand* has been chanted a prayer is offered and [the ceremony concludes with] the serving of *karah prasad*.

(k) Non-Sikhs cannot be married according to the *Anand* rite.

(l) No cash payment should ever be made as part of a marriage settlement.

(m) If the bride's parents should be offered food when they visit their daughter's [new] home they should accept it without hesitation. It is mere superstition to refuse food [under such circumstances], for the supreme Guru Akal Purakh has provided food in order that the Khalsa may eat. The Guru has joined the two families in a common relationship as a result of the marriage so why should they not eat together?³⁶

(n) A widow should be permitted to remarry if a suitable husband can be found. The same rule applies to Sikh widowers.

(o) Remarriage should also be conducted in accordance with the *Anand* rite.

(p) Normally a Sikh should have only one wife.

(q) A Sikh who has been initiated into the Khalsa (*amrit-dhārī singh*) should ensure that his wife is also initiated.

2.2.3 THE FUNERAL CEREMONY (*MIRATAK SAṆSKĀR*)

(a) If a person dies while lying on a bed, the corpse should not be placed under the bed.³⁷ Other superstitious practices that are to be avoided include the placing of lamps in the hands of deceased persons and giving gifts [to Brahmans. The bereaved should] do nothing more than read the sacred scriptures or repeat the name of Vahiguru.

(b) When a death takes place there should be no excessive lamenting, no beating of breasts or grief-stricken wailing. The best method of reconciling oneself to the will of Vahiguru is to read the sacred scriptures or repeat Vahiguru's name.

(c) Every corpse should be cremated, no matter how young the deceased may have been. If cremation is not possible it is permissible to dispose of a body by casting it into a river or some such means.

(d) A cremation may be performed during the day or at night.

(e) A corpse should be bathed and clad in clean garments, complete with all Five Ks. It should be laid on a bier and prayer should be offered. The bier should then be carried to the cremation-ground to the accompaniment of hymns appropriate to a funeral. At the cremation-ground a funeral-pyre should be erected and before consigning the body to the flames prayer should be offered. The corpse should then be laid on the pyre and the pyre lit by a son, some other relative, or a close friend. The assembled sangat should meanwhile sit some distance away and sing appropriate hymns. Such superstitious customs as the breaking of the skull should not be observed. When the pyre is well ablaze *Kīrtan Sohilā* should be sung, followed by prayer. The sangat should then return [from the cremation-ground].

After the cremation a reading of the Guru Granth Sahib should be initiated on behalf of the departed soul, either in the house of the deceased or in a neighbouring gurdwara. This should begin with the six prescribed stanzas from *Anand Sāhib*, the reciting of Ardas, and the serving of karah prasad. The

reading should be completed in the course of ten days. If it is not possible to bring the reading to its close on the tenth day another day may be selected to suit the convenience of the bereaved family. Members of the bereaved household and their relatives should share in the actual reading. If possible, kirtan should also be held each evening. After the ten-day period has elapsed all ritual requirements will have been completed.

(f) When the funeral pyre has cooled the body's ashes, together with any remaining bones, should be gathered and either cast into running water or buried at the place of cremation. No memorial should be erected to mark the spot where the cremation took place.

(g) Such practices as loud lamenting, laying the corpse on the floor, placing lamps in the hands of the deceased, offering oblations, and performing [traditional] obsequies or memorial services (*shrāddh*) are all forbidden.³⁸ It is also forbidden to gather from the pyre the residual bones sanctified by Hindu custom and to deposit them in such rivers as the Ganga, [the Satluj at] Kiratpur, or [the Ravi at] Kartarpur.

2.2.4 OTHER RITUALS

In addition to the ceremonies detailed above there may be occasions of particular joy or sadness which warrant a special intercession. Examples are the first entry into a new building, the opening of a new shop, or a child's first day at school. On such occasions a Sikh should seek Vahiguru's blessing by reciting prayer. Readings from the scriptures and prayer are essential components of all Sikh rituals.

3. Service

Service (*seva*) is a fundamental feature of Sikhism. Gurdwara maintenance provides a means of inculcating this essential virtue. Common examples are the sweeping of a gurdwara, serving water to members of a sangat or fanning them, serving food in the gurdwara dining-hall (*langar*), and cleaning the shoes [of worshippers].

(a) The Guru's langar serves two purposes. It inculcates the spirit of service in Sikhs; and it breaks down false notions of status and caste.

(b) Anyone may eat in a langar, regardless of his status or caste. When all take their places in the same line (*paṅgat*) there should be no discrimination on the basis of nationality, varna (*varan*), caste (*zāt*), or religion. The only qualification is that food that is given to initiated members of the Khalsa (*amrit-dhārī sikh*) must be served from a separate dish.

II. Panthic Discipline

[This section deals with the following issues:] (1) The Guru Panth. (2) The Khalsa initiation ceremony. (3) The procedure to be followed when imposing penances for infringements of the Khalsa Rahit. (4) The procedure to be followed when issuing a panthic injunction (*guramatā*). (5) Appeals against local decisions.

1. The Guru Panth

Seva is not merely a matter of waving fans or serving food in the langar. A Sikh should devote his entire life to the welfare of others. The most effective form of service is that which involves people working together without imposing excessive demands on any individual. This is only achieved through cooperation. In addition to his personal duty each Sikh should therefore acknowledge a corporate obligation. The institution [which makes it possible to discharge this corporate responsibility] is called the Panth. A Sikh can fulfil his religious obligations only if he is an active member of the Panth.

Those Sikhs who are qualified Singhs³⁹ together constitute what is called the Guru Panth. This [corporate institution] was progressively developed by the ten Gurus and was given its definitive form by the tenth Guru when he conferred on it the authority of the Guru.⁴⁰

2. The rite of Khalsa initiation (*amrit saṅskār*)

(a) The Khalsa initiation ceremony requires a careful choice of circumstances. It should never be conducted in a place that is a public thoroughfare.

(b) An open copy of the Guru Granth Sahib is required at the place of initiation, together with at least six fully-apparelled Singhs. One of these will sit with the Guru Granth Sahib while

the remaining five will administer the actual initiation. Female Singhs (*siṅghanīān*) may be numbered amongst them. Prior to the ceremony they should all bathe and wash their hair.

(c) The Panj Piaras [chosen to administer initiation] should be physically sound, being neither blind nor one-eyed, neither crippled nor disabled; and they should be free from chronic disease. No [undischarged] person convicted of transgressing the Rahit (*tanakhāhīā*) should be selected. He should be a worthy and virtuous Singh.

(d) Any man or woman who affirms belief in the Sikh faith and vows to live according to its principles may receive initiation, regardless of nationality, [previous] creed, or caste. Those who are to receive initiation should be old enough to understand the meaning of the ceremony. They should bathe and wash their hair, and should present themselves wearing all five Khalsa symbols. These are uncut hair (*kes*), a kirpan in a baldric, a pair of shorts (*kachhahirā*), a comb (*kaṅghā*), and a wrist-ring (*kaṛā*). No symbols associated with other faiths may be worn. The head must be covered, but not with any kind of hat or cap.⁴¹ Ear-rings and nose ornaments must not be worn. [Prior to receiving initiation the candidates] should stand reverently before the Guru Granth [Sahib] with palms together.

(e) If any person should be seeking re-initiation after violating a cardinal injunction of the Rahit (*kurahit*) he/she should be separated from the other candidates and in the presence of the sangat should receive a penance from the Panj Piaras. [He/she may then rejoin the other candidates.]

(f) One of the Panj Piaras should then address those who are seeking initiation, explaining to them the principles of the Sikh faith in the following terms:

'The Sikh faith requires you to abandon the worship of man-made objects. Instead you should direct your loving devotion and adoration to the one Creator. This obligation is discharged by attending to the words of sacred scripture; by serving the sangat of the devout and the Panth; by acting benevolently towards others; by maintaining love for the divine Name; and after receiving initiation by living in accordance with the Rahit. Do you gladly accept this faith (*dharam*)?'

(g) When an affirmative answer has been given one of the Piaras, in preparation for administering *amrit*, should offer a prayer and take a *hukam*. The Panj Piaras then prepare for the *amrit* ceremony by taking their places beside the bowl [which is to be used for the initiation].

(h) The bowl should be made of iron and set on something appropriate such as a gilded stool.

(i) Fresh water should be poured into the bowl and soluble sweets (*patāse*) added. Having done this the Panj Piaras should sit around the bowl, adopting the 'heroic posture'. The following compositions should then be recited.

(j) *Japu[ī]*, *Jāp*, the *Ten Savayyās* (the savayyas beginning with 'Scrupulous Jains and hosts of Siddhs'), *Benatī Chaupai* (from 'Extend to me your guiding hand' to 'Shield me from my foes') and the six prescribed stanzas of *Anand Sāhib*.

(k) Each officiant, when reciting should do so with his left hand placed on the rim of the bowl. With his right hand he should stir the water with a two-edged sword (*khandā*), keeping his attention intently focused [on the task he is performing]. The other officiants should gaze intently into the water with both hands resting on the rim of the bowl.

(l) After the appointed passages have been completed one of the Piaras should recite Ardas.

(m) Only those candidates who have been present throughout the whole of the ceremony's preparatory period may receive initiation. Any who arrive while it is in progress are debarred.

(n) The candidates shall now be instructed to adopt the 'heroic posture', turning their thoughts to the Tenth Master as they do so. Each should cup his/her hands, placing the right hand over the left. Five times the sanctified water (*amrit*) is poured into the candidate's cupped hands. As he/she receives it he/she shall be instructed: 'Cry *Vāhigurū jī kḥ Khālsā! Vāhigurū jī kḥ fateh!*' After drinking each portion the recipient shall repeat: '*Vāhigurū jī kḥ Khālsā! Vāhigurū jī kḥ fateh!*' Five times the *amrit* is sprinkled on his/her eyes and five times it is sprinkled over his/her kes. After each action the officiant cries '*Vāhigurū jī kḥ Khālsā! Vāhigurū jī kḥ fateh!*' and the recipient shall repeat the words after him. The *amrit* that still remains

is then consumed by the initiates (both men and women), all drinking from the same vessel.

(o) Next, the Panj Piaras impart the Name of God to the initiates by reciting the Basic Credal Statement (*mūl mantra*) in unison and by having the initiates repeat it after them:

There is one Supreme Being, the Eternal Reality, the Creator, without fear and devoid of enmity, immortal, never incarnated, self-existent, known by grace through the Guru.

(p) One of the Panj Piaras then expounds the *Rahit* as follows:

'As from today you are 'born to the Guru and freed from rebirth'. You are now a member of the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh is your spiritual father and Sahib Kaur your spiritual mother.⁴² Your birthplace is Kesgarh Sahib and your home is Anandpur Sahib. Because you are all children of the same father you are spiritual brothers, one with another and with all others who have received the *amrit* initiation. You must renounce your former lineage, occupation, works, and religious affiliation. This means that you should put aside all concern for caste status, birth, country, and religion, for you are now exclusively a member of the sublime Khalsa. You must worship Akal Purakh alone, spurning all other gods, goddesses, incarnations and prophets. You must accept the ten Gurus and their teachings as your only means of deliverance.

'You can already read the Gurmukhi script (if not you must learn how to do so) and at least once a day you must read or hear the following works which together constitute the Daily Rule: *Japujī*, *Jāp*, the *Ten Savayās* (beginning with 'Scrupulous Jains and hosts of Siddhs'), *Sodar Raharās*, and *Sohilā*. You should also read or hear some additional passages from the Guru Granth Sahib, and you must always wear the Five Ks. These are uncut hair (*kes*), a kirpan,⁴³ a pair of shorts (*kachhahirā*),⁴⁴ a comb (*kaṅghā*), and a wrist-ring (*karā*).⁴⁵

'There are four sins, which are particularly serious (*kurahitān*) and, which must be scrupulously avoided: (1) Showing disrespect to one's hair [by cutting it]. (2) Eating *kuṭṭhā* meat. (3) Sexual intercourse with any person other than one's spouse. (4) Using tobacco. Anyone who commits

any of these four cardinal sins must be re-initiated, unless the act has been unintentional in which case no punishment should be administered.

'Have no dealings with initiated Sikhs who cut their hair (*sir-gum*)⁴⁶ or with Sikhs who smoke.

'Always be prepared to support the Panth and to provide whatever assistance may be required in a gurdwara. Set aside a tenth part of whatever you earn and dedicate it to the Guru. Let all that you do be done in accordance with the principles of Gurmat.

'Observe at all times the discipline required of those who belong to the Khalsa. If you violate the Rahit in any respect, you should present yourself before a congregation of the Khalsa and request a penance. Take care thereafter not to commit the same offence.

(q) 'The following offences warrant a penance:

1. Associating with Minas, Masands, Dhir-malias, Ram-raias, and other enemies of the Panth⁴⁷; or with initiated Sikhs who smoke, those who murder baby daughters, or [those Kes-dhari Sikhs] who cut their hair (*sir-gum*).⁴⁸

2. Eating from the same dish as a person who has not received the Khalsa initiation or is an apostate Sikh (*putit*).

3. Dyeing one's beard.

4. Giving or receiving a cash dowry in return for a son's or a daughter's hand in marriage.

5. Consuming any drug or intoxicant (cannabis, opium, alcohol, cocaine, etc.).

6. Performing any rite or ceremony which conflicts with Sikh belief, or commissioning anyone else to do so.

7. Neglecting to fulfil any part of the Rahit.'

(r) At the conclusion for this homily one of the Panj Piaras should offer prayer.

(s) The person sitting in attendance on the Guru Granth Sahib should then take a *hukam*. If any of the newly-initiated bears a name that was not selected from the Guru Granth Sahib, he should now receive a new name [chosen in the approved manner] (see I.2.2.1a).

(t) Finally *karah prasad* should be distributed. All who have enlisted in the Guru's service, both men and women, should take *karah prasad* from the same dish.

3. The imposing of penances

(a) Any Sikh who commits a breach of the *Rahit* is required to appear before the nearest *sangat*. He should stand in their presence and confess his fault.

(b) In the presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib* the *sangat* should choose [five] *Panj Piaras* who will investigate the offence and recommend to the *sangat* a penance which this person should perform.

(c) The *sangat* should not use compulsion when imposing a penance, and the offender should not question its verdict. The penance should take the form of service [to the *sangat*], particularly the kind that requires manual labour.

(d) After a penance has been awarded *Ardas* should be recited.

4. The issuing of panthic injunctions

(a) *Panthic injunctions* (*gurmatā*) can be promulgated only in relation to issues that concern the fundamental tenets of the Sikh religion, viz. the dignity and status of the Gurus or the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the correctness of the sacred text, the form of the initiation ceremony, the content of the *Rahit*, the organisation of the *Panth*, etc. Other issues of lesser importance (religious, educational, social, or political) should be settled without recourse to religious sanction.

(b) *Gurmatas* may be determined and promulgated only by the elected members of the supreme council of the *Guru Panth*.

5. Appeals against local decisions

Appeals against the decisions of local *sangats* may be lodged at *Akal Takhat* (see I.1.4.1p).

Appendices



Appendix 1

Coverage of sundry rahit-namas by Kahn Singh Nabha in *Gurumat Sudhākar (GSudh)* and the Panch Khalsa Divan in its *Khālsā Rahit Prakāśh (KRP)*

Verses of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* included by *GSudh* (x) and the *KRP* (a)

1			19	x	a	37	x	a
2	x	a	20	x	a	38	x	a
3	x	a	21	x		39	x	a
4	x	a	22	x		40	x	
5	x	a	23	x	a	41		
6	x	a	24	x	a	42		
7	x	a	25	x		43		
8	x	a	26	x		44	x	a
9	x	a	27	x	a	45		
10	x	a	28	x	a	46		
11	x	a	29	x	a	47	x	a
12	x	a	30	x	a	48	x	a
13	x	a	31	x	a	49	x	a
14	x	a	32	x	a	50	x	
15			33	x	a	51		
16	x	a	34	x	a	52		
17	x	a	35	x	a	53	x	
18	x	a	36	x	a	54-62		

KRP does not name either Nand Lal or Gobind Singh (giving only *gurū*). *BNLG* and *GSudh* give only *gobind singh* without the *gurū*. The *KRP*'s reason for not naming Nand Lal was that because he did not have 'Singh' in his name he could not have been a member of the Khalsa.

Neither *GSudh* nor *KRP* is set out with *doharā* and *chaupai* as in *BNLG* and in *PSP*. The various items are set out in *BNLG* as stanzas (some very brief, others longer). In *GSudh* and *KRP* they are presented as rhymed couplets in numbered groups (sometimes one couplet, sometimes two, sometimes more than two). The single-couplet groups are longer than the brief couplets of the other groups and obviously bear the marks of at least a rudimentary poetic form. These groups do not correspond in the two versions. The grouping adopted by *GSudh* is a little closer to a poetic form than that of the *KRP*.

GSudh and *KRP* are closer to each other than to *BNLG* or *PSP* as far the spelling of individual words is concerned. *GSudh* does, however, use the names of both Nand Lal and Gobind Singh, and follows the *BNLG/PSP* version when there are differences concerning the text. For example:

BNLG: *sūhā pahīn lae nasavār* (17)

GSudh: *sūhā pahir lae nasavār* (7)

KRP: *bikhyā pīe lae nasavār* (15)

BNLG: *atithi vekh nahīn devai dān* (33)

GSudh: *atithi dekh nahin devai dān* (16)

KRP: *dan yog nahi devai dān* (22)

But then immediately after:

BNLG: *kīratan kathā siun man nahīn lāvai* (34)

GSudh: *kathā kīratan man nahin lāvai* (17)

KRP: *kathā kīratan man nahin lāvai* (23)

GSudh reverts soon after. *BNLG* 37 and *GSudh* 18 have *narak hazār*, whereas *KRP* 24 has *kashaṭ apār*.

Then in *BNLG* 48 there is divergence again:

BNLG: *khālsā soi gurabāṇī hit lāi* (48)

GSudh: *khālsā soi gurū hit lāvai* (21)

KRP: *khālsā soi gurū hit lāvai* (26)

Injunctions omitted by *GSudh* and *KRP*:

Accepts Turks as master	15
Touches iron with his feet	15
Abandons the Guru	41
Naked while sleeping, having intercourse, bathing, roaming around, or distributing food	41-3
Avoids five evil impulses	45
Avoids rituals	45
Abandons pride	46
Avoids another's woman	46
A Khalsa repeats the divine Name	51
A Khalsa fights against barbarians/Turks	51
A Khalsa is absorbed in the divine Name	52
A Khalsa breaks free from that which binds him	52
A Khalsa carries weapons	54
A Khalsa smites oppressors/Turks	54
Omitted only from <i>KRP</i> :	
Goes unarmed	21
Robs wayfarer	22
Does not use cold water for bathing	25
Eats without reciting Japuji	25
Does not join in Rahiras	26
Does not recite Kirtan Sohila	26
Seduces Guru's wife	40
A Khalsa supports the needy	50
A Khalsa destroys the oppressor	50
A Khalsa knows how to ride	53
A Khalsa is always fighting	53

Verses of *Prashan-uttar* included in *GSudh* (x) and the *KRP* (a)

	x	a	8	x	a
	x	a	9		
	x	a	10	x	a
	x	a	11		
1	x	a	12	x	a
2			13	x	a
3	x	a	14	x	a
4			(i.e 2nd half + 1st half)		
5			15		
6	x	a	16	x	a
7	x	a	17-23		

The *GSudh* and *KRP* versions do not have sub-headings indicating whether the Guru or Nand Lal is the speaker. The two versions are virtually identical, except that as usual Nand Lal is not mentioned by the *KRP*. It uses *sikh* instead of *nand*.

Come into my presence	2
Deliverance for all descendants	4
Where do we find the Guru?	5
Bathe at dawn and walk thrice round the Granth	9
Acknowledge the Granth	11
Verses 15–23 repeat what has already been said	

* * *

Verses of the *Desā Singh Rahit-nāmā* included by *GSudh* (x)
and the *KRP* (a)

/ = line of couplet (two lines in each couplet)

Variant: *KRP* has a stanza different from *GSudh*

1 /	37 /	73 /	x a
/	/	/	
2 /	38 /	74 /	
/	/	/	x a
3 /	39 /	x Variant 75 /	x a —
/	/	x Variant	/ x a
4 / x a	40 /	/	x a
/ x a	/	x a	Variant
5 / x a	41 /		Variant
/ x a	/	x a	76 /
6 / x a	42 /	/	/
/ x a	/	x a	77 /
7 / x a	43 /	x a	/
/ x a	/		78 /
8 / x a	44 /	x a	/
/ x a	/	x a	79 /
9 /	45 /	/	/
/	/		80 /
10 / x a	46 // //	x a	/
/ x a	// //	x a	81 /
11 /	Variant	/	/
/	Variant	82 /	/
12 /	47 /	/	/
/ x a	/	83 /	/

13	/	x a	48	/			/
	/	x a		/		84	/
14	/		49	/			/
	/			/	x	85	/
15	/		50	/			/
	/	x a		/		86	/ x a
16	/		51	/			/ x a
	/			/		87	/
17	/		52	/			/
	/			/		88	/ x a
18	/		53	/			/ x a
	/			/	x a	89	/ x a
19	/		54	/	x a		/ x a
	/			/	x a	90-146	/
20	/		55	/	x		
	/			/	x		
21	/		56	/			
	/			/			
22	/		57	/			
	/	x a		/	x a		
23	/		58	/	x a		
	/		59	/			
24	/	x a		/			
	/	x a	60	/			
25	/			/	x		
	/		61	/			
26	/			/			
	/		62	/			
27	/			/			
	/		63	/			
28	/			/			
	/		64	/			
29	/	x a		/	x a		
	/	x a	65	/	x		
30	/	x a		/	x		
	/	x a	66	/			
31	/	x a		/			
	/		67	/			
32	/			/			
	/		68	/			

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33	/	x a	/		
	/	x Variant	69	/	
34	/	x Variant		/	
	/		70	/	
35	/			/	
	/		71	/	x a
36	/	x a		/	x a
	/	x a	72	/	
				/	x a

Note: 4th ed of *PSP* omits 3–4

Everything from 90–146 has been omitted by *GSudh* and the *KRP*. Stanza 90 is the beginning of the langar and autobiographical sections.

The text of *GSudh* sometimes agrees with *KRP*, sometimes with *PSP*. On the whole it is more like *PSP* and refers to Nand Lal. See also *PSP* 38: *duhūn granth*. *GSudh* (45) agrees with this, not with *KRP*'s *gurū granth* (45). This actually represents a clear doctrinal position for the *AG* and against the *DG*. But note examples like *PSP* 75/ *GSudh* 60/ *KRP* 57. The differences in the text are not great, but *GSudh* and *KRP* agree completely. *PSP* is the text that diverges. This stanza comes very near the end of both the *GSudh* and *KRP* texts. *KRP* inserts an extra stanza which both of the others lack (58) and then *GSudh* and *KRP* conclude with a single stanza (*GSudh* 61, *KRP* 59) what *PSP* covers in three stanzas (86, 88, and 89). The three texts are almost exact copies, the only significant difference being that whereas *PSP* and *GSudh* both have *ṭhākur*, *KRP* has *sāhib* (*oh sāhib main usakū cherū*).

Protect cows	16
Against Turks	16, 20, 21, 46, 62
Superstitions	20, 47, 68
Serving renunciants	25–6
Caste approved for marriage	28
Small amounts of opium and bhang permissible	31 (2)
Liquor permissible before battle	45
Kill! Kill!	46, 47
The Veda supported	60

Verses of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā* included by
GSudh (x) and the *KRP* (a)

Kahn Singh has taken very little from the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*,

both in terms of his selection of injunctions and in the length of each injunction. As an example see the differing lengths of *GSudh* 7-8 and that of *ChS* 45. For an example of adding items compare *GSudh* 12 with *ChS* 86. For an example of taking only a small part of the original in *ChS* compare *GSudh* 17 with *ChS* 120.

The *ChS* injunctions are given in W. H. McLeod, *The Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*:

Column 1 = *GSudh* Column 2 = items in *ChS* Column 3 = *KRP*

[] = *GSudh* has changed the wording of the source significantly

1	7	60	11	84	68	[21]	136	-	31	?	74
2	12	61	12	86	-	22	137	70	32	286	75
3	13	62	13	102	69	23	138	71	33	286	75
[4]	17	62	14	102	69	[24]	141	-	34	347	76
5	20	63	15	104	139	[25]	144	-	35	346	-
6	23	64	[16]	108	-	26	146	-	[36]	363	-
7	45	-	17	120	-	27	146	-	[37]	373	78
8	45	66	18	122	-	28	188	-	38	405	-
9	48	67	19	129	-	29	188	-	39	459	-
10	72	-	[20]	133	-	30	190	-	[40]	455	-
									41	465	-
									42	513	-

Injunction 31 may have its source in a portion omitted from MS. 6124.

GSudh's 42 items were as follows:

1. A Gursikh shall not drink intoxicating liquor. 'He who drinks dislodges his reason and becomes demented.'¹

2. A Gursikh shall not kill his daughter. Do not associate with someone who kills his daughter.

3. Do not exact a price for your daughter [when she is given in marriage.]

4. Enter a relationship with a Gursikh [and have your daughter married without money being involved].

5. A Gursikh should not observe the custom of wearing a sacred thread or a frontal sect-mark (*tikkā*).

6. A Gursikh should regard a poor person's mouth as the Guru's alms-box (*golak*).

7. A Gursikh's head must not be shaved after death (*bhaddan*).

8. When death comes perform Kirtan [Sohila] and, as one's means permit, distribute [karah] prasad.

9. From the proceeds of your labours² put aside a tenth part for the Guru's share.

10. Do not have a pir or a masand in charge of a dharamsala (dharamasalia).

11. Employ a Sikh as your cook.³

12. Do not burn dung in your kitchen, nor use it for plastering a cooking-square.

13. Do not steal or commit adultery.

14. Do not gamble.

15. Do not speak while distributing food. If you must speak then cover your mouth with a handkerchief. If you scratch your body wash your hands.

16. Before commencing any work say Ardas.

17. Follow no one except your Guru.

18. Preach the faith and lead your relatives to the [Khalsa] faith.

19. Apart from the Guru's compositions you should neither read nor hear anything else.

20. Greet with the Guru's 'Fateh' salutation.

21. By whatever means drive away a Sikh's suffering.

22. A Gursikh should spurn the following: [Muslim] tombs, the shrines [of deceased Hindus], the places where widows were burnt on their husbands' funeral pyres, mosques, mullahs, qazis.

23. Boys should be taught how to read the Granth Sahib.

24. At the conclusion of a reading of the Granth Sahib read the shaloks of the ninth King, [Guru Tegh Bahadur].⁴

25. In each village a building should be erected by the congregation (*sādhusaṅgat*) where it can meet and where travellers can find rest.

26. Obey the [Guru] Granth Sahib.

27. Let grace be the liquor which intoxicates you.

28. Be armed.

29. Do not believe what the masands say.

30. Never turn your back in battle.

31. The Khalsa is distinct from Hindus and Muslims.

32. When a Sikh commits an offence against the Rahit (*kurahit*) he should stand before all [the assembly] with his palms together and having received a penance he should be forgiven.

33. There should be no reluctance in granting forgiveness to a Sikh.

34. A Sikh should not dye his beard. If he does so he is a tanakhahia.

35. The Sikh who plucks white hairs from his kes is a tanakhahia.

36. When you first see a Sikh utter the 'Fateh' greeting. He who does not accept the 'Fateh' greeting is a tanakhahia.

37. A Sikh who, eating from the same plate, shares with a person who has not been initiated, is a tanakhahia.

38. He who at a wedding watches a display staged by harlots is a tanakhahia.

39. In disputes between Sikhs that Sikh who takes it [straight] to a magistrate (*hākam*) without discussing it [with the other Sikh] is a tanakhahia.

40. An importunate lender is a tanakhahia.

41. He who gives his word and then goes back on it is a tanakhahia.

42. He who deceives is a tanakhahia (*GSudh* 1901, 458–502).

Conclusion

The *GSudh* and *KRP* versions of these four rahit-namas are close, particularly the first three. Likewise the fact that both omit Prahilad Rai. Evidently Kahn Singh Nabha had a considerable influence on Teja Singh Bhasaur.

Portions of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* included in Kahn Singh's *Gurumat Sudhākar*

Numbers in the left margin correspond to the *GSudh*'s numbers. The early version of the *Dayā Singh Rahit-nāmā* was written in prose, without numbers to break the text into sections. The second number in each case corresponds to the number introduced in this volume for sections of the translation.

1. Most of 12 (the latter portion)
2. A version of 13
3. Portion of 14
4. A version of a portion of 14
5. Portion of 14
6. Portion of 17
7. Latter part of 28
8. 31 (The first stanza of a *doharā*. The PSP text is corrupt. *GSudh* is clear.)
9. A very different version of 40
10. Middle sentence of 21
11. Middle portion of 23
12. Third sentence of 27. Wording a little different.
13. Middle sentence of 28
14. Apparently first sentence of 29, though wording is very different.
15. Apparently from 44. The wording is rather different, but the main features are present in both versions.
16. First sentence of 49. Some words and intention are different, but evidently the source for *GSudh*.
17. Portion of 57. Same meaning but wording very different.
18. 63 could be the source, although the wording and the meaning are different. Alternatively it may have been taken from 66.
19. Second sentence of 77. Extensive differences, but it seems to be the source.
20. 77, third sentence.
21. 80, fourth sentence.
22. 80, fifth sentence.
23. 83, first sentence. *GSudh* uses *sar* instead of *khavar*.
24. 83, third sentence.
25. 91 includes the same injunction, but with a wording that is different (*GSudh* 503–7).

Appendix 2

On Tradition

Tradition requires a close analysis, particularly tradition as it affects the Sikhs. Within the Sikh community there have always been men revered for their piety and for their knowledge of the Panth's scripture.¹ To qualify as exponents and bearers of Sikh tradition these men needed, above all, the ability to interpret and expound the hymns of the Gurus and to relate the Panth's traditional history.² Either residing in one place or moving from village to village such men communicated a simple version of the Sikh faith, and in this way the illiterate Sikh peasant normally acquired the basic features of his faith. Passed down from one generation to the next they formed a generally stable framework.

This, however, is not all that can be said about tradition in the Sikh Panth. Several features helped form the tradition in its earliest days. These include:

1. Climate. The Sikh faith developed in the Punjab where, for much of the year, the temperatures are very high. This has encouraged such features as early-morning bathing, prayer, and meditation.

2. Environment. Amongst other features this involves the agrarian activities of a large majority of Sikhs, with village life and seasonal cycles.

3. Religious doctrines of the host cultures. To this background can be traced such basic features as the doctrine of Guru, the practice of meditation on the divine Name, and the influence of Muslim belief in a single scripture.

Other influences are brought to bear on the tradition as it develops. These include:

1. The continuing religious doctrines and practices of the host cultures. Shivalik Hills society and the lengthy influence of the Devi cult on the Khalsa can be held to be examples of this.³ So too can Sufi belief in a communal kitchen.

2. The customs of the dominant group within Sikh society. The militant tradition of the Jats and their carrying weapons are examples of this feature. The Khalsa insistence upon the kes also probably, derives from this source. These features were not present

in the early Sikh Panth, but grew as the Jats asserted increasing dominance.

3. Historical events. Two prominent examples of this influence are the actual founding of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh and the warfare of the eighteenth century against Muslim enemies.

4. Antipathy towards one's enemies. Muslims were the eighteenth-century enemies, and to this feature can be traced the ban on *halāl* meat and the strict avoidance of Muslim women. The ban on the hookah is almost certainly from the same source.

5. The influence of an exotic culture. This meant the British. Their influence is to be found in Tat Khalsa ideals of rational order, western values of the nineteenth century, institutions, education, military recruitment, and martial races.

6. Education. This is to be seen in the Tat Khalsa objection to 'superstition' and their preference for system and order.

One writer who was acutely aware of the issues raised by the early rahit-namas was Piara Singh Padam. In his book entitled *Rahit-nāme* (PSP) he raised the general problem and provided an answer which was awkwardly traditional.

In some rahit-namas there are items which do not accord with Gurmat, for example privileges for Brahman Sikhs, unduly harsh treatment for Muslims, and the ban on reading Arabic or Persian.... There may be contemporary explanations for such items, but they are nevertheless unacceptable for Sikhs (PSP, 35-6).

It should be appreciated, he continues, that the new Panth was trying to break loose from both Brahmans and Turks, and with this in mind the rahit-namas must be read carefully. For example, he claims, the injunction denouncing hat-wearing condemns only Sikhs to hell if they wear one, not all hat-wearers (PSP, 36).

Endnotes



1. A Selection from the Vars of Bhai Gurdas

1. *balihārī tinhān gurasikhān*: I offer myself as a sacrifice to those Sikhs of the Guru.
2. 3 A.M. to 6 A.M.
3. *hau tisū viṭahu vārīā*: I make a sacrifice, offering, before a deity.
4. *par nārī de neṛī na jāvai*: does not go near another's wife.
5. *hau tis dai chauakhannīai*: I shall be cut in four pieces for that person.
6. *dūjā bhau*: 'duality'. See GNSR, p. 249.
7. *guru chelā chelā guru sandā*.

2. Prashan-uttar attributed to Nand Lal

1. This prologue is only in *GSudh*, p. 462, and *KSP*, pp. 10–11.
2. The period from 12 noon until 3 P.M.
3. Possibly the following: (1) Arise at dawn. (2) Bathe. (3) Meditate.
- (4) Visit the dharamsala or gurdwara. (5) Hear Rahiras at sunset.
4. Kahn Singh interprets these three to mean God (*paramātmā*), the Khalsa, and the Guru Granth Sahib. *GSudh*, p. 463n. This is confusing, for *Prashan-uttar* explicitly defines the second form as the Guru Granth Sahib (verse 8) and its notion of the third form could mean the Khalsa (verse 12). The confusion arises from the fact that the author of *Prashan-uttar*, when announcing the Guru's three forms in verse 6, defines the third as *gur-shabad*, the divine Word. He repeats this three-fold definition in verse 17.
5. This *doharā* is absent from *PSP*.

3. A Portion of Gur Sobha

1. Although the civil year actually ends with the month of Phaggaṇ (February/March), the end of Chet (March/April, the following month) marks the conclusion of the astronomical year. Punjabi peasants regarded Chet as the final month of the year. Baisakh (April–May) was therefore acknowledged as the first month of a new year by the Sikhs and New Year's Day was known as Baisakhi Day.

2. The five reprobate groups (*pañj meh*). See ch. 7.22, 'The Five Reprobate Groups'.

3. *bhaddar*, *bhaddan*: the Hindu tonsure ceremony; the shaving of a deceased person's head before cremation. Censures against *bhaddar* recur in *GSobh*.

4. Ganda Singh's text reads: *zorāvar kari sīṅgh hukam varatūā*. Ganda Singh, p. 24. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, *Shrī Guru Sobhā*, p. 33, agrees with Ganda Singh and interprets the text as follows: 'The son of the Guru (*sāhibzādā*) Zoravar Singh was initiated by the two-edged sword.' This seems unlikely as Zoravar Singh was the third of the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh. Kahn Singh Nabha has a different text: *sīṅgh aṭīl hukam baratāyā*. This he interprets as demonstrating on the authority of Sainapati that the four sons of the Guru all received initiation. *GM*, vol. 1, p. 84.

5. The five evil impulses: *kām* (lust), *krodh* (anger), *lobh* (covetousness), *moh* (attachment to worldly things), *haṅkāṛ* (pride).

6. Theft, fornication, gambling, drunkenness, and lying.

4. A Portion of the Dasam Granth

1. According to Puranic cosmography, the world comprised a series of concentric *dvīpa* or 'continents' (normally computed as seven), with Jambudvīpa situated at the very centre of the system. Jambudvīpa was itself divided into nine *varsha* or 'regions'. Bharat-varsha (India) lay at the outer extremity and Mount Sumeru (or Mount Meru) at the very centre. Between the regions lay mountain ranges, the first of them being the Himalayas. The name Hem Kunt (also Hem Kund and Hem Kut), 'golden-peaked', was variously applied to two of Jambudvīpas prominent features. It was the name attached to the second of the dividing mountain ranges, the one separating the second *varsha* (Kinnar) from the third; and it was also applied to Mount Sumeru which was believed to consist of solid gold. It is difficult to tell whether the reference in *Bachitar Nāṭak* points to Mount Sumeru or to the Hem Kunt range of mountains. Whereas the singular form *hem kunṭ parabat* implies a single mountain, the 'seven peaks' (*sapat-srīṅg*) which follows it seems better suited to the latter possibility. The author of *ChS* had no doubt. Hem

Kunt for him meant Mount Sumeru. *ChS* 157, p. 79. Modern Sikhs are likewise in no doubt that it was the range of mountains. Mount Sumeru also figures prominently in the *janam-sakhis*. W. H. McLeod (1980), p. 145. *B40*, p. 91.

2. A god who, according to the *Markaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, was killed by Chandi (Durga). She also killed his brother Nishumbha.

3. Two demons who, according to the *Mahābhārata* and the *Puranas*, grew from the ear of the sleeping Vishnu and had to be killed by him. There is confusion surrounding their end. The *Markaṇḍeya Purāṇa* attributes the death of Kaitabh to the consort of Shiv.

4. According to one tradition Mahishasur (not Mahikhasur) was a demon killed by Chandi.

5. Demons slain by Chandi.

6. Chandi fought against Rakat-vij, but each drop of his blood that fell on the ground produced a new demon. Chandi ended this by drinking his blood and eating his flesh.

7. *Chandī charitr ukatī bilās* 231, *DG*, p. 99. Stanzas 228–30 are based on the translation by Jodh Singh and Dharam Singh (1999), vol. 1, p. 277.

8. *Bhagautī* can be either a sword or a name for Durga.

9. Presumably 'By the Tenth Master' although it lacks the full form *sri mukh vāk pātashāhī* 10.

10. The evil king of Mathura, the cousin of Krishan, who eventually killed him.

11. The Tretayuga declined by only a quarter.

12. Heaven, earth, and the underworld.

13. *Vār Sṛī Bhagautī jī kī*, stanzas 1–8, 53, *DG*, pp. 119–20, 127. Stanzas 2–8 and 53 are based on Jodh Singh and Dharam Singh (1999), *op cit*, vol. 1, pp. 337, 339, and 361.

5. Tanakhah-nama attributed to Nand Lal

1. MS 770 does not call the *rahit-nama* *Tanakhāh-nāmā*. The name it gives to this work is *Nasihat-nāmā* ('Manual of Instruction') which it uses in its terminal verse. All other versions have no other instances where the word *tanakhāh* is used, and only one where a cognate appears (*tanakhāhadār*). This occurs in verse 3. This cognate is also missing from MS 770, which does not begin until verse 7. It seems clear that the original name must have been *Nasihat-nāmā* and that the term *tanakhāh* had not yet entered Khalsa usage by 1718–19 CE (the time when MS 770 was first recorded). The same applies to the word *tanakhāhī*. Thanks are due to Louis Fenech for alerting me to this issue.

2. Yam, the god of death, appears in the Vedas and the Purans. Upon dying each person must appear before him. His record-keeper Chitra-gupta reads out the account of that person's deeds and Yam dispenses an appropriate sentence.

3. MS 770 starts at this point.

4. The plastering would be done with earth and cow-dung.

5. See ch. 7.13, pp. 219–23. In this instance 'Muslim' should probably read 'Mughal'.

6. Iron is a sacred for the Khalsa and must not be shown disrespect.

7. At this point MS 770 leaps ahead to the second line of couplet 25, omitting everything in between. MS 234 and *Ashok*, p. 53, contain this portion.

8. The author here takes sides in one of the disputes which divided the followers of Banda (the Bandai Sikhs) from the more orthodox Tat Khalsa who gathered around one of the widows of Guru Gobind Singh, Mata Sundari and her adopted son Ajit Singh. Banda had ordered the Sikhs to wear red clothing in place of the traditional blue. The Tat Khalsa opposed this.

9. This is interpreted to mean that a daughter must be given in marriage to a Sikh who refrains from cutting his hair, not to a Mona. *GSudh*, 1st edition, p. 457 n*. In the 4th edition this note is replaced by a much more general one.

10. This is the reading of 21 and 22 as recorded by *GSudh*, *BNLG*, and *PSP*. It is also the version translated by Surinder Singh Kohli (1986), p. 96; and by Trilochan Singh (1977), p. 103. The earlier version recorded by MS 234 and *Ashok*, p. 53, omits the last line of both 21 and 22 and adds an extra couplet which reads in translation as 22a. This couplet will have been in the portion omitted in error by MS 770. The following translations all follow the earlier version: R. Leech (1969), p. 32. J. D. Cunningham (1849), p. 345. Attar Singh (1876), p. 3 (second section).

11. Here also 'Muslim' should probably read 'Mughal'.

12. *chūṇāṇā*: to gather an untied turban into handfuls before tying it onto the head. Always retie a turban every day. Do not put it on intact.

13. Here, however, 'Muslim' appears to be the correct reading.

14. This *doharā* is contained in MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok*, p. 53. It is omitted by *GSudh*, *BNLG*, and *PSP*.

15. For example, he who eats beef.

16. There is some confusion over the wording of this line. The MS. 234 version, f.3b, is as follows: *bheṭ na karai saṅg kirupān*. The reference is presumably to touching karah prasad with a kirpan.

17. MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok*, p. 54. Omitted by *GSudh*, *BNLG*, and *PSP*.

18. Hindu tradition condemned anyone who seduced the wife of his Guru. The injunction sounds strange when delivered to the Khalsa, followers of a Guru who was by this time non-personal. There is a remote chance that it is understandable when read in the light of the continuing conflict between the Bandai Sikhs and the Tat Khalsa. The author of *Tanakhāh-nāmā* had already declared his allegiance with the Tat Khalsa. See note 8. Another possibility is that *gur talapi* should really read *gur nindak* ('He who slanders the Guru'). There can be no justification for this latter version other than the fact that it seems more appropriate for a *rahit-nama*.

19. A Sikh should always wear at least a *kachh* to cover his loins.

20. *nagan karan jo phaili badi*. This is the reading of MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok* for the first half of line 43a. *BNLG* and *PSP* have *nagan hoi bāhar phirai*. *GSudh* omits the verse.

21. *khānu*, to rhyme with *dānu* in the preceding line.

22. MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok*, p. 54. Omitted by *GSudh*, *BNLG*, and *PSP*.

23. These are: *kām* (lust), *krodh* (anger, wrath), *lobh* (covetousness), *moh* (attachment to worldly things), and *haṅkāṛ* (pride).

24. *Ashok* text: *na dinu jāge*.

25. The first line of MS 770 of verse 46 agrees with *Ashok* (*khālsā soī jo ān ko tiāgai*) and disagrees with *BNLG* and *PSP*, but its second line (*khālsā soī jo paratriā so bhāgai*) agrees (with minor variants) with the others, whereas *Ashok* has *khālsā soī jo na dinu jāge*. But then in the first line of the following verse MS 770 reads: *khālsā soī jo rūni ko jāgai*, and then takes the first line of verse 47 as its second line (*khālsā soī jo pradrisaī tiāgai*). It omits the second line altogether. *Ashok* has, in effect, the first line of the couplet (*nu din jāge*) but omits MS 770's second one. All versions agree on verse 48 except that in the second line of the couplet only MS 770 has *muhi muhi* instead of *sār muhi*. *Ashok* agrees with the modern text. *GSudh* omits verse 46, but retains 47 and 48. It is a very confusing section of *Tanakhāh-nāmā*.

26. Presumably Muslims and explicitly so for *BNLG/PSP* which has *malechh*. MS 770: *mukhālaph* (enemy). *Ashok*: *maḥikhāsūr*. *GSudh* omits the verse.

27. MS 770 has omitted the second line from verse 52.

28. *GSudh* ends at this point with the couplet which appears as verse 49 in *BNLG* (verse 26 in *PSP*).

29. MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok* all have *turak*. *BNLG/PSP*: *dushaī* (scoundrel, oppressor).

30. He is exalted to kingly rank. MS 770, MS 234, and *Ashok*, p. 54 all have this couplet. Omitted by *BNLG* and *PSP*.

31. Presumably Mughals.

32. MS 770: *rāj karaigā khālsā yakī tīkai na koi*. The other texts (including *Ashok*) read: *rāj karegā khālsā ākī rahe nā koi*. There are only minor differences in the second line. Here *Ashok* is closer to MS 770. This couplet, known to every Sikh, is repeated at the conclusion of *Ardas*. See ch. 7.25.

33. *ākī* (*bāgī*): he who does not care for the ideals of the Sikhs; a traitor.

34. *BNLG* and *PSP* contain a final injunction which is obviously a stray addition without a verse number. It reads: 'The Guru has said that if the son of a Sikh cuts his hair the source of his being will wither. If a Sikh who cuts his hair becomes a [real] Sikh, [and refrains from the practice], the source of his being will grow green.'

35. This is the conclusion of MS 770. *Ashok's* conclusion reads: 'Sri *Tanakhāh-nāmā* is finished. By reading or hearing it one gains liberation.' *BNLG* has the first of *Ashok's* two sentences. *PSP* has no conclusion.

6. Prahilad Rai Rahit-nama

1. *PSP* does not call him an Udasi, terming him instead Lal Dariai.

2. Nander (or Nanded), situated on the Godavari River in eastern Maharashtra. It was here that Guru Gobind Singh died in 1708 following an assassination attempt.

3. The earlier text provided by Lala Maghi Ram Sant Ram and by *Ashok*, as well as the more recent one of *PSP*, call him Prahilad Singh. Both Attar Singh and Trumpp, however, refer to him as Prahilad Rai. Evidently this was the name used in the early manuscripts.

4. On f. 100a *B40* refers to Guru Nanak wearing a *top* and on f. 184a a *topī* ('cap' or 'hat'). *B40*, pp. 109, 196. *B40*, however, was written by a Sahaj-dhari Sikh who presumably cut his hair. The force of this injunction is that a true Sikh of the Khalsa must never cut his hair. This means that for men at least, turbans are the appropriate head-gear, not topis. Also, the *topi* was idiomatically associated with a Mughal soldier and later with a European. Note that the same sentence on f. 184a in *B40* also refers to Baba Nanak wearing 'two dhotis'. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

5. In Sant and Sikh usage *māyā* designates the corrupting and corruptible world, with all its snares, presented to men and women as permanent and incorruptible and so masquerading as ultimate truth. The term has strong moral overtones and is frequently symbolized by lucre and women.

6. *Ashok* inserts the word *mukh* ('mouth') in this line and follows it with *nase* ('intoxication') instead of *nāse* (*nāsā*, 'nose'), which suggests that the snuff is taken through the mouth. *Ashok*, p. 57. This

could mean that the injunction is against chewing tobacco. Snuff is not taken through the mouth, however, and there is no indication that *nasavār* means other than snuff. Trumpp, who quotes this couplet in Gurmukhi in a footnote, uses *mukh* but follows it with *nāse*. Trumpp, p. cxiv, fn. 3.

7. Most texts have *jar* which can mean one of three things: (1) burnt; (2) dragging out for public punishment; (3) as *zar*, money, losing one's wealth. Ashok has *jal* ('water') which makes little sense.

8. This *doharā* comprising four couplets is provided by the texts of Maghi Ram Sant Ram (p. 13) and by Ashok (p. 57). It is also included in the following translations (listed in fn 10 of the *Tanakhāh-nāmā* translation): Leech, p. 39. Cunningham, p. 343. Attar Singh, p. 3 (first section). It is not included in the *PSP* version.

9. All subsequent Gurus were descended from Guru Ram Das of the Sodhi *got* of Khatri.

10. Verses 19 and 20 are missing from Attar Singh's translation.

11. See note 4. The reference here is clearly to a Mughal.

12. Verse 24, together with verse 30, is commonly recited at the conclusion of Ardas. It clearly states the doctrine of the Guru Panth where the Panth is defined as the Khalsa. Verse 30 with equal clarity declares the doctrine of the Guru Granth as well as the Guru Panth.

13. The ascetic Nath or Kanphat tradition comprises a cluster of yogic sects all claiming descent from the semi-legendary Gorakhnath and all promulgating hatha-yoga as a means of spiritual liberation. During the time of Guru Nanak they were particularly influential.

14. Maghi Ram Sant Ram and Ashok: *jagadish*. *PSP*: *karatūr*.

15. *darashan*: the six schools of Hindu philosophy. The six are: 1. Nyaya 2. Vaiseshika 3. Sankhya 4. Yoga 5. Purva-mimansa 6. Uttara-mimansa.

16. *PSP* diverges from the earlier text at several points in this verse. The earlier text is preferable.

17. Before it everyone must touch the ground with his forehead.

18. Ashok, Maghi Ram Sant Ram, and *PSP* all have *ambar* ('garment'). Quoting this verse, however, Trumpp has *amrit* (p. cxiii note 2) and Leech (p. 41) uses it in his translation. Moreover, Cunningham (p. 344) and also Attar Singh (p. 5, first section) were evidently translating *amrit* when they use 'Pahal' (*pāhul*). *Amrit* makes better sense than *ambar* and seems clearly to have been in the original text.

19. Lit. 'in his mouth'.

20. *Nām-dhārī nit-nem* (Sri Bhaini Sahib: Namdhari Darbar, 9th edition, 1978), introduction, p. 42, quotes this verse as follows:

*sati sri akāl sri vāhigurū/param bij eh mant/
sabh sikhān ko bachān hai/gurū mānō granth/*

Sat Akāl Sṛī Vāhigurū: this shall be known as the basic mantra. Every Sikh is bidden to accept the Granth as Guru.'

21. Magh *vadī* 5, S. 1752, is the equivalent of Thursday 13th of February, 1696. It did not fall on a Sunday. The earlier text places this verse between 34 and 35. Only *PSP* places it at the conclusion of the *rahit-nama*. A modern version concludes with a verse proclaiming the obligation to wear all Five Ks:

*kachh kes kañghā kirapān/kaṛā aur jo karo bakhān/
ih kake pañj tum māno/gurū garanth ko tum sabh jāno/
Accept the five kakke which are here described—kachh, kes,
comb, kirpan, and wrist-ring. All must believe in the Guru Granth.*

This additional stanza appears at the conclusion of the *Prahlād Rāi/Singh Rahit-nāmā* included by Sant Fateh Singh (1967), p. 246.

7. Sakhi Rahit Ki Attributed to Nand Lal

1. *pañḍit pā[n]dhe mīe mahant*: 'Mian' designates eminent Muslims. The title 'Mahant' presumably applies to superiors of Nath establishments.

2. *nañgī bodī*: 'with tuft of hair uncovered'. Sikhs should never defer to Brahmans nor take instruction from them.

3. *ekādasī* (Pbi. *ikādasī*): the eleventh day of each half of the lunar month. For Vaishnavas the consumption of grains is prohibited on this day. Only fruit, vegetables, and milk are permitted.

4. Guru Ram Das, *Naṭ Nārāin Ashṭ* 4(5), AG, p. 982.

5. A portion of Guru Amar Das's *Rāmakaṭī Anand* AG, pp. 917–22, commands a particular prominence in Sikh liturgy and ritual. The portion which comprises the first five stanzas and the last one is a part of *Sodar Raharās*, the evening liturgy. It is also recited before commencing a reading of the complete *Adi Granth* and again at its conclusion; prior to the distribution of *karah prasad*; at the conclusion of the orders of service for child-naming and marriage; during the brief post-cremation ritual; and as a part of the *Khalsa* initiation ceremony. For a translation see *TSSS*, pp. 100–1.

6. *ar pitṛ nū[n] bhī pahuchā*. The ceremonies performed by Sikhs of the *Khalsa* constitute an effective shraddh. For the shraddh see ch. 7.9, pp. 214–15.

7. *doi ghaṛiān*, two *ghaṛīs*. A *ghaṛī* is the equivalent of 24 minutes, which means that a pedantically accurate translation would read: '48 minutes before the close of day (viz. before the conclusion of the fourth watch of the day).' The actual reading should thus begin shortly after 5 P.M.

8. The evening liturgy. See ch. 7.2, pp. 191–4.

9. *mīe brahaman*. The connotation of *mīe* (sing. *mīān*) is not clear. The word *mīān* may be used as a noun meaning 'teacher', and it may also be used adjectivally or as a form of address to mean 'respected'. In this latter usage it was characteristically applied to Muslims in the Punjab and 'Muslim teachers' could be considered as a possible translation. It is, however, much more likely that it is to be read as an ironic title for the execrated Brahmans.

10. Guru Ram Das, *Naṭ Nārāin Ashṭ* 4(5), AG, p. 982.

8. Desa Singh Rahit-nama

1. Lit. I meditate on the feet of the Guru.

2. Verse 9 is missing from *GSudh* and also from the translations of Surinder Singh Kohli (1986) and Trilochan Singh (1977).

3. *man*: mind; heart; soul. *kām krodh mām mad lobha*: the five evil impulses are usually listed as *kām* (lust), *krodh* (anger), *lobh* (covetousness), *moh* (attachment to worldly things), and *hañkār* (pride).

4. *PSP* ends this line with *marai* ('dies'). It should be *mārai* ('smites'). This makes sense and also corresponds to *bhāgai* in the preceding line. *GSudh* omits this couplet, as do the translators Trilochan Singh and Kohli. This is understandable. The notion that Singhs should protect cows and Brahmans and should smite Muslims certainly does not agree with the revisionist ideals of the Tat Khalsa.

5. Gurdwara Sach-khand in Nander on the Godavari river where Guru Gobind Singh was assassinated. These four places were the four *takhts* of the Sikhs, elevated to five by a resolution of the SGPC which in 1966 added the central gurdwara in Damdama Sahib.

6. He no longer needs to transmigrate.

7. A Chuhra (outcaste sweeper) who has converted to Islam. Although they gave up Chuhra duties and for that reason ranked higher than them the Musallis were still regarded as outcastes.

8. Without the protection of a male or of other women.

9. The word used is *ṭopī* which normally means 'hat' but here means *chilam* (the bowl for tobacco and fire of a hookah).

10. In place of stanzas 33 and 34 *KRP* has the following stanzas:

He who is a Khalsa and obedient to the Rahit should never
be without a weapon. 42

He who is a Khalsa and obedient to the Rahit is one who knows
no fear.

If a man should nourish himself on grain [alone], never eat the
food which he has defiled. 43

—*KRP*, p. 16.

11. The shabad known as *Sodar* comes at the beginning of the order for evening prayer held at dusk and the complete order is called *Sodar Raharās*. The shabad contains only one long verse and the complete section known as *Sodar* comprises (in the modern version) five shabads.

12. Between stanzas 38 and 39 *KRP* inserts the following stanza:
 He who sleeps with his wife without [being married by] the
 Anand ceremony will be dragged to Yama's abode, there
 to dwell in misery.

Rather than committing sexual intercourse as between two unmarried individuals have the Anand ceremony performed with the one who is recognised as your woman. 46

—*KRP*, p. 17.

13. From Guru Gobind Singh back to Guru Nanak.

14. 'Serve the Guru's feet continuously.'

15. *PSP* indicates that the last quarter of 51 is missing.

16. *barakhar* > ? *barakat*. Translation uncertain.

17. Attached to the feet of the Guru.

18. 'Do not sing the song of enmity.'

19. They are not to be greeted deferentially.

20. This refers to the preparation of *karāh prasād*, not *prasād* as such. The ceremony of scoring with a kirpan has, for an indeterminate time, been followed with *karah prasad*. The practice as it is followed today is to bring the *karah prasad* into the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, read the six appointed stanzas from *Anand Sahib*, recite *Ardas*, and then touch the *karah prasad* with the tip of a kirpan. It is thus sanctified and is ready for distribution.

21. There is a sudden change of subject midway through 64. The narrator is no longer describing the distribution of *karah prasad*, but is now briefly writing about the duty of an administrator.

22. 24 minutes multiplied by four (an hour and 36 minutes).

23. Two hands, two feet, and the mouth.

24. The *PSP* text of *Desaś* frequently seems to overlap two verses with one subject, beginning it in the second line of one verse and completing it in the first line of the next verse. 66–7 provides a good example. 67–8 provides another which is less clear, but certainly there seems to be a definite break between the first and second line of 68. Is *PSP* reproducing an authentic *Desaś* or is this a later version which has suffered in the process of transmission? The much briefer version of *GSudh* is certainly better in this respect, although in comparison with the *PSP* version it leaves out much that seems genuinely old.

25. Modern Sikhs, with attitudes influenced by the Singh Sabha movement, are hostile to *pūjā*, regarding it as a distinctively Hindu activity. Here there is no such hostility. Presumably in this earlier

context it was always performed in the presence of either the Granth Sahibs or weapons or both.

26. The term 'pujari' (performer of ritual functions in a temple, reserved in modern usage for Hindus) was sometimes used by those Sikhs who preceded the Singh Sabha movement. They were not necessarily celibate.

27. After stanza 75 *KRP* inserts the following stanza:

If a Khalsa acts differently I may praise him; but when [his actions] take the form of a different ritual he will receive no trust from me. 58

—*KRP*, p. 20.

28. This line appears in almost the same words in the rahit-nama of Prahilad Singh (*PrahR* 36.) Evidently it had acquired proverbial status amongst the Sikhs. The origin is presumably to be found in Bhai Gurdas 40:11: *guru chelā chelā guru sandā*. See 1. Bhai Gurdas, p. 264.

29. Guru Arjan, *Gauri Bāvan Akharī* 44, AG, p. 259. This line stands at the head of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-nāmā*. *ChS*, pp. 57, 149.

30. *musalā*: The term is an insulting one. *MK*, p. 732n.

31. *deg*. lit. a large iron cooking pot; a dixie. During the nineteenth century the *deg* was a symbol of the langar. During the eighteenth century it symbolised the Sikh's duty to be charitable and as such appeared in the slogan *deg teg fateh*. From there it came to be represented on nineteenth-century Khalsa flags as well as serving as a symbol of the langar. Eventually it was transmuted into a *chakkar* or quoit and came to be part of the *khaṇḍā* design which emerged during the 1930s. See p. 25.

32. This injunction may refer to the langar only. Cf. verses 32, 105. If that is not the case the author appears to be inconsistent concerning the eating of meat.

33. The Jhinvars or Jhivars are not strictly a caste but rather an occupational group concerned with the carrying and provision of water, fishing, and basket-making. They were village menials and received customary dues for performing customary services. Elsewhere they are not reported as being occupied in cutting hair, but given the range of tasks they performed it is possible that some Jhinvars had adopted the occupation.

34. Meaning obscure. This meaning is suggested by *MK*, p. 320.

35. *deg na karane deī*.

36. 1. To read. 2. To teach others how to read. 3. To perform yoga. 4. To teach others how to perform yoga. 5. To give gifts. 6. To accept gifts. *MK*, p. 272.

37. This injunction may also refer only to the langar.

38. *guron ke bhog*. The term *bhog* is used in different contexts with different meanings. Here it seems to indicate the ceremony of first

touching karah prasād with a knife or kirpan in the name of the Guru. See note 20.

39. This refers to the gurdwara convention whereby all participants in a langar meal must sit in the same line, regardless of caste or status. *bed > ved[a]*.

40. This verse appears to be out of place.

41. The reference is clearly to karah prasād, the sacramental food (*prasād*) which is prepared in a large iron dish (*karāhī*) and distributed in gurdwaras and at other religious functions.

42. Contrary to the Rahit; a grievous sin.

43. A defensive building erected beside Harimandir Sahib (later known as the Golden Temple) in the late eighteenth century as the Sikhs gained control of Amritsar. These bungalows were named after the people or groups responsible for their erection, whether commanders of Sikh misals, important sardars, rich communities in various towns, or particular sects such as the Nirmalas or Udasis. One of them, Akal Bunga, houses Akal Takhat, the primary temporal centre of the Panth. The precise number of those that existed is not known, but it was between 70 and 90. During the nineteenth century the bungalows provided accommodation for pilgrims, and some of them earned reputations as centres of learning. Santokh Singh (1788–1844) was one poet who received his training in a bunga. Very few bungalows now remain as they have been demolished in order to provide an uninterrupted walkway around the pool.

44. Jassa Singh Kalal or Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (1718–83), prominent Sikh military leader during the turbulent middle years of the eighteenth century. Whenever the Sikh misls joined to form the Dal Khalsa he was recognised as the supreme leader.

45. Harimandir Sahib in Patna is the gurdwara marking the place where Guru Gobind Singh was born.

46. Sodhi was the subcaste (*got*) of the Khatri caste (*zāt*) to which Guru Gobind Singh and his six predecessors belonged. For *got* and *zāt* see *Sikhism*, pp. 230–6.

47. The 24 incarnations of Ram and Krishan, a section of the Dasam Granth.

48. Dattatreya features in the Veda as a son of the rishi Atri, embodying portions of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiv. In the Dasam Granth he appears as one who worshipped 24 (*chaubīs*) gurus. *MK*, p. 464.

49. Tales of the Wives of Women, a section of the Dasam Granth.

50. The *Pakhayān Charitr*.

9. Daya Singh Rahit-nama

1. Devi, the Mother Goddess, consort of Shiv and variously manifested as Bhagauti, Chandī, Parvati, Kali, and Durga. Sikhs today

treat mention of the Goddess as coded references to the sword. See ch. 7.12.

2. This list is similar to that given in Kuir Singh's version of the creation of the Khalsa. *Gur-bilās Pātashāhī 10*, ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, Patiala, 1968, p. 121.

3. Karah prasad contains only three ingredients.

4. The Dalits.

5. The meaning is possibly : 'he should be given the Gur-mantra of Satinam [and instructed in] the Rahit.' The grammar of the text, however, makes this meaning unlikely.

6. *bhujāṅgī* lit. a snake's young, but used for the son of an initiated Sikh. *MK*, p. 689. These five are the sangat's Panch Piare, 'sons of Singhs' being the author's customary designation for them. Cf. item 65. It is not clear who these five are, nor the name of their sangat.

7. Durvasas is scarcely a figure from Hindu mythology to be emulated. He is described in the *Rāmāyana* to have been noted for his impatience and irascibility.

8. Normally *kāmī* means 'sexually active'. It may carry this meaning here.

9. Translation uncertain.

10. *shesh*, *shesh-nāg*: King of the serpent race (the Nags) and ruler of the nether regions. Patanjali, originator of the Yoga school, was reputed to have come as a serpent from heaven.

11. Rise above moods which prompt such feelings.

12. Presumably this does not include Sikh prayers.

13. *akāl charan khālase nāl juṛe*.

14. The meaning is possibly 'Guru [and] Akal Purakh'. The text suggests, however, that no distinction should be drawn between them.

15. *granth vich parameshar arādhe*.

16. 'The mother of all features'.

17. Blue has been omitted.

18. *kasumbhā*: the colour of the safflower dye. This is the placement in the 4th edition of *PSP* of the injunction concerning the ban on red clothing. In the first edition it comes after that which enjoins putting offerings in the poor-box in accordance with the *hukam-nama*.

19. No indication is given of how this *hukam-nama* was sanctioned or to what area it applied.

20. The precise nature of this garment is not clear.

21. Instances where only the first name is used, with 'Singh' omitted.

22. A Shi'ite festival which commemorates Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. Only women may participate. The practice is condemned because it involves a Muslim festival.

23. 'Offspring of a barbarian'.

24. The subcastes (*got*) to which Gurus Nanak, Amar Das, and all from Ram Das onwards belonged. The Trehan *got* to which Guru Angad belonged is not mentioned.

25. Sufis sometimes made necklaces from pieces of wood.

26. This presumably refers to *karah prasad* offered to the Guru.

27. For *takhat* ('Takht' or 'Throne') see *DesaṢ*, note 5. It is not clear how many sites were recognised as *takhats* when *DayaṢ* was recorded.

28. Darbar Sahib indicates what is now the Golden Temple and its immediate surroundings.

29. A gold coin. The figures named by the author of the *rahit-nama* seem patently to be a huge exaggeration, presumably to emphasise the perceived seriousness of the offence.

30. *yavanī*: a Greek woman. In this context, however, it must designate a Turkish woman, which presumably means a Muslim.

31. Considering that the sacred places would certainly include Patna in eastern India and Nander in central India this would seem a particularly difficult penance to discharge.

32. The place in Anandpur where Guru Gobind Singh inaugurated the Khalsa.

33. The *Namdhari* *Rahit-nama* expresses this requirement as follows: 'When taking off a *kachh* withdraw one leg and put it in the leg-hole of another pair before withdrawing the second leg.' See *Namdh* 12, p. 346.

34. The *kachh* must be above the knee.

35. *prān nahī nikalate*: 'their breath does not emerge'.

36. Although the word is *tanakhāh* it seems clearly to mean an offering rather than a fine or penance.

37. This may concern those who attach a talismanic or superstitious significance to the reading of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

38. Both plants provide red colouring.

39. This passage, comprising the *shalok* and first two lines of *ashtapadi* 6 of *Gaurī Sukhamanī* (AG, p. 269), is traditionally recited before eating.

May lust, anger, and covetousness depart, [and with them]
worldly affection and vanity.

Nanak craves your protection O Lord, and prays for your grace
O Master.

As you consume all delicacies,
Hold in remembrance that Lord.

40. The five who have been chosen by the *sangat* to act as *Panj Piare*.

41. 'Around his neck'.

42. The wording suggests that it should be distributed *only* to Sikhs.

43. Intimacy with one so young is regarded as improper.

44. The first edition of *PSP*, p. 64, contains the words *triṇ kāsūṭ charam kâ bipār na kare*. Later editions omit this passage.

45. Here the author uses *musalamān*, not *turak*, for a Muslim, and does so when his meaning is plainly those who rule or administer. This strengthens the case for regarding both *turak* and *musalamān* as simultaneously communicating both Mughals or Afghans and Muslims in general. Frequently it can be very difficult knowing which meaning (or both meanings) the author intends. Here he seems clearly to mean Mughals or Afghans. In other cases he seems obviously to mean any Muslim, as in the expression *turak kâ mās* ('Muslim meat') which he uses in items 35, 57, and 59. See ch. 7.13, pp. 219–23.

46. Antimony or collyrium is applied to the eyes as a cosmetic. This injunction forbids its use for this purpose. It can only be applied at night when it serves as a medicine.

47. Because the hillmen attacked Guru Gobind Singh in Anandpur.

48. Kashi is a name for Banaras or Varanasi. Damdama (Talavandi Sabo) in southern Punjab, where after the evacuation of Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh stayed for nine months in 1706, was the place where (according to tradition) Baba Dip Singh later prepared copies of the *Adi Granth*.

49. *bihangam*: a bird; a sadhu who is free of all earthly attachment. *DayaṢ* later makes it clear that the term was used for renunciant celibate Sikhs who moved from gurdwara to gurdwara, living off the charity of the respective sangats. See item 95. Gurdwara attendants of the Nanaksar sect of Sikhs are celibate and are called Bihangams.

50. Persian was regarded as the language of the rulers who confronted the Khalsa. See also items 90, 91.

51. A follower of Sakhi Sarvar Sultan, a Muslim whose tomb in Dera Ghazi Khan District formerly attracted many thousands of devotees. Although his life story consists of a mass of legends, until recently the Sultani sect was a very large one. William Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, vol. 1, London, 1896, pp. 208–11. Santokh Singh bears witness to the fact that during the middle years of the nineteenth century the Sultani following was one of the greatest challenges to the Sikh Panth. Harpinder Jit Kaur (1996), p. 234.

52. This is a curious instruction. One would expect *bāṇī* to be read or recited every day.

53. In traditional Punjabi society step-sons and step-brothers are not trusted.

54. In the first edition of *PSP*, pp. 65–6, this section is expressed rather differently: *ik dhande dī dūjī dekhādekhī jo padārath vāsate tīsari hirasī jo bahut karan so karanā kul bhāv pañjavīn sidak bhāv kī*. In its place the fourth edition, pp. 77–8, has the following: *ik dhande kī dūjī*

dekhūdekhī jo bahut karan so karānā tījī hirasī jo padārath vāsate chauthī sidakī pañjavīn bhāu kī. The same five varieties of Sikh belief are also specified in sakhi 12 of the *Sau Sākhī*. Gurbachan Singh Naiar (1985), pp. 20–1. The occurrence of this brief section near the end of *DayaṢ*, immediately before the final two sections which are obviously later borrowings, suggests that this section is also a later borrowing. The confused text of the *PSP* version in comparison with the much more consistent *Sau Sākhī* text supports this assumption.

55. This and the following portion on the definition of a Bihangam have evidently been added later and (in the case of this reply of Guru Gobind Singh) only partially.

56. Akali here means Nihang.

57. Kirpan (sword), bow, gun, punch-dagger (*kaṭār*), and quoit. *MK*, p. 593. A *kaṭār* is a dagger with a broad blade fastened to a cross-bar, with short projections extending from each end of the cross-bar to provide protection for the wrist. For illustrations of a *kaṭār* see the photographs of weapons facing page 100 of *MK*, numbers 23 and 24. See also figure 39 in W. H. McLeod (1991), p. 110, which depicts Guru Gobind Singh with a *kaṭār* tucked in his belt.

58. The Sikh tradition is to score newly-prepared karah prasad with the tip of a kirpan before distributing it. This account of an Akali (viz. a Nihang) claims that all food is thus scored before it is eaten. A knife (*karad*) is named as the instrument, not a kirpan.

59. This couplet is taken from the version of *Śrī Satigurū vāch* given in Shamsheer Singh Ashok (1979), p. 66. Its text seems more suitable than that of the *PSP* version.

60. Both works, together with *Jāp*, are from the Dasam Granth.

61. 'Never will he offer rice-balls [at a shraddh].' See ch. 7.9 for shraddh.

62. *pañch janan* (*pañch jan*): *kām* (lust), *krodh* (anger), *lobh* (covetousness), *moh* (attachment to worldly things), *hañkār* (pride).

63. See item 21 for *gaz*. The amount of cloth used for a Nihang's *kachh* is substantial.

64. *nihang*: free from care; free from worldly concern. For the Nihangs see *Sikhism* pp. 194–5.

65. This suggests that this portion was composed in the early nineteenth century during the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

66. Deception of the Guru is the water with which his faith (*dīn*) is extinguished.

67. The pot or *loṭā* will be for washing after he has moved his bowels.

68. He has the power to withhold his semen during sexual intercourse.

69. The Khatri subcastes (*got*) to which the Gurus had belonged, plus the Sikh sect of ascetic Udasis. The inclusion of the Udasis is perhaps

surprising, for the anti-ascetic items mentioned earlier in the *rahit-nama* contradicted the Udasi way of life. It is possibly explained by the fact that by the late eighteenth century the Udasis had acquired control of many of the gurdwaras. For the Udasis see Glossary and *Sikhism*, pp. 184–5.

70. Presumably this means a Bihangam.

71. The four stages in the life of a Brahman: 1. *Brahmachārī*, student. 2. *Gṛhastha*, householder. 3. *Vānaprastha*, retired to the forest. 4. *Sannyāsī*, mendicant freed from all worldly desires. A Bihangam would presumably be thought to belong to the fourth ashram.

10. Khalsa Mahima (Portion of Sarab Loh Granth)

1. The ten Gurus, the Guru Panth, and the Guru Granth.
2. It is cleansed.
3. The Guru.
4. The Khalsa.

11. Sau Sakhi, Sakhi 8: Mukati-nama

1. *sūrmā*. PSP has *karam*.
2. *bhog ni sukhātī*. In place of *sukhatī* PSP has *supatī*, 'dream'.
3. *jāti*: caste. Presumably the author means an Outcaste (cf. verse 19) unless of course the *Mukati-nāmā* is by multiple authors. Cf. also verse 34.
4. *chādo*, *chīle* (*chītā*): '[hunting a] cheetah', Khalsa slang for urinating.
5. PSP: *jūth*. GRM text has *jūjh*.
6. *āratū* > *āratī*. *Āratī* is a hymn by Guru Nanak included in the liturgy for *Kīrtan Sohilā* (*Dhūnāsarī* 3, AG, pp. 13, 663).
7. *kaṅg* > ? *kaṅgāl*. Translation uncertain.
8. Translation uncertain.
9. He should marry his daughter to a Sikh.
10. GRM has *sur* (? *devatā*, god). The PSP reading *gur* seems much more likely.
11. Take and give food from fellow Sikhs, regardless of their status in the four-fold caste system.
12. The Muslim confession of faith ('There is no god but God'). If meat is to be regarded as *halāl* it is essential that the Kalima should be recited over the dying animal.
13. PSP: *nāṅgā bhoj na khāhi*, 'Do not consume the food naked'.
14. The standard Sikh gesture of respect, always performed before the Adi Granth.

15. *doi gotr*: the two sub-castes (i.e. the father's and the mother's). On the meaning of *gotra* or *got* see *ESC*, pp. 89–90, 97.

16. *PSP*: *bhet*. *GRM*: *bhed*.

17. This too suggests that *Mukati-nāmā* may be by multiple hands. Cf. verses 13, 36, 37.

18. A significant issue is raised at this point by the question of whether the wording of the text should be divided or not divided. In the original version the text is not divided, each word being joined to the next without any space between them. Here the word(s) is (or are) *kesakī* (the *PSP* reading) or *kes kī* (the *GRM* reading). If the undivided *PSP* reading is correct the translation is 'small turban' or 'under-turban'. If, on the other hand, the divided *GRM* reading is accepted it follows that *kes* is the word for kes and the translation should be 'hair'. The *GRM* reading has been accepted as otherwise it is difficult to make sense of the sentence which follows. Whereas a tonsure would certainly remove the kes (that is, the hair of the head) it cannot remove an under-turban (at least not permanently). Situations such as this serve to enliven the controversy between main-line Sikhs and the Akhand Kirtani Jatha (and further back with the Panch Khalsa Divan) in that an undivided reading would provide evidence for the AKJ's insistence on the keski or under-turban being regarded as one of the Five Ks. For another such situation see p. 75 in which the passage from *Gurū kīān Sakhīān* is clearly on the side of the AKJ. See p. 81, endnote.

19. This suggests that the meaning of *tanakhāh* is changing from 'penance' to 'donation'.

20. This perhaps implies that an uninitiated Sikh may worship idols.

21. 'A Sikh without limits.'

22. A dharamsala or gurdwara.

23. Some manuscripts, including *PSP*, omit *na* ('not'). The meaning of the couplet as a whole seems clearly to favour this omission.

24. Cf. *DayaS* 91. The second line follows the *PSP* text. The *GRM* text has only *na saṅkar datt rām nū*.

25. 84 lakhs (84,00,000), the traditional number of births which the spirit must pass through before attaining liberation.

12. Sau Sakhi, Sakhi 65

1. In its first edition *PSP* erroneously states that the text is taken from sakhi 45 (p. 149). In the 4th edition, still mistaken, it names sakhi 61 as its source (p. 161).

2. The Sikh who honours and maintains his *kes*.

3. *PSP*: *gurū piāre kes*. *GRM*: *gurū ke piāse tes*.

4. GRM puts *turak kī* ('of a Muslim' or 'of a Mughal') in brackets. PSP omits it.

5. *mathā kabū na jhakāi*.

6. This was because the hill chieftains had fought against Guru Gobind Singh. Elsewhere the author of *Sau Sākhī* makes his feelings concerning the hill men clear. See for example sakhi 19.

7. The PSP text lacks the last two lines of this verse, using instead the first two lines of 14. Thereafter the two texts do not correspond in terms of verse numbering.

8. The text of PSP has been followed.

9. *pinḍ*: a ball of rice which is offered at a shraddh ceremony. For the shraddh ceremony see ch. 7.9, pp. 214–15.

10. PSP: *ret*. GRM has *het*.

11. GRM: *avar majar ke sikh na dei*. PSP: *avar mazab ho sikh na lei*.

12. At this point, midway through a verse, GRM signals that a *doharā* begins. PSP also indicates the beginning of a *doharā*, but because it is following verse numbers different from GRM this indication comes at the end of verse 15. Four *doharā* then follow in PSP (verses 16–19), after which it reverts to *chaupai*. In GRM the last half of its verse 17 is in *doharā* metre and verses 18–21 are also in *doharā*. Only with verse 22 does it revert to the brief four-lined *chaupai* metre.

13. This indicates that the false Sikh would be a Brahman.

14. Presumably this stricture also refers specifically to Brahmins.

15. Presumably this also refers to a Brahman.

16. *jāp* is not prescribed.

17. GRM: *vañs*. PSP: *vaish*.

18. The meaning of this verse is not clear.

19. The PSP text differs considerably for this verse. The final sentence translates: 'Without love he knows only grief.'

20. This is aimed at greedy Brahmins.

13. Prem Sumarag, Chapter 4

1. The English language does not possess sufficient vocabulary to cope with the differences in caste terminology that one encounters in Indian languages. If we are translating into English 'caste' must serve for both *baran* and *jāti*. They have, however, different meanings. The term *baran* (*varan*, 'colour') applies to the division into four groups: Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. By contrast, *jāti* (Pbi. *zāt*) is used at a lower level, yet not so low as to qualify for the term 'sub-caste'. Whereas *jāti* ('caste') designates the larger endogamous group, *gotra* (Pbi. *got*, 'sub-caste') specifies smaller exogamous lineages within a *jāti*. One solution to this problem of inadequate language is always to use the Hindi or Punjabi term. When translating the

Prem Sumārag, however, this method raises difficulties, for the author occasionally uses *baran* and *jāti* interchangeably. See for example section 12. Terminology relating to caste requires particular care and attention when used in translation. For caste as observed in the Sikh Panth see *ESC*, ch. 5.

2. Sri Bhagauti, strictly the goddess Devi, presumably here designates Akal Purakh in the form of a sword as the word *bhagauti* has already been used for a sword. It does, however, mean that Akal Purakh is being addressed twice in the officiating Gurmukh's statement.

3. At the time of marriage circumambulating a sacred object (in this case a fire).

4. *AG*, pp. 773–4. For a translation see *TSSS*, pp. 118–19.

14. Namadhari Rahit-nama and Namdhari Ardas

1. Guru Nanak, *Vār Mājīh* 7:2, *AG*, p. 141.

2. * Sri Satguru Hari Singh commanded that *Chandī dī Vār* and *Ugar-dantī* should also be read during the ritual fire service. [For the former see *DG*, pp. 119–27. *Ugar-dantī* does not appear in authorised versions of the Dasam Granth, only in some manuscript copies. The text is given in *Nām-dhārī Nīt-nem*, pp. 617–40.]

3. This consists of 'a mixture of saffron, musk, sandalwood powder, sugar, ghee and about fifteen other such things'. Swaran Singh Sanehi, 'Kukas as they live', in John C. B. Webster (1974), p. 34.

4. The Namdhari rahit-nama was evidently circulated among the followers of Ram Singh in 1866. Nahar Singh, *Gooroo Ram Singh and the Kuka Sikhs*, New Delhi, 1965, p. 26.

5. For the mainstream version of Ardas see *Sikh Rahit Marayādā*, pp. 379–80.

6. *srī vāhigurū*.

7. See ch. 7.3, 'Ardas', pp. 194–6.

8. The invocation in the Namdhari version of Ardas corresponds to the mainstream Sikh version except that it prolongs it to include the other Gurus of the Namdharis. The last couplet is also the same as the orthodox version, with the significant difference that the name of Ram Singh is substituted for Nanak. The portion between the invocation and the concluding couplet is very different.

9. This refers to an incident in 1872 when a group of Kukas (Namdharis) were executed at Malerkotla after attacking a small fort in Ludhiana District. 49 were executed without trial by the British official in charge of the district and another 16 were subsequently executed after a summary trial by his superior from Ambala. The executions were conducted by lashing each prisoner to the mouth of a gun and firing the gun.

10. Following the Malerkotla executions the Government of India decided to crush the Kuka movement by transporting to the Andamans its leader Ram Singh and several of his followers.

15. Nirankari Hukam-nama

1. The Formless One; God.
2. Guru Arjan, *Sūhī Chhant* 10(1), AG, p. 783.
3. *Sūhī Chhant* 2, AG, pp. 773–4.

16. Vajib-u'l-Araz, the Sahaj-dharis' Rahit-nama

1. It is not clear whether the author intends to have the whole of *Anand* read or just the abbreviated form (verses 1–5 and 40).
2. A masand of Guru Gobind Singh's time who was opposed to the Udasis.
3. Whether *pāhul* should be *khaṇḍe kī pāhul* (the Khalsa form administered with a two-edged sword) or *charan-amrit* ('foot-initiation', common amongst Sahaj-dharis) is not made clear. Presumably it is the latter.
4. The meaning is not clear.
5. The meaning is not clear. Perhaps it means that a Kes-dhari would have to cut his hair in order to keep it at an acceptable length.
6. Guru Gobind Singh here uses a form of address to his Sahaj-dhari followers which one would not expect. The title 'Singh' implies respect and normally would be restricted to members of the Khalsa.

17. Portion of Avatar Singh Vahiria's Khalsa Dharam Shastr

1. Lit. cleanse your tongue.
2. A pool in Amritsar adjacent to the pool of Harmandir.
3. Amritsar.
4. The 'five washings': two hands, two feet, and the mouth.
5. I owe the following note to Professor Pashaura Singh: Language is divided into four levels of sacred sound, corresponding to levels of consciousness or awareness.
 1. *parā bāṇī*: most subtle, beyond any sound
 2. *pashyantī bāṇī*: subtle impulses, inner sound
 3. *mudhyamā bāṇī*: low tone
 4. *vaikhari bāṇī*: loud speaking

This division is frequently encountered in Radhasoami texts. Originally it is based on Bhartarhari's Grammarian School of *nād yoga*. See also *chār bāṇīān*, MK, p. 347.

6. In one minute a person breathes approximately 16–17 times. In an hour one breathes 1000 times ($16 \times 60 = 960 + 40 = 1000$). In 24 hours one takes 24,000 breaths. I owe this also to Professor Pashaura Singh.

7. This note I also owe to Professor Pashaura Singh: An extended version of Rahiras is given here which is found in the *gūṭakās* used by the Nanaksar tradition. This is the same order as is used at Gurdwara Sach Khand, Nander Sahib, and by the Damadami Taksal. Various *savaiyyās* and *doharās* have been added from the Dasam Granth. The Nanaksar tradition is the longer one.

18. Extracts from the Sanskar Bagh of Baba Khem Singh Bedi

1. This should be the *Jāp* of the Dasam Granth.
2. This presumably means the Ardas.

19. Portion of Guramat Prakash Bhag Sanskar

1. The text provides for male, female, and multiple candidates for initiation.

2. *Vāh gurūjī kṛ khālsā! Vāh gurūjī kṛ fateh!*

3. AG, p. 709. All passages from scripture are given in full in the text of GPBS.

4. The 'Cherished Five' or 'Five Loved Ones', replicas of the first five to be initiated by Guru Gobind Singh at the founding of the Khalsa order.

5. AG, p. 598. * This [quotation] is only an example of the precept. Worthy people can choose [other quotations] which carry the same meaning.

6. Guru Nanak replies that he has found the inner light and thus the means to cross the dread Ocean of Existence. AG, p. 940.

7. AG, p. 1293. The Guru who answers this question is, of course, the Guru Granth Sahib.

8. *gur charanān vich prem*: love for the Guru's feet.

9. The Daily Rule comprises *Japujī* and other works designated by tradition to be read, chanted or heard during the devotional periods of early morning, evening, and retirement.

10. * The bowl, like other sacred items, should be raised above ground level.

11. * In the same way the other four Piaras should also concentrate their attention on the *amrit*.

12. * The Panj Piaras [all] stand, [each] keeping one hand on the bowl.
13. *āp de charanān nāl nibhe*: that he clings to your feet.
14. 'Wearer of the plume', an epithet commonly applied to Guru Gobind Singh.
15. A fold in the turban is parted so that *amrit* can be applied directly to the *kes*.
16. * In delivering this discourse the leading Singh can introduce relevant proof-texts from the scripture.
17. *SRM* calls her Sahib Kaur. See p. 399.
18. * But if any of these five should accept initiation and adopt the complete uniform [of the Khalsa] he is a brother in the faith.
19. * This does not mean abuse, but rather avoidance of those who preach belief in the goddess. *Shalok Kabir jī* 131, *AG*, p. 1371.
20. This may mean that hair should be kept clean and regularly combed; it may be an injunction to avoid Hindu practices of asceticism; or it may be both.
21. * Anyone else's woman.
22. * Tobacco.
23. * The [initiant's] name should be changed if the name given at birth is not in accordance with Sikh tradition.
24. *Vār Mājh*, *AG*, p. 150. * Close attention must be focussed on the meaning of this message.
25. * The divine Name.
26. * The sacred scriptures (*gurubāṇī*).
27. The fourth of five stages in a person's spiritual ascent as depicted by Guru Nanak in *Japujī*. *AG*, p. 8.
28. *AG*, p. 562. * Or another hymn with the same message.
29. *AG*, p. 783. *GPBS* mistakenly lists it as *mahālā 1* (Guru Nanak) instead of *mahālā 5* (Guru Arjan). This and another instance in fn. 30 are difficult to explain.
30. *AG*, p. 449. *GPBS* mistakenly lists it as *mahālā 1* (Guru Nanak) instead of *mahālā 4* (Guru Ram Das).
31. *amrit velā*. * *Amrit velā* is the best possible time, but other times may be selected for marriage.
32. The bridal couple and the congregation would of course sit on the floor or the ground.
33. Guru Amar Das, *Vār Sūhi* 9(3), *AG*, p. 788.
34. Guru Arjan, *Mulār Dupade* 7, *AG*, p. 1268.
35. *he kṛpā sindhū*: O River of Grace.
36. Guru Arjan, *Sūhi* 10, *AG*, p. 784. In the *AG* the first part of the line is in the third person.
37. * This is an example of the sermon [which may be given]. Various

[scriptural] verses may be added as appropriate, but the sermon should not be too lengthy.

38. Guru Amar Das, *Vār Sūhī* 9(3), AG, p. 788.

39. * *Vārān Bhāi Gurdās* 16 and 29 (stanza 11). Guru Arjan, *Gauṛī Sukhamanī* 9(1). AG, p. 274.

40. * Guru Nanak, *Tilāṅg* 4, AG, p. 722. *Shalok Shekh Farīd* 127, AG, p. 1384. Guru Nanak, *Mārū Vār* 9(2), AG, p. 1088. Guru Angad, *Vār Sūhī*, 20(2), AG, p. 792.

41. * If the woman has been previously married she takes the hem herself.

42. There is no English translation which adequately expresses the Sikh relationship of wife to husband. 'Master' or 'Lord' carries the degree of subordination too far. Omitting such terms does not go far enough.

43. *Lāv* (pl. *lāvān*): the reverent walking around a sacred scripture or fire. Here the sacred scripture is the Guru Granth Sahib which is walked around by the couple four times, each time preceded by a singing of one of the four verses of Guru Ram Das's *Sūhī Chhant* 2, AG, pp. 773–4.

44. Guru Amar Das, *Rāmakālī Anand*, AG, pp. 917, 922.

45. AG, p. 78. The verse begins: 'The marriage is complete, my Father, and through the Guru's word I have found [you, my] God (*harī*).'

46. AG, p. 97. The hymn begins: 'The house in which the husband attained wedded bliss.'

47. AG, p. 577. The verse begins: 'My God (*rām*), all my hopes and desires have been fulfilled.'

21. Sikh Rahit Marayada

1. * The purpose of reciting a portion of *Anand Sāhib* at this time or at the conclusion of any religious assembly is to offer joyous greeting to the Guru and to give thanks to him.

2. * This is an example of the form which Ardas may take. Only the shabad beginning 'Having first remembered God (*bhagautī*)' and the concluding couplet beginning 'Nanak [prays that] the Name' are mandatory.

3. By the time Khalsa Ardas had emerged with a fixed structure during the Singh Sabha reformation the two words *vāh* and *gurū* had coalesced to mean the same as Akal Purakh.

4. *Bhagautī* either designates the goddess Durga or means 'sword'. Since the Singh Sabha reform movement Bhagauti has been insistently held by Sikhs to designate Akal Purakh or Vahiguru. 'Sword' is held

to symbolise Akal Purakh and so this is the meaning which the word has figuratively acquired. See ch. 7.3, pp. 194–6.

5. *Chandī dī Vār*, stanza 1, *DG*, p. 119. See p. 276.

6. The four sons of Guru Gobind Singh are reverently remembered as martyrs to their father's faith. The two elder sons, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, fell at the battle of Chamkaur in 1705. The two younger sons, Zoravar Singh and Fateh Singh, were betrayed to the Mughal governor of Sirhind and executed by him. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol. 1, Princeton, 1963, pp. 91–3.

7. During the siege of Anandpur, which preceded the battle of Chamkaur, forty of the Guru's followers deserted and returned to their homes. Shamed by their women they rejoined the Guru's force prior to the battle of Khidrana (or Muktsar) later in 1705 and were all killed. In recognition of their restored loyalty and subsequent sacrifice the Guru declared them to be *mukate*, men who had attained deliverance. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Bombay, 1950, pp. 72, 75. Most works in English refer to them as the 'Forty Saved Ones'.

8. Teja Singh's translation of Ardas inserts the following cluster prior to the prayer for takhats and gurdwaras: 'Those who, to purge the temples of long-standing evils, suffered themselves to be ruthlessly beaten or imprisoned, to be shot, cut up, or burnt alive with kerosene oil, but did not make any resistance or utter even a sigh of complaint: think of their patient faith and call on God!' Teja Singh, *Sikhism*, Calcutta, 1951, p. 123. His footnotes indicate that this addition commemorates the struggle for control of the gurdwaras which took place during the years 1921–5. Teja Singh's translation is reproduced in Kanwaljit Kaur and Indarjit Singh, *Rehat Maryada*, London, 1971, pp. 2–3.

9. The remainder of this *SRM* version differs considerably in the earlier Teja/Singh version, op. cit., pp. 125–6.

10. This petition refers to gurdwaras in Pakistan. The partition of 1947 separated the Panth from all its sacred places in Pakistan.

11. 'Hail to the Guru's Khalsa! Hail to the victory of the Guru!' In the Teja Singh translation this salutation is rendered: 'Hail Khalsa of the wonderful Lord who is also victorious!' Op. cit., p. 126. *Sirī* or *Srī* ('revered') is commonly inserted before the second *Vāhigurū*.

12. 'Akāl [Purakh] is true!'

13. *vāk*: 'saying'. In Sikh usage this designates a randomly selected passage from the Guru Granth Sahib. A synonym (in appropriate contexts) is *hukam*. See 1.4.3(e).

14. Lit: 'one should keep [the scripture or the gurdwara] on the right side.'

15. This was one of the issues fought out between the Sanatan Sikhs

and the Tat Khalsa late in the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth. Descendants of the Gurus commonly expected that they would receive cushions in a gurdwara in recognition of their special status. Khem Singh Bedi was one such Sikh in direct descent from a Guru.

16. Early editions of *SRM* refer to only four takhats, these being Akal Takhat beside the Golden Temple in Amritsar and the remaining three located in Patna, Anandpur Sahib, and Nander. In 1966, however, the SGPC declared Damdama Sahib (near Bhatinda) to be a fifth takhat. This is acknowledged in subsequent editions of *SRM*. Apart from Akal Takhat all locations are associated with important events in the career of Guru Gobind Singh. The title *takhat* or 'throne' signifies temporal authority within the Panth, as opposed to the spiritual authority represented by the Golden Temple. Important secular issues affecting the Panth are debated and decided within the precincts of a *takhat* (normally Akal Takhat).

17. A *patit* or 'fallen' Sikh is one who is guilty of any serious breach of the Rahit. It normally designates a Khalsa Sikh who has committed one of the four cardinal sins (*kurahit*). See II.2(p).

18. A *vār* is a distinctive form of the Guru Granth Sahib or Adi Granth. The original Punjabi *vār* was a heroic ballad recounting the exploits of some famous warrior. In the Adi Granth version of the form Akal Purakh takes the place of the folk hero and the exploits which it proclaims are strictly spiritual. The basis of the standard Adi Granth *vār* is a sequence of stanzas (*paurī*) composed by one of the Gurus. Each of these stanzas is preceded by supplementary verses (*shalok*), varying both in number and in length, and composed by any of the Gurus or Bhagats whose works have been recorded in the Adi Granth. Most *paurīs* are preceded by two or three *shaloks*. The general theme of the *vār* is carried by the *paurī* sequence, with the *shaloks* adding further detail and comments. All the *vārs* are written to be sung and each is recorded in the scripture under its appropriate *rāg*. The Adi Granth contains 22 *vārs*, all but two of them following the standard format.

19. A relay of readers participates, each succeeding his/her predecessor without pause.

20. *Rehat Maryada: A Guide to the Sikh Way of Life*, Amritsar, 1978, p. 10, indicates that the karah prasad is to be distributed after the *hukam* has been taken, immediately before the reading commences.

21. For detailed instructions concerning the preparation of karah prasad see Jogendra Singh, *Sikh Ceremonies*, Bombay, 1941, pp. 95–6; or Parkash Singh, *The Sikh Gurus and the Temple of Bread*, Amritsar, 1964, pp. 106–10.

22. * After the appointed portion of *Anand Sāhib* has been recited once it need not be repeated whenever dishes of karah prasad arrive

[later in the day]. It will be sufficient merely to touch each offering with a kirpan.

23. * This person should not be given a double share.

24. No further definition is given for this category. Obvious examples of works which have earned 'panthic approval' are the janam-sakhis (excluding the execrated *Miharbān Janam-sākhā*) and the works of Santokh Singh (*Nānak Prakāsh* and *Sūraj Prakāsh*).

25. See I.1.3(a), note 11.

26. Lit. 'the offering of rice balls in bowls made of leaves'.

27. * From birth.

28. This heading does not appear in the Punjabi text.

29. *Rehat Maryada: A Guide to the Sikh Way of Life*, Amritsar, 1978, p. 13, inserts an additional item at the beginning of this section, printing it in parentheses: (At the birth of a child any Gursikh relation or friend may pour some water in a small iron (steel) cup and add some patashas or honey in it and stir it with a Kirpan while reciting the first five Pauries (Stanzas) of the Japji alongwith (*sic*) the prologue given at the very beginning of this Bani. A few drops of [t]his holy water [should] be poured into the mouth of the child and [the] remaining [water should] be taken by the mother. A prayer of thanks giving (*sic*) should also be offered.)

30. AG, pp. 628, 396. The two hymns are translated in TSSS, pp. 115–16.

31. Guru Nanak, *Āsā kī Vār* 18:3, AG, p. 472.

32. This ceremony, termed *milnī* or 'meeting', normally takes place on the day preceding the actual wedding.

33. Guru Amar Das, *Vār Sūhī* 9:3, AG, p. 788.

34. A light scarf or sash is commonly used for this purpose.

35. AG, pp. 773–4. For a translation see TSSS, pp. 118–20. The person serving as reader is not normally the same person as the celebrant. If, however, only one competent person is available that person may discharge both functions. A *lāv* (pl. *lāvān*) is a circuit round a sacred object. For *amrit saṁskār* the object is the Guru Granth Sahib.

36. * *Prem Sumārag*.

37. A Hindu custom.

38. The list has been abbreviated.

39. *tiār baratiār singh*. This implies only Amrit-dhari Sikhs without actually saying so.

40. The Guru Panth shares this authority conjointly with the Guru Granth (the Adi Granth or Guru Granth Sahib). See ch. 7.24, pp. 233–4. For a further explanation of the terms *Gurū Granth* and *Gurū Panth* see ESC, pp. 16–18, 44–50, 55–8. Note that the Guru Panth is coterminous with the Khalsa (the Khalsa Panth).

41. Male initiants must wear turbans.

42. Sahib Kaur was the third of Guru Gobind Singh's three wives. Unlike the other two wives she was childless and it was for this reason (according to tradition) that the Guru designated her the Mother of the Khalsa. It is also tradition that reports that her name was changed from Sahib Devi to Sahib Kaur during the Guru's lifetime. This was not the case. The change was actually made late in the Singh Sabha period. *Gurumat Prakāsh Bhāg Saṅskār*, which was published in 1915, still refers to her as Sahib Devi. See also Doris R. Jakobsh, 'Relocating gender in Sikh history' (University of British Columbia PhD thesis, 1999), pp. 303–6.

43. * A kirpan may be of any length.

44. * The shorts may be made from any kind of cloth, but must not reach below the knees.

45. * The wrist-ring must be made of iron only (*sarab-loh*). [Wrist-rings are normally made from iron, coated with steel to prevent rusting. Some groups such as the Nihangs and the Akhand Kirtani Jatha do, however, have them made entirely of iron.]

46. * Kes-dharis who have their hair cut.

47. * If members of any of these groups should accept initiation and enter the Panth it will be permissible to associate with them.

48. * In this context 'associating' means eating with such people and contracting marriage arrangements with them, acts which would establish a clear and close relationship.

Appendix 1

1. Guru Amar Das, *Bihāgarē kī Vār mahālā* 4, 16.1, AG, p. 554.

2. Lit. From the proceeds of discharging your duty (*dharam*). *ChS* lacks *dharam*.

3. In *ChS*, this injunction is applied to sardars, rajas, and wealthy merchants.

4. Kahn Singh adds a footnote indicating that the *Rāg-mālā* is not a part of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Appendix 2

1. These men are called bhais, babas, or gianis. Harjot Singh Oberoi, 'Bhais, Babas and Gyanis: traditional intellectuals in nineteenth century Punjab', *Studies in History*, vol. II, no. 2 (1980), pp. 33–62.

2. The person who specialised in the Panth's traditional history was known as a *dhādhī*. These men were itinerant bards who related stories to the accompaniment of small hand-held drums.

3. For Shivalik Hills influence see *ESC*, pp. 13–14.

Glossary



<i>Adi Granth</i>	The Guru Granth Sahib (<i>q.v.</i>), the sacred scripture of the Sikhs.
<i>Akālī</i>	Follower of Akal Purakh (<i>q.v.</i>); member of the Akali Dal (Akali Party).
<i>Akāl Purakh</i>	'The One beyond Time', God.
<i>Akāl Takhat</i>	The principal takhat (<i>q.v.</i>), located immediately adjacent to Harimandir Sahib (<i>q.v.</i> , the Golden Temple).
<i>akhaṇḍ pāṭh</i>	Unbroken reading of the Guru Granth Sahib (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>amrit</i>	'Nectar of immortality'; sweetened initiation water used in <i>amrit saṁskār</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Amrit-dhārī</i>	A Sikh who has 'taken <i>amrit</i> ', viz. an initiated member of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Amrit saṁskār</i>	The initiation ceremony of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>amrit velā</i>	The amrit time; the delectable time; the last watch of the night (3 a.m. to 6 a.m.); ambrosial hour.
<i>Anand kāraj</i>	The Sikh marriage ceremony.
<i>Ardās</i>	The Khalsa Prayer, a formal prayer recited at the conclusion of most Sikh rituals.
<i>ardasia</i>	The Sikh who conducts <i>Ardās</i> ; granthi.
<i>Arora</i>	A mercantile caste of the Punjab.

<i>ashṭapadī</i>	An <i>Adi Granth shabad</i> (<i>qq.v.</i>) of eight verses with refrain.
<i>asumedh</i> (<i>ashvamedha</i>)	A Vedic ritual costing considerable wealth practised by kings of ancient India in search of heirs or atoning for a sin.
<i>avatār</i>	An incarnation of a deity, usually Vishnu.
<i>Bābā</i>	'Father', a term of respect applied to holy men. Used in other Indian traditions.
<i>baikunṭh</i>	The paradise of Vishnu (see ch. 7.28, pp. 238–9).
<i>Baisākhī Day</i>	New Year's Day in rural Punjab, the first day of the month of Baisakh or Visakh.
<i>bāṇī</i>	Works of the Gurus and other poets included in the Sikh sacred scriptures.
<i>baraṇ</i> (<i>varaṇ</i>)	See <i>varṇa</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Beas</i>	Vyas (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>bhaddar</i> , <i>bhaddaṇ</i>	The Hindu tonsure ceremony; the shaving of a deceased person's head before cremation.
<i>bhagautī</i>	1. Durga. 2. A sword.
<i>Bhāī</i>	'Brother', title of respect given for piety and/or learning.
<i>bhog</i>	The ceremony which concludes a complete reading of the <i>Guru Granth Sahib</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>bhujāṅgī</i>	Lit. a snake's young, but used for the son of an initiated Sikh.
<i>bikhyā</i> (<i>bikhiā</i>)	Lit. poison. In Sikh usage it means tobacco. It can also mean drugs or intoxicating liquor.
<i>bīṛ</i>	Tome; volume.
<i>bīr-āsan</i>	Heroic pose; The right knee is laid on the ground with the body's weight on the right knee. The left knee is held upright.
<i>buṅgā</i>	1. The elevated cone of a Nihang's turban. 2. A defensive building erected beside Harimandir Sahib.
<i>Chaṇḍāl</i>	The offspring of a union between a Shudra father and a Brahman mother; an outcaste; a member of the outcaste group supposed

	to descend from such antecedents; a vile wretch.
<i>charan amrit</i>	Initiation with water in which the Guru or person administering has dipped his toe. Also used by Hindus.
<i>chaupai</i>	Lit. a verse composition of four lines. Commonly, however, it exceeded four lines.
<i>chhant</i>	An <i>Adi Granth</i> shabad (<i>qq.v.</i>), commonly of four or six lengthy verses.
<i>Chief Khalsa Diwan</i>	United body formed in 1902 to conduct the affairs of the Amritsar and Lahore Singh Sabhas (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>darshan</i>	1. Audience; appearance before an eminent person, sacred object, & c. 2. The six schools of Hindu philosophy.
<i>Dasagūtra</i>	A Hindu ceremony held ten days after a death at which the ashes of the deceased are gathered.
<i>Dasam Granth</i>	The scripture attributed to the authorship or times of Guru Gobind Singh.
<i>deg teg fateh</i>	'Cauldron, sword, victory', slogan of the eighteenth-century Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>dhak</i>	The tree <i>butea frondosa</i> .
<i>dharam (dharma)</i>	Panthic duty.
<i>dharamasālā</i>	Place of worship for early Sikh Panth (later gurdwara, <i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>Dharamrāj</i>	Yam (<i>q.v.</i>), the god of death.
<i>Dhīr-maliā</i>	A follower of Dhir Mal, elder brother of Guru Har Rai and grandson of Guru Hargobind
<i>dhūp</i>	Sunshine; incense.
<i>divān (dewan)</i>	Court; minister of state; assembly; assembly hall; congregation; collected verse of a poet.
<i>doharā</i>	A verse comprising two lines; a couplet.
<i>Dum, Dom</i>	A caste of lowly minstrels; the Hindu equivalent of the Muslim Mirasi. Commonly they were regarded as outcastes.
<i>Durbāsā</i>	Durvasas, described in the <i>Rāmāyana</i> as impatient and irascible.

<i>ekādasī</i> (<i>Pbi. ikādasī</i>)	The eleventh day of each half of the lunar month.
<i>faqīr</i>	Muslim ascetic. Loosely used to designate Sufis (<i>q.v.</i>) and non-Muslim ascetics.
<i>Five Ks</i>	Five items (each beginning with the initial 'k') which Sikhs of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>) must wear: <i>kes</i> , <i>kañghā</i> , <i>kachh</i> , <i>kirpān</i> , and <i>kaṛā</i> (<i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>Garud Purān</i>	A Puran, which deals with death rituals and which was read by Brahmans at funerals.
<i>Gayatri</i>	The verse from the Rig-veda, which Brahmans are expected to repeat morning and evening.
<i>gaz</i>	1 gaz equals approximately 1 yard or 90 cms.
<i>ghunḍ</i>	A veil which conceals most of the face.
<i>golak</i>	A receptacle in which cash or various items are accumulated for giving as charity or as an offering to a dharmshala or gurdwara.
<i>got</i> (<i>gotra</i>)	Exogamous caste grouping within a <i>zāt</i> (<i>q.v.</i>); sub-caste.
<i>gotā khāñā</i>	To be immersed; to struggle to save oneself from drowning.
<i>grahasat dharam</i>	A faith which, rejecting the Hindu veneration of asceticism, upholds the ideal of marriage and of normal relation between sexes.
<i>Granth</i>	The '[Sacred] Volume', the <i>Adi Granth</i> or <i>Guru Granth Sahib</i> (<i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>granthī</i>	Custodian of a gurdwara (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>gurabāñī</i>	Compositions of the Gurus.
<i>gur-bilās</i>	'Praise of the Guru'; hagiographic narratives of the lives of the sixth and tenth Gurus, stressing their role as warriors.
<i>gurdwara</i>	Sikh place of worship.
<i>Gurmat</i>	The teachings of the Gurus; Sikhism.
<i>Gurmukh</i>	A loyal follower of the Guru.
<i>Gurmukhī</i>	'From the Guru's mouth', the script in which Punjabi is written.

<i>Gursikh</i>	The Sikh who is devoted to the Guru.
<i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i>	The Adi Granth, specifically in its role as Guru (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Gurū Granth</i>	The Granth (<i>q.v.</i>) in its role as Guru.
<i>Gurū Khālsā</i>	The Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>) in the role of Guru.
<i>Gurū Panth</i>	The Panth (<i>q.v.</i>) in its role as Guru.
<i>hadīth</i>	Muslim tradition.
<i>halāl</i>	Flesh of an animal killed in accordance with Muslim ritual whereby it is bled to death while the Kalima is pronounced (cf. <i>jhaṭkā</i> , <i>kuṭṭhā</i> , <i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>Hari</i>	Name of God. Also used by Hindus.
<i>Harimandir Sāhib</i>	The principal gurdwara (<i>q.v.</i>) of the Sikhs, known as the Golden Temple.
<i>havan jag</i>	Ritual fire ceremony practised by the Namdhari Sikhs (<i>q.v.</i>). Also called a <i>hom</i> .
<i>hukam</i>	Divine Order; a passage from the Guru Granth Sahib (<i>q.v.</i>) chosen at random. Cf. <i>vāk</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>hukam-nāmā</i>	'Letter of command'; document containing a command or a request issued by one of the later Gurus to an individual or a sangat (<i>q.v.</i>); a similar document issued to the Panth by the Sarbat Khalsa from Akal Takhat (<i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>Ik-Oaṅkār</i>	The One Being; benedictory formula from the Adi Granth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>jag (yajñā)</i>	A religious ceremony, sacrifice. Cf. <i>havan jag</i> (<i>q.v.</i>)
<i>Jaimini</i>	A disciple of Vyas (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>janam-sākhī</i>	Hagiographic narrative of the life of Guru Nanak.
<i>Jaṭ</i>	Punjabi rural caste, numerically dominant in the Panth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>jhaṭkā</i>	Flesh of an animal killed with a single blow, approved for consumption by members of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>). Cf. <i>halāl</i> , <i>kuṭṭhā</i> (<i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>kachh</i>	A pair of breeches, which must not extend below the knees, worn as one of the Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>).

<i>kachhihra</i>	A kachh (<i>q.v.</i>)
<i>kal</i>	One of the names of Yam.
<i>kal (yug)</i>	Cosmic age, as in Kaliyug (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Kalima</i>	The Muslim confession of faith ('There is no god but God' etc.).
<i>Kaliyug</i>	The 'Age of Iron', the fourth and last of the cosmic ages; the age of degeneracy. According to Hindu mythology the world passes cyclically through four ages. Starting with the Satiyug (or Kritayug) it traverses the Tretayug and Dvaparayug until it reaches the present Kaliyug. Each is marked by a shorter life and greater suffering. At the end of the Kaliyug's span, marked by the appearance of the Kalkin <i>avatār</i> on his white horse, the Satiyug begins again. Cf. <i>Satiyug</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>kañghā</i>	Wooden comb, worn as one the Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Kapil</i>	The originator of the sāṅkhya school of philosophy.
<i>kar</i>	Lit. 'hand'.
<i>kaṛā</i>	Steel wrist-ring worn on the right wrist as one of the Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>kaṛāh prasād</i>	Sacramental food prepared in a large iron dish (<i>kaṛāhī</i>). Cf. <i>prasād</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>karma (karam)</i>	The destiny, fate of an individual, generated in accordance with the deeds performed in his/her present and past existences. A part also of Hindu belief.
<i>kathā</i>	Homily; oral commentary on sacred scriptures; narrating of pious anecdotes.
<i>kes (kesh)</i>	Uncut hair, worn as one of the Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Kes-dhārī</i>	A Sikh who retains the kes (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>keskī</i>	Small under-turban.
<i>Khālsā</i>	The religious order established by Guru Gobind Singh at the end of the seventeenth century.

<i>khaṇḍā</i>	Two-edged sword; Khalsa symbol comprising a vertical two-edged sword over a quoit with two crossed kirpans (<i>q.v.</i>) below the quoit.
<i>khaṇḍe dī pāhul</i>	Khalsa initiation in which water sweetened with soluble sweets is stirred with a two-edged sword Cf. <i>amrit</i> (<i>q.v.</i>), <i>pāhul</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>khaṭiā</i>	A <i>mañjā</i> (bed), which may be used for sitting or sleeping.
<i>Khatrī</i>	A mercantile caste of the Punjab.
<i>kirpān</i>	Sword or poniard, worn as one of the Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>kīrtan</i>	Singing of hymns.
<i>Kūkā</i>	Member of the Namdhari sect of Sikhs (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>kul-putrī</i>	A girl from the male's own <i>got</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>kumbhī narak</i>	A hell in which the wicked are said to be baked as a potter's vessels.
<i>kurahit</i>	One of the four cardinal infringements of the Rahit (<i>q.v.</i>). The four modern <i>kurahit</i> are: 1. Cutting one's hair. 2. Consuming <i>kuṭṭhā</i> meat (<i>q.v.</i>). 3. Extra-marital sexual intercourse. 4. Smoking.
<i>kuṭṭhā</i>	Meat from an animal killed in the Muslim style. Cf. <i>jhaṭkā</i> , <i>halāl</i> (<i>qq.v.</i>).
<i>laṅgar</i>	The kitchen/refectory attached to every gurdwara (<i>q.v.</i>) from which food is served to all regardless of caste or creed; the meal served from such a kitchen.
<i>lāv</i> (pl. <i>lāvān</i>)	Circumambulating the Guru Granth Sahib (<i>q.v.</i>) or a sacred fire as part of a marriage ceremony.
<i>man</i>	1. The complex of heart, mind, and spirit. Common Indian word. 2. A measure of weight. The maund varied in different parts of India, but was usually approximately 40 kilos.
<i>mañjī</i>	Preaching office of the early Panth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>mantra</i>	A verse, phrase, or syllable of particular religious import. Also used by Hindus.

<i>maṛiā</i> (<i>maṛhī</i>)	A monument erected in memory of an important Hindu, normally at a burning ghat.
<i>masand</i>	Administrative deputy acting for the Guru. Inaugurated by Guru Ram Das they served faithfully for some time, but later became corrupt and were disestablished by Guru Gobind Singh. See <i>pañj mel</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>matthā ṭekaṇā</i>	Touching the ground with one's forehead. The standard Sikh gesture of respect, always performed before the Adi Granth.
<i>Miṇā</i>	'Rascal'; follower of Prithi Chand, eldest son of Guru Ram Das, and a pretender to the office of Guru. See <i>pañj mel</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>miri-piri</i>	Doctrine that the Guru possesses temporal (<i>miri</i>) as well as spiritual authority (<i>piri</i>).
<i>misl</i>	A military cohort of the mid-eighteenth century Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>mohur</i>	A gold coin.
<i>moksha</i>	Spiritual liberation; liberation from transmigration. Also used by Hindus.
<i>monā</i>	Shaven. Mona Sikh sometimes designates a Sikh who cuts his/her hair.
<i>nām</i>	The divine Name, a summary term expressing the total being of Akal Purakh (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Nāmdhārī</i>	Member of the Namdhari Sikh sect (also known as Kuka Sikhs, <i>q.v.</i>), followers of Balak Singh and Ram Singh.
<i>nām japāṇ</i>	Devoutly repeating the divine Name.
<i>nām simaraṇ</i>	The devotional practice of meditating on the divine Name.
<i>Nārad</i>	A great rishi.
<i>nasavār</i>	Snuff, normally made from tobacco.
<i>nihaṅg</i>	free from care; free from worldly concern; a militant Sikh sect.
<i>Nirankār</i>	'Without Form', a name of Akal Purakh (<i>q.v.</i>) used by Guru Nanak.
<i>Nirankārī</i>	Member of the Nirankari Sikh sect, follower of Baba Dayal (1783–1855) and his

	successors. So-called because the sect emphasised the Nirankar form of Akal Purakh (<i>qq.v.</i>)
<i>nirguṇ</i>	'Without qualities', formless, non-incarnated. Cf. <i>sa[r]jguṇ</i> (<i>q.v.</i>). Also used by Hindus.
<i>Nirmalā</i>	A sect of Sikhs which was particularly influential in the nineteenth century. The Nirmalas were, by a highly improbable tradition, an order founded by Guru Gobind Singh who despatched five Sikhs to Banaras to learn Sanskrit. This sect was also distinguished by its ascetic teachings and practice. Members wear saffron robes and observe celibacy, and its teachings are strongly Vedantic. <i>HDS</i> , p. 155. <i>Sikhism</i> pp. 185–6.
<i>nit-nem</i>	The Sikh daily liturgy.
<i>pāhul</i>	The administration of <i>amrit</i> (<i>q.v.</i>) during the Khalsa initiation ceremony. Cf. <i>khaṇḍe dī pāhul</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>pañj kakhe</i>	The Five Ks (<i>q.v.</i>); the five items, each beginning with 'k', which members of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>) must wear. Also called the <i>pañj kakār</i> .
<i>pañj mel</i>	The Five Reprobate Groups. These comprise the followers of Prithi Chand (the Minas), Dhir Mal, and Ram Rai, the masands (<i>qq.v.</i>), and a fifth group which today is usually identified as those who cut their hair. The first three groups were relatives of actual Gurus who were pretenders for the title of Guru.
<i>Pañj Piāre</i>	The 'Cherished Five' or 'Five Beloved'; the first five Sikhs to be initiated as members of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>); five Sikhs in good standing chosen to represent a sangat (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>panth</i>	A 'path' or 'way'; system of religious belief or practice; community observing a

<i>Panth</i>	particular system of belief or practice. Common Indian word. The Sikh community (<i>panth</i> spelt with a capital 'P').
<i>panthic (panthik)</i> <i>parakaramā</i>	Concerning the Panth. To circumambulate an object of devotion (normally a gurdwara). The circumambulation of a gurdwara is usually in a clockwise direction.
<i>Patanjali</i>	The originator of the Yoga School reputed to have come as a serpent from the nether region of the Nags, the serpent race.
<i>pāṭh</i> <i>patit</i>	A reading from the Sikh scriptures. An Amrit-dhari (<i>q.v.</i>) who commits one of the four cardinal sins (the four <i>kurahit</i> , <i>q.v.</i>) or a Kes-dhari (<i>q.v.</i>) who cuts his hair.
<i>pauṛī</i> <i>pothī</i> <i>prasād</i>	Stanza of a <i>vār</i> (<i>q.v.</i>). Tome, volume. Sacramentally offered food. Cf. <i>kaṛāh prasād</i> (<i>q.v.</i>). Also used for ordinary food. Common Indian word.
<i>Purāṭan</i>	One of the extant collections of janam-sakhi anecdotes (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>rāg (rāga)</i> <i>ragī</i> <i>Rahirās (Raharās)</i>	Metrical mode. A professional singer of kirtan. Sodar Rahiras. The Sikh liturgy sung at sundown.
<i>Rahit</i>	The code of belief and conduct of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>rahit-nāmā</i> <i>rāj karegā khālsā</i> <i>Rāmgarhiā</i>	A recorded version of the Rahit (<i>q.v.</i>). 'The Khalsa shall rule!' A Sikh artisan caste, predominantly drawn from the Tarkhan or carpenter caste but also including Sikhs from the blacksmith, mason and barber castes.
<i>Rām-rāiā</i>	A follower of Ram Rai, elder son of Guru Har Rai.
<i>sabhā</i> <i>sach khaṇḍ</i>	Society, association. Common Indian word. The 'Realm of Truth'.

<i>sahaj</i>	1. Slow, easy, natural; 2. inexpressible beatitude; the condition of ineffable bliss resulting from the practice of <i>nām simaraṇ</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Sahaj-dhārī</i>	A non-Khalsa Sikh, one who does not observe the Rahit (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Sanātān Sikhs</i>	Conservative members of the Singh Sabha (<i>q.v.</i>), opposed to the Tat Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>saṅgal</i>	Congregation, group of devotees.
<i>sant</i>	One who knows the truth; a pious person; an adherent of the Sant tradition (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Sant</i>	One renowned as a teacher of Gurmat (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>sant-sipāhī</i>	A 'sant-soldier', the ideal Sikh; a Sikh who combines the piety of the <i>sant</i> (<i>q.v.</i>) with the bravery of a soldier.
<i>Sant tradition</i>	A devotional tradition of North India which stressed the need for interior religion as opposed to external observance.
<i>Sarbat Khālsā</i>	'The Entire Khalsa'; representative assembly of the Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>sardār</i>	Chieftain; leader of a misl (<i>q.v.</i>). 'Sardar' is nowadays used as a title of address for all Kes-dhari Sikh men. The corresponding title for a Sikh woman is 'Sardarani'.
<i>sa[r]guṇ</i>	'With qualities', possessing form. Cf. <i>nirguṇ</i> (<i>q.v.</i>). Used also by Hindus.
<i>sari</i>	In a pool or stream.
<i>sat</i>	Truth; true. Common Indian word.
<i>sati-nām</i>	'[Your] Name is Truth'.
<i>Satiyug</i>	The 'Age of Truth', the first and best of the cosmic eras which follows the Kaliyug (<i>q.v.</i>) in the cosmic cycle.
<i>satsaṅg</i>	An assembly of true believers; congregation.
<i>ser</i>	A variable measure of weight, usually approximately 1 kilogram.
<i>sevā</i>	Service, commonly to a gurdwara (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>SGPC</i>	See <i>Shiromaṇī Guraduarā Parbandhak Committee</i> .

<i>shabad (śabda)</i>	Word; a hymn of the Adi Granth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Shakta</i>	A worshipper of <i>Shakti</i> or divine power of Shiv personified as a women (Devi, Durga etc.).
<i>shulok (ślok)</i>	A short composition (normally a couplet) from the Adi Granth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Shesh-nāg</i>	King of the serpent race (the Nags) and ruler of the nether world; a serpent with a thousand heads and so a thousand tongues.
<i>Shiromaṇī Akālī Dal</i>	The Akali Party.
<i>Shiromaṇī Guradūārā</i>	The committee which controls the historic gurdwaras (<i>q.v.</i>) of the Punjab and Haryana (commonly referred to as the SGPC).
<i>Parbandhak Committee</i>	
<i>Shukdev</i>	A famous rishi, son of Vyas who is mentioned in the <i>Mahābhārata</i> .
<i>Sikhni</i>	A Sikh woman.
<i>Singh Sabhā</i>	Reform movement in the Panth (<i>q.v.</i>) initiated in 1873. The Singh Sabha became the arena for a struggle between the conservative Sanatan Sikhs (<i>q.v.</i>) and the radical Tat Khalsa (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>siratāj</i>	Master, chief.
<i>sīs</i>	Head.
<i>Sitalā</i>	Goddess who controls or inflicts small-pox.
<i>Sodar</i>	See <i>Rahirās</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>Sūfi</i>	A member of one of the Muslim mystical orders.
<i>Sumeru (Mount)</i>	The axis of the Hindu mythological view of the universe.
<i>ṭakā</i>	Usually a copper coin worth two paise. Sometimes a rupee.
<i>takhat</i>	'Throne'; one of the five centres of temporal authority in the Panth (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>tamas</i>	Depression anger, irascibility.
<i>tamgunī</i>	Condition in which qualities of <i>tamas</i> (<i>q.v.</i>) are predominant.
<i>tan</i>	Body; person.
<i>tanakhāh</i>	A penance for a violation of the Rahit (<i>q.v.</i>).

<i>tanakhāhīā</i>	A transgressor against the Rahit (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>tarāṇan</i>	Lit. 'satisfaction'; the Hindu ceremony of casting or sprinkling water as an offering to gods or deceased forbears.
<i>Tat Khālsā</i>	The 'true Khalsa' or 'pure Khalsa'. In the early eighteenth century the immediate followers of Banda Bahadur. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries radical members of the Singh Sabha (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>ṭikkā</i>	A mark made by some Hindus on the forehead.
<i>tīrath</i>	A place of pilgrimage. Word used by Hindus also.
<i>tolā</i>	A jeweller's weight. 1 tola = 11.664 grams.
<i>ṭopī</i>	Hat; cap; helmet.
<i>Udāsī</i>	Adherent of the Udasi panth (<i>q.v.</i>), an order of ascetics (normally celibate) who claim as their founder Siri Chand (one of Guru Nanak's sons). Celibacy, asceticism, and shaven heads are principal features of their way of life, a pattern which differs radically from that of the Khalsa Sikhs. Many gurdwaras passed into their hands during the turmoil of the eighteenth century and it was not until the Gurdwara Reform Movement of the early 1920s that these incumbents were finally ejected in favour of Khalsa candidates. Udasis are now very few in number. <i>HDS</i> , pp. 214–15. <i>Sikhism</i> , pp. 184–5.
<i>Vāhigurū</i>	'Praise to the Guru'; the modern Sikh name for God.
<i>vāk</i>	'Saying'; a passage from the Guru Granth Sahib (<i>q.v.</i>) chosen at random. Cf. <i>hukam</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>vār</i>	A poetic form; an Adi Granth (<i>q.v.</i>) arrangement consisting of stanzas with preceding shaloks (<i>q.v.</i>).
<i>varṇa</i>	'Colour'; the classical caste hierarchy or a division of it. The four sections are

	Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisha, and Shudra, with Outcastes placed outside the hierarchy.
<i>Vasisht</i>	A celebrated Vedic rishi.
<i>Vishvamisra</i>	One of the seven great rishis.
<i>Vyas</i>	The arranger of the Vedas.
<i>Yam</i>	The god of the dead; the master of hell. Yam appears in the Vedas and the Purans. Upon dying each person must appear before him. His record-keeper Chitra-gupta reads out the account of that person's deeds and Yam dispenses an appropriate sentence.
<i>zāt (jāti)</i>	Endogamous caste grouping; caste. Cf. <i>got</i> (<i>q.v.</i>).

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SIKHS OF THE KHALSA
A History of the Khalsa Rahit

W. H. McLEOD

The Rahit is the code of belief and conduct laid down by the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh for all Sikhs who join the Khalsa. In this important and pioneering study, McLeod rejects the commonly held view that the Rahit has descended unchanged since its first promulgation. Tracing the development of the Rahit, through the last three centuries, he argues that it has evolved in response to historical circumstances and that the modern Rahit, in some respects, is different from the original one. The book also provides an insightful discussion on the nature of the Khalsa Rahit and the fundamental criteria by which one could be identified as a Sikh. McLeod's meticulous and masterful analysis is supplemented by selected translations of original Punjabi rahit-namas in the second part of this volume.

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Cover photograph: B. P. S. Walia

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ISBN 019567221-6



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