

Copyright  
by  
Wai Chung LI  
2015

**The Dissertation Committee for Wai Chung LI Certifies that this is the approved  
version of the following dissertation:**

**The Sikh *Gurmat Sangīt* Revival in Post-Partition India**

**Committee:**

---

Stephen Slawek, Supervisor

---

Andrew Dell'Antonio

---

Gordon Mathews

---

Kamran Ali

---

Robin Moore

---

Veit Erlmann

**The Sikh *Gurmat Sangīt* Revival in Post-Partition India**

**by**

**Wai Chung LI, MPhil.**

**Dissertation**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**May 2015**

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following individual and parties for making this project possible. First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect to Professor Stephen Slawek, who always enlightens me with intellectual thoughts and personal advice. I would also like to thank other members of my doctoral committee, including Professor Andrew Professor Dell'Antonio, Professor Gordon Mathews, Professor Kamran Ali, Professor Robin Moore, and Professor Veit Erlmann for their insightful comments and support towards this project.

I am grateful to the staff of the following Sikh temples and academic institutions where research was conducted: The Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology; The American Institute of Indian Studies, Haryana; Gurdwara Sahib Austin, Texas; Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana; Gurdwara Sahib Silat Road, Singapore; Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, Hong Kong; Punjabi University Patiala, Patiala; The Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar; and The Sikh Center, Central Sikh Gurdwara Board, Singapore.

I owe a debt of gratitude to people affiliated with the Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana, as they made my time in India (especially Punjab) enjoyable and memorable. They include Sant Giani Amir Singh and Baba Sohan Singh from the Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana; Principal Sukhwant Singh, the well-respected teacher at the Gurmat Sangeet Academy; Dr. Jasbir Kaur from the Punjabi University Patiala; Principal Satnam Singh from the Gurmat Sangeet Academy in Singapore; and many other musicians, students, and teachers.

For the sustaining friendship over the years, I would like to especially thank Mr. Sharanjit Singh and his family, both in Amritsar and Hong Kong. It was these wonderful and sweet family members who aroused my interest in Sikh devotional music, and made my first research trip possible. Finally, I would like to thank my amazing family for their love, encouragement, and continuous support. I could not have done the research in India

and pursued a doctoral degree abroad without them. They are the love of my life, and it is to them that I dedicate this dissertation.

# The Sikh *Gurmat Sangīt* Revival in Post-Partition India

Wai Chung LI, PhD

The University of Texas at Austin, 2015

Supervisor: Stephen Slawek

*Gurmat sangīt*, literally *sacred music of the Sikhs*, is a religious marker of Sikhism. Sikh religious practice is oriented toward musical performance to worship God and evoke spiritual elevation. As a common religious practice at the Sikh temples, *gurmat sangīt* generally involves recitation of religious texts and devotional singing with instrumental accompaniment by professional musicians and/or the congregation. It also illustrates musical ways of uniting with God as found in Sikh scriptures. The major sacred text, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, contains a large number of verses in an arrangement organized by *rāgas* (musical modes).

*Gurmat sangīt* has developed rapidly since the 1980s. The number of recordings, publications, and performances featuring Sikh religious music and/or musicians increased. Academic programs and organizations of *gurmat sangīt* were launched to train both professional and amateur musicians in India and abroad. At that time, a trend has developed to revive the authentic practice of Sikh devotional music with correct rendition of *rāga* performance and the re-introduction of stringed instruments such as the *tāūs* (a bowed-string instrument in peacock body sound box) and *rabāb* (a plucked-lute instrument). While exhibiting a tendency to standardize musical details and generate a historiography of Sikh music, contemporary practitioners also emphasize authenticity and tradition in re-imagining the devotional music performance at the time of the Sikh *Gurūs*.

The revival is identified with not only professional Sikh musicians in Punjab but also overseas Sikh musicians and musicians of other religious and/or socio-cultural backgrounds.

In this study, I adopt the case study approach to examine the phenomenon of the *gurmat sangīt* revival in 20th- and 21st-century Punjab. My research focuses on the annual performances of Sikh devotional music, and a Sikh religious institution in the city of Ludhiana, from where the trend of the music revival has been developed. For the revival's aim to promote the "authentic" Sikh devotional music tradition, I argue that it involves a self-interpretation of combined authentic, invented, and westernized concepts in association with musical practice at the Sikh *Gurūs*' times and Indian classical music, and being shown in the standardization, classicization, and hybridization of Sikh devotional music performance.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	xiv
List of Illustrations .....	xv
<b>PART ONE: OVERVIEW OF SIKH MUSIC .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Chapter 1      Introduction: Theoretical Framework, Literature Review, and Research .....	1
Theoretical Framework .....	4
Revival and Revitalization .....	5
Classicization .....	7
Nations, Identity, and Subalternity .....	8
Literature Review .....	12
Devotional Music of India .....	12
Sikh Devotional Music .....	16
Music of an Indian Minority Population .....	23
Research .....	26
Methodology .....	26
Fieldwork .....	28
Main Research Site and Informants .....	31
Special Feature of the Research: Sikh Names .....	36
Chapter 2      Music of Sikhism .....	39
Concept of Music and Sound in Sikhism .....	39
Music and the Sikh Scriptures: the Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth .....	43
Terminology of Sikh Music and Musicians .....	47
Sikh Devotional Music: Śabad Kīrtan, Gurbāṇi Kīrtan, and Gurmat Sangīt .....	48
Sikh Musicians: Rabābī, Kīrtankār, Rāgī, and Ḍhādī .....	51
Context of Sikh Music and Performing Styles .....	59
Professional Sikh Music Practice .....	59



Amateur Sikh Music Practice .....	61
Performing Styles.....	62
Sikh Music from the Time of Gurū Nanak to the Present .....	63
Sikh Gurus' Times: Compilation of Śabad Compositions and Consolidation of Sikh Devotional Music Performance .....	64
Post-Gurus' Times and the Partition Period: Various Attempts to Develop the Sikh Devotional Music Practice.....	65
The 1990s: the Gurmat Sangīt Revival and the Recent Scene.....	70
<b>PART TWO: THE GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL.....</b>	<b>73</b>
Chapter 3 Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan/AGSS .....	73
Socio-political History of Sikhism in Punjab in the 1990s.....	74
Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan/AGSS .....	75
Initiator: Sant Baba Sucha Singh (1948–2002) and the Jawaddi Taksal .....	84
Rāg Nirnayak Committee .....	86
The 1991 Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan .....	93
Chapter 4 Revival of the Sikh Devotional Music Tradition.....	96
Singing in Prescribed Rāgas .....	97
Controversies of Rāgas as the Requirement of Kīrtan Singing .....	98
Functions and Designations of Rāgas in Sikh Scriptures .....	101
Section of Rāgmālā in the Guru Granth Sahib.....	102
Rāgas' Details and Their Origins.....	104
Re-introducing Instruments of the Sikh Gurus' Times.....	112
Rabāb .....	113
Other Stringed Instruments: Tāus, Dilrubā, Sarandā, and Tānpurā...116	
Percussion Instruments: Tablā, Jorī, and Pakhāvaj.....	118
Other Instruments: Harmonium, Swarmanḍal, Violin, Sarangi, Mandolin, and Electronic Keyboard.....	119
Evidence in Historical Portraits, Photos, and Sikh Manuscripts .....	123
Instrumental Combination of the Gurmat Sangīt Revival .....	129
Other Aspects in the Gurmat Sangīt Revival.....	130

Chaṅkī .....	131
Tāla .....	133
Partāl .....	134
The Common Practice of Sikh Devotional Music and Other Experimentations in the 20th and 21st Centuries.....	136
Content of the Gurmat Sangīt Revival: Combination of Ancient, Contemporary, Specialized, and Imagined Concepts .....	140
Chapter 5    Gurmat Sangīt Revival as the Neo-traditional Practice .....	141
Corresponding Publications .....	141
Institutionalization and Standardization .....	146
Individualization .....	154
Sikh Musicians Active at the Sikh Gurus' Time .....	159
Sikh Musicians Active before and at the Time of the Partition .....	160
Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries .....	163
Involving Other Musicians: non-Sikhs, Women, and Ḍhāḍīs .....	166
Gurmat Sangīt Revival as the Neo-traditional Practice .....	168
<b>PART THREE: CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>169</b>
Chapter 6    Music Revival and Significance .....	169
Music Revival: Characteristics and Socio-cultural Issues .....	170
Revival and Its Participants .....	171
Motive.....	172
Different Approaches to Promote the Gurmat Sangīt Revival .....	174
Significance of the Gurmat Sangīt Revival .....	177
Favorable Responses.....	178
No Responses.....	183
Unfavorable Responses.....	187
Contribution and Significance of My Research.....	188
Appendices.....	191
Appendix 1    Transliteration Table of Punjabi .....	191
1.1    Letters .....	191

1.2	Vowels (Independent Form) .....	192
1.3	Vowels (Dependent form – combining “ਕ” with vowels).....	192
1.4	Nasalization and Germination.....	192
Appendix 2	Research Activities, Field Venues, Interviews, and Personal Communication.....	193
2.1	Major Activities and Fieldwork Venues .....	193
2.2	Major Interviews and Personal Communications .....	194
Appendix 3	Rāgas from the Section “Śabad” of the Dasam Granth ...	196
Appendix 4	Printed Materials of the AGSS .....	197
4.1	Sticker of the 2010 AGSS.....	197
4.2	Poster of the 2009 AGSS .....	197
4.3	Sticker of the 1999 AGSS.....	198
4.4	Banner of the 2004 AGSS.....	198
4.5	Poster of the 2007 AGSS .....	199
Appendix 5	Photos of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (© Vismaad Naad). .....	200
5.1	Bhai Tejpal Singh (left) at the 1992 AGSS .....	200
5.2	Dr. Gurnam Singh (right) at the 1999 AGSS.....	200
5.3	Bhāi Prithipal Singh Kang (middle) .....	201
5.4	Bhāi Avtar Singh (left) at the 1999 AGSS.....	201
5.5	Professor Kartar Singh (right) at the 1999 AGSS.....	202
5.6	Principal Baldev Singh (left) at the 1997 AGSS .....	202
5.7	Bībī Jasbir Kaur (middle) at the 1993 AGSS.....	203
5.8	Principal Rajinder Singh (middle) at the 1993 AGSS .....	203
5.9	Principal Shamsheer Singh Karir (middle) at the 1993 AGSS ...	204
5.10	Ustad Jaswant Singh Bhanwra (middle) at the 1996 AGSS .....	204
5.11	Professor Paramjot Singh (middle) at the 2001 AGSS .....	205
5.12	Dr. Ajit Singh Paintal at the 1991 AGSS.....	205
5.13	Bhai Balbir Singh (middle) at the 1997 AGSS .....	206
5.14	Pt. Dalip Chander Bedi at the 1997 AGSS .....	206

5.15	Professor Avtar Singh (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., booklet in English) .....	207
5.16	Principal Chanan Singh Majbor (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., booklet in English) .....	207
5.17	Professor Harchand Singh (the harmonium player on the right) (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., pamphlet in Punjabi) .....	208
Appendix 6	The Sections of “General Committee” and “Rāg Darbār” in <i>Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelan 1991</i> (Satbīr Singh ed. 1991, booklet in Punjabi) .....	209
Appendix 7	List of Rāgīs Performed at the 1991 AGSS .....	211
Appendix 8	Suggestion of Tāla s to Accompany Kīrtan Singing .....	215
8.1	Tāl Dādrā .....	215
8.2	Tāl Rūpak .....	215
8.3	Chapptāl .....	215
8.4	Tīn Tāl .....	215
8.5	Ek Tāl .....	215
8.6	Chār Tāl .....	215
8.7	Sūl Tāl (Sūl Phāk) .....	216
8.8	Ārhā Chāl Tāl .....	216
8.9	Tāl Īpchandī .....	216
8.10	Tāl Pharodsat .....	216
8.11	Tāl Panjābī Tekā (Chotā Tīn Tāl) .....	216
8.12	Tāl Tīvarā .....	217
8.13	Tāl Tilvārhā .....	217
8.14	Tāl Dhamār .....	217
8.15	Tāl Bhānmatī (Chār Tāl Dī Savārī) .....	217
8.16	Panj Tāl Dī Savārī (Pancham Savārī) .....	217
8.17	Paorī Tāl – Mātrā Chār .....	217
8.18	Jai Tāl .....	218
8.19	Tāl Jagpāl .....	218
8.20	Tāl Ramtīk .....	218
8.21	Tāl Mahosh .....	218

8.22 Tāl 13½ Mātrā.....	218
Appendix 9 55 Śabads with Indication of Partāl in the Guru Granth Sahib .....	219
Appendix 10 List of Rāgas, Their Wives, and Sons in the Rāgmālā Section of the Guru Granth Sahib (1429–430) .....	221
10.1 <i>Bhairao</i> rāga.....	221
10.2 <i>Mālakausak</i> rāga .....	221
10.3 <i>Hindol</i> rāga.....	221
10.4 <i>Dīpak</i> rāga.....	221
10.5 <i>Srīrāg</i> rāga .....	221
10.6 <i>Megh</i> rāga.....	222
Glossary .....	223
Works Cited .....	230
References in English .....	230
References in Punjabi and Hindi.....	243
Audio-visual References .....	245

## **List of Tables**

Table 2.1:	Main Rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib. ....	45
Table 2.2:	Mixed Rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib. ....	46
Table 3.1:	The Annual Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan (1991–2012). ....	83
Table 4.1:	Comparison of musical details of sirī rāg as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and other publications. ....	105
Table 4.2:	Nine possibilities of jāṭī in rāgas. ....	107
Table 4.3:	Time dimensions of the main and mixed rāgas as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (4 quarters of the day). ....	108
Table 4.4:	Time dimensions of the main and mixed rāgas as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (4 quarters of the night). ....	109
Table 4.5:	Performing time of different chaṅkī sessions at the 1997 AGSS. ....	132
Table 5.1:	Paintings of prescribed rāgas in Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006. ....	145
Table 5.2:	List of taksāls that offer kīrtan classes along with other training in religious duties. ....	148
Table 5.3:	Recipients of Gurmat Sangeet Awards presented by the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash and their background. ....	157

## List of Illustrations

Illustration 1.1: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana in 1991.....	32
Illustration 1.2: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana in 2012.....	32
Illustration 1.3: Principal Satnam Singh playing the rabāb. ....	34
Illustration 1.4: Principal Sukhwant Singh holding a tānpurā. ....	35
Illustration 1.5 Baba Sohan Singh. ....	36
Illustration 2.1: Portrayal of Gurū Nānak and Bhai Mardānā. ....	52
Illustration 2.2: Rāgī Jathā performing at the Hemkunt Sahib (from left to right: two vocalists playing harmoniums and a tablā player); all facing the congregation, with the Guru Granth Sahib on the left hand side.	56
Illustration 2.3 Dhāḍī jathā was invited to perform at the 1999 AGSS (from left to right: ḍhāḍ player, sarangi player, ḍhāḍ player, and orator). ....	58
Illustration 3.1: Musicians were performing on the stage at the 1991 AGSS. ....	77
Illustration 3.2: Audience members were sitting inside the tent at the 1991 AGSS. .....	77
Illustration 3.3: Temporary accommodation for the audience members in the complex of Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana at the 1991 AGSS. ....	78
Illustration 3.4: Logo of the AGSS.....	80
Illustration 3.5: Sant Baba Sucha Singh (1948–2002). ....	84
Illustration 3.6: Sant Baba Sucha Singh was bestowed with five relics at the 1996 AGSS. ....	86

Illustration 4.1: The Sikh/dhrupad rabāb (left, by Bhai Manbir Singh) and the Persian/Afghani rabāb (right, by Principal Satnam Singh) (VCD Cover). .....	113
Illustration 4.2: Gurū Nānak (right) met Bhai Firandā who carved the rabāb (middle). .....	115
Illustration 4.3: Stringed instruments introduced at the 1991 AGSS (from left to right): dilrubā, sarandā, dilrubā, and tāus. ....	116
Illustration 4.4: Pakhāvaj (left, by Bhai Baldeep Singh) as rhythmic accompaniment for kīrtan singing at the 2001 AGSS; Bibi Jaswant Kaur in the middle as the lead vocalist. ....	118
Illustration 4.5: Jorī (right, by Bhai Baldeep Singh) as rhythmic accompaniment for kīrtan singing at the 1997 AGSS; Bhai Balbir Singh in the middle as the lead vocalist.....	119
Illustration 4.6: Swarmaṇḍal (middle, by Bhai Mahinder Singh Thumri) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1993 AGSS. ....	120
Illustration 4.7: Sarangi (left) and violin (right) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 2002 AGSS. ....	121
Illustration 4.8: Mandolin (left) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1997 AGSS; Bhai Sarabjeet Singh in the middle as the lead vocalist. ....	122
Illustration 4.9: Electronic keyboards (left and middle) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1997 AGSS. ....	122
Illustration 4.10: Bhai Mardānā (left) is playing the (Sikh/dhrupad) rabāb to accompany the singing of Gurū Nānak (middle, holding a holy book). ....	125



Illustration 4.11: The meeting of Gurū Nānak and Kabīr, along with Bhai Mardānā (right) holding the (Persian/Afghani) rabāb.....	125
Illustration 4.12: Gurū Nānak’s wedding reception; wedding band at the bottom of the painting.....	127
Illustration 5.1: Painting of Gurū Nānak and Bhai Mardānā, painter unknown (Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006).....	144

## PART ONE: OVERVIEW OF SIKH MUSIC

### Chapter 1 Introduction: Theoretical Framework, Literature Review, and Research

This research is about music revival, with a focus on Sikh devotional music of the 20th and 21st centuries. Sikh devotional music, known as *gurmat sangīt*, is a common religious practice at the gurdwaras/*gurdvāras* (Sikh temples) that generally involves recitation of *gurbāṇis* (Sikh religious texts) and *kīrtan* singing (religious singing) with instrumental accompaniment by professional musicians and/or the congregation. It illustrates musical ways of uniting with God found in religious scriptures. The major sacred text, the Guru Granth Sahib/*Gurū Granth Sāhib*, contains a large number of verses in an arrangement organized by *rāgas* (musical modes). Despite numerous religious and political conflicts along the Sikh history, *gurmat sangīt* remains fundamental to the religion. This is verified by the employment of *rāgī jathā* (group of Sikh musicians) at most gurdwaras, and the availability of *gurmat sangīt* classes offered by gurdwaras or music academies in India and other parts of the world. For the social stability and economic prosperity after the Partition, technological and cultural development has been prominent in India and it brought influences to religious activities in various ways. One such way is the increasing demand for *rāgīs* (Sikh musicians) and training classes of Sikh devotional music from both local and overseas gurdwaras. Sikh devotional music

performances can be observed not only in gurdwaras, but also in various mass and social medium including audio-visual recordings, live broadcasts of television programs, and online-viewing channels.

Since the 1990s, a trend has developed to revive the authentic practice of devotional music performance at Sikh Gurus’/Gurūs’ times. The trend began with the AGSS /Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan (Unique Gathering of Sikh Religious Music), organized and first held at a Sikh temple in Ludhiana, India, in 1991.<sup>1</sup> It involves two revitalized campaigns in response to the contemporary Sikh devotional music practice: gurbāṇī recitation according to the rāgas stated in the Guru Granth Sahib, as contemporary practitioners criticized rāgīs for not performing *śabad kīrtans* (religious singing) in rāgas; and the re-introduction of stringed instruments into the gurmat sangīt performance, which has been dominated by harmonium playing since the colonial period. Where the AGSS is regarded as a “deliberate, organized, conscious effort” to “construct a more satisfying culture” of Sikh devotional music tradition, it involves “acts of revival, restoration, and renewal” that shape and transform “musical landscapes and experiences across diverse times and places” of the worldwide Sikh communities (Hill and Bithell 2014:3, Wallace 1956:225). The AGSS, as an origin of the gurmat sangīt revival in the 20th and 21st centuries, has raised the concern of performing Sikh devotional music “correctly” by following the authentic practice at the Sikh Gurus’ times.

---

<sup>1</sup> Where the name “Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan” has become the commonly-agreed term in the field, the Punjabi transliteration should be “*Aduttī Gurmat Sangīt Sanmellan*.”

As the dissertation title, *The Sikh Gurmat Sangīt Revival in Post-Partition India*, I argue for the Sikh devotional music revival as a self-interpretation of combined authentic, invented, and westernized concepts in association with music tradition at the Sikh Gurus' times and Indian classical music, and being shown in the standardization, classicization, and hybridization of Sikh devotional music performance. In order to be distinct from the dominant religious, socio-political, and cultural situations of India, gurmat sangīt becomes the subject to reveal Sikh's "resistance to and acceptance of domination and hierarchy" of Indian mainstream culture and modernity (Chakrabarty 1985, Chaudhury 1987). Originating from the micro-level of the city of Ludhiana, the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival has been shifted to the regional level of the Punjab state and to the international level of other countries (e.g. the U.S.A. and the U.K.) in visibility (Slobin 1993). While the revival content remains the same, the shift in space connects Sikh communities in India with Sikh minorities in overseas countries sharing the same ethnic, religious, and/or national identities.

My research demonstrates the complexities of the gurmat sangīt revival by tracing its initiating event (the AGSS), musical details, and participants, as well as discussing its corresponding promotion campaigns and significance. It explores the relationship between music (Sikh devotional music), revived tradition (musical practice at the Sikh Gurus' times), and minority (Sikh communities in India and other parts of the world). The study reveals an alternative scene of the Indian music culture that exists in Sikhism, in contrast to Hindu and Islamic musics, and Indian classical music as the mainstream academic studies in South Asian ethnomusicology. Addressing issues of music revival,

authenticity, and identity, it will be of immediate interest to the fields of South Asian minority studies, religious studies, and studies of the performing arts.

I adopt the case study approach to examine the phenomenon of the gurmat sangīt revival in 20th- and 21st-century Punjab. My research focuses on the annual performances of Sikh devotional music, and a Sikh religious institution in the city of Ludhiana, from where the trend of music revival has been developed. For the revival's aim to promote the "authentic" Sikh devotional music tradition, I assess the influence of the revival and trace its transmission through other social spaces such as local and overseas gurdwaras, Sikh music academies, record companies, and the Internet. I intend to answer the following questions: when, where, and how did the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival start in the 1990s? What are the "traditional" and "new/invented" elements that resist and accept the Indian domination and hierarchy in post-Partition India, respectively? How do contemporary practitioners engage in defining the authentic tradition of Sikh devotional music, and how do they communicate with other local and overseas believers and musicians?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

My study of the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival involves the following ethnomusicological issues: revival and revitalization; classicization; and nations, identity and subalternity.

## **Revival and Revitalization**

Revival and revitalization, basically covering the same concept as recreation, reorientation, and reenacting etc., generally refer to “an entity that was once alive, then dead and gone, then brought back to live again (‘re-vived’) (Ronström 1996:6).” As an important and widespread phenomenon studied by ethnomusicologists, ethnologists, and anthropologists, the study of music revival involves two approaches: the object-oriented approach and the process-oriented approach. The object-oriented approach centers around questions of authenticity, and aims to search for differences among the original, recent, and revived forms of what people refer to as the same, authentic, changeless, and everlasting origin. The process-oriented approach treats revival as a cultural expression or a communication process to be “involved in political, economic, and cultural struggles on many levels simultaneously (ibid.).”

My study of the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival involves both the object-oriented and process-oriented approaches of the revival phenomenon. First of all, the revival features gurmat sangīt performance ostensibly reminiscent of the Sikh Gurus’ times, such as singing of śabad kīrtans in rāgas, and with the musical accompaniment of stringed instruments adopted by the Sikh Gurus. The process of which core proponents revive the authentic Sikh devotional music tradition involves transformations in sound, practice, and context; essentialization, legitimation, commodification of the tradition; and transmission, dissemination, and promotion of its details (Hill and Bithell 2014). Where Sikh musicians define the Sikh devotional music tradition by identifying musical practices and objects with standardized forms through devotional music performance, religious officers and

common believers help in the legitimation of the same by attending religious events, workshops, and kīrtan classes, practicing kīrtan singing and instruments at home, and appreciating gurmat sangīt performances on the television and the Internet. Through participation as musicians and/or audience members, knowledge of the gurmat sangīt tradition is “summarised and retold in standardized and simplified forms,” then repeatedly performed, summarized and simplified, “before taken on as models for conscious staging of ‘old traditions’ (Ronström 1996:12).” This process of traditionalization also creates a differentiation between musicians who know more and those who know less about the tradition, and this distinguishes musicians who claim to follow the “authentic” musical practice of the Sikh Gurus’ time.

In the process-oriented approach, the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival is regarded “as an ongoing reconstruction of social life,” with the tradition symbolically constructed, invented, and legitimized as authentic (Handler and Linnekin 1984, Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983, and Ronström 1996). In the revitalization movement, the struggle is, in fact, the conscious action that aims for a rapid cultural change from the present practice at gurdwaras. The gurmat sangīt revival incorporates elements from the past (i.e. the Sikh Gurus’ times) and the present (i.e. the 20th- and 21st-century Punjab), and symbolizes different kinds of meanings and functions simultaneously. It can be regarded as a social movement against religious modernity that accompanies the increasing variety and flexibility of gurmat sangīt performance at gurdwaras nowadays. It is also a regional and religious struggle, in which Sikhs try to raise their social, political, and religious statuses against the dominant Hindu religion and Hindustani tradition.

## **Classicization**

The notion of “classical,” generally refers to music representative of one’s culture: most of the “classical” styles are claimed to be developing from “authentic” and “great” traditions with serious content and superior cultural values. The term once referred to the art music of European traditions from the 11th century to present times, where it contained well-developed scholarship, professionalism, notation and education systems, and performance practices. However, it is also applied to non-Western traditions nowadays, as an attempt to claim a comparable space in world cultures against the encroachment of Western power and modernity. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the classicization of musics in India was established by middle- and upper-class Hindu Brahmins with reference to two genres, Hindustani and Carnatic musics, represented to both Indians and foreigners (Dennen 2010). To survive the challenges of modernity and colonization, these two genres were “invented” as classical by Indian nationalist reformers to prove national equality on musical grounds. The classicization process involved developing a “scientific” system of written notation; institutionalization of music with education reforms and listener appreciation societies; canonization of Hindustani and Carnatic musics; and systematization and standardization of the musics and their pedagogy (Bakhle 2005, Dennen 2010, Schofield 2010, and Weidman 2006).<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Schofield clarifies the period as a “re-classicization,” for her proof of the classicization of Indian music once happened in the 17th century, where Mughal court music underwent the process of canonization and systematization (2010).



Similarly, the gurmat sangīt revival aims to classicize the Sikh devotional music to prove its equality with other regional (e.g. Marathi folk musics), devotional (e.g. Hindu and Muslim musics), and even classical (e.g. Hindustani and Carnatic musics, or even classical genres of other cultural) genres. Where the revitalization movement involves the above classicization process (details of the process will be discussed in Chapter 5), it promotes gurmat sangīt as the Punjab-originated, Sikh devotional music that is as “great,” “authentic,” and “traditional” as other musical genres in India, or as in other cultures and traditions.

### **Nations, Identity, and Subalternity**

In revival and revitalization, the celebration of traditions often creates feelings of group solidarity and of community. The performance of the gurmat sangīt tradition becomes a tool to “produce the difference” by the Sikhs. The difference involves “the construction, maintenance and negotiation of boundaries, so as to reveal social identities in a context of opposition and relativities” (Stokes 1997:6). Instead of highlighting the physical or national distinction in the real sense, the revival of the gurmat sangīt tradition illustrates one’s intention and thoughts to highlight the difference. Just as Gupta and Ferguson state, “as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, ideas of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient (1997:10).” The Sikh revitalization movement, through reviving the gurmat sangīt tradition, aims at constructing these culturally and ethnically distinct places.

Sikhism can be understood as a religious and social concept to highlight difference. The difference involves the community's religious beliefs (Sikhism), ethnic and national identities (Punjabi and Indian), and political ideals (*Khālistan*).<sup>3</sup> It was under the domination of Hinduism in post-Partition India that the Sikh community became a religious minority. Most Sikhs come from the Punjab region, and they are regarded as an ethnic community (i.e. Punjabi) in India and other Asia countries (such as Singapore and Hong Kong). However, they are considered as Indian immigrants outside of India (such as the U.S.A., the U.K., and Canada). Sikhs also belong to the political minority fighting for the sovereignty of an independent state since the days of the India-Pakistan Partition. To sum up, Sikhs represent a minority in relation to different historical and social experiences, and the community reflects how Sikhs produce and highlight their differences and position themselves with respect to others.<sup>4</sup>

In the minority-specific context, music illustrates how “the minorities react by maintaining their unique style,” or by “exaggerating the difference between it and the majority (Nettl 2005:425).” It is a symbolic reflection of religious, ethnic, and national identities of the Sikh community. In terms of music scholarship, *gurmat sangīt* is

---

<sup>3</sup> *Khālistan* refers to the demand for a separate Sikh state independent of the Indian Republic in the 1970s and 1980s (Cole and Sambhi 1990:95–96, McLeod 1989:107).

<sup>4</sup> Nettle concerns whether population groups of minorities are distinguished from the majority by the descent, by culture, or by language, Sikh community belong to all these types as according to their history and association. Earliest from Gurū Nānak's time, Sikh minorities have been established within a dominant culture against the Hindu population as well as the Muslim believers (especially in the pre-1947 Partition). In the post-colonial period, some Sikhs moved away from Punjab and brought along with their minority status. However, it was an identity of Indian immigrants as against the U.S. citizens. These Sikh immigrants occupied the role of minority temporarily while completing a process of acculturation to the dominant U.S. culture. Some Sikh immigrants of the later generations did not acquire the Punjabi language, thus creating problems and issues like dissemination and translation of Sikh scriptures in the religious development (Nettl 2005:424).

regarded as a “little tradition” in relation to the “great tradition” of Hindustani music (Slawek 1988).<sup>5</sup> Hindustani music is the dominant and “great” genre of North India for its long-developed court history and popularity of master musicians. On the contrary, gurmat sangīt is considered to be “little” for several reasons. First of all, its content is less known to both Sikh and non-Sikh believers. Second, its religious (Sikh), ethnic (Punjabi), and national (Indian) aspects take up a very small percentage under the religious affiliation and ethnicity of the Indian and overseas population.<sup>6</sup> Third, rāgīs have seldom been highlighted and recognized with their individual names and details, making them less attached to the concept of “master musicians” (i.e. *Gurū* or *Ustād*) known to the general public.<sup>7</sup> As a minority in the subordinate position, practitioners of the gurmat sangīt revival maintain its uniqueness by highlighting differences from their religious, ethnic, and national counterparts, such as promoting instruments introduced by the Sikh Gurus; defining śabad kīrtan texts as derived from gurbāṇis of the Sikh scriptures; and linking the religious establishment to music-making behaviors (for Gurū Nānak sang with the rabāb accompaniment of Bhai Mardānā).

Moreover, the negotiation of the “us-them” boundary involves not only differences but also similarities between the two parties. Nettl suggests that there exists

---

<sup>5</sup> For discussion of “great” and “little” tradition of Slawek’s article, please refer to the section of “Literature Review” in Chapter 1.

<sup>6</sup> According to the 2011 Census in India, Sikhism accounted for 1.9% of the Indian population, following Hinduism (80.5%), Muslim (13.4%), and Christianity (2.3%). The Punjabis are ranked 15th in the total Indian population of 28 states and 7 union territories (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, New Delhi 2010).

<sup>7</sup> However, this trend of individualizing master musicians in gurmat sangīt is getting more common nowadays. While rāgīs are performing in a group of three members, the group is always referred to the name of the chief vocalist. Besides, names of the chief vocalist and the geographic origin of the group are always highlighted in the live performance or recordings of gurmat sangīt.

“a degree of stylistic similarity between minority and majority musics,” and he states “people who have been thrown into a minority situation may react musically in various ways, but in many cases they are affected by the musical style of the majority” (2005:425). As to interact with the “great tradition,” the gurmat sangīt revival adopts musical details parallel to Hindustani music to a large extent. This involves interpreting most prescribed rāgas of the Guru Granth Sahib as from the Hindustani tradition (e.g. rāgas *bilāval* and *rāmkalī*); emphasizing the background of some Sikh musicians in relation to Hindustani music (e.g. Pt. Dalip Chander Bedi, Head of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee); and adopting stringed instruments (e.g. *sarangi/sāraṅgī*) commonly found at Hindustani instrumental performance into the Sikh devotional practice. Moreover, a similar performing style is found in śabad kīrtan and other devotional genres: while harmonium has become the major accompaniment of sacred and secular singing in the Indian subcontinent (such as ghazal and qawwali/*qawālī*), various percussion instruments have also been adopted to accompany the leader and chorus singing.<sup>8</sup> Further discussion of similarities and differences will be included in Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

The intention of highlighting differences and similarities through the revival of gurmat sangīt tradition illustrates the subaltern consciousness of the Sikhs in the post-Partition period. Participants, including the contemporary practitioners, religious officers, and common believers, all engaged in the gurmat sangīt revival to develop “an

---

<sup>8</sup> Ghazal belongs to the light classical form and its text is in Urdu poetry. The performing ensemble consists of a *tablā* and a harmonium or sometimes two harmoniums (Wade 2000:183–84). *Qawwali* is the Sufi devotional song performed by musicians of *Mīrāsī* background in Punjab. Musicians usually perform as a group of 12 members, with lead singer, two chorus singers, and *tablā* and harmonium players. The remaining performers comprise the chorus, and they clap regularly together (Nayyar 2000:765–66).

autonomous domain” of religious insurgency (Guha 1982). In search of the standardization, authentication, and consensus of concepts in the Sikh devotional music tradition, Sikhs produce their own domain of religious sovereignty within the political power of Hindu society (Chatterjee 1993, Ludden 2001). The Sikh subalternity, as developed from this revitalization movement, reveals “fragments” of the Indian nation in terms of religiosity and musical performance. My research discusses the gurmat sangīt revival in detail, and also illustrates how and what Sikhs do to present their “authentic” music tradition and develop their domain of sovereignty under the production of differences and similarities.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literatures corresponding to my research of the gurmat sangīt revival mainly involve ethnomusicological studies of Indian music, or those in religious or diasporic contexts. I discuss these literatures under three subject matters: (1) devotional music of India; (2) Sikh devotional music; and (3) music of the Indian diaspora.

### **Devotional Music of India**

Major literatures of devotional music of India involve genres of various traditions or regions, such as the South Asian Muharram drumming (Wolf 2000a); mourning songs of Kotas’ death rituals (Wolf 2000b); sacred songs of Khoja Muslims (Catlin-Jairazbhoy 2004); Hindu kīrtan of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (Schultz 2002, 2008, 2013,

Slawek 1988); Sufi musical culture (Qureshi 1986); temple and ritual music of South India (Grosbeck 1999, Killius 2006, and Terada 2008); and liturgical music and rituals of a Hindu temple in Braj (Ho 1996, 2013). The following is a discussion of selected authors' works because of their relevance to my research approaches and issues.

For the three studies on Hindu devotional music of Kerala, namely, *South India: Ritual Music and Hindu Rituals of Kerala* (Killius 2006), "Temple Music Traditions in Hindu South India: Periya Mēḷam and Its Performance Practice (Terada 2008)," and "Classical Music,' 'Folk Music,' and the Brahmanical Temple in Kerala, India (Grosbeck 1999)," all three authors give an overview of Hindu devotional music of Kerala as a social system and discuss the inseparability of music from ritual. Killius' article introduces different elements of ritual music in the Kerala temples (including Hinduism and different rituals in South India, relationship between the divine and devotees, ensemble types, musical instruments, musicians, and ritual expert communities); Terada's research traces the historical evidence of *periya mēḷam* music, discusses ritual and social duties of the musicians, and analyzes that relationship between music and the marriage ceremony in South India; and Grosbeck discusses the tripartite categorization scheme to divide liturgical instrumental music, vocal or vocal-based music, and non-Brahmanical temple instrumental music in the first part of his essay. Focusing on the religious music in India, the studies illustrate devotional music in both synchronic and diachronic approaches.

Research and articles by Grosbeck (1999), Ho (1996), and Slawek (1998) center around the interaction of devotional music with other genres in the Indian music tradition.

Slawek’s article (titled “Popular *Kīrtan* in Banaras: Some ‘Great’ Aspects of a Little Tradition,”) introduces popular *kīrtan* of Hinduism by explaining the connections between concept, symbol, and sound, and by discussing how singing is linked to the religious and philosophical traditions of Sanskritic *brāhmaṇism*. For *kīrtan* of eastern Uttar Pradesh sharing musical elements in common with the Hindustani music, such as the practice of increasing tempo throughout the course of performance, the standard formatting of fixed compositions, contrast of verse and refrain, musical rhythm, and the progression from free to strict rhythm, the author argues for interaction between the rural practice of Indian music with non-Brahmin members (known as the “little” tradition) and the urban, Brahmin practice of Indian music (known as the “great” tradition) that develops into the little-great continuum, thus leading to the continuity of Indian music tradition.

As an extended discussion on the “great-little” tradition of Indian music, Groesbeck argues against the classical/folk dichotomy as derived from the tradition. The categorization of music of the Brahmanical temple in Kerala is considered problematic because of its impermeable division with blurring boundaries and its failure to take the views of different groups of insiders into consideration. Though the classical/folk dichotomy is not sufficient to explain genres that have been interacting with one another on different levels and in different time periods, the classification of “great-little” tradition provides a conceptual foundation for further discussions, such as interaction of religious and non-religious elements in devotional and classical music performance in the next two articles.

Titled “Connecting Histories: Liturgical Songs as Classical Compositions in Hindustani Music,” Ho’s article argues for the use of religious elements in classical music performance of the Braj region. As part of research in her dissertation on the liturgical music of the Puṣṭi Mārg, Ho proves the classical-liturgical relationship with similar repertoires found in written sources and performance of kīrtans and Hindustani vocal compositions (such as *dhrupad* and *khyāl*). By uncovering “liturgical songs that have been performed and recorded as canonical compositions of classical lineages,” the author argues that the liturgical practice has become the source contributor to the evolution of the classical tradition (Ho 2013:207). The research attempts to construct a chronology of origins and sources with written and audio evidence, in order to give evidence of an early evolutionary stage of Indian classical music’s development.

Schultz illustrates how devotional songs can be used for political propaganda (2002, 2008, 2013). Her research discovers non-religious elements in devotional music of Maharashtra, and illustrates how nation and state are imagined and performed through regional idioms in local contexts. In the author’s two journal articles (2002 and 2008) and one book publication (titled *Singing a Hindu Nation: Marathi Devotional Performance and Nationalism*, 2013), she explains how devotional music becomes an effective medium for the propagation of nationalist ideas through experiences of embodiment, group participation, and the performing style of *kīrtankārs* (kīrtan musicians). Marathi rāshṭrīya kīrtan, a devotional performance in western India, achieved its spiritual and nationalist goals in the 20th century by combining songs, philosophical discourse, and storytelling. The devotional singing performance in regional idioms aimed at promoting



the fight against British colonization, to work for contemporary, social reform, to create a sense of national unity and pride, and to foster Hindu nationalism. Kīrtankārs made use of the ritual context, participatory nature of devotional singing, and the improvisatory characteristics of the genre for political ends, such as the sharing of their political sentiments through the interplay of the sung *povādā* (a narrative genre eulogizing the heroism of warriors), of past-ness and narrative speech of Shiva in Maharashtrian history and its contrast in the current socio-political situation.

### **Sikh Devotional Music**

Literature on Sikh devotional music involves printed materials in Punjabi and English, and most of them are published in the 1990s and 2000s, when the AGSS had been held annually. The authors of Punjabi literature are mainly experienced Sikh musicians who wrote for the purposes of general education and cultural preservation. The contents of these publications include a general introduction of śabad kīrtans (Gurnam Singh 2005, and Tara Singh 1997); practical guidelines on the performance of rāgas in selected śabad kīrtans (Gurnam Singh 2008, Kartar Singh 2001, 2004, Kulwant Chandan Singh 2009, and Tara Singh 2011); and the performing styles of individual rāgīs (such as Bhai Hira Singh by Balwant Singh 1995, Bhai Samund Singh by Paramjot Singh 2011, and Bhai Randhi Singh by Kanwar Jit Singh 1999). Besides, there are numerous programs (mostly in booklet format) and corresponding publications of the AGSS (Gurnam Singh ed. 1997, 2001, Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash 1997, 2004, Jasbir Kaur

1991, Jasbir Kaur ed. 2005, Satbir Singh ed. 1991, 1992, 1993, and Sukhwant Singh ed. n.y., 2006, 2007). They are all useful materials for analyzing the phenomenon of the gurmat sangīt revival in India (especially in the Punjab region).

For literature in English, both Brar (2008) and Middlebrook (2000) give a brief introduction of Sikh music as dictionary or encyclopedic entries, respectively. There are some books and articles illustrating gurmat sangīt as a musical system and discussing its texts and musical styles, repertoires and composers, and musicians and instruments (Chaitanya 1967, Daljit Singh 1995, Gurnam Singh 2008, Inderjit N. Kaur 2011a, and Mansukhani 1982). Some books approach gurmat sangīt in structural functionalism, discussing the religious meanings and functions of śabad kīrtans (Chaitanya 1967, and Mansukhani 1982), and some explain meanings of signs and gurbāṇis in the Guru Granth Sahib (Amardeep Singh 2004, 2006, 2011, and Inderjit N. Kaur 2008). Some publications give performing guidelines with details of selected śabad kīrtans, and melodic and rhythmic notations (Gurdev Kaur 1993, and Gurnam Singh 2005). Other contents include English translations of śabad kīrtans of different Sikh Gurus and saints (Dass 1991, 2000, Khushwant Singh 1969, 2003, and Trilochan Singh 1975), biographies of rāgīs (Arora 2000, Banerji 2001, Gargi 2003, and Gill 2010), and discussion of the relationship between Sikh history and Punjabi music culture (Nijhawan 2006, Pettigrew 1992, and Schreffler 2010). An international conference on the topic of Sikh devotional music was held in May 2010, resulting in a number of selected papers in the special issue of *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, and Theory*, published in December 2011.

*Sikh Music: History, Text, and Praxis* is the first research project of gurmat sangīt carried out by a non-Sikh researcher in the Western academia (Doel 2008). In her Master's thesis, Doel analyzes how devotional music becomes a means of fostering the connection with the divine in the Guru Granth Sahib. The musical discussion focuses on the middle section of the Guru Granth Sahib and the relationship between Sikh music and the experience of prayer. Doel also traces the connection between khyāl and *gurbāṇī kīrtan*, and bhajan and *gurbāṇī kīrtan*, from interview data and historical background of the genres; however, the argument needs to be strengthened with more historical evidence and musical analysis.

*Dhadi Darbar: Religion, Violence, and the Performance of Sikh History* examines the musical culture of the *dhāḍīs* and the expression of violence through musical performance (Nijhawan 2006). *Dhāḍīs* are the group of Sikh musicians who were active in the period of Gurū Gobind Singh, when they sang of heroic deeds in drastic and intense vocal quality. They are no longer active in gurdwara performance, and the tradition is close to extinction.<sup>9</sup> Nijhawan's publication argues for the negotiation of religious and political identities through *dhāḍī* performance in the 20th-century Punjab. Elements from hagiographies, mythologies, and epic performances contribute to the South Asian modernity, legitimization of violence, and historical imagination of the Punjabi community in the post-Partition context.

---

<sup>9</sup> Most of the informants claimed that the *dhāḍī* tradition was no longer active nowadays. In my preliminary research, *dhāḍī* performance was less common than the *rāgī* performance at Sikh religious events. There had been occasional *dhāḍī* performance at the Golden Temple Amritsar in 2009, and I just heard of the *dhāḍī* performance once at the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple in the past eight years.

Later chapters (Chapters 7 and 8) of the dissertation *Sikh Śabad Kīrtan as a Musical Construction of Memory* bring new insights and information to the research of gurmat sangīt (Protopapas 2011b). To examine the role of śabad kīrtan in the construction of Sikh identity and memory, Protopapas illustrates the rules that govern a Sikh service and maps a process of social interaction between the musicians and the congregation in later chapters of her dissertation. The author explains the concepts and details of gurmat sangīt with numerous transcriptions, including the 62 rāgas of the Guru Granth Sahib, the rhythmic structure of *partāl*, selected śabad kīrtans, and other sections in individual *chaunḳīs* (literally sittings; sessions of kīrtan performance). She also gives a detailed analysis and description of the early morning service (known as “*Āsā Dī Vār*”), including congregational movement and activities, performing mode, śabad kīrtans performed, and execution by various officers (ibid.177–200). While Protopapas relies on musical elements of gurmat sangīt to search for the Sikh identity and ideology, my study focuses on rāgīs or other music makers as agents shaping the Sikh identity.

In the chapter “Devotional Music” of *Cassette Culture*, Manuel contributed a short yet important discussion on the impact of cassette technology on Sikh devotional music in the 1980s (Manuel 1993). He comments that “most Sikh music, even as marketed on commercial cassettes, has resisted the influence of film music and retains a more traditional aesthetic... The widespread sale of cassettes enables Sikhs to hear kīrtan and śabad gurbāṇi at home (ibid.119).” Although the dissemination of śabad kīrtan cassettes has been denounced for its discouragement of visiting the gurdwaras, recordings were available for sale in the market or gurdwaras, and the quantity and the quality of

these recordings have been increasing since the late 1980s. Meanwhile, cassettes have played a significant role in the growth of Sikh separatism. Beyond censorship of the state, Sikh separatists made effective use of cassettes since the early 1980s, and recorded tapes of songs celebrating the Khālistan struggle and important figures of the independent movement (Manuel 1993:249–250).

In my preliminary research, I found that mass media and technology plays an important role in exchanging religious information worldwide during the 20th and 21st centuries. Influenced by the AGSS, the idea to revive the gurmat sangīt tradition has been promoted through the Internet and by means of printed and audio-visual publications. Contemporary practitioners and musicians participated in live broadcasts of śabad kīrtan programs on TV and the Internet, and sang “legitimate” śabad kīrtans at gurdwaras, locally and overseas. The trend to revive, classicize, and standardize the gurmat sangīt tradition has been further developed with the release of CDs and DVDs featuring recorded performances of śabad kīrtans in prescribed rāgas (as in the Guru Granth Sahib) and/or with stringed instruments, and guidebooks that introduce and notate śabad kīrtans. These publications have been produced as teaching guides to establish the standard of śabad kīrtan performance.

A special issue of *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, and Theory*, titled *Sikh Musicology*, was published in December 2011 (Volume 7, Issue 3). This journal contains selected papers from an international conference held on 21–23 May 2010, in the name of

“Hermeneutics of Sikh Music (*rāg*) and Word (*shabad*).”<sup>10</sup> The conference explores the relationship between scripture (i.e. the Guru Granth Sahib) and music (i.e. *kīrtans*) in different Sikh communities and traditions. Elements of these two aspects involve the language, meaning, and interpretation of the *gurbānīs*, and the *rāga*, *tāla* (rhythm), tempo, expression, and instrumentation of the music performance, respectively. The scholarly discussion includes defining *śabad kīrtan* from the insider’s perspective (the author as the 13th generation exponent of the *kīrtan* tradition) in “What is *Kīrtan*? Observations, Interventions and Personal Reflections” by (Bhai) Baldeep Singh (245–95); introducing key concepts of the musical aesthetic of Sikh Gurus in “Musical Aesthetic in the Guru Granth and Implications for the Performance Practice of Sikh *Shabad Kīrtan*” by Inderjit Nilu Kaur (297–312); locating the subject of *gurmat sangīt* within the academic field of international musicology in “The Music of the Sikh Gurus’ Tradition in a Western Context: Cross-cultural Pedagogy and Research” by Francesca Cassio (313–17); providing a “thick description” of the *chaṅkī* of *Āsā Dī Vār* in “*Kīrtan Chaṅkī*: Affect, Embodiment and Memory” by Janice Protopapas (339–64); studying the *rabābī* tradition in Sikh/Muslim Bhai-Bhai? Towards a Social History of The *Rababī* Tradition of *Shabad Kīrtan*” by Navtej K. Purewal (365–82); and exploring cultural and socio-political meanings of *kīrtan* in “Sikh Sacred Music, Empire and World Music: Aesthetics and Historical Change” by Bob van der Linden (383–97). These articles have been

---

<sup>10</sup> Both “*shabad*” and “*śabad*” contain the same meaning and they are the commonly agreed terms in the field. However, “*śabad*” is the transliteration from Punjabi.

incorporated as arguments and supporting materials in different chapters of this dissertation.

After the special issue, another two articles of Sikh devotional music had been included in the succeeding two issues of *Sikh Formations*. This first article, titled “Music of the Sikh Diaspora: Devotional Sounds, Musical Memory and Cultural Identity” by Gurdeep John Singh Khabra, constructs the Sikh diasporic identity with the means of devotional music performance. The article compares the performance of devotional music by two Sikh communities in two different locales (a heterodox Sikh community in the U.K., and an orthodox Sikh Community in Hong Kong), thus illustrating the various interpretations of ritual practice to portray and present religious identity within the larger context of the society (as the minority of Namdhari Sikhism in the Indian immigrant community of the U.K.; and as the Indian minority for the Chinese community of Hong Kong). From the author’s analyses plus my own field observations at the Hong Kong Gurdwara, these two cases can be regarded as examples showing no responses or not being influenced by the gurmat sangīt revival developed by the AGSS. Detailed discussion of these cases may be found in the section “Significance of the Gurmat Sangīt Revival” in Chapter 6.

The second article, “*Gurbani Kirtan* Renaissance: Reviving Musical Memory, Reforming Sikh Identity” by Nirinjan Kaur Khalsa (2012), is similar to the content of this dissertation. While there has been a collective effort to revive and revitalize the traditional practice of Sikh devotional music (referred to as “gurbāṇī kīrtan” by the author) in the past 25 years, the author examines the practice of institutionalization within

the contemporary renaissance of the gurbānī kīrtan tradition. Citing different understandings of “authentic” Sikh music by musicians in the field, he suggests a reassessment of the practice by putting orality and embodied experience into consideration. While this article discusses the general scene of the gurmat sangīt revival and the corresponding practice against the “tradition,” my research extended the discussion by focusing on activities organized by the initiators, details and concepts of Sikh devotional music agreed and standardized by “experts,” sources of the details and concepts, and their impact to other Sikh communities (e.g. Sikhs with no music background, overseas Sikh believers).

### **Music of an Indian Minority Population**

Literature on music of an Indian minority population involves issues like the transcultural movement of regional genres, the creation of a new identity, ethnic representation in new spaces, and the negotiation of boundaries in cultural practices. The following three publications, Manuel 2000, Myers 1998, and Roy 2010, explore these issues by examining music of the Indian ethnic minority in Trinidad, Caribbean, and London.

*Music of Hindu Trinidad* (Myers 1998) is one of the earliest researches on music of the Indian diaspora. In the style of a diary and report, Myers focuses on the musical activities of Felicity village in central Trinidad, from where she made three hundred hours of recordings. The contents of these recordings include religious rituals, music at



social events, question-and-answer sessions, conversations, and villagers' comments based on earlier recordings. Myers also made numerous trips to northeastern India and visited ancestral villages of the Indian minorities in Trinidad. She traces the origins of these diasporic activities and makes certain to date specific events. Based on Alan Merriam's conceptualization of music, behavior in relation to music, and music sound (Merriam 1964), the author discusses how music was involved in different contexts of daily activities, including the annual cycle, weddings, rituals, cremation, folk songs, and love songs.

*East Indian Music in the West Indies: Tān-Singing, Chutney and the Making of Indo-Caribbean Culture* is “a study of cultural persistence, creation, and adaptation as reflected in the trajectory of a neo-traditional music genre and its contemporary syncretic successor (Manuel 2000:xiv–xv).” By examining the East Indian musical culture in the Caribbean, Manuel illustrates how tān-singing and its successor *chutney*, once viewed as distinctively Indian genres, progress from a reconstructed Indian village society to a modern entity, and engages in the process of identity construction of the Indo-Caribbean community. As the Indo-Caribbeans are embracing hyphenated identities of various “homelands,” their musical choices reflect their self-consciousness of subcultures and diasporic societies, celebration of hybridity and cosmopolitan syncretism, as well as imagination of ancestral traditions and migration histories.

*Bhangra Moves: From Ludhiana to London* (Roy 2010) investigates the trans-local movement and global flows of a folk genre originated from a Punjabi harvest dance. The book illustrates how *bhangra* creates new definitions of culture, identity, and nation

in the process of cultural reinvention. Originally as a folk dance in Ludhiana, bhangra gained popularity as a hybrid musical genre in London, illustrating the repositioning from an ethnic minority music to “new Asian Kool” (ibid.17–18). The book traces bhangra’s global flows in terms of its multi-directional, multi-linear, and transnational natures, where new definitions of culture, identity, and nation are created in the process of cultural intervention and the development of cultural nationalism. Beyond outlining the global flows of bhangra, the author illustrates how Indian cultures have constantly reinvented themselves by absorbing the other while maintaining boundaries.

My research model of the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival is adopted from the above three publications. Similar to the above studies of minority music, my research examines the motion and re-creation of musical cultures. While Sikhs gather as the minority in different social spaces (for example, as the religious minority under the majority of Hindu and Muslim population in India; as the Punjabi minority under different ethnic groups in India; and as a religious and ethnic minority of new immigrants in overseas countries), the study of music is no longer restricted to geographical boundaries but attends to the global flow of culture. The music revival is based on the imagining of an authentic practice of śabad kīrtan performance proposed by the Sikh Gurus, and it also engages in the re-creation process by contemporary Sikh musicians. While I argue for the Sikh gurmat sangīt revival as originated from a three-day annual gurmat sangīt performance in Punjab (i.e. the AGSS), I also trace its global flows and assess its influence on the Sikh communities overseas. The revival reveals how Sikhs express their awareness of minority

identity through aligning to and contrasting with other religious, ethnic, and cultural elements in the Sikh devotional music performance.

## **RESEARCH**

In this section, I discuss the practical operation and concern of my research on the gurmat sangīt revival, including methodology, fieldwork, main research site and informants, and Sikh names as a special feature of the research.

### **Methodology**

Akin to most ethnomusicological research, I collected my research data from different social spaces, including libraries and archives, the Internet, and ethnography. Moreover, my ethnographic research does not focus on a conventional single-site location like what has been discussed in the previous section (“Devotional Music of India,” under “Literature Review”). Instead, I have adopted a mode of the multi-sited ethnography, namely strategically situated (single-site) ethnography, as categorized by George E. Marcus in “Ethnography in or of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography” (1995:110–12). As a foreshortened multi-sited project, this mode of ethnography “attempts to understand something broadly about the system” of Sikh devotional music as one of the core elements in religious worship.

Adding issues of space and place as discussed by Gupta and Ferguson (1992) in “Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference,” the multi-sited

approach connects scenes of Sikh devotional music from different parts of the world, which are linked together by the religious and social identity of Sikhs and (mostly) Punjabis/Indians; by the physical spot of gurdwaras; and/or by imagination of their Sikh homeland. This approach also examines the international flow of Sikh devotional music in these “interconnected spaces,” where interactions and connections occur in different levels. For musicians stationed at and employed by gurdwaras in different places, almost all of them obtain their training from religious institutions in India (particularly Punjab). Significant musicians, whether based in India or other parts of the world, tend to travel and sing at gurdwaras around the world. Similarly, Sikh believers would travel to different places and join religious activities at local gurdwaras. Simultaneously, books and recordings related to Sikhism (Sikh devotional music in particular) are circulated among these believers. The flow also exists on a virtual level from where audio-visual clips are shared on the Internet and live broadcasts of gurdwara activities on television and radio are presented to an international audience every day.

Under the common scene of Sikh devotional music performance, the multi-sited ethnographic research enables me to identify the differences and changes, thus exploring the mutual relationship of the performance practice and perception in gurdwaras from different places. As historical and social process, migration of Sikhs at different sites is interconnected by the religious practice at gurdwaras, where Sikh devotional music performance takes up the significant role (Gallo 2009). As a result, I am able to reveal revival scene and trace its origins and development from historical, geographical, and social perspectives.

## **Fieldwork**

My field research started in 2009 and ended in 2014. I made occasional field trips to various places to obtain my research information. My research sources contain printed, audio-visual and Internet materials from different places, such as libraries and archives, gurdwaras, companies that sell and produce gurmat sangīt audio-visual items, websites, and online discussion forums. These materials are either available in the market or the Internet, or they are provided by students from gurmat sangīt institutions, rāgīs, sellers and producers of gurmat sangīt audio-visual items, Sikh believers, website makers, and the internet commentators. There is also ethnographic data and field recordings obtained through interviews and participant observations at various Sikh music activities.

I adopt this case study approach to examine the development of the Sikh devotional music and the gurmat sangīt revival in the 20th- and 21st-century Punjab. I focus on a Sikh religious school in Punjab - the Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash, Jawaddi Taksal in Ludhiana (commonly known as the “Jawaddi Taksal”). The Taksal was established in the early 1990s in response to the revitalization movement initiated by Sant Baba Sucha Singh, who organized meetings and performing events to revive the singing of śabad kīrtans in prescribed rāgas and to re-introduce the stringed instruments of Sikh Gurūs’ times. Major gurmat sangīt activities that have been carried out by the Taksal include the AGSS, the Gurmat Sangeet Workshop (Workshop of Sikh Religious Music),

seminars on the topics of religions, the release of audio-visual recordings, and the publication and archiving of relevant materials.

While multi-sited research enabled me to have a general view of the Sikh devotional music performance in different parts of the world, it also led me to a research site where I could obtain most of my data, and reach major proponents of the gurmat sangīt. I invested much time and effort to find out and determine this major research site before going to the Jawaddi Taksal. I travelled to Hong Kong, Singapore, and India for preliminary research. This allowed me to get access to some libraries and archives, obtain contacts of gurdwaras, Sikh organizations, and institutions, and to get in touch with rāgīs. In 2009 and 2010, I collected some printed materials and audio-visual recordings from the Ethnomusicology Archive and Fine Arts Library of the University of Texas at Austin, and the AIIIS Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology in New Delhi. In the summer of 2009, I visited gurdwaras in Delhi and Amritsar and discussed with rāgīs about further research possibilities, and acquired gurmat sangīt audio-visual items in the market.

In the summer of 2011, I visited two libraries at Katong Gurdwara Singapore and the Sikh Centre in Singapore. I obtained rare English sources of gurmat sangīt and back issues of a Sikh music magazine, *Amrit Kirtan*, acquired past recordings of the śabad kīrtan performance, and conducted interviews at the Sikh Centre in Singapore.<sup>11</sup> I met a very important informant, Satnam Singh, the principal of the Gurmat Sangeet Academy

---

<sup>11</sup> The magazine, published by the Amrit Kirtan Trust, contains articles of insiders' views and knowledge about gurmat sangīt, such as names and background of rāgīs, gurdwaras, activities (such as workshops, competitions and concerts), recordings, and institutions. These names and terms provide directions for fieldwork, discussion topics of interviews, and keywords for the Internet search.

at Central Sikh Gurdwara Board of Singapore. Satnam Singh received his training from both university (Punjabi University Patiala) and religious school (Jawaddi Taksal) before going to Singapore, and he still keeps in close contact with the latest scene of Sikh music development by regular travel, and through the internet and phone conversations. Sharing his learning experience and knowledge of Sikh music development in Punjab, Satnam Singh also informed me about the existence of the Jawaddi Taksal, which eventually became the main research site of my gurmat sangīt studies.

In the summer of 2012, I travelled to Ludhiana and stayed at the Jawaddi Taksal under the recommendation of (Principal) Satnam Singh. I interviewed various participants, including Sikh musicians, teachers and students at the Taksal, and audience members and guest musicians of occasional performances. I joined the annual Gurmat Sangeet Workshop held by the Taksal and observed the learning and performing process there. I also visited the Punjabi University in Patiala, where the only academic department of gurmat sangīt had been established in the late 1990s. I interviewed rāgīs, students and professors of gurmat sangīt institutions, Sikh believers, producers of gurmat sangīt audio-visual items, and publishers of Sikh music publications. I learned to sing śabad kīrtans, participated at the performance, and joined the congregation to observe the śabad kīrtan performance at gurdwaras. All my research activities and fieldwork venues are listed in Appendix 2.

Between my various research trips, I made regular visits to the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, became acquainted with the believers, and observed their activities. I also studied published and ethnographic information obtained from the field,

and searched relevant materials on the Internet. The Internet is an important site for obtaining the latest news and audio-visual information about gurmat sangīt. There are websites operated by both Indian and overseas religious and academic organizations, such as Jawaddi Taksal, the Punjabi University in Patiala, Anad Conservatory, Gurmat Sangeet Academy (Birmingham), and Raj Academy Conservatoire (London). These websites introduce gurmat sangīt to the general public, report the latest developments on the scene, list names of rāgīs and Sikh music organizations, and illustrate live recordings at gurdwaras or other religious ceremonies. As online information is overwhelmingly enormous, identifying the relevant and useful data for the study is necessary, and recommendations by rāgīs and other informants are definitely needed for identification.

### **Main Research Site and Informants**

The main site of my research is the Jawaddi Taksal at the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash (Illustrations 1.1 and 1.2). It is located in the city of Ludhiana in the Indian state of Punjab. Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash was established by (Sant Baba) Sucha Singh in 1985; later, the Jawaddi Taksal was set up within the area in 1992. Nowadays, Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash has become a religious place with various buildings and social functions. Apart from the gurdwara, there are the Gur Sabad Academy (also known as the Gurmat Sangeet Academy), the Guru Hargobind Library, *langar* hall (community kitchen), a parking area, a cowshed, an office, a digital archive, and a hostel. The Jawaddi Taksal can be regarded as a sub-section under the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. Most



Sikhs at the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash are either believers who go to the gurdwara or students who receive training at the Jawaddi Taksal.



Illustration 1.1: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana in 1991.



Illustration 1.2: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana in 2012.

Apart from the common religious activities held at the gurdwara, the Jawaddi Taksal is a Sikh seminary, where students are trained to become *rāgīs*, *granthīs* (priests) and *prachāraks* (preachers). Apart from the full-time students who study, stay, and work in the area, there are non-Taksal students who come to learn singing or Indian instruments at the Gurmat Sangeet Academy regularly. The Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash also publishes books and audio-visual materials regularly (under the Vismaad Naad Publication House), hold music classes, seminars, and workshops, and organize the annual Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan. In the summer of 2013, there were five officers working full-time and living at the Jawaddi Taksal: the head, principal of the gurmat sangeet academy, the publication manager, the warden, and the cook. In addition, there were about 150 students studying at the Jawaddi Taksal, and about 30 Sikhs coming to the area and doing *seva/sevā* (voluntary work) every day.

Most of my major informants are Sikhs, and their names have been included in Appendix 2. The following three informants, all attached to the Jawaddi Taksal, are discussed for their assistance in obtaining field data and building up social connections for further research.

As mentioned in the previous section, Satnam Singh (Illustration 1.3), principal of the gurmat sangeet academy in Singapore, referred me to Jawaddi Taksal, and he also provided me with some general knowledge about gurmat sangīt at the preliminary stage of my field research. Principal Sukhwant Singh (Illustration 1.4), principal of the gurmat sangeet academy at the Taksal, joined the organization in 1995. As the vocal teacher for all students at the Taksal, Principal Sukhwant Singh has been a reputable singer and

respectable teacher in the field of Sikh devotional music performance. Apart from interviews, he invited me to experience his daily teachings and performing duties: in the summer of 2013, I went to various gurdwaras in Punjab to observe his kīrtan performances and classes; for most of the time, I sat with the students and joined the singing. Principal Sukhwant Singh also referred his acquaintances and senior students to me, so that I could know more about the development of the Sikh devotional music tradition outside the Jawaddi Taksal.



Illustration 1.3: Principal Satnam Singh playing the rabāb.



Illustration 1.4: Principal Sukhwant Singh holding a tãnpurã.

(Baba) Sohan Singh (Illustration 1.5), publication manager of the Jawaddi Taksal, joined the organization in 1988. He has been assisting the annual organization of the AGSS since 1991. Although he is not a music specialist, he provided most information related to the AGSS as both an organizer and an audience member. Over 20 years of the event's existence, he has been serving the organizing committee that witnessed the development and influence of this event (while others passed away from old age). In addition, Baba Sohan Singh is responsible for the publication matters of the Jawaddi Taksal, including the CD and DVD release of the annual AGSS, individual vocalists, and instruments (please refer to the Audio-Visual References), printed publication of gurmat sangīt books (please refer to the References in English, and in Punjabi and Hindi), and uploading of audio-visual files on the website. Day by day, he found out some old CDs and DVDs published by the Jawaddi Taksal that were no longer available in the market. At the digital archive, we discussed audio-visual files stored in the server, or any live

recordings in the process of digitization. Baba Sohan Singh also introduced various informants for interviews, such as (Dr.) Jasbir Kaur and (Principal) Paramjot Singh.



Illustration 1.5 Baba Sohan Singh.

### **Special Feature of the Research: Sikh Names**

It is the special nature of Sikh names that makes identification and reference of individuals difficult. Since almost all of my informants were born into a Sikh family, they were given either “Singh (for male, literally means lion)” or “Kaur (for female, literally means princess)” as the surname or middle name in general. The naming practice came from the baptism in the late 17th century, when Gurū Gōbind Singh established the new Khālsā Brotherhood with symbols, a code of discipline, and daily sacred compositions.<sup>12</sup> Sometimes the female Sikhs may adopt “Singh,” which is supposed to be used for male

---

<sup>12</sup> For details please refer to Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:78–81.

Sikhs, as their surname. Regardless of the gender, Sikhs share the same surnames, and non-Sikhs may find difficulties in distinguishing individuals by names.

In daily conversations, Sikhs refer to each other with nicknames given by their parents or derived from their first name. While the former gives various names that help in identifying individuals, the latter confuses the outsider when two or more individuals, sometimes of different sexes, share the same nicknames. For example, the nickname “Aman” is derived from either “Amandeep (Singh)” for male or “Amanpreet (Kaur)” for female, and I had once mixed up two informants from the opposite sex with this same nickname. Besides, similar or even the same first names are adopted by Sikhs of the same or opposite gender. For example, there may be “Partap Singh (male)” and “Partap Kaur (female);” and “Simranjit (Singh)” for male and “Simran (Kaur)” for female. I have even encountered several male Sikhs called “Satnam” in person, on the cassette cover of Sikh music recordings, and in the ragīs’ performing schedule of gurdwaras.

In publications related to the Sikh devotional music studies, Sikhs’ full names appear along with other titles. Adding a title before a Sikh name is a common practice. The prefix may be a plain address to a man or woman, such as “*Sardār* (mister),” “*Baba/Bābā* (a respected old man),” “*Bibi/Bībī* (miss/madam),” “*Bhai/Bhāī* (brother),” and “*Sahib/Sāhib* (sir).” Some titles indicate the profession, work position, or educational level of a Sikh, such as “Principal,” “Professor,” “Dr.,” “*Jathedār* (captain/leader),” and “*Rāgī* (Sikh musician).” Other titles give religious or honorific respect to a Sikh, such as “*Sant* (saint/teacher/spiritual guide)” and “*Giānī* (a person with spiritual knowledge, and

who has achieved unity with God).” Examples of these Sikh names can be found in Appendix 6.

In the middle or at the end of a Sikh name, some other titles are used for distinction. These are “*Jī*” (sign of respect, usually at the end of a Sikh name), “*Khālsā*” (used to refer to a baptized Sikh, at the end of a Sikh name), and “*Hazūrī Rāgī*” (literally meaning a court musician; refers to a Sikh musician serving at a specific gurdwara, at the end of a Sikh name). To specify an individual, some titles tell the villages and regions that the Sikhs come from, the names of companies that they work for, or castes that they belong to. These titles are usually added at the end of a Sikh name, for example, “Mullanpur (a village, from ‘Bhai Sāhib Paramjot Singh Mullanpur’),” “Housing Board of Ludhiana (a company, from ‘Bhai Jagtār Singh, Housing Board, Ludhiana’),” and “Gill (a caste, from ‘Dr. Rañtej Singh Gill’).”

To avoid mixing up different Sikhs with the same surnames, first names, or nicknames, I will use their full names to refer to different individuals in this dissertation. While some Sikhs may be addressed in their full names along with other titles, I put brackets for these other titles for its first appearance, for example, (Principal) Sukhwant Singh or (Baba) Sohan Singh, in the previous section. Meanwhile, the full titles stated in these Sikh devotional music studies need insider’s knowledge to distinguish the full name from other titles mentioned above. There will be further explanation for other titles in the footnote whenever necessary.

## Chapter 2 Music of Sikhism

What is the relationship between music and Sikhism? This chapter adopts both the synchronic and diachronic approaches to give a general overview on music of Sikhism. It illustrates the importance of music in religious, socio-political, and historical aspects of the religion. First, I explain the general concept of music, as derived from sound, underlying the religion and the scriptural organization. Then, I discuss the daily practice of Sikh music, including its terminology, usage and functions, and performance. Finally, I trace the historical development of Sikh music from the time of its religious establishment to present times.

### CONCEPT OF MUSIC AND SOUND IN SIKHISM

As the world's fifth largest religion, Sikhism was founded by Gurū Nānak in the 15th century.<sup>13</sup> The religion was established during a period of religious reform and political confrontation between the Hindus and the Muslims, absorbing influences of Sufism, the Sant Mats and the Bhakti Movement during its formative period. It is based on the teachings of ten Sikh Gurus, the Guru Granth Sahib compiled in 1604, and other holy scriptures.<sup>14</sup> With the migration of Punjabi believers in the pre-/post-colonial

---

<sup>13</sup> The foundation year of Sikhism refers to the birth of Gurū Nānak (1469–1539 C.E.) in 1469.

<sup>14</sup> Gurū, derived from the Sanskrit, generally refers to the “learned man” having great knowledge in certain area, and who uses it guide others (Neuman 1990:43). In the Sikh religion, Guru refers to God or the ten messengers (Gurū Nānak, Gurū Angad, Gurū Amardās, Gurū Rāmdās, Gurū Arjun, Gurū Hargobind, Gurū Har Rai, Gurū Har Krishan, Gurū Tegh Bahadur, and Gurū Gobind Singh) who had established and



period, Sikhism spread to countries and regions outside of India; currently, the major populations of Sikh immigrants reside in Canada, Britain, and the United States. Today, there are around 27 million Sikhs in the world, and more than 70% of Sikhs reside in the Indian State of Punjab. In terms of religion and ethnicity, Sikhs are regarded as a minority: the figure makes up only 0.39% and 1.9% of the world and Indian population, respectively.

The Sikh Gurus regarded musical sound as the easiest and the most effective way of spiritual attainment.<sup>15</sup> Music is the means to evoke the “correct feeling or emotion,” so that “man loses his identity and gets in tune with God (Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:93).” Singing and listening to *śabad kīrtan* is an ideal way to stabilize the mind and unite with God.<sup>16</sup> It is different from secular, festive, or erotic music in terms of its religious goal. The association between music and religion is seen in aspects of the Gurūs’ lives and is mentioned in the *gurbāṇis*. For instance, in the earliest history of Sikhism, Gurū Nānak spread the message of the Divine by singing. Later, musicians known as *rabābīs* (those who play *rabābs*, a plucked-lute instrument) accompanied different Gurus’ singing. One such *rabābī*, (Bhai) Mardānā, accompanied Gurū Nānak’s singing, and (Bhai) Balvand/Balwand accompanied Gurū Arjun’s singing.<sup>17</sup>

---

developed the religion, as well as the Guru Granth Sahib (Cole 2004, Inderjit N. Kaur 2011b, and McLeod 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Some authors highlight the importance of chanting to enhance meditation and spiritual attainment, such as Khalsa 2010, and Pashaura Singh 2006.

<sup>16</sup> For Sikh believers, God is the corporate body of the Sikh Gurūs. *Gurbāṇis*, as stated in the Sikh scriptures, includes truths and moral values that can be of great help in one’s spiritual progress. The religious practice of Sikhism aims at ethical living and spiritual uplift (Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:11–12).

<sup>17</sup> According to an interview with Satnam Singh in May 2011, *rabābīs* were a group of Muslim musicians featuring the *rabāb* playing, while some of them actually played instruments rather than *rabāb*. According

Music performance in the setting of the gurdwara and other religious activities is based on śabad kīrtan singing with instrumental accompaniment.<sup>18</sup> The singing text contains gurbāṇis of various Sikh scriptures, including the *Adi Granth/Ādi Granth*, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and the *Dasam Granth*.<sup>19</sup> It can be either recited or sung, and instrumental accompaniment is optional. Sometimes, śabad kīrtan singing is accompanied by a *kathā* (sermon preaching), in which music and contemplation alternate and reinforce each other to enhance spiritual transformation. Gurbāṇis and their meanings are the most important elements in the śabad kīrtan performance, as it is the singing to “the glory of God with words, mind and actions (Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:93).” Instead of melodic refinement and ornamentation, proper recitation, meditation, and congregational participation are the main concerns.<sup>20</sup>

In the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the most important Sikh scripture, numerous gurbāṇis illustrate the relationship between music/sound and union with God. One of the many examples describing the act of singing to God by different sonic elements of the world (selections from the *Guru Granth Sahib*, 8–9):<sup>21</sup>

“*vāje nād anek asankhā kete vāvaṅhāre...* (The sound-current of the *nād* (i.e. the cosmic sound) vibrates there for You (i.e. God), and countless musicians play all sorts of instruments there for You...);”

---

to Arora 2000 and Gurnam Singh 2008, the *rabābīs* contained a particular style of singing and perfection of gurbāṇi recitation. The *rabābī* tradition is extinct today, due to Muslim musicians fleeing to Pakistan at the time of Partition (Gill 2010, and Mansukhani 1982).

<sup>18</sup> Religious activities include ceremonies like naming of the newly born, baptism, marriage and death, and annual festivals like birthdays of Gurū Nānak and Gurū Gobind Singh, Baisākhī, Dīwālī, and anniversary of Gurū Arjun’s and Gurū Tegh Bahadur’s martyrdom. Details of these activities are listed in Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee 1994, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:135–51, 171–75.

<sup>19</sup> For details of the *Guru Granth Sahib* the *Dasam Granth*, please refer to the next section.

<sup>20</sup> Balbinder Singh Bhogal 2011, Middlebrook 2000:655, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:93.

<sup>21</sup> The gurbāṇis were written by Gurū Nānak as sunset liturgy in *āsā rāga*.

“*kete tere rāg parī siū kahāhi kete tere gāvaṅhāre...* (There are so many rāgas and musical harmonies to You; so many minstrels sing hymns of You...)”; and

“*gāvahi tuhno pauṅ pāṅī baisantar gāvai rājā dharam duāre...* (Wind, water and fire sing of You; The Righteous Judge of Dharma sings at Your Door...)”

Here is another gurbāṅī excerpt describing the close relationship of “song (i.e. kīrtan),” meditation, and spiritual attainment (selections from the Guru Granth Sahib, 335):<sup>22</sup>

“*log jānai ih gīt hai ih taū braham bīchār...* (People believe that this is just a song, but it is a meditation on God...)”

All these gurbāṅīs illustrate four fundamental aspects of Sikh sacred music proposed by exponents of Sikh musicology: *rāga*, *tāla*, *śabad* (sections or paragraphs in the religious text), and *surat* (concentrated intent of consciousness) (Balbinder Singh Bhogal 2011, Baldeep Singh 2011). In kīrtan singing, *rāga* and *tāla* are the musical components (as shown in words meaning “song,” “sound,” “musical harmonies,” and the action of “sing(ing),” in the Guru Granth Sahib), *śabad* is the text, and *surat* is behavior or outcome in association with God. Derived from the concept of *Nād-Brāhman* in Hinduism, physical vibrations of musical sound/*āhata* (struck melody) are connected with the spiritual world of *anahad* (unstruck melody), as stated in śabads by Sikh Gurus (in bold):

“*sabh **nād** bed gurbāṅīs...* (gurbāṅīs is the sound current of the nād, the vedas, everything...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 879); and

---

<sup>22</sup> The gurbāṅīs were written by Kabīr in gauṛī pūrbī rāga.

“*anahad bānī gurmukh vakhānī jas suṅ suṅ man tan hariā...* (The Gurmukh chants the speechless-speech; hearing it, listening to it, my mind and body are rejuvenated...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 781).<sup>23</sup>

## **MUSIC AND THE SIKH SCRIPTURES: THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB AND THE DASAM GRANTH**

While the Sikh scriptures illustrate the relationship between music/sound and union with God as shown in numerous gurbāṅis, they also give hints of performing guides for some śabads. The two important Sikh scriptures, the Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth, contain poetic compositions with information of rāgas. In this way, gurbāṅis illustrate the harmonious blending of words, poetry, and melody. Singing of these gurbāṅis, also known as śabad kīrtan, is a common performing scene in the setting of gurdwara and other religious activities.

The major source of śabad kīrtan comes from the Guru Granth Sahib, initially titled as the Adi Granth and compiled by Gurū Arjun/Arjan in 1604. Gurū Gobind Singh (the 10th Guru) added Gurū Tegh Bahadur’s text in the Adi Granth and named it the Guru Granth Sahib in 1704. The Holy Scripture was declared by the Gurū Gobind Singh as the permanent Guru that is to be revered as the body and spirit of the ten Sikh Gurus (including himself). It is regarded as the Word of God, being placed in every gurdwara of the world. Contributors of the Guru Granth Sahib include the first nine Sikh Gurus, Hindu Saints, Muslim Sufis, and other holy persons of various castes, who wrote śabads

---

<sup>23</sup> The first gurbāṅis were written by Gurū Nānak in rāmkālī rāga, whereas the second gurbāṅis were written by Gurū Arjun in sūhī rāga.

in poetic format.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, it was Gurū Arjun who compiled these śabads and arranged them into the order of rāgas.

The standard edition of the Guru Granth Sahib, finalized by the S.G.P.C./Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee in the early 20th century, has 1430 pages. The middle section (14–1042) contains śabad kīrtans in a categorization of 31 main rāgas and 31 mixed rāgas.<sup>25</sup> The list of 31 main rāgas and their corresponding page numbers of the Guru Granth Sahib are listed in Table 2.1 and that of 31 mixed rāgas and derivation of the main rāgas are listed in Table 2.2. The mixed rāgas marked with an asterisk (\*) are unique to the Sikh tradition. The selected rāgas reflect the common performing practice by contributors of the Guru Granth Sahib, thus giving direction to Sikh musicians on music performance.<sup>26</sup> Similar to rāga, hint of tāla or *svār* (tone) has also been stated before each śabad the Guru Granth Sahib. The caption is shown with the word *ghar* (home) followed by a number from 1 to 17. Moreover, tāla or *svār* are just possible meanings suggested by various Sikh scholars. *Ghar* is no longer practiced in present day performances of śabad kīrtans, and its exact meaning is still under debate.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> For the list of contributors and their contributions, please refer to Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:24–29.

<sup>25</sup> For its textual structure, the Guru Granth Sahib can be divided into three sections: the introductory section (1–13), the middle section (14–1342), and the epilogue (1352–1430). The introductory section contains routine prayers that Sikhs should recite every day, and the epilogue includes miscellaneous works that were not composed in rāgas, and a two-page section titled “rāgmālā.”

<sup>26</sup> For detailed analysis of the Guru Granth Sahib, please refer to Doel 2008, Gurnam Singh 2008, Jaswant Singh 2008, Protopapas 2011b, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008.

<sup>27</sup> For further discussion on the possible meanings of *ghar*, please refer to Amardeep Singh 2004, Dogra and Dogra 2003:147–48, and Inderjit N. Kaur 2008.

<b>Order</b>	<b>Main Rāga</b>	<b>Page Number in the Guru Granth Sahib</b>
1st	Sirī Rāg	14
2nd	Mājh	94
3rd	Gaurī	151
4th	Āsā	347
5th	Gūjarī	489
6th	Devchandhārī	527
7th	Bihāgaṛā	537
8th	Vadhans	557
9th	Soraṭh	595
10th	Dhanāsarī	660
11th	Jaitsrī	696
12th	Fōḍī	711
13th	Bairāri	719
14th	Tilang	721
15th	Sūhī	728
16th	Bilāval	795
17th	Gōṇḍ	859
18th	Rāmkalī	876
19th	Naṭ Nārāiṇ	977
20th	Mālī Gauṛā	984
21st	Mārū	989
22nd	Tūkhārī	1107
23rd	Kedārā	1118
24th	Bhairo	1125
25th	Basant	1168
26th	Sārang	1197
27th	Malhār	1254
28th	Kānaṛa	1294
29th	Kaliāṇ	1319
30th	Prabhātī	1327
31st	Jaijāvanti	1352

Table 2.1: Main Rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib.

<b>Mixed Rāga</b>	<b>Derivation from the Main Rāga</b>	
Gauṛī Dakḥṇī	Mālī Gauṛā	
Gauṛī Bairāgaṇ *		
Gauṛī Mālvā *		
Gauṛī Guārerī *		
Gauṛī Chetī		
Gauṛī Dīpakī *		
Gauṛī Pūrbī		
Gauṛī Mājḥ *		
Gauṛī Mālā *		
Gauṛī Sorath *		
Gauṛī Pūrbī Dīpakī *		
Āsā Kāphī *		Āsā
Āsāvarī		
Āsāvarī Sudhang		
Devghandhār	Devghandhārī	
Vaḍhans Dakḥṇī	Vaḍhans	
Tilang Kāphī *	Tilang	
Sūhī Kāphī *	Sūhī	
Sūhī Lalit *		
Bilāval Mangal	Bilāval	
Bilāval Gōṇḍ *		
Bilāval Dakḥṇī		
Rāmkaḷī Dakḥṇī	Rāmkaḷī	
Naṭ	Naṭ Nārāiṇ	
Mārū Dakḥṇī	Mārū	
Mārū Kāphī *		
Basant Hindol *	Basant	
Kaliāṇ Bhupālī	Kaliāṇ	
Prabhātī Bibhās *	Prabhātī	
Bibhās Prabhātī		
Prabhātī Dakḥṇī		

Table 2.2: Mixed Rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib.

The Dasam Granth is considered to be next in importance to the Guru Granth Sahib. It contains poetic compositions written by Gurū Gobind Singh in 1684–1706.<sup>28</sup> Unlike the Guru Granth Sahib, compositions of the Dasam Granth are not organized in rāgas. Although an authorized version of the Dasam Granth has not reached to a general agreement, the popular version by Munshi Gulab Singh in 1913 has 1428 pages with 15 chapters, and each chapter titled according to its own content. The content of the Dasam Granth can be classified into four categories: autobiography, devotional compositions, miscellaneous works, and legendary narratives.<sup>29</sup> The section of “Śabad” contains ten śabads with indication of rāgas, as listed in Appendix 3.

#### **TERMINOLOGY OF SIKH MUSIC AND MUSICIANS**

Throughout the history of Sikhism, various terms of Sikh devotional music and musicians have been adopted and described in Sikh scriptures, gurdwaras, classes of Sikh music, and daily experiences and conversations of the Sikhs. While Sikh devotional music is commonly referred to as śabad kīrtan, gurbāṇi kīrtan, and gurmat sangīt, Sikh musicians are generally referred to as rabābī, kīrtankār, rāgī, and dhāḍī. I list these different terms with explanations and their general usage in the following paragraphs.

---

<sup>28</sup> The authorship of the Dasam Granth is still under discussion: instead of just Gurū Gobind Singh, some scholars think compositions in the Dasam Granth had been contributed by Gurū Gobind Singh and other court poets (Kapoor 2003:4; McLeod 1976:80–81).

<sup>29</sup> For detailed analysis of the Dasam Granth, please refer to Kapoor 2008, McLeod 1976, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008.



## **Sikh Devotional Music: Śabad Kīrtan, Gurbāṇi Kīrtan, and Gurmat Sangīt**

Śabad kīrtan and gurbāṇi kīrtan, both imply the devotional singing in Sikh tradition, are the terms most commonly used in Sikh religious activities and publications nowadays. Śabad and gurbāṇi share similar meanings: both refer to the word of God revealed to those whose compositions are contained in the Sikh scriptures.<sup>30</sup> While the latter refers to God’s word in a general sense, the former denotes a section or a composition by different contributors in the Sikh scriptures.

Both terms share “kīrtan,” a word derived from a Sanskrit root “*kīrti* (Pashaura Singh 2006:141–42).” In North India, groups of non-specialist males sing repetitious hymns with accompaniment from a *dholak* (a double-headed drum), cymbals or hand-clapping, and harmonium. This is generally known as kīrtan, “a participatory type of devotional singing that is derivative in style and eclectic in nature (Slawek 1988:77).” This singing style is regarded as “the prominent medium for musico-religious expression in popular Hinduism (ibid.),” and the singing texts mainly express devotion to the Hindu deities of different regions. The same word “kīrtan” applied in Sikh devotional music shows the connection with Hinduism and its devotional singing style.

Kīrtan is also known as *kīrtana* in South India, referring to the Hindu religious singing in association with the Bhakti movement. Kīrtana is a song form composed of a refrain and verses and chanted in a collective manner. The Bhakti movement rejects the strict hierarchical social order imposed by the Brahmanic orthodoxy, advocates for an

---

<sup>30</sup> Even though some compositions are not contributed by the Sikh Gurus, they are regarded as the word of God as being included in the Sikh scriptures.

egalitarian attitude among different castes, and promotes for vernacular languages in religious observances. In support of the movement, both Muslims and Hindus expressed their spiritual ideas and feelings through music and dance. As Sikhism was established around the golden period of the Bhakti movement (i.e. the 15th century), elements of refrain-verse chanting, collective singing in vernacular languages, and spiritual ideas of Hinduism and Islam, can be observed in the Sikh devotional music (Jackson 2000, Qureshi et al. 2013, Slawek 1988).

Gurmat sangīt, usually written as “gurmat sangeet” in the Indian context, literally means “music as per Guru’s viewpoint.” Since the revitalization movement of Sikh devotional music in the 1990s, the term has denoted the rāga-based singing with accompaniment of stringed instruments. It is also associated with the practitioner’s intention to develop a Sikh musicology and its institutionalization, and transform the devotional music tradition into an academic scholarship equivalent to that of Indian classical music or other western music genres. There is no mention of “gurmat sangīt” in the Sikh scriptures; however, “*sangīt*” in the meaning of music occurs twice in the Guru Granth Sahib:<sup>31</sup>

“*bahu bhojan kāpar sangīt rasnā japgī har har nīt...* (abundant food, clothes and music come to one whose tongue continually chants the Lord’s Name...) (Guru Granth Sahib, 290)”; and

“*anik dhunit lalit sangīt...* (many exquisite melodies sing of the Lord...) (Guru Granth Sahib, 1236).”

---

<sup>31</sup> The first gurbāṇīs were in the poetic form of asṭapadī, whereas the second gurbāṇīs were written by Gurū Arjun in sārang rāga.

Agreeing to Inderjit N. Kaur's comment, the word *sangīt* is only "used to imply music in general and not specifically singing (2011b:272)." Although "*sangīt*" and "*kīrtan*" both contain the meaning of religious music, the former term implies music in general but not specifically singing in the Sikh scriptures. According to Inderjit N. Kaur, "*kīrtan*" is mentioned 109 times in the *Guru Granth Sahib*; its benefits, such as bringing peace and liberation, cleansing the mind, illuminating the soul, and realizing the Divine, are stated in various compositions (*ibid.*). McLeod, for his studies of *Janamsākhī*, the narratives of Gurū Nānak's life as the prophet-mentor of the Sikh religion by different authors, pointed out that "the singing of *kīrtan* within the regular *satsang* (congregation) was accepted as normative by the *Janamsākhī* narrators and one of their purposes was to encourage the practice (1980:241)." It showed Gurū Nānak's intention to compose works for singing: combining individual devotion with participation of communal activity like *kīrtan* singing, one may be led to the path of salvation.

According to Karu 2011b, it was not until 1902 that the term "*gurmat sangīt*" first appeared in the essay "*Gurmat Sangīt Nirne*" of *Srī Gurū Granth Bānī Biurā* by Charan Singh in the context of musicology and education (273). The article emphasizes the need to establish an academic study of Sikh music and follow musical guidelines in the Sikh scriptures properly. There has been an increasing usage of the term after the first AGSS in 1991, the annual performance that aims for the revival of devotional music performance in the Sikh Gurus' tradition. The term stays in the context of public education, and frequently appears as a title of Sikh music publications, such as books on notations, discographies, websites, and magazine articles. It also retains the musicological

context where different academic organizations and events have been recently established, such as the Department of Gurmat Sangeet, Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Gurmat Sangeet Workshop, and The Gurmat Sangeet Award.

The usage of “gurmat sangīt” has been popularized for its association with the Sikh music revival, the phenomenon that mainly proposes for the “proper” Sikh music interpretation with rāga-based śabad kīrtans and heritage stringed instruments. While gurbāṇī contains the core message of Sikhism and should be of supreme religious importance, the concept of gurmat sangīt contradicts with its music-dominant rather than śabad-dominant nature.<sup>32</sup>

### **Sikh Musicians: Rabābī, Kīrtankār, Rāgī, and Ḍhādī**

Rabābīs were originally Muslim mīrāsīs (in other words, professional singers) who earned their livelihood by singing devotional songs during the time of Gurū Nānak. Gurū Nānak started the rabābī tradition by engaging Bhai Mardānā, a rabābī, as his accompanist (Illustration 2.1). Singing to the accompaniment of the rabāb, rabābīs used to perform kīrtans regularly during the Sikh Gurū period as professional musicians. With a number of references describing the disappearance of rabābīs due to their fleeing to Pakistan after the 1947 Partition (Doel 2008, Mansukhani 1982, and Protopapas 2011,

---

<sup>32</sup> Kaur criticizes for the current practice of “gurmat sangīt” lacking the śabad-attuned consciousness and the religious essence. Nevertheless, based on my research, gurmat sangīt is regarded as one of the core religious practices in both local and overseas Sikh communities nowadays. Kaur also referred “gurmat sangīt” as rāga-based śabad kīrtan, implying for another genres of śabad kīrtan that may be folk-based or even pop-based (2011b:271–76).

etc.), Ibbetson's record of 109 rabābīs at Lahore in 1916 proves a small population of the musicians since the colonial period (2008).<sup>33</sup>



Illustration 2.1: Portrayal of Gurū Nānak and Bhai Mardānā.

Purewal's article (2011) analyzed three periods of marginalization of the rabābī tradition, and they are: (1) Gurū Arjun's effort to popularize kīrtan in the 16th century; (2) the enactment of *The Sikh Reht Maryada* from the early to the mid-20th century; and (3) the 1947 Partition. The first period is when Gurū Arjun developed the congregation-based kīrtan learning and performance, so that this new historical lineage could share the role of Sikh devotional singing with rabābī musicians who used to be given special patronage by the previous Gurūs. The second period belongs to the disciplining of the performance of kīrtan towards a systematized form through the development of *The Sikh*

---

<sup>33</sup> Denzil Ibbetson's publication titled *Punjab Caste* was published by the Low Price Publications (New Delhi) in 2008 (first edition in 1916). However, I was not able to locate the book.

*Reht Maryada*, where modernizing systems were emphasized as going against the hereditary form of the rabābī tradition. The last period is similar to what has been mentioned in the last paragraph, when rabābī musicians lost their chance to sing at the gurdwaras because of their Muslim identity.

Today, the rabābī lineage has disappeared in the performance of Sikh devotional music. Even though there is rabāb playing along with kīrtan singing nowadays, the Sikh musician is not a rabābī owing to his non-relations with the Muslim rabābī tradition. Moreover, a recent research reveals that the rabābī tradition still survives in a family living in Lahore, Pakistan: (Bhai) Ghulam Muhammed Chand, together with his brothers (Bhai) Sham and (Bhai) Bakshi (Purewal 2011). Despite giving up kīrtan singing after moving to Lahore in the post-Partition period, Bhai Ghulam Muhammed Chand was re-introduced to Sikh devotional singing since the 2000s, and some of his recent music activities include presentation of the Bhai Mardana Award at the Punjabi University Patiala in 2005, and his U.K. tour in 2011.<sup>34</sup> A brief biography of Bhai Ghulam Muhammed Chand is included under the section of “Sikh Musicians Active before and at the Time of the Partition” in Chapter 5.

Kīrtankār/*Kīrtanīya* generally refers to the common Sikhs who sing kīrtans. The kīrtanīya tradition started at the time of Gurū Arjun to avoid the sole dependence of professional rabābīs.<sup>35</sup> In the late 1500s, Gurū Arjun directed the Sikh congregation to

---

<sup>34</sup> In November 2011, Bhai Ghulam Muhammed Chand had performed at various gurdwaras and religious centers in the U.K., such as the Ramgarhia Gurdwara and Nishkam Centre at Birmingham, and Central Gurdwara at Manchester (Jagjit Klar et al. 2011).

<sup>35</sup> One incident that led to the development of the kīrtanīya tradition is when Bhai Sattā and Balwand requested more remuneration for their talent, skill, and popular demand for performing kīrtans, Gurū Arjun

learn and sing kīrtans themselves, so as to produce another historical lineage being passed down through family lines and from teachers to students. The practice of devotional singing by amateur musicians soon developed into the professional rāgī tradition, but it also became popular for raising “a Sikh identity consciousness” and by featuring “group singing and chanting of hymns” from the Sikh scriptures in the late 1980s and 1990s. The kīrtanīya performance is still a common practice nowadays: amateur musicians lead the congregational singing with the accompaniment of a harmonium and *tablā* at gurdwaras. The kīrtanīya may sing kīrtans in any performing styles, such as *lok gīt* (folk song), ghazal, and bhajan (Kaur 2011b:258).

Rāgī literally means a person (mostly a male) singing kīrtans in rāgas (as prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib). The professional rāgī tradition, originally developed from the kīrtanīyas from the Sikh Gurus’ period, received the patronage of maharajas and leaders during the 19th century. Rāgīs always perform in a group ensemble known as rāgī jathā, and it is the typical kīrtan setting at gurdwaras nowadays. The contemporary standard rāgī jathā consists of three male musicians: the lead and support vocalists who also play harmoniums as accompaniment, and a *tablā* player. The rāgī jathā is usually addressed with the lead vocalist’s name, adding the prefix “Bhai,” for example, (Bhai) Harjinder Singh (lead vocalist) started his kīrtan career in Sri Nagar and

---

dismissed the two brothers and arranged the common believers to learn kīrtans themselves (Purewal 2011:374). This popular lore has been mentioned in many books and articles, such as Dogra and Dogra 2003, Gurnam Singh 2008, and Purewal 2011.

formed a rāgī jathā with his younger brother (Bhai) Maninder Singh (support vocalist) and (Bhai) Jatinder Pal Singh (tablā player).<sup>36</sup>

Different from the amateur kīrtanīyas who perform kīrtans in any styles, professional rāgīs are formally trained by music institutions or master musicians, and they are employed to sing rāga-based kīrtans in gurdwaras or homes, and for regular worship services, special festivals, or celebrations. A rāgī stationed at and employed by the gurdwara is known as the hāzurī rāgī. They receive payment, accommodation, and hospitality from gurdwaras or individuals who request their services. At gurdwaras, the rāgī jathā usually sits next to the Guru Granth Sahib and faces the congregation (Illustration 2.2). It leads the congregation to sing śabad kīrtans, performed at daily chaṁkīs or other religious ceremonies. For most Indian gurdwaras, there is at least one group of rāgī jathā stationed there that sings kīrtans regularly, everyday. At gurdwaras where rāgīs are not available, such as newly established gurdwaras or in areas overseas with very few believers, kīrtan sessions are usually conducted by amateur kīrtanīyas with occasional employment of a rāgī jathā for important religious events.

---

<sup>36</sup> Traditionally, only male musicians can become rāgīs; however, a few female rāgī jathās have emerged in the recent years. Female rāgīs have the title of “bibi,” and mixed gender rāgī jathās are rarely seen.





Illustration 2.2: Rāgī Jathā performing at the Hemkunt Sahib (from left to right: two vocalists playing harmoniums and a tablā player); all facing the congregation, with the Guru Granth Sahib on the left hand side.

*Dhāḍī* literally means a person (mostly a male) performing with the *dhaḍ* (an hourglass-shaped drum).<sup>37</sup> Its origin can be traced to the non-Sikh context in the pre-colonial period. The term *dhāḍī* appears frequently in various poetic and Hindu devotional texts, and *dhāḍīs* are referred to as singers in the Dhola-Maru folklore of the 15th century. Sufi vernacular poetry and patronage linkages are also found (Nijhawan 2006:27–33). The *dhāḍī* tradition in association with Sikhism arose in the time of Gurū Hargobind, and became popular during the time when the Sikh army fought against the Afghans (1747–1769). *Dhāḍīs* played a significant role in the dissemination of political

<sup>37</sup> *Dhaḍ*, an hourglass-shaped drum, is held by one hand and played with another hand's fingers. Pitch variation and duration can be made by cotton strings tied towards the drum skin of two sides.

information: they were mobile, performed at villages and market town fairs, and raised the awareness of Sikh political history and culture to those with little schooling.

Dhādīs sing from the Sikh scriptures, but they also use folk tunes and compose songs, and sing about the heroic deeds of old warriors. Their performance usually lasts anywhere between half an hour to several hours. Oratory by Sikh dhādī performers often moves between historical and moral-religious discourse. Contrary to rāgīs’ harmonious and sophisticated singing, the performing style of the dhādīs is unconstrained, bold, or even rugged for its specific content. The content of heroism and martyrdom in dhādīs mainly deals with eulogizing heroes, their brave acts, and the battles they have waged. While belittling misfortune and torture in the songs, individual martyrdom is honored with optimism and rejoiced in resistance. These songs are related to martial tradition, customary law, and the spirit of martyrdom in Sikhism and traditional Punjabi culture (Nijhawan 2006:204–06, Pettigrew 1992:86–96).

In the 21st century, dhādī jathā has been employed occasionally to sing for events commemorating the heroic deeds of old warriors along the Sikh history. The contemporary standard dhādī jathā consists of four male members, including one orator and three chorus singers (Illustration 2.3). The three chorus singers play the two dhad drums and one folk sarangi simultaneously, respectively.<sup>38</sup> A typical dhādīs’ performance begins with the invocation of spiritual authority, which is followed by the respectful greeting of the present audience for allusion to divine voices. When the dhad

---

<sup>38</sup> The folk sarangi of dhādī tradition is smaller and lighter than the classical sarangi, and it is played in a standing posture.

drums produce the tāla, the sarangi resonates with the voice of the singers. All performers stand in front of the believers. Around the themes of death, dying and sacrifice, ḍhāḍīs’ inspirational message is delivered through three forms: *vār* (ballad), lok gīt and other folk tunes. The musical characteristics consist of oral epic recitation, poetical-musical patterns in vibratos or ornamentations, and dialogue singing between the orator and the chorus singers. The expressive form of the ḍhāḍī genre is based on the mediation between speaker and listeners’ agency at particular contexts of performance. Evaluation of a ḍhāḍī performance is based on narrative elaboration, plot-structure, persuasiveness, emotive qualities, and voice production (Nijhawan 2006:226–31, Pettigrew 1992).



Illustration 2.3 Ḍhāḍī jathā was invited to perform at the 1999 AGSS (from left to right: ḍhāḍ player, sarangi player, ḍhāḍ player, and orator).

## CONTEXT OF SIKH MUSIC AND PERFORMING STYLES

For Sikh religious music practiced under different occasions of Sikh gatherings, this section introduces these occasions and functions, and their leading singers and performing styles. The most prominent performing context is the gurdwara; moreover, Sikh homes, special ceremonies, and educational institutions can be associated with kīrtan singing occasionally. Kīrtan singing under different contexts is generally categorized as professional and amateur music practices.

### Professional Sikh Music Practice

The professional Sikh music practice of a professional rāgī jathā is commonly observed as a daily activity of the gurdwaras. The daily routine of kīrtan singing involves two to eight chauṅkīs, where a day is divided into different time periods with selected gurbāṇi performance as regular service. The number of chauṅkīs varies with gurdwaras and days of the week. Major gurdwaras usually have a higher number of chauṅkīs. For example, five chauṅkīs are observed at the Golden Temple, one of the most prominent gurdwaras in Amritsar. The singing of “*Āsā Dī Vār* (A Ballad of Hope)” belongs to the first early morning chauṅkī of all gurdwaras. The chauṅkī usually lasts for two to three hours with this composition by Gurū Nānak on pages 462–475 of the Guru Granth Sahib. The music is set to the āsā rāga and the śabad emphasizes the importance of sincere praying and the spiritual path to the ultimate union with God. Other chauṅkīs include kīrtan sessions before noon, in the afternoon, at sunset and at night.<sup>39</sup> Apart from the

---

<sup>39</sup> Pashaura Singh 2006:150, Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:119–23.

daily routine, occasional activities like *gurpurbs* (commemoration of days related to Sikhism) and the anniversary of gurdwaras' establishment also involve *śabad* performance known as *kīrtan darbār* (court of the kīrtan). Depending on the context and the nature of the event, kīrtan darbār may involve professional and/or amateur musicians' participation.

Professional Sikh music practice also takes place for important events outside gurdwaras, such as birth, baptism, marriage, and death. Kīrtan singing by *rāgī jathā* is usually requested by the Sikh family members to seek the blessing of God and to revive the spirit of devotion and service. In the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib, these religious ceremonies involve not only kīrtan singing but also *ardās* (prayers) and distribution of *praśād* (sweets as Guru's blessing). Similar to the *chauñkīs*, different *śabad kīrtans* are assigned for the ceremonies. For example, in the *ānand kāraj* (Sikh wedding ceremony), four verses of *lāvāñ* (Guru Granth Sahib, 773–74) are chanted with the couple circling around the holy book four times. For the marriage union with singing and circling, it also symbolizes the successive stages of the soul's journey to divine union.<sup>40</sup>

Nowadays, most *rāgīs* who lead the above kīrtan sessions have obtained practical training of music at local universities or *taksāls* (Sikh institutions of learning). Music departments of local universities offer performance-based courses of Indian classical music, so that *rāgīs* can apply the general knowledge of *rāgas* to Sikh devotional singing.

---

<sup>40</sup> For details of *ānand kāraj*, please refer to Inderjit N. Kaur 2011b:257, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:144–50.

University departments and taksāls offering professional Sikh music programs include the Department of Gurmat Sangeet at Punjabi University Patiala, Jawaddi Taksal in Ludhiana, Damdami Taksal in Amritsar, Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar (S.G.P.C.), and Gurbani Sangeet Academy, Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.<sup>41</sup>

### **Amateur Sikh Music Practice**

Amateur musicians learn kīrtans either from their gurdwaras experience, kīrtan recordings, or kīrtan classes organized by gurdwaras. Their music practice emphasizes the participation between leading singers and other participants, and the musical choice and performing style is more flexible than that of the rāgī. At gurdwaras where professional rāgīs are not available, common believers may take turns to hold the singing sessions. Sometimes they may lead the kīrtan singing with familiar tunes of folk songs and/or popular music, or sing the *rahāo* (pause) verses repeatedly, so that the congregation can join the kīrtan singing.<sup>42</sup>

*Istrī satsang* (woman’s congregation) and *nagar kīrtan* (religious procession) are two performing forms commonly practiced by amateur musicians or common believers at irregular times. Both are ceremonial performances organized by gurdwaras and characterized by music activities. The former, *istrī satsang*, refers to the women’s kīrtan singing with instrumental accompaniment of harmonium, *chīmṭā* (an idiophone in rings

---

<sup>41</sup> For more names, please refer to Gurnam Singh 2001:23, and Protopapas 2011b:84–85.

<sup>42</sup> The word “rahāo” appears in most śabads of the Guru Granth Sahib, to indicate the central theme of a composition. Rahāo denotes the refrain of a śabad, and it is always repeated while singing. For details of rahāo, please refer to Amardeep Singh 2011.

of cymbals), and *ḍholkī* (a small, double-headed barrel drum); in a call-and-response manner, participants may take turns to lead the singing. The latter, *nagar kīrtan*, refers to large Sikh groups walking in procession around the gurdwara complex or neighborhood streets. While common believers usually carry the Guru Granth Sahib along, they take turns to lead the singing with percussion instruments (e.g. *chimṭā* and *ḍholkī*).

### **Performing Styles**

The most common performing style of *kīrtan* singing at gurdwaras usually involves elements of *lok gīt*, *ghazal*, and *bhajan*, featuring simple melodies and rhythms for the congregation to sing along. Along with the rhythmic accompaniment by the *tablā*, the leading *kīrtanīya* intersperses singing with complementary melodic materials played on the harmonium, repeats the *rahāo* verses, and develops the mood. In terms of *śabad* presentation, the leading *kīrtanīya* may intersperse verses from related *śabads* to elaborate on the main theme (known as *parmāṇ*-style *kīrtan*), or pause the singing to explain the *śabad* being sung and present a short discourse (known as *viakhiā*-style *kīrtan*) (Inderjit N. Kaur 2011b:258).

For the Sikh revival since the 1990s, performance of *gurmat sangīt* has become popular at gurdwaras and Sikh music institutions. The musical characteristics include *kīrtan* singing in *rāgas* prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib, the use of historical stringed instruments along with the harmonium and *tablā*, and singing in the contemporary *khyāl* style of Hindustani music and folk singing styles. Examples of *kīrtan* singing in the

contemporary khyāl style of Hindustani music involve śabads of *pada* (poem) and partāl, whereas those in folk style involve śabads of vār, *dhūnī*, *chhant*, *ghōṛīān*, *alāuhñīā* etc. (Gurnam Singh 2008:16–18). While a lot of publications of Sikh devotional music provide examples of śabad performance in musical notations and introduce rāgas prescribed in different śabads, they also contain instructions for lines of gurbāñīs marked with rahāo and *ank* (digit) to be sung as *sthāyī* and *antarā* of khyāl style, respectively. A few kīrtanīyas, such as the late (Bhai) Avtar Singh (1925–2006), (Bhai) Gurcharan Singh, and Bhai Baldeep Singh, have been known for their dhrupad performance of gurmat sangīt, the singing style developed in the medieval period (1200–1800 A.D.). Therefore, many practitioners and scholars highlighted the uniqueness of the gurmat sangīt tradition as a combination of three categories of Indian music: folk, devotional, and classical (examples include Cassio 2011, Gurnam Singh 2008, and Sukhwant Singh ed. 2008). Despite the fact that the gurmat sangīt tradition has been greatly addressed and promoted these years, it has not developed as the most common performing style of kīrtan singing at gurdwaras nowadays.

## **SIKH MUSIC FROM THE TIME OF GURŪ NANAK TO THE PRESENT**

Since the time of becoming a part of the religious establishment, Sikh music has undergone various stages of development. From another point of view, the recent practice of Sikh music has been shaped by various efforts along the religious history. These efforts involve not only the performance of Sikh Gurus, but also the participation of



common Sikh believers and re-interpretation of performance by kīrtanīyas. Meanwhile, the social and political history of India has also engaged a role in shaping the Sikh music performance. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the development of Sikh music performance under three time stages, namely Sikh Gurus' Times, Post-Gurus' Times and the Partition Period, and the 1990s.

### **Sikh Gurus' Times: Compilation of Śabad Compositions and Consolidation of Sikh Devotional Music Performance**

This is the period from the birth of the first Guru, Gurū Nānak (1469), to the death of Gurū Gobind Singh (1708), when ten Gurus established the Sikh tradition and philosophy in succession. Sikh Gurus, especially Gurū Nānak, Gurū Arjun, and Gurū Gobind Singh, also contributed to shape the Sikh musical practice at gurdwaras nowadays.

In the mid-15th century, Gurū Nānak established the singing approach of preaching and religious worship with rabāb accompaniment by Bhai Mardānā. Since then, singing of gurbāñīs became the main form of religious worship and has remained so until now. The kīrtan practice started with the rababī tradition at the court of Gurū Nānak, where rababīs remained to be the only musicians recognized by the Sikh Gurus until the time of Gurū Arjun. In 1604, Gurū Arjun compiled the Adi Granth; Gurū Gobind Singh added more śabads and transformed the Adi Granth into the Guru Granth Sahib and contributed to the śabad compositions of the Dasam Granth in the 18th century. These

holy scriptures set the lyrical context of śabad kīrtans being performed at gurdwaras. Gurū Arjun also established eight chaṅkīs to sing kīrtans as part of the daily routine in Amritsar. The first early morning chaṅkī of “Āsā Dī Vār” remains the most important daily-practiced chaṅkī of most gurdwaras in the world.

Various Gurus introduced different Sikh musicians to lead kīrtan singing at gurdwaras: for example, rabābīs by Gurū Nānak, kīrtanīyas and rāgīs by Gurū Arjun, and ḍhāḍīs by Gurū Gobind Singh. Except for the extinction of Muslim-based rabābīs at the time of Partition, professional rāgīs carried out daily routines at gurdwaras, whereas amateur kīrtanīyas and folk-based ḍhāḍīs performed occasionally or at special Sikh events. In addition, Sikh Gurus introduced different instruments to accompany the kīrtan singing, for example, rabāb by Gurū Nānak, *sarandā* (a bowed-string instrument) by Gurū Arjun, and *tāus* (a bowed-string instrument in peacock body sound box) by Gurū Hargobind, and *dilrubā* (a bowed-string instrument) by Gurū Gobind Singh. These instruments became the major concern of the gurmat sangīt revival, when Sikhs re-introduced them as the major accompaniment of kīrtan singing in the 1990s.

### **Post-Gurus’ Times and the Partition Period: Various Attempts to Develop the Sikh Deovtional Music Practice<sup>43</sup>**

From the Gurus’ times to the late 19th century, there was hardly any progress on the development of Sikh musical practice and Sikh music studies. Little had been

---

<sup>43</sup> Khushwant Singh 1999, Linden 2011, Macauliffe 1909, and Purewal 2011.

achieved to contribute to today's scene of Sikh music performance because of the death of Gurū Gobind Singh, the declaration of the Guru Granth Sahib as the succeeding Guru and the incessant fighting with Muslim rulers and invaders before and after the Sikh Empire in the early to mid-19th century.

Before Gurū Gobind Singh died in 1708, he affirmed the sacred text of the Guru Granth Sahib as his successor. Regarded as the eleventh and eternal Guru of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth Sahib limits and standardizes the content of the Gurus' teaching in textual format. It is contrary to the periods of the living Gurus, when devotional singing was allowed flexibility with either Sikh Gurus singing ones' own compositions, or musicians and common believers singing religious songs learnt from oral tradition (through different *gharānās* or *taksāls*). In the post-Sikh Guru period, much effort was put to wars; while no records of religious music performance was found in any references, it is believed that Sikh music practice was not frequently held, or it was not given emphasis in the historical records of this period.

It was after the Singh Sabha reformation in the 1900s that ideas to classicize and standardize the Sikh devotional music practice developed. This new movement aimed at a search for Sikh identity and self-assertion as different from that of a Christian, Hindu or Muslim identity in colonial India. Education and literacy were the two most important aspects of the Singh Sabha movement, and they involved revival of the Sikh Gurus' teachings, production of religious literature in Punjabi, and a campaign against illiteracy. In the context of Sikh devotional music, *śabad kīrtans* were taught in institutional settings, rationalized and canonized through textbooks' publications; professionalization

of Sikh musicians was required; and performance was held not only at gurdwaras but also nono-religious public spaces.

The S.G.P.C., an orthodox Sikh organization established in 1920, contributed to the institutionalization and professionalization of Sikh devotional music practice by establishing schools to train professional officers and arranging duties of religious services. Meanwhile, the rationalization and canonization of śabad kīrtans reflected the interest to develop Sikh music as a subject of academic scholarship, advanced by researches, both locally and overseas. First of all, musical notation of rāgas from the Guru Granth Sahib was adopted in writings of Sikh religion. According to Pashaura Singh (2006), M.A. Macauliffe was the first western scholar to write about the 31 rāgas of the Adi Granth with musical notations in the fifth volume of *The Sikh Religion* (1909:333–51). Macauliffe also pointed out the different interpretations of rāgas, as well as the low-pitched singing style of the rāga in kīrtan performance to enhance the meaning of gurbānī.

Not only the westerners but also Sikh scholars were interested in studying the musicology of the Guru Granth Sahib. These publications typically provided definitions of musical terms, illustrated rāgas' performance with śabad notations, and discussed musical features of śabad kīrtan. In the 1930s, Charan Singh published a five-book compilation of śabad kīrtans titled *Gurmat Sangīt Par Hun Tak Milī Khōj (Recent Research of Gurmat Sangīt)*.<sup>44</sup> My informants mostly referred to the book as one of the earliest publications documenting and describing Sikh religious music, and it had been re-

---

<sup>44</sup> The version that I obtained from my fieldwork research was published by Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1958.

published by many other organizations in later years.<sup>45</sup> Since then, a trend of describing and documenting śabad kīrtans, and publishing books of Sikh religious music, developed gradually.

The partition of India in 1947 split the former British province of Punjab between India and Pakistan. Crossing borders to seek safety, Muslims moved to western Punjab in Pakistan, and the Sikhs and Hindus moved to eastern Punjab in India. As massive violence accompanied the displacement of millions, Muslim rabābīs chose to stay in Pakistan and, therefore, they could no longer serve at Sikh gurdwaras. The official announcement by the S.G.P.C., requiring only Sikhs to take up kīrtan singing (as discussed in the next paragraph), further expedited the disappearance of the rabābī tradition in Sikh devotional practice. Along with the decreasing demand for dhādīs after Gurū Gobind Singh, rāgīs remain the only professional musicians employed by gurdwaras to sing kīrtans nowadays.

The S.G.P.C. strived to document śabad compositions with an aim of defining and preserving the Sikh devotional music tradition in the post-Partition period. Another two-volume publication, *Gurbāñī Sangīt*, was written by (Bhai) Gian Singh Abbotabad and published by the S.G.P.C. in 1961. Different from the previous publications that notated prescribed rāgas in western notation, the two volumes record kīrtan singing in musical

---

<sup>45</sup> Protopapas' dissertation mentioned about two earliest publications of Sikh music: one by Ustād Bhai Prem Singh in 1903, and another by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabh by 1930. According to Protopapas, the former's book title was obtained through the interview with Bhai Baldeep Singh; the latter, titled as *Gurushabad Ratnākar Mahān Kōsh*, is a dictionary of Sikh music. Moreover, I was not able to locate both books during my fieldwork in Punjab (2011b:85).

notation developed by Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936), an Indian musicologist who advocated the systematization of Hindustani music knowledge.

The S.G.P.C. also published *The Sikh Rehat Maryada (the Code of Sikh Conduct and Convention)* in 1950 that became “the key to the Sikh spiritual and social philosophy” to promote “uniformity in the Sikh conduct and observances in the interest of deeper religion cohesion.”<sup>46</sup> In Article VI of Chapter V, there is a relatively short and simple guide of kīrtan performance as follows:

#### Chapter V

#### Kirtan (Devotional Hymn Singing by a Group or an Individual)

#### Article VI

- (a) Only a Sikh may perform kirtan in a congregation.
- (b) Kirtan means singing the scriptural compositions in traditional musical measures.
- (c) In the congregation, kirtan only of Gurbani (Guru Granth’s or Guru Gobind Singh’s hymns) and, for its elaboration, of the compositions of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal, may be performed.<sup>47</sup>
- (d) It is improper, while singing hymns to rhythmic folk tunes or to traditional musical measures, or in team singing, to induct into them improvised and extraneous refrains. Only a line from the hymn should be made a refrain.

---

<sup>46</sup> The printed version of *The Sikh Reht Maryada* that I obtained was written in Punjabi and English, and it was published in 1994. The content can now be viewed in the website of *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee*.

<sup>47</sup> Bhai Gurdas (1551–1637) helped Gurū Arjun to compile the *Adi Granth*, and he wrote 31/39/40? vārs to comment on and explain theology and the ethnics of Sikh beliefs. Bhai Nand Lal (1633–1713) is a poet influenced by Sikh teaching and he became a close companion of Gurū Gobind Singh. Bhai Nand Lal had written ten works in praise of Gurus and on the subject of Sikh philosophy; and two of his writings are *Rahit Nama* and *Tankhah Nama*.

The article defines and sets the scope of “kīrtan” by highlighting certain words and characteristics, giving suggestions to the performance, and excluding “non-Sikh” elements. First of all, the phrase “(b) ...traditional musical measures” emphasizes the importance of authenticity, or even more directly singing in prescribed rāgas; for “(d) ...only one line from the hymn should be made a refrain,” it gives guidelines to the kīrtan performance that the rahāo line of the śabad should be repeated in the singing; and both “(a) ...in a congregation ” and “(c) In the congregation...” speak for the collective activity of the kīrtan performance. Second, “improvised and extraneous refrains” are considered as improper in kīrtan performance, and it reminds musicians of giving up individual styles that are mostly characterized by improvisation of extended singing. Finally, the phrase “(a) only a Sikh may perform kirtan...” excludes rabābīs of Muslim lineage to earn a living by kīrtan singing at gurdwaras and denies them of their professionalism along the religious history; it somewhat limits the participation of kīrtan singing (mostly associated with ritual practice) to Sikh believers.

### **The 1990s: the Gurmat Sangīt Revival and the Recent Scene**

With the first AGSS organized in 1991 at the Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana, Punjab, an interest in reviving the “authentic” musical practice by the Sikh Gurus was inspired. Referred to as the period of gurmat sangit revival, concepts of “authentic” Sikh music like the performance of rāga-based śabad kīrtans at gurdwaras, the correct rendition of rāga performance, and the re-introduction of stringed instruments of the Sikh Gurus’ time

were advocated and put into practice. Following the success of this three-day event, the festival is now organized annually, featuring performances by prominent kīrtanīyas and attracting an audience of common Sikh believers from India and other parts of the world.

Along with the annual AGSS, activities advocating the revival of authentic Sikh musical practice were inspired, such as organizing classes, competitions, workshops and conferences, the release of print publications, and audio-visual recordings. Labeling them with the term “gurmat sangīt,” these activities are organized by local and overseas gurdwaras, taksāls, Sikh music learning centers, or private teachers. When started as a local event in Punjab, the gurmat sangit revival has become the global trend of Sikh music performance within the Sikh community worldwide. As the focus of this dissertation, I discuss, in the following chapters, the details of the gurmat sangīt revival, its relation to the AGSS, and other points of significance.

In the past 20 years, an increasing number of Sikh immigrants and overseas gurdwaras has led to the increasing demand for professional rāgīs to carry out the daily routine. As there are no official records documenting existing gurdwaras and professional rāgīs in the world, it is impossible to estimate these numbers from preliminary sources. Some gurdwaras, such as the Gurdwara Sahib Austin in Texas, and the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple in Hong Kong, have no rāgī jathās stationed to carry out the daily routines. Moreover, there are usually kīrtan darbārs on Saturdays, Sundays, or special commemorative events, so the amateur kīrtanīyas form groups to perform or lead



the kīrtan singing.<sup>48</sup> By contrast, some major gurdwaras in India, such as the Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in Delhi and the Harmandir Sahib (The Golden Temple) in Amritsar, have more than one rāgī jathā stationed to carry out the daily routines.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the increasing concern for performing “authentic” Sikh music and the growing number of kīrtan singing activities at gurdwaras, Sikh musicians, no matter whether they are professional rāgīs or amateur kīrtanīyas, are generally not known outside of the Sikh community. The reason for this is that most of these musicians perform the śabad kīrtans only at gurdwaras in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. Even though much of the kīrtan performance is broadcast through the mass medium of recordings or the internet nowadays, the audience is limited to Sikh believers who attend gurdwaras regularly or who are aware of their Sikh religious development in their daily lives. The non-Sikhs seldom have any exposure to these kīrtan activities, thus making these musicians less known to the general public.

---

<sup>48</sup> Established in 2003, the Gurdwara Sahib Austin opens only on Sunday, with the kīrtan dārbār (11:30a.m.–1:30p.m.) led by amateur kīrtanīyas. The Gurdwara Sahib Austin has about 400 regular attendees of Sikh families, who are mainly Sikh immigrants from India, Sikhs studying in Austin, or the second generation American Sikhs. The Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, the only gurdwara in Hong Kong, opens every day with the kīrtan darbār (6:00a.m.–8:30a.m. and 6:30p.m.–8:00p.m. from Monday to Sunday; an additional session of 9:00a.m.–1:30p.m. on Sunday) led by amateur kīrtanīyas who are officers of the gurdwara. There are 10,000 Sikhs in Hong Kong, making up about 0.14% of the Hong Kong population in 2012.

<sup>49</sup> Daily kīrtan darbārs at both the Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in Delhi and the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar are conducted by different rāgī jathās at the assigned time periods (3:00a.m.–10:00p.m., about 45 minutes per session).

## **PART TWO: THE GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL**

### **Chapter 3 Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan/AGSS**

In most printed and Internet sources of Sikh music, scenes and content of the gurmat sangīt revival have been generally introduced. Yet, little has been said about its origins and earliest development since the 1990s. According to my research, the AGSS is the first official and public event giving impetus to revive the authentic aspects of Sikh musical practice. Though there has been individual interest and studies of the gurmat sangīt revival at around the same time when the AGSS was first initiated, the AGSS is significant for its large-scale activity featuring Sikh devotional music performance, collective efforts and participation by reputable musicians, scholars, and the general public, and regular and continuous organizations by gurdwaras in Punjab until now. In this chapter, I highlight the significance of the AGSS with its details and contributions. Starting with a brief socio-political history of Sikhism in Punjab in the 1990s, I introduce the AGSS with its basic information, initiator, advising committee, and its first public performance.

## **SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY OF SIKHISM IN PUNJAB IN THE 1990s**

Despite continuous conflicts with other religious and political parties since its establishment, Sikhism in the late 20th century has been relatively stable and violence-free since the late 1980s and the early 1990s, several years after the massacre of Sikhs at the Golden Temple and the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards in October 1984.<sup>50</sup> Although painful memories were still retained in the minds of both the Sikhs and the other people in northern India, industry and economy developed rapidly in most cities of Punjab. Sikhs and Hindus re-established a rapport that helped to foster industrial and economic development. With the majority of the Sikh population living in Indian Punjab, people in the state were enjoying economic prosperity due to the rapid growth in agriculture and manufacturing industry in the late 1980s. With the largest city of Ludhiana within its boundaries, Punjab's per capita income was the highest in India for producing wheat and paddy (Bhalla 1995, Khushwant Singh 1999). Ludhianna, where the AGSS was first organized as origin of the gurmat sangīt revival, was described as a safe and busy city by Khushwant Singh (1999), where "rich industrialists moved freely without bodyguards, workings came for night shifts without fear, cinemas were full for late night shows," and "hotel occupancy rose to over 90 per cent (423)."

Along with economic prosperity, Sikhs continued to advocate the creation of Khālistan with a gentler approach. Where no direct correlations between the Khālistan and the gurmat sangīt revival can be found in my research, I regard the latter as a

---

<sup>50</sup> For details of the massacre and assassination, please refer to Khushwant Singh 1999:351–72.

movement of non-violence that emphasizes the non-political aspect of Sikhism.

Abandoning the violence-oriented approach of the past, Sikhs resorted to emphasizing their cultural values to seek religious and ethnic independence, resisting the invasive movement by the government, and thereby distinguishing their identity from that of the Hindus. Therefore, once the AGSS had been proposed and organized, it had developed into the widespread revival movement of gurmat sangīt in the 1990s. The above socio-political factors created favorable conditions for the development and revival of Sikh devotional music tradition.

#### **ADUTTI GURMAT SANGEET SAMELLAN/AGSS**

The Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan/AGSS, literally “Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music,” has been organized annually since 1991 (except in 2000, as the initiator Sant Baba Sucha Singh passed away that year). From 1991 to 2013, the annual AGSS was organized at the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana. The exception was in the following three years, 1994, 1995, and 1996, when the AGSS was held at the Gurdwara Banglā Sāhib, Delhi, Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, and Taḡhat Srī Hazūr Sāhib, Maharashtra, respectively.

The initiator of AGSS was Sant Baba Sucha Singh, who founded the Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash and the Jawaddi Taksal some years later. The event is financially supported by an independent fund from the public audience.

The AGSS is a three-day musical event that aims to “preserve and preach the traditional style of kīrtan which is almost dying out (Jasbir Kaur 1991).” The AGSS is open to the public and has different groups of musicians performing on stage from morning until late night. Usually it is held in the month of November, when the autumn weather is more favorable to accommodate thousands of audience members in the temporary tent raised specifically for this event. Similar to other Sikh religious activities, continuous langar food is provided to the participants during the time of performance. While musicians perform on the stage (Illustration 3.1), audience members sit inside the tent (Illustration 3.2), and the AGSS committee oversees the overall logistics. Other Sikhs contribute to the event by doing seva such as cooking, handling the shoes, cleaning, and washing. Free accommodation is provided to the audience members and musicians in temporary tents and at the apartments of host families nearby, respectively (Illustration 3.3).



Illustration 3.1: Musicians were performing on the stage at the 1991 AGSS.



Illustration 3.2: Audience members were sitting inside the tent at the 1991 AGSS.

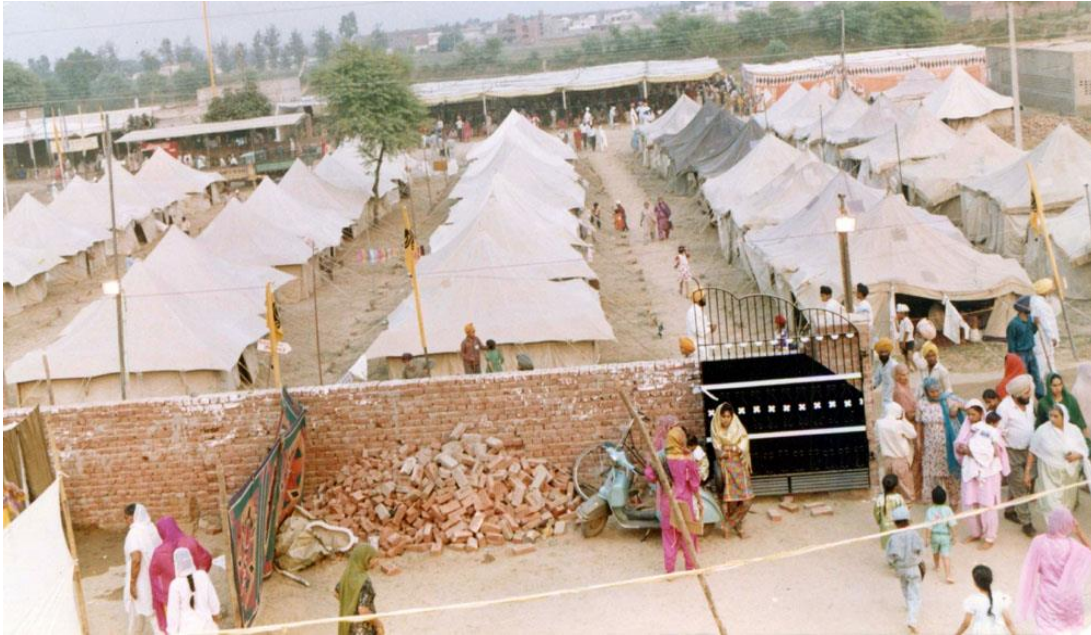


Illustration 3.3: Temporary accommodation for the audience members in the complex of Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana at the 1991 AGSS.

The performance of the annual AGSS usually lasts from early morning until late night. Each day's program begins with *Āsā Dī Vār*, and ends with the *ardās*.<sup>51</sup> The event is structured as a continuous *kīrtan* performance on the stage, where each performing group is assigned to a 20- to 45-minute session. Each year, about 40–55 performing groups are invited to sing *kīrtans*, and some may sing more than one session. In between performances by different groups of musicians, there are special non-musical sessions, such as the prize-giving ceremony of the *Gurmat Sangeet* award, bestowing *siropāo* (the

---

<sup>51</sup> *Āsā Dī Vār* is to be sung at dawn in gurdwara. It is composed in the poetic form of *vār* and set to the *āsā rāga* (Guru Granth Sahib, 462–75). For the content, please refer to Dogra and Dogra 2003:39, and Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008:119–23.

Sikh robe of honor), lecture and discussion forum of Sikh music, and ardās.<sup>52</sup> On the day before the annual AGSS, there is usually a competition for students from colleges and academies, featuring the kīrtan performance in prescribed rāgas with accompaniment of stringed instruments.<sup>53</sup>

There are different ways of promoting the AGSS, such as distribution of stickers and posters, and web announcements (Appendix 4). While booklets of the current year’s AGSS are given to distinguished guests, audio-visual recordings of the previous years’ AGSS-events are distributed to the participants free of charge.

The major aim of the AGSS is to showcase the “traditional style of kīrtan” which involves two major performing directions: singing in prescribed rāgas and the re-introduction of stringed instruments. “Singing in prescribed rāgas” refers to the practice of kīrtan singing according to the rāgas stated in the holy scriptures, i.e. the Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth. Similar to the practice of Hindustani music, rāgas’ names are stated in the Sikh scriptures but not their related theory. To reach a consensus between different interpretations of rāga performance, the AGSS involves kīrtan singing with details of the various rāgas agreed upon by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee/*Rāg Nirnāik Committee* (Rāga Selection Committee). A concept of “correct,” standardized version of rāga performance has been developed and reinforced through this regular, large-scale, annual event of the AGSS.

---

<sup>52</sup> Siropāo, referring to the Sikh robe of honor, usually consists of a long saffron-colored garment, scarf, or cloth garlanding someone who has earned high merit and dedication in the Sikh community. Ardās is the Sikh prayer beginning and/or ending almost every ritual; typically, participants stand up, face the Guru Granth Sahib with hands folded. For original and translated text of ardās, please refer to Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee 1994b.

<sup>53</sup> There are 15–20 groups for the competition.



“Re-introduction of stringed instruments” refers to the practice of kīrtan singing with instruments introduced by different Sikh Gurus. A general AGSS logo illustrates the major instruments for accompaniment of devotional singing as below (Illustration 3.4):<sup>54</sup>



### Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammelan

Illustration 3.4: Logo of the AGSS.

The Punjabi symbols next to every instrument state the time when the specific Sikh Guru had introduced the instrument in the practice of Sikh devotional music (Illustration 3.4, from left to right): rabāb by Gurū Nānak (*pā: 1*, the 1st Guru), sarandā by Gurū Arjun (*pā: 5*, the 5th Guru), *tānpurā* by Gurū Gobind Singh (*pā: 10*, the 10th Guru), tablā by Gurū Arjun (*pā: 5*, the 5th Guru), and tāus by Gurū Hargobind (*pā: 6*, the

<sup>54</sup> While the logo of the 1991 AGSS is in the similar design (please refer to the stage backdrop in Illustration 3.1), the colored logo in Illustration 3.4 is designed in 2004. The logo is also adopted in the cover design of Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006.

6th Guru).<sup>55</sup> Note that the *tablā*, introduced by Gurū Arjun, is the non-stringed instrument. Other major stringed instruments being re-introduced include *dilrubā*, *sarangi*, and *sitar*. The details of these instruments, and their relation to the Sikh devotional music, will be discussed in Chapter 4.

In addition to the portrayal of the five instruments, there is other information in the logo. The top symbol is titled “Vismaad Naad,” a sub-branch of the Jawaddi Taksal publishing various AGSS-related booklets and audio-visual recordings every year.<sup>56</sup> The logo design of Vismaad Naad is the flame, symbolizing the energy that created the universe, bringing the *ik onkar* into existence.<sup>57</sup> The Punjabi phrase in orange curved banding states: “*Rāg Nād Sabad Sohne* (Graceful/Beautiful/Proper Rāga Sound),” citing from the second *śabad* by Gurū Amar Dās in *bilāval rāga* (Guru Granth Sahib, 849). It also responds to the first performing direction of the AGSS aim: placing emphasis on its “proper sound,” “singing in prescribed rāgas” is regarded as graceful and beautiful.

In the latter part of AGSS aim, the traditional style of *kīrtan* is referred to as “almost dying out.” It is because the two major performing directions proposed were claimed to have disappeared after Sikh Gurus’ times. What happened is that most musicians adopted either the folk or popular tunes but not the *rāgas* prescribed in the Sikh scriptures. In addition, stringed instruments were replaced by harmoniums as the melodious accompaniment of *kīrtan* singing (while *tablā* remained as the major rhythmic

---

<sup>55</sup> “Pā” is the abbreviated form of “*pātshāhī*” which means kingdom or empire.

<sup>56</sup> The Punjabi transliteration for “Vismaad Naad” is “*Vismād Nād*” and its literal meaning is “ecstasy sound”.

<sup>57</sup> “Ik onkar” refers to the one supreme reality as the foundation belief of Sikhism. It is also the first phrase of *Mūl Mantra*, the first poetical statement by Gurū Nānak that introduces the essence of Sikh theology (Cole and Sambhi 1990, Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore 2008).

accompaniment all through history). Being observed in almost all gurdwaras nowadays, these “new” practices are regarded as being “improper” and departing from the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. It is believed that preserving and preaching the traditional style of kīrtan is the major way to restore the “proper sound” and original teachings of the Sikh Gurus.

Based on these two directions, different content and themes have been introduced to the AGSS every year (Table 3.1).<sup>58</sup> For example, singing of the main rāgas and mixed rāgas in the 1991 and 1992 AGSS, respectively; singing of the kīrtans by Gurū Nānak and Gurū Arjun in the 1998 and 2006 AGSS, respectively; and kīrtans of the Dasam Granth in the 1999 AGSS. The meanings and origins of the themes and content will be discussed in Chapter 4.

---

<sup>58</sup> The table lists the basic information of the annual Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan, including its dates, themes, and venues. The information below is summarized from the AGSS promotional materials, conversations with informants, and other publication materials in Punjabi.

Year	Dates	Themes	Organizer and Venue
1991	9–13 Oct	Singing of 31 main rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
1992	7–11 Oct	Singing of 31 mixed rāgas along with folk-based tunes in the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
1993	5–7 Nov	Singing of compositions by 6 Gurus, 15 <i>bhagats</i> (Holy men of various sects), 11 <i>bhatts</i> (bards), and 4 Sikh <i>bāṇīkārs</i> (non-Guru Sikhs)	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
1994	1 May	Singing of 31 main rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Banglā Sāhib, Delhi <sup>59</sup>
1995	21–25 Sep	Singing of gurbāṇīs in 31 main rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib	Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar
1996	12–16 Nov	Singing of prescribed rāgas by the bhagats in the Guru Granth Sāhib	Takhat Srī Hazūr Sāhib <sup>60</sup>
1997	6–9 Nov	Singing according to the ancient chaṅkī tradition at the Harmandir Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
1998	12–15 Nov	Singing in prescribed rāgas from selected compositions of Gurū Nānak	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
1999	2–5 Dec	Singing of prescribed rāgas from the bāṇīs of Dasam Pātshāh (10th Guru)	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2000	No Samellan organized to mourn the passing of Baba Sucha Singh		
2001	14–16 Dec	Kīrtans by young rāgīs (based on 31 main rāgas in Guru Granth Sahib)	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2002	13–15 Dec	Singing of 31 mixed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2003	19–21 Dec	Singing of selected bāṇīs from the Guru Granth Sahib in prescribed rāgas	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2004	2–5 Dec	Singing of 55 partāl compositions in the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2005	Missing	Singing of savaiyā in rāgas from the section of Rāgmālā	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2006	15–17 Dec	Kīrtans of Gurū Arjun’s bāṇīs (including <i>chaubole</i> , <i>gātha</i> , <i>phunhe</i> , <i>savaiyā</i> , <i>śalōk saḥskritī</i> and <i>bara mātā</i> ) in rāgas from the section of rāgmālā	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2007	30 Nov–2 Dec	Kīrtan singing in prescribed rāgas, in accordance with the ancient chaṅkī tradition with stringed musical instruments	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2008	21–23 Nov	Kīrtan singing in prescribed rāgas; the 300th anniversary celebration of the Guru-ship of the Guru Granth Sahib	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2009	20–22 Nov	Singing of kīrtans in prescribed rāgas	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2010	3–5 Dec	Singing of kīrtans in prescribed rāgas	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2011	25–27 Nov	Singing of kīrtans in prescribed rāgas	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana
2012	16–18 Nov	Singing of kīrtans in prescribed rāgas; and dhādī darbār	Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana

Table 3.1: The Annual Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan (1991–2012).

<sup>59</sup> The Samellan was held outside of the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana for the first time.

<sup>60</sup> The full name and address of the venue is: Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib, Nanded-431601, Maharashtra.

### INITIATOR: SANT BABA SUCHA SINGH (1948–2002) AND THE JAWADDI TAKSAL



Illustration 3.5: Sant Baba Sucha Singh (1948–2002).

(Sant Baba) Sucha Singh was both the founder of Jawaddi Taksal and the initiator of the AGSS (Illustration 3.5). He was born in the city of Rupnagar in the Indian state of Punjab in 1948. In 1985, Sucha Singh established a small religious center in the name of Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash, Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana. Popularly known as the Jawaddi Taksal, this religious center is located at the Jawaddi village where Gurū Hargobind (the 6th Guru) had once visited his disciple's (Bhai Jawanda) house and meditated. The Jawaddi Taksal is located at the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, where the annual AGSS is usually organized. Apart from the taksāl, there is a gurdwara and a number of sub-units such as the music academy (Gurshabad Sangeet Academy), publication house (Vismaad Naad), charity office (Sukh Sagar Charitable Trust), and library (Guru Hargobind Sahib Library).

Sucha Singh has a deep appreciation for music but had never obtained any kind of musical training. Bestowed the titles “Sant” and “Baba” by his devotees, Sucha Singh was regarded as an exponent of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus and was also the spiritual guide of general Sikh believers. Moreover, he had been in charge of the annual AGSS from the year of 1991 to 2001. The AGSS had not been organized in 2002 because of the death of Sucha Singh. He also organized national and international seminars, symposiums and workshops related to Sikh religion and music, and imparted religious and musical knowledge to students from different backgrounds at the taksāl and the Gurshabad Sangeet Academy. Before the AGSS in 1991, he established the Rāg Nirnayak Committee to standardize and confirm the usage of rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib. Different members, as listed in the next section, were invited to give their opinions on how each rāga should be performed and notated from their musical experiences. Their collaborative efforts on rāga standardization will be discussed in Chapter 4.

For his effort in organizing the AGSS annually to foster the development of Sikh devotional music, Sucha Singh received numerous awards for his contributions to the Sikh community in this special way. At the World Sikh Conference 1995, Sucha Singh was honored by the Akal Takhat for Jawaddi Taksal’s contribution of organizing the annual AGSS and other activities of Gurmat Sangeet revival. He was also bestowed with five relics by Jathedār for organizing the 1996 AGSS at the Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazoor Sahib in Maharashtra (Illustration 3.6). After his death in August 2002, Sant Giānī Amir Singh took up the position of Chairman (until the present year of 2013) with the major coordination by Baba Sohan Singh (for the publications) and Principal Sukhwant Singh

(for the music activities) at the Jawaddi Taksal. Except for 1996, the year of the demise of Sant Baba Sucha Singh, the AGSS is organized annually until now.



Illustration 3.6: Sant Baba Sucha Singh was bestowed with five relics at the 1996 AGSS.

### **RĀG NIRNAYAK COMMITTEE**

The Rāg Nirnayak Committee, literally “Rāga Selection Committee,” was formed by Sant Baba Sucha Singh on the usage of rāgas in 1991 (Sukwant Singh ed. 2007, 2008). Before the 1991 AGSS, divergent views existed amongst various musicians regarding the unsystematic form of rāgas, and this was shown in the references of Sikh religion and kīrtans with limited sources. Sucha Singh invited (Pt.) Dalip Chander (Bedī) to be The Chairman and other reputable musicians or scholars to hold regular meetings before the

1991 AGSS.<sup>61</sup> According to Baba Sohan Singh, the committee members met almost every day from January to October 1991, and they continued to meet up to have follow-up discussions three months after the 1991 AGSS. There are 20 members in the Rāg Nirnayak Committee from different background and I discuss the initiator, head, and other members one by one, with photos in Appendix 5.<sup>62</sup>

Sant Baba Sucha Singh (1948–2002) (Illustrations 3.5 and 3.6) is the founder of the Jawaddi Taksal Ludhiana and Initiator of the AGSS and the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. As a saint with no music training, his background has been mentioned in the previous section of this chapter.

Pt. Dalip Chander Bedī, also known as “(Baba) Sarabjot Singh (Bedī Ūnā Sāhib),” is the Head of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.14). As the 17th generation of the Gurū Nānak’s descendants, he has been the hāzurī rāgī of the Golden Temple, Amritsar in the 1930s. His original name is Dalip Singh with Bedī as his family name; later, he changed his name from “Singh” to “Chander” when he started to reflect his mastery of Hindustani music.

(Principal) Rajinder Singh is the member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee from Lucknow (Appendix 5.8). He is the chief advisor of the Rāg Darbār Committee at the 1991 AGSS.

(Bhai) Avtār Singh (1925–2006) is the member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.4). He has been the hāzurī rāgī of Gurdwara SisGanj Sahib in New Delhi.

---

<sup>61</sup> Pt.” is the abbreviated form of *pandit* (teacher); Bedī is a khatri sub-caste to which Gurū Nānak belongs to.

<sup>62</sup> The information is derived from Dogra and Dogra 2003, Pashaura Singh 2006, Rajan 2004, Sukhwant Singh ed. 2007, and 2008, and interviews with informants.



Bhai Avtār Singh sang dhrupad, and his ancestors were singing at the court of Gurū Gobind Singh. He wrote books of gurmat sangīt, played dilrubā and tāūs, and recorded an album of 31 rāgas (but not the prescribed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib). He is the son of (Bhai) Jawala Singh (1892–1952), an accomplished rāgī as the 10th generation exponent of gurbāṇi kīrtan; the maternal grandfather of Bhai Baldeep Singh, the Sikh musician active in promoting gurmat sangīt revival nowadays.<sup>63</sup> He formed the rāgī jathā with his elder brother, (Bhai) Gurcharan Singh and nephew, (Bhai) Swaran Singh on tablā.

(Bhai) Tejpal Singh is the member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee from Delhi (Appendix 5.1). He formed a jathā with his brother (Bhai) Surinderpal Singh (b.1939) and is known to the public as “Singh Bandhu.” Both brothers are master vocalists of the Hindustani music (specializing in khyāl) and gurbāṇi kīrtans, and they are disciples of the late Ustād Amīr Khan (Lucknow gharānā). They have been receivers of the Gurmat Sangeet Award by the Jawaddi Taksal. As music directors for a few films and television shows in India, Singh Bandhu are a group of a few Sikh musicians that also earned fame outside the Sikh community.

(Bhai) Prithipal Singh (Kang) is the member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.3).<sup>64</sup> He is from Indore.

(Bhai) Balbir Singh from Amritsar is the member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.13).<sup>65</sup> He sang classical music (specialized in dhrupad), gurbāṇi kīrtans in

---

<sup>63</sup> For more information of Bhai Jawala, please refer to Pashaura Singh 2006:162.

<sup>64</sup> The title “Kang” is a clan of Jat people.

both prescribed and non-prescribed rāgas, and compositions of the Dasam Granth; and he played dilrubā. His father (Bhai) Santa Singh is a famous tablā/*pakhāvaj* (Indian classical drumming) exponent who taught at the Gurmat Vidyalaya in Taran Taran, Amritsar. Bhai Balbīr Singh received his initial training in gurbāṇī kirtans from his father, his grandfather (Bhai) Kundan Singh, and great-grandfather (Bhai) Hira Singh. He started singing kīrtans with the dilrubā at a young age, and he learned 250 rāgas. As the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib for 36 years (1955–1991), Bhai Balbir Singh received many honors and titles such as the Shiromani Ragi Award from the Indian Council for Sikh Affairs in 1983, the Gurmat Sangeet Award from the Jawaddi Taksal in 1991, the Bhai Batan Singh Memorial Award in 1997), the Sant Sarwan Singh Gandharva Award in 2001, the Bhai Dilbagh Singh Kirtaniya Samrat Award in 2010, and the National Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2011. He is considered “one of the last links to the traditional style of gurbāṇī kīrtan (IP Singh 2012).”

(Dr.) Ajit Singh (Paintal) (1936–2012) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.12).<sup>66</sup> He obtained his Ph.D. degree on his research of gurbāṇī kīrtan at the University of Delhi. His dissertation titled *Nature and Place of Music in Sikh Religion and Its Affinity with Hindustani Classical Music*, was completed in 1972.

(Principal) Baldev Singh is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.6). He is the hāzurī rāgī at the G. Bangla Sahib, Delhi.

---

<sup>65</sup> Clarified by Baba Sohan Singh, Sukhwant Singh ed. 2008 (English version) gave a wrong name as Bhai Baldev Singh in listing names of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Preface).

<sup>66</sup> Paintal is the Indian surname.

(Professor) Kartar Singh (b.1928) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee from Ludhiana (Appendix 5.5). As the former Head of Music Department of Guru Nanak Girls' College in Ludhiana and the former Director of the Gurmat Sangeet Academy of Jawaddi Taksal, he is now the Director of the Gurmat Sangeet Academy at Sri Anandpur Sahib, Ropar. He is also the author of *Gurmat Sangeet Darpan* (2010); and *Guru Angad Dev Sangeet Darpan* (2004), and he received the Gurmat Sangeet Award in 1995.

(Professor) Paramjot Singh (1947–2014) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.11). He is from Mullanpur, and he obtained the Gurmat Sangeet Award from the Jawaddi Taksal. He is also the author of *Samund Sagar* (2011).

(Professor) Charanjit Singh is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. He is from Ludhiana.

(Principal) Chanan Singh (Majbor) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.16).

(Ustad) Jaswant Singh (Bhanwra) (deceased) was a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.10). He was both a vocalist and composer.

(Bibi/Dr.) Jasbir Kaur is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.7). As a Professor in Music in the Department of Development of Punjabi Language, Punjabi University Patiala, she earned her Ph.D. in Music at Punjab University Chandigarh focusing her research on the historical development of gurbāṇi sangīt. Bibi Jasbir Kaur is the vocalist of Hindustani music, Sufi singing, and Punjabi folk songs. She is also the editor of *Samajak Vigiyān Pattar: Gurmat Sangeet Vishesh Ank* (a yearbook in Punjabi), and the receiver of the Gurmat Sangeet Award by the Jawaddi Taksal.

(Principal) Shamsher Singh Karir (deceased) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.9). He is from Patiala.

(Dr.) Jagir Singh is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Illustration 3.1, the harmonium player on the right). He is from Chandigarh, and the former Head of the Gurmat Sangeet Department at the Punjabi University Patiala. He published the journal titled *Amrit Kirtan*.

(Professor) Harchand Singh is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.17).

(Professor) Avtar Singh (Naz) is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.15). He is a Professor at the Sikh Missionary College in Amritsar.

Dr. Gurnam Singh is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (Appendix 5.2). He learned kīrtans from his father (Bhai) Uttam Singh, and Professor Tara Singh of Patiala. He is the Department Head of the Music and Gurmat Sangeet Department at the Punjabi University in Patiala. He is also the author of *Sikh Musicology* (2001), *Gur Shabad Keertan* (2005), and *Sikh Sacred Music* (2008); and the receiver of the Gurmat Sangeet Award by Jawaddi Taksal.

The above committee members are either experienced and reputable musicians or scholars in the field of Sikh music and Hindustani music, and they are usually addressed as Pandit, Ustad, Professor, and Principal by the general public. While some of them come from families of musicians, most of them are descendants or disciples of famous rāgīs or master vocalists of Hindustani music. For example, Pt. Dalip Chander Bedī, head of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee is the 17th generation of Gurū Nānak and vocalist of

Hindustani music; Bhai Avtar Singh, Bhai Balbir Singh, and Principal Baldev Singh are the hāzurī rāgī of major gurdwaras in India; Professor Paramjot Singh, Dr. Gurnam Singh, and Dr. Ajit Singh Paintal are authors and researchers of Sikh devotional music; Dr. Gurnam Singh, Bibi Jasbir Kaur, and Professor Kartar Singh are affiliated with Indian music institutions.

While the above list of individuals is based on the publications sharing the same title of *Raag Sarup Nirnay: Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, they are the Punjabi and English versions both edited by Principal Sukhwant Singh in 2006 and 2008, respectively. Moreover, in the booklet of the 1991 AGSS, titled *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelan 1991*, there were only 2 members listed in the section of “Committee,” and 13 members listed in the sub-section of “Kīrtan Committee (Rāg Nirnayak Committee)” (Satbīr Singh ed. 1991, as shown in Appendix 6). The difference of numbers and names in the Rāg Nirnayak Committee reflects two groups of contributors: the original members formally invited by Sant Baba Sucha Singh to the prescribed rāgas’ discussion, as listed in Satbīr Singh ed. 1991; and other members being invited informally, yet who actively participated in researching and discussing details of the prescribed rāgas, as listed in Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006, and 2008.

Apart from standardizing details of prescribed rāgas, members from the Board of Experts (Appendix 6) examine the performers on the correctness of their kīrtan singing and gurbāñi pronunciation in the AGSS, so that the recorded ‘correct’ performance is then published as the 16-cassette-set production. In 2010, it was reissued as an audio-CD-set with the selected mixed rāgas at the 1992 AGSS (Sohan Singh 2010b).

## THE 1991 ADUTTI GURMAT SANGEET SAMELLAN

The Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan was first held in the year of 1991. Unlike the AGSS of other years that usually lasted for three days, the 1991 AGSS was a five-day event dated 9th–13th October 1991. On the first day, a competition was held between students from colleges and academies on prescribed rāgas with accompaniment of stringed instruments. About 15–20 groups participated in this competition. From the second to the last day, the event took place from 5:30a.m–11:00p.m. with continuous kīrtan performance. The performance was based on the rāgas prescribed in the gurbāṅis, following the musical details confirmed and standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (to be discussed in Chapter 4).

A total of 52 groups performed kīrtans at the 1991 AGSS, as listed in Appendix 7.<sup>67</sup> However, there are no official statistics recording the total number of audience members. The AGSS is open to anybody at any time, and outsiders may join the event by watching the kīrtan performance, praying, doing sewa, eating langar, greeting each other etc. Hence, it is difficult to evaluate its significance taking into account the number of participants at the event. To make a rough estimate, there were about three to four thousand audience members and performers in the performing hall at any given time. According to Baba Sohan Singh, the following was consumed at the langar during the 1991 AGSS:

---

<sup>67</sup> The information is derived from program and timetable of *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan 1991*, and discussion with informants.

- 21,000 kg of milk for daily products,
- 200 gas cylinders for cooking,
- 4 000 kg of wood for cooking,
- 60,000 metal bowls, and
- 100,000 disposal plates.

In between kīrtan performances, there were performances by ḍhāḍī jathās (from 3:00p.m. to 5:00p.m.), recitation of poems about Sikh Gurus' lives, kathā, the Gurmat Sangeet Award ceremony (to Bhai Balbir Singh), bestowing siropāo, and lecture demonstration of stringed instruments accompanied for traditional kīrtan singing. The stringed instruments introduced at the 1991 AGSS and their corresponding participating musicians, were as follows:

- Rabāb: Jaswant Singh (Delhi)
- Sarandā: Bhai Gurcharan Singh (Batala)<sup>68</sup>
- Dilrubā: Bhai Chettar Singh (Jhalandar), Sri Omprakash, and Professor Piara Singh Padan (Assam)
- *Swarmaṇḍal* (an Indian zither): Sri Dharampal
- Tānpurā: Sadar Ravinder Pratap Singh

Some musicians also demonstrated the non-stringed instruments as follows:

- Harmonium: Sri Mahmood Dhoulpuri
- Tablā: Sri Kalarm

---

<sup>68</sup> Batala is the municipal council in Gurdaspur District in the state of Punjab, India.

For the stringed instruments that were no longer practiced in the post-Guru period, the 1991 AGSS was the first event re-introducing them on the stage of kīrtan performance. While the practice of some stringed instruments was near extinction, the contacts of these surviving musicians were referred by Bhai Balbir Singh. At their very old age, these musicians recalled the moments of traditional kīrtan performance, practiced the instruments that they had abandoned for a long time, and performed at the 1991 AGSS.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> When I collected the field data in 2011, all these musicians, except Professor Piara Singh Padan, had already passed away.



## Chapter 4 Revival of the Sikh Devotional Music Tradition

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the AGSS aims to “preserve and preach the traditional style of kīrtan which is almost dying out (Jasbir Kaur 1991).” The event involves two major performing aspects: singing in prescribed rāgas and the re-introduction of stringed instruments. These aspects have become the guidelines for the “authentic,” “correct,” and “traditional” style of kīrtan performance at the annual AGSS, and they have been gradually accepted by professional Sikh musicians and adopted in kīrtan performance at gurdwaras all over the world. Moreover, little or no evidence is found to prove the consideration of the two major performance aspects of the AGSS in Sikh Gurus’ time, as few sources about singing in prescribed rāgas and adopting stringed instruments as accompaniment can be found in Sikh scriptures and art works.

This chapter illustrates the details of these two major performing aspects, as well as other features of Sikh devotional music proposed in the gurmat sangīt revival. I argue that some concepts actually belong to collective memories or imaginations of the core proponents (i.e. members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee), as there is no concrete evidence (from any Sikh scriptures or corresponding manuscripts) supporting the development of these concepts at Sikh Gurus’ times. Instead, they can be found in ancient or contemporary theories of Indian music and historical portraits. From the two major performing aspects, I explain how and why these concepts are related or not related to the “traditional style” of kīrtan performance at Sikh Gurus’ times. I also discuss musical details that have not reached a consensus among members of the Rāg Nirnayak

Committee, yet they are regarded as important aspects of Sikh devotional music and highlighted in the AGSS. At the end of this chapter, I contrast the common practice of Sikh devotional music and other experimentations in the 20th and 21st centuries with the context of gurmat sangīt revival as proposed by the AGSS.

### SINGING IN PRESCRIBED RĀGAS

“Prescribed rāgas” refer to rāgas stated in the major scripture of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib. Śabad kīrtans are assigned and categorized under a specific rāga, and there are 31 main rāgas and 31 mixed rāgas.<sup>70</sup> Main rāgas are considered to be in association with Indian classical tradition (both Hindustani and Carnatic traditions), regions (mostly Punjab region), religions, and seasons. Here are some examples: main rāgas *sirī rāg*, *ṭōḍī*, *tilang*, *bilāval*, *rāmkalī*, and *jaijāvanti* are of the Hindustani music tradition, main rāgas *tūkhārī* and *kānarā*, and mixed rāgas *gauṛī dakhṇī*, *vaḍhans dakhṇī*, *māru dakhṇī*, *bilāval dakhṇī*, *rāmkalī dakhṇī*, and *prabhātī dakhṇī* are of the Carnatic music tradition. *Mājh* is a regional rāga of Punjab, *gūjarī* belongs to the Gurjar ethnic group, and *basant* and *malhār* are to be performed in spring and rainy seasons, respectively.<sup>71</sup> Besides, there are mixed rāgas unique to the Sikh tradition: *gauṛī bairāgaṅ*, *gauṛī mālva*, *gauṛī guārerī*, *gauṛī dīpakī*, *gauṛī mājh*, *gauṛī mālā*, *gauṛī soraṭh*,

---

<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the order of rāgas listed in the Guru Granth Sahib is rather unknown; indeed, it is not the concern of any Sikh musicians or scholars. For names of 31 main rāgas and 31 mixed rāgas, please refer to Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

<sup>71</sup> Bor ed. 1999, Gurnam Singh 2008, and Jaswant Singh 2008.

*gaurī pūrbī dīpakī, āsā kāphī, tilang kāphī, sūhī kāphī, sūhī lalit, bilāval gōṇḍ, māru kāphī, basant hindol, and prabhātī bibhās.*

Musical details of the prescribed rāgas have been agreed upon and standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. These include *āroh* (ascending form), *avroh* (descending form), *sur* (note), *ṭhāṭ* (scale), *jātī* (mode class), *samān* (time), *vādī* (the most important note), *samvādī* (the second most important note), *sukkh ang* (main style of playing), and *sur visthār* (variation of note). These musical details, together with Indian notations and audio recordings illustrated by different Rāg Nirnayak Committee members have been released as publications of major teaching resources for Sikh music academies in Punjab and overseas.

From when and where was the requirement of singing in prescribed rāgas and its details developed? Did the Rāg Nirnayak Committee rely on certain written sources, or did the members just discuss based on their oral tradition of learning and performing experience? In the following passages, I give evidence for and against the requirement by discussing controversies of rāgas as the requirement of kīrtan singing; functions and designations of rāgas in Sikh scriptures; section of Rāgmālā in the Guru Granth Sahib; and rāgas' details and their origins.

### **Controversies of Rāgas as the Requirement of Kīrtan Singing**

As the core direction of Sikh devotional music practice, singing in prescribed rāgas has been regarded as one of two major performing aspects in the annual AGSS.

Nevertheless, there was no concrete evidence (e.g. written references) supporting the performance of Sikh devotional music in any rāgas (prescribed or non-prescribed), or stating the importance of singing in rāgas at the Sikh devotional practice. While there is a small proportion of gurbānīs mentioning rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib, gurbānīs and their content of description are summarized as follows (bolded when mentioning of rāgas or rāgas' names):

- a) Rāgas are closely related to singing, chanting, and music, though the relation between them is not explained:

“*kete **rāg** parī siū kahīan kete tere gāvaṅhāre...* (So many **rāgas**, so many musicians singing there...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 6);

“*kete tere **rāg** parī siū kahīahi kete tere gāvaṅhāre* (There are so many **rāgas** and musical harmonies to You; so many minstrels sing hymns of You...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 8, and 347);

“*gāvahi **rāg** bhāt bahu bolah ih manūā khelai khel...* (You sing in so many **rāgas** and harmonies, and you talk so much, but this mind of yours is only playing a game...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 368);

“*dhan su **rāg** surangre ālāpat sabh tikh jāi...* (Blessed are those beautiful **rāgas** which, when chanted, quench all thirst...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 958); and

“*ik gāvahi **rāg** parīā **rāg** na bhījai...* (Some sing according to traditional **rāgas**, but the Lord is not pleased by these **rāgas**...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1285).

- b) Some prescribed rāgas, including sṛī rāg, gauṛī, kedārā, malhār, mārū, and sorāṭh, have been discussed with their spiritual functions and emotional effects in the Guru Granth Sahib:

“***rāgā** vich sṛīrāg hai je sach dhare piār...* (Among the **rāgas**, sṛī rāg is the best, if it inspires you to enshrine love for the True Lord...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 83);

“**gauṛī rāg** sulakhaṇī je khasamai chit karei... (**Gauṛī rāga** is auspicious, if, through it, one comes to think of his Lord and Master...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 311);

“**kedārā rāgā** vich jāṇīai bhāī śabde kare piāru... (Among the rāgas, **kedārā rāga** is known as good, o siblings of destiny, if through it, one comes to love the word of the śabads...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1087);

“**malhār sītal rāgu** hai har dhiāiai sānt hoe... (**Malhār** is a calming and soothing **rāga**; meditating on the Lord brings peace and tranquility...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1283);”

“**gurmukh malhār rāg** jo karahi tin man tan sītal hoe... (Those gurmukhs who sing in **malhār rāga**, their minds and bodies become cool and clam...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1285); and

“**jīte panch bairāīā Nānak saphal mārū** ih rāg..... **soraṭh** so ras pījīai kabhū na phīk ā hoe... (When the five enemies are overcome, O Nānak, the musical measure of **rāga mārū** becomes fruitful.....in **rāga soraṭh**, drink in this sublime essence, which never loses its taste...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1425).

- c) Rāgas are revealed through the sound current of *nād* (sound) to spiritual attainment and the ultimate truth:

“**koī gāvai rāgī nādī bedī bahu bhāt kar**... (Some sing of the Lord, through musical rāgas and the sound current of the nād, through the Vedas, and in so many ways...)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 450); and

“**sabhna rāgān** vich so bhalā bhāī jīt vasimā man āe.....**rāg** nād sabh sach hai kīmat kahī jāe..... **rāgai** nādai bāhrā inī hukam na būjhā jāe... (Among all **rāgas**, that one is sublime, O siblings of destiny, by which the Lord comes to abide in the mind...those **rāgas** which are in the sound current of the nād are totally true; their value cannot be expressed.....those **rāgas** which are not in the sound current of the *nād* – by these, the Lord’s will cannot be understood)” (Guru Granth Sahib, 1423).

In sum, only a small proportion of gurbāṇīs states the close relationship between rāgas, singing, chanting, and music; spiritual functions and emotional effects of selected

rāgas; and rāgas' usage to reach ultimate truth and spiritual attainment. Yet, there are no gurbānīs stating that one should sing in prescribed or non-prescribed rāgas.

### **Functions and Designations of Rāgas in Sikh Scriptures**

The idea that “one should sing kīrtans according to the prescribed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib” implies that these rāgas have musical functions in the religious context. However, not all Sikh scholars have agreed with this statement. In his research about the evolution of Sikh scripture, Mann (1993) points out that although “Sikh Gurus knew enough about music to set their hymns to various rāgas,” it may not mean that the division of the content of Sikh scripture in rāgas is the result of their interest in music (132–33). In ancient manuscripts like *Gitagovinda (Song of Krishna)* by Jayadeva in the 12th century and padas of Sūrdās in the 16th century, a rāga is assigned to each composition, and textual organization is based on rāga division. At that time, the Guru Granth Sahib was a compilation of various early manuscripts of scriptural text.

The rāga designation has undergone changes as shown in *Goindvāl Pothīs* (1570–572), *Kartarpur Pothīs* (1604), and the *Adi Granth* (1604)/*Guru Granth Sahib* (1705).<sup>72</sup> While both *Goindvāl Pothīs* and *Kartarpur Pothīs* are considered recensions of the *Adi Granth*, the former was written by (Baba) Shansram (grandson of Gurū

---

<sup>72</sup> On top of the rāga designations, there are various researches studying the evolution of the *Adi Granth* /*Guru Granth Sahib* from other manuscripts, such as changes in sequence of rāgas, textual differences, and numbers of śabads from different Sikh Gurus (Mann 1993, Pashaura Singh 2000).

Amardās), and the latter was inscribed by (Bhai) Gurdās as dictation by Gurū Arjun.<sup>73</sup> Two rāgas, *mārū* and *kedārā*, appear separately in the *Adi Granth/Guru Granth Sahib* and the *Kartarpur Pothīs*; moreover, a combined rāga title of *mārū kedārā* is found in *Goindvāl Pothīs*. Another two rāgas, *sūhī* and *sūhī lalit*, appear separately in the *Adi Granth/Guru Granth Sahib* and the *Kartarpur Pothīs*; moreover, a combined rāga title of *prabhātī lalit* is found in *Goindvāl Pothīs* (Mann 1993:138–39). As the text of the *Ādi Granth/the Guru Granth Sahib* evolves along with the discrepancies of rāga designations in early manuscripts like *Goindvāl Pothīs* and *Kartarpur Pothīs*, it further problematizes the concern of kīrtan singing in prescribed rāgas: how can we ensure that the rāgas stated in the *Guru Granth Sahib* were those prescribed by the Sikh Gurus, given that there is no unity of gurbāṇīs between various early manuscripts and that of the *Adi Granth/Guru Granth Sahib* as the official holy scripture nowadays?

### **Section of Rāgmālā in the Guru Granth Sahib**

The *rāgmālā* section is in the last two pages (1429–430) of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. These two pages give a list of six rāgas with 30 *rāginīs* (wives) and 48 *putras* (sons) (Appendix 10). This list does not correspond with the main and mixed rāgas used to categorize gurbāṇīs in the middle section of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Twenty-three names are mentioned in both the middle section (as the main rāgas) and the *rāgmālā*

---

<sup>73</sup> The two volumes of the *Goindvāl Pothīs* contain 300 and 224 folios respectively (with some blank pages). The first volume is in the custody of the Bhalla descendants of Gurū Amardās in Jalandhar, and the second is in the possession of a collateral family in Pinjore, Haryana. The *Kartarpur Pothīs* has 974 folios and it is in the custody of Marajit Singh Sodhi of Kartarpur, the dissenting descendant of Gurū Hargobind. For detailed discussion of these early manuscripts, please refer to Pashaura Singh 2000:28–82.

section (as rāgas, rāginīs, or putras). Names of eight main rāgas in the middle section (*bihāgarā, vaḍhans, mājh, jaitsrī, rāmkalī, tūkhārī, prabhātī, and jaijāvantī*) do not appear in the rāgmālā section again. On the contrary, many names in the rāgmālā section (e.g. *mālakausak, hindol, dīpak, megh*) are neither main nor mixed rāgas prescribed in the middle section of the Guru Granth Sahib.

There is much controversy over the meaning and function of these two pages. While some scholars claim it is a summary of various rāgas used in the middle section of the Guru Granth Sahib (McLeod 1976:71); some argue that it is the catalogue of rāgas used in Indian music of the time, i.e. the early 17th century only (Cole and Sambhi ed. 1997:130); others focus on the argument of whether rāgmālā is gurbānī, and whether it was included in the earliest version of the Adi Granth (Brown ed. 1999:201). Whatever the controversy, the rāgmālā section problematizes the issue of prescribed rāgas with doubts and interrogation: is the rāgmālā section a summary of the rāgas used in the middle section of the Guru Granth Sahib, or is it the catalogue of rāgas used in Indian music of the time? This leads to yet another question: does it mean that śabads may be sung in rāgas other than the prescribed ones? If it is concluded that the rāgas in the middle section function just as a means of cataloguing śabads and not as performing guidelines, what, then, are the implications?



## Rāgas' Details and Their Origins

Musical details of the prescribed rāgas, approved and standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee, have been published in *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 1 (The Sacred Book of Gurū Nānak's Music System, Part 1)* (Sukhwant Singh ed. n.y.) and *Raag Sarup Nirnay: Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (Sukhwant Singh ed. 2008), in Punjabi and English transliteration, respectively. While most but not all performing groups have been following these musical details strictly at the AGSS performing stage, only those kirtan performances following these details are selected and included in the audio-visual recordings published by the Vismaad Naad (i.e. publication house of the AGSS organizer). In the context of the AGSS, these details have been uniquely designed and confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee, for its discrepancies from other writings of Sikh devotional and Hindustani music.

*Sirī rāg*, the first main rāga prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib, is used as an example to illustrate the discrepancies of musical details as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and other publications about Sikh devotional music (Table 4.1). The four publications used for comparison include *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 1*; *Sikh Musicology: Sri Guru Granth Sahib and Hymns of the Human Spirit* (Gurnam Singh 2001); *Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kirtan* by (Gobind Singh Mansukhani 1982); and *The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas* (Bor ed. 1999). While the first three publications serve as guidebooks that introduce the Sikh devotional music tradition, the last publication is also a guidebook but in Hindustani music.

Publications	Sukhwant Singh ed. n.y.	Gurnam Singh 2001	Mansukhani 1982	Bor ed. 1999
Āroh	S <u>R</u> , <u>M</u> P, N <u>Ś</u>	S <u>R</u> , <u>M</u> P, N <u>Ś</u>	<b>S <u>R</u> <u>R</u> P, <u>M</u> P N <u>Ś</u></b>	S <u>R</u> <u>M</u> P N <u>Ś</u> , <b>S <u>R</u> P, <u>M</u> P N <u>Ś</u> <u>Ṛ</u> <u>Ś</u>, <u>Ṛ</u> N</b>
Avroh	<u>Ś</u> N <u>D</u> P, <u>M</u> G <u>R</u> , S	<u>Ś</u> N <u>D</u> P, <u>M</u> G <u>R</u> , S	<u>Ś</u> N <u>D</u> P, <u>M</u> D <u>M</u> G <u>R</u> , R R P R G G R S	<b><u>D</u> P, <u>M</u> P <u>D</u> <u>M</u> G <u>R</u>, <u>R</u> G <u>R</u> S</b>
Svār	G and D are omitted in ascent; R & D notes are flattened notes; M is the sharpened note; The rest of the notes are natural	<b>G is omitted in ascent;</b> G & D are flattened notes; M is the sharpened note; The rest of the notes are natural	S, R, and P are used in descent; M is the sharpened note	G and D are omitted in ascent; R is the flattened note <b>with most articulation</b>
Thāṭ	Pūrvī	Pūrvī	Pūrvī	Not stated
Jāṭī	Auṛav-Sanpūran (pentatonic-heptatonic)	Auṛav-Sanpūran (pentatonic-heptatonic)	Auṛav-Sanpūran (pentatonic-heptatonic)	Not stated
Vādī	R	R	R	Not stated
Samvādī	P	P	P	Not stated
Time of Performance	1st quarter of night (6-9pm)	Dawn	Evening (6-9pm)	Winter, early evening, after sunset
Others	<b>Main Notes: S, S-<u>R</u>, G-<u>R</u>, P, P <u>M</u>, G S-R, S-R, S</b> <b>Paintings of prescribed rāgas (both main and mixed rāgas) are included</b>	Nil	<b>Atmosphere: Solemn and grave</b>	<b>Pakad (musical phrase): S, <u>R</u>, <u>R</u>, P, <u>M</u>, <u>R</u>, G R, S</b>

Table 4.1: Comparison of musical details of sirī rāg as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and other publications.

By comparing musical details of sirī rāg in these publications, one can find that some (but not all) musical details from the latter three publications (i.e. *Sikh Musicology*; *Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kirtan*; and *The Raga Guide*) are also included in the first publication (i.e. *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 1*) that states musical details designed and confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. Both the discrepancies found in illustrating musical details of āroh, avroh, and svār (bolded in the corresponding rows), and descriptions of main svār and paintings (bolded in the row titled “others”) that

are found only in *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 1*, prove that musical details designed and confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee were referenced from common knowledge (of Sikh devotional and Hindustani music) and were added with new materials simultaneously.

Together with Indian notation as examples in *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 1*, these musical details give more indication but limit the performing flexibility when comparing to the original presentation of the Guru Granth Sahib that only states the rāga, composer, and poetic form of the śabad. Musical details, such as rāga, jāṭī, ṭhāṭ, and time dimension, have illustrated the adoption of concepts and theories from ancient treatises and contemporary practice.

First of all, rāga has been the most authentic and fundamental melodic format of Indian music in general, regardless of style: classical, folk, regional, or popular. Moreover, nothing about “Gurū Nānak singing in specific rāgas” has been mentioned in *Janamsākhī* (narrative manuscripts about Gurū Nānak’s life), the discussion of rāgas can be found in Indian treatises as early as the 14th century, such as Sudhakalasa’s *Saṅgītopandiśad-sāroddhāra* (c.1350) and Kallinatha’s *Kalānidhi* (c.1450) (Simms 2000:40–41).

Second, the three types of jāṭī, of which the prescribed rāgas belong to one or two of them, were first described in *Bṛhaddeśī* of the 9th century and *Saṅgītaratnākara* of the 1200s. While *Bṛhaddeśī* is the first musical treatise in which the word “rāga” first appeared, *Saṅgītaratnākara* was one of the last writings on the ancient theory that defined Indian music as a whole (with no distinction of Hindustani and Carnatic

tradition). The concept of jāṭī defines the pattern of rāgas in five, six, or seven notes, known as pentatonic, hexatonic, and heptatonic, respectively. While there may be a varying number of notes in ascending or descending patterns, nine possibilities of jāṭī are derived as follows:

<b>Jāṭī</b>	<b>Ascending</b>	<b>Descending</b>
1	Pentatonic	Pentatonic
2	Pentatonic	Hexatonic
3	Pentatonic	Heptatonic
4	Hexatonic	Hexatonic
5	Hexatonic	Heptatonic
6	Hexatonic	Pentatonic
7	Heptatonic	Heptatonic
8	Heptatonic	Pentatonic
9	Heptatonic	Hexatonic

Table 4.2: Nine possibilities of jāṭī in rāgas.

As the main and mixed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib utilize all nine jāṭīs, the musical modes are limited to pentatonic, hexatonic, and heptatonic patterns. The designation of jāṭīs by the Rāg Nirṇayak Committee reflects the adoption of ancient Indian music theory and concept, and the concretization of rāga pattern with the number of notes (in both ascending and descending forms).

The main and mixed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib, their assigned time dimensions and ṭhāt, are agreed upon and confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee as follows:

<b>Time Dimension</b>	<b>Main Rāgas (Ṭhāt)</b>	<b>Mixed Rāgas (Ṭhāt)</b>
1st Quarter of the Day (6:00a.m.–9:00a.m.)	Āsā (bilāval) Rāmkalī (bhairav) Bhairo (bhairav) Prabhātī (bilāval)	Gauṛī Dakḥṇī (bhairav) Gauṛī Bairāgaṇ (bhairav) Bilāval Mangal (bilāval) Māru Dakḥṇī Basant Hindol (pūrvī-mārvā) Prabhātī Bibhās Bibhās Prabhātī Prabhātī Dakḥṇī
2nd Quarter of the Day (9:00a.m.–12:00noon)	Gūjarī (toṛī) Devghandhārī (bilāval) Ṭōḍī (toṛī) Sūhī (bilāval) Bilāval (bilāval) Gōṇḍ (bilāval) Vaḍhans (khamāj) Basant (bilāval)	Āsāvarī (āsāvarī) Āsāvarī Sudhang (āsāvarī) Devghandhār (āsāvarī) Sūhī Kāphī Sūhī Lalit Bilāval Gōṇḍ (bilāval)
3rd Quarter of the Day (12:00noon–3:00p.m.)	Dhanāsarī (kāphī) Tilang (khamāj) Mārū (khamāj) Sārang (kāphī)	Vaḍhans Dakḥṇī Bilāval Dakḥṇī (bilāval)
4th Quarter of the Day (3:00p.m.–6:00p.m.)	Jaitsrī (pūrvī) Bairāṛī (mārvā) Mālī Gauṛā (mārvā) Tūkhārī (toṛī)	Gauṛī Mālvā

Table 4.3: Time dimensions of the main and mixed rāgas as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (4 quarters of the day).

<b>Time Dimension</b>	<b>Main Rāgas (Thāṭ)</b>	<b>Mixed Rāgas (Thāṭ)</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of the Night (6:00p.m.–9:00p.m.)	Sirī Rāg (pūrvī) Mājḥ (khamāj) Gauṛī (bhairav) Āsā (bilāval) Kedārā (kaliān) Kaliāṇ (kaliān)	Gauṛī Guārerī (mārvā) Gauṛī Chetī (pūrvī) Gauṛī Dīpakī Gauṛī Pūrbī Dīpakī (bhairav) Gauṛī Pūrbī (pūrvī) Gauṛī Mājḥ Gauṛī Mālā Gauṛī Soraṭḥ Āsā Kāphī Rāmkaḷī Dakḥṇī (bhairav) Māru Kāphī (kāphī) Kaliāṇ Bhupālī (kaliān)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of the Night (9:00p.m.–12:00a.m.)	Bihāgaṛā (bilāval) Soraṭḥ (khamāj) Naṭ Nārāiṇ (bilāval) Kānaṛā (kāphī) Jaijāvantī (khamāj)	Tilang Kāphī (khamāj) Naṭ (bilāval)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of the Night (12:00a.m.–3:00a.m.)	Malhār (khamāj)	--
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of the Night (3:00a.m.–6:00a.m.)	--	--

Table 4.4: Time dimensions of the main and mixed rāgas as confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (4 quarters of the night).

All rāgas are assigned to one quarter of the day or night except āsā, which can be performed in the 1st quarter of both day (6:00a.m.–9:00a.m.) and night (6:00p.m.–9:00p.m.). Neither main nor mixed rāgas are assigned to the 4th quarter of the night (3:00a.m.–6:00a.m.), as the empty time period is left for the performance of Āsā Dī Vār and meditation at dawn.<sup>74</sup> Thāṭ is the scale-type system derived by Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936) in the early 20th century as to provide order to the ragas of

<sup>74</sup> This information is obtained from interview with Baba Sohan Singh and Principal Paramjot Singh.

Hindustani music. Bhatkhande developed ten *ṭhāṭs*, and all major *rāgas* are assigned to one of these ten, as shown in brackets after each *rāga* (please refer to Tables 4.2 and 4.3). Some mixed *rāgas* are assigned to *ṭhāṭ* while some are not, and they are shown with no brackets in the table.

The concept of performing time for main and mixed *rāgas* is also derived from Bhatkhande. In his *Hindusthānī Sangīt-Paddhait* (1910–1932), Bhatkhande suggests the relationship between ten *ṭhāṭ-rāgas* and their appropriate performance times as such: starting at 7:00a.m., 24 hours of the day and night are divided into eight three-hour sections, where certain *rāgas* are assigned to each section. While two concepts (*ṭhāṭ* and performing time) are derived from the 20th century scholarship, it is noted that most members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee received musical training in the Hindustani tradition, and they may determine certain details through reliance on their knowledge of Hindustani music, but not specifically of the Sikh devotional tradition.

In various interviews conducted by Nirinjan Kaur Khalsa (2012), a number of Rāg Nirnayak Committee members regarded certain prescribed *rāgas* as being based on Hindustani music. While Bhai Tejpal Singh admitted that he did not have any formal training of Sikh devotional singing, he started singing *gurbāṇī kīrtans* with his brother (Bhai Surinderpal Singh) only after training in Hindustani music to an “advanced” level and being well received by audiences.<sup>75</sup> Besides, he also claimed the authenticity of

---

<sup>75</sup> As Bhai Tejpal Singh claimed that it was his training of Hindustani music “had attained that stage” that he started singing *kīrtans* with his brother, I interpret that quote as an advanced stage so that the brothers are skillful enough to perform *kīrtans* in prescribed *rāgas* based on the knowledge of Hindustani music (Khalsa 2012:14).

gurbāṇī kīrtan as being derived from Hindustani music, but not from its unique tradition that was commonly practiced by the Sikh community. Dr. Ajit Singh Paintal from Delhi even regarded the tradition of gurbāṇī kīrtan as “inauthentic” and “in need of correction to match with Hindustani music” (15).

Corresponding to various claims by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee members, throughout my research and interviews, I have never met any informants who deliberately highlighted the prescribed rāgas as being different from those of the same name in Hindustani music. Nevertheless, there is no evidence proving the tradition of gurbāṇī kīrtan as being derived from the Hindustani music, or vice versa. The relation between Hindustani music and gurbāṇī kīrtan can only be confirmed in the following ways: the demarcation of Hindustani and Carnatic music started approximately during the 16th and 17th centuries, around the same time period when Gurū Arjun compiled the Adi Granth in 1604; some rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib share the same names as those found in Hindustani music; and most prominent Sikh musicians (especially those with Hindustani music training in their background) based their performance of gurbāṇī kīrtan on their knowledge of Hindustani music.

Similar to the discrepancies found in musical details of prescribed rāgas from other writings of Sikh devotional and Hindustani music, the performing time aspect of prescribed rāgas as agreed upon and standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee is also different from other writings, such as Protopapas’ listing of eight time periods (2011b, Table 6.3); Mansukhani’s discussion of “rāgas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (1982, Chapter 11);” and Bhatkhande 1910–1932. Whereas the concept of the three-hour session remains



the same in all these publications, the assignment of prescribed rāgas (or ṭhāṭs of those rāgas) to certain time periods is different. The discrepancies illustrate that knowledge of prescribed rāgas assigned to time periods is not uniform among those Sikh musicians who claimed to be practicing the “authentic” Sikh devotional music tradition.

### **RE-INTRODUCING INSTRUMENTS OF THE SIKH GURUS’ TIMES**

Another major performing aspect of the AGSS objective is based on the belief that instruments, mostly plucked-string or bowed string, were once employed to accompany kīrtan singing. After being replaced by the harmonium in the 19th century, these instruments were then re-introduced to revive the traditional style of Sikh devotional music performance. The major instruments re-introduced include the rabāb, tāus and dilrubā, sarandā, and tānpurā from the stringed category. Tablā is also “officially” regarded as the major percussion instrument in the gurmat sangīt performance, although one musician proposed a similar membranophone (*jorī*) used during the time period of the Sikh Gurus’. Other instruments such as tablā, sarangi, swarmaṇḍal, violin, and harmonium are not regarded as the main instruments of the gurmat sangīt revival; yet, they have been found on the performing stages of the AGSS throughout the years. The following section explains how these instruments are related to gurmat sangīt and other music traditions, and provides evidence supporting the use of these instruments during the time period of the Sikh Gurus’.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Gurnam Singh 2008, Sikh Saaj 2013, Sikh Spectrum 2002, and Sukhwant Singh ed. 2008.

## Rabāb

Rabāb was introduced to the Indian classical music scene around the 14th and 15th centuries. It is the plucked lute precursor to the contemporary *sarod*, and its emerging popularity can be traced to its playing by Akbar’s legendary musician Tansen at the Mughal court in the late 16th century. There are two types of rabāb adopted in the common practice of gurmat sangīt performance, namely the Persian/Afghani rabāb and the Sikh/dhrupad rabāb (Illustration 4.1):



Illustration 4.1: The Sikh/dhrupad rabāb (left, by Bhai Manbir Singh) and the Persian/Afghani rabāb (right, by Principal Satnam Singh) (VCD Cover).

The Persian/Afghani rabāb is found primarily in Afghanistan and Kashmir. It is believed that at the time of Gurū Nānak, Muslim rabābīs performed kīrtans with this type of rabāb, reflecting a Persian influence during the earliest development of Sikh devotional

music. This type of rabāb possesses four main strings and six to seven sympathetic strings and has a round-bellied sound box as resonator.

The Sikh/dhrupad rabāb has a round sound box as resonator and six main strings. Its immediate predecessor is the Persian/Afghani rabāb. As a popular instrument in Hindustani music, it is depicted in numerous miniature paintings of the 19th century. The rabāb became extinct in the beginning of the 20th century, and was replaced by its modifications such as the sarod and *sursingār*.

According to an online article introducing the gurmat sangeet project held at the Punjabi University Patiala (title: “Gurmat Sangeet Project: Punjabi University Patiala”), the Sikh rabāb is also known as the Firandia rabāb, named after (Bhai) Firandā, who carved the instrument for Bhai Mardānā to accompany Gurū Nānak’s singing of gurbāñīs. The portrait below (Illustration 4.2) is a manuscript of *Janamsākhī* (dated approximately 1800–1900):<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Exhibits of the Asian Art Museum, object ID:1998.58.13 (Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture 2014).



Illustration 4.2: Gurū Nānak (right) met Bhai Firandā who carved the rabāb (middle).

The painting illustrates the meeting of Gurū Nānak (right) with Bhai Firandā (middle), in which the latter presented the rabāb to the former with the accompaniment of Bhai Mardānā (left). Incidents of “Mardānā meets the Minstrel” and “Bābā Nānak meets Firandā” have been recorded in the tradition of Bālā Janamsākhī (McLeod 1980:273). The rabāb that Bhai Firandā presented to Gurū Nānak is in the shape of a Persian/Afghani rabāb, which may suggest the overlapping of the usage of both the rabāb types (Sikh/dhrupad rabāb and Persian/Afghani rabāb) at the time. Other evidence supporting the usage of rabāb is discussed in the section of “Evidence in Historical Portraits and Early Manuscripts” of this chapter.

The oldest Sikh rabāb still existing today belongs to Gurū Gobind Singh.<sup>78</sup> This instrument was given to Maharaja Sidh Sen of Suket Mandi as a gift in c.1692, and it is now on display at the Suket Mandi Gurdwara in Himachal Pradesh. This is a typical dhrupad rabāb and is more than four feet in length. It is believed that since the time of Gurū Nānak, the size of the Sikh rabāb had increased so that it could be heard among growing congregations. At present, the Sikh rabāb is just the dhrupad rabāb commonly used by musicians of Indian classical tradition.

#### **Other Stringed Instruments: Tāus, Dilrubā, Sarandā, and Tānpurā**



Illustration 4.3: Stringed instruments introduced at the 1991 AGSS (from left to right): dilrubā, sarandā, dilrubā, and tāus.

---

<sup>78</sup> In March 2013, the Gurmat Sangeet Department of the Punjabi University Patiala made a replica of the rabāb originally used by Bhai Mardānā. The rabāb is 35 inches long; it is made up of walnut wood with 6 strings, and it weighs 6 kg. (Sharma 2013).

Tāus and dilrubā (Illustrations 3.4 and 4.3) are two bowed-string instruments of Persian origin. Tāus means “peacock” in Persian. This instrument is a long-necked, fretted lute with a peacock-like shape. There are four main strings and 16 sympathetic metal strings. The instrument was introduced by Gurū Hargobind, the 6th Guru. It is now extinct in Indian music practice. Dilrubā means “heart stealer” in Persian, and it is a modified version of the tāus. Similar to the tāus, it is a long-necked and fretted lute with four main strings and 12–15 sympathetic strings. This instrument is also played with a bow. Unlike the tāus, the dilrubā is smaller, lighter, and not in the peacock shape. It was introduced by Gurū Gobind Singh, the 10th Guru, for its more portable nature, so that soldiers could keep the instruments during their warfare journey.<sup>79</sup>

The sarandā (Illustrations 3.4 and 4.3) was introduced by Gurū Amar Dās (the 3rd Guru) and Gurū Arjun (the 5th Guru,) of whom the latter was greatly involved in the propagation and development of musical instruments among the Sikhs. This bowed-string instrument has its origin in folk music, and it is a hybrid instrument based on the sarod.

Gurū Gobind Singh, the 10th Guru, introduced the tānpurā (Illustration 3.4), the typical drone instrument of Indian classical music, in kīrtan recitation.

---

<sup>79</sup> Instead of dilrubā, a similar instrument *isrāj/esrāj* is mentioned as instrument of gurmat sangīt in Gurnam Singh 2008. According to the author, isrāj was frequently played by Sikh kīrtanīya from the period of Gurū Arjun.

### **Percussion Instruments: Tablā, Jorī, and Pakhāvaj**

Tablā (Illustration 3.4) provides rhythmic accompaniment to any kīrtan performance at gurdwaras nowadays. This percussion instrument also accompanied kīrtan singing at Sikh Gurus' times. It was introduced by the 5th Sikh Guru, Gurū Arjun. According to Bhai Baldeep Singh, a similar instrument of tablā named jorī was introduced by Gurū Arjun to accompany the rabāb in playing for kīrtan singing. The jorī is regarded as a predecessor of tablā and inheritor of pakhāvaj/*mridangam*. Though being similar to tablā in outlook and structure, the jorī is heavier, larger in size, and has a deeper and louder sound (Allyn 2013). Both the pakhāvaj and jorī have been occasionally used to accompany kīrtan singing at different years of the AGSS (Illustrations 4.4 and 4.5).



Illustration 4.4: Pakhāvaj (left, by Bhai Baldeep Singh) as rhythmic accompaniment for kīrtan singing at the 2001 AGSS; Bibi Jaswant Kaur in the middle as the lead vocalist.



Illustration 4.5: Jorī (right, by Bhai Baldeep Singh) as rhythmic accompaniment for kīrtan singing at the 1997 AGSS; Bhaii Balbir Singh in the middle as the lead vocalist.

### **Other Instruments: Harmonium, Swarmaṇḍal, Violin, Sarangi, Mandolin, and Electronic Keyboard**

While the above instruments (mostly stringed ones) have been regarded as the dominant instruments of the gurmat sangīt revival, some other instruments occasionally appear on the kīrtan stage. From the highest to the lowest frequency of appearance on the AGSS stage, these instruments are harmonium, swarmaṇḍal and violin, sarangi and mandolin, and electronic keyboard. These instruments appear on the stage with the above stringed instruments at the annual AGSS. This implies a common acceptance as accompaniment for kīrtan singing by the participants (both performers and audience members) at the event.



The harmonium (Illustrations 3.1 and 4.5) is a popular melodic accompaniment of kīrtan performance at gurdwaras nowadays. It was adopted to accompany kīrtan singing sometime during the 19th century. Because of its portability, more durable nature, and relative ease in its technical mastery, the harmonium virtually replaced stringed instruments as the major accompaniment of Sikh music performance during most of the 20th century.

The swarmaṇḍal (Illustration 4.6) is an instrument sometimes used in accompanying Hindustani vocal music, and the violin (Illustration 4.7 and Appendix 5.17) is the instrument of Carnatic tradition. Similarly, these two instruments have been occasionally used to accompany kīrtan singing at different years of the AGSS.



Illustration 4.6: Swarmaṇḍal (middle, by Bhai Mahinder Singh Thumri) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1993 AGSS.



Illustration 4.7: Sarangi (left) and violin (right) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 2002 AGSS.

Sarangi (Illustration 4.7) is the only bowed-string instrument that provides melodic accompaniment or a rhythmic timeline in Hindustani music. It is to note that the sarangi performed on the AGSS stage is different from that associated with the Sikh *ḍhāḍī* performance. As discussed in Chapter 2, the latter is a folk instrument introduced by the 6th Sikh Guru, Gurū Hargobind, and it is played in a standing posture. Neither the mandolin (Illustration 4.8) or electronic keyboard (Illustration 4.9) is as commonly used as other stringed instruments like the *swarmaṇḍal* and violin, nor are they “standard” instruments on the performing stage of Indian music. Moreover, they are found in different years of the AGSS.



Illustration 4.8: Mandolin (left) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1997 AGSS; Bhai Sarabjeet Singh in the middle as the lead vocalist.



Illustration 4.9: Electronic keyboards (left and middle) as kīrtan accompaniment at the 1997 AGSS.

## Evidence in Historical Portraits, Photos, and Sikh Manuscripts

As another performing aspect in the AGSS objective, evidence of playing stringed instruments along with śabad kīrtan singing can be found in Sikh manuscripts, miscellaneous historical portraits of the 18th–20th centuries, and photos in the pre- and post-Partition period. Moreover, the rabāb is the only instrument described in Sikh manuscripts and historical paintings of kīrtan performance. While most of the text and pictorial evidence describes the association of Bhai Mardānā and Gurū Nānak, others present the scene of folk music activities at the Sikh Gurus’ time, and kīrtan singing by musicians at gurdwaras during the Partition period.

The word “rabāb” is found in various early manuscripts of Sikh scriptures, and is associated with Bhai Mardānā and Gurū Nānak. Two examples are found in vārs by Bhai Gurdās (bolded when the name of the instrument appears):

“*iku bābā akāl rūpu dūjā **rabābī** Mardānā... (Firstly Baba, Gurū Nānak, was in the form of Timeless and secondly, he had his companion Mardānā, the **rabāb** player...)*” (Vār 1, stanza 35, line 2); and

“*bhalā **rabāb** vajāindā majalas mardānā mīrāsī... (Mardānā, the bard and witty person and a good player of **rabāb** in assemblies was a disciple of Gurū Nānak...)*” (Vār 11, stanza 13, line 4).

In addition, the rabāb is mentioned in association with music-making activities and under the religious context in *Savaiyā* by Gurū Gobind Singh (bolded when the name of the instrument appears):

“*jhālar tāl mridang upang **rabāb** līe sur sāj milāvai... (Various musical instruments like bells, cymbals, kettledrums, small drums, and **rabābs** are played together in harmonies...)*” (Dasam Granth, 190); and

“*tāl mridang muchang upang surang se nāda sunāvḥage | ḍaḍḥ bār tarang rabāb raṇ sankha asankha bajavahage...* (The sounds of drums will be heard; the tabors, the musical glasses, **rabābs** and conches etc. will be played...)” (Dasam Granth, 1152).

There are other instruments mentioned in these gurbāṇīs, such as *mridang* (mridangam), *jhālar* (bell), *tāl* (cymbals), and *upang* (small drum). Moreover, except for mridangam, they are not regarded as major instruments introduced by the Sikh Gurus to accompany devotional singing.<sup>80</sup>

The similar portrayal in the historical paintings reveals the rabāb played/held by Bhai Mardānā with Gurū Nānak in a seated posture, as shown in Illustrations 4.10 and 4.11.<sup>81</sup> These illustrations belong to two of the many other exhibits in similar scenes (i.e. Bhai Mardānā playing the rabāb with Gurū Nānak in a seated posture) at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco:<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> For discussion on mridangam, please refer to the section of “Percussion Instruments: Tablā, Jorī, and Pakhāvaj” in this chapter.

<sup>81</sup> Object IDs of Illustrations 4.10 and 4.11 are 1998.98 and 1998.58.28, respectively (Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture 2014).

<sup>82</sup> Other exhibits can be found in Brown ed. 1999 (Plates 3, 24, 34, and 35), Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh 2011 (3, Figure 2), Stronge ed. 1999 (Plates 27, 29, 61, and 121), and Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture (Object ID 1998.58.14, 1998.58.16, 1998.58.17, 1998.58.18, 1998.58.19, 1998.58.20, 1998.58.21, 1998.58.22, 1998.58.24, 1998.58.25, 1998.58.27, 1998.58.31, and 1998.58.35 in Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture 2014).



Illustration 4.10: Bhai Mardānā (left) is playing the (Sikh/dhrupad) rabāb to accompany the singing of Gurū Nānak (middle, holding a holy book).



Illustration 4.11: The meeting of Gurū Nānak and Kabīr, along with Bhai Mardānā (right) holding the (Persian/Afghani) rabāb.

The above two paintings show the usage of two rabāb types: Illustration 4.10 is the Sikh/dhrupad rabāb, and the painting originated from Punjab of India or Pakistan in approximately 1700-1800, and Illustration 4.11 shows the Persian/Afghani rabāb, and the painting originated from West Bengal state of India in approximately 1800–1900. According to the exhibit description provided by the Museum, Illustration 4.11 is a manuscript of *Janamsākhī*, where the incident of “meeting with Kabīr” had been recorded in the tradition of Mihartān Janamsākhī (McLeod 1968:74).

Other than the rabāb (in association with Bhai Mardānā), I am not able to locate other stringed instruments (as stated in the AGSS logo, i.e. sarandā, tānpurā, and tāus/dilrubā) in any of these paintings or portraits associated with the Sikh Gurus. Furthermore, folk instruments can be found in a portrait of celebrations and ceremonies in association with Gurū Nānak. An exhibit at the Asian Art Museum titled “Gurū Nānak’s Wedding Reception” illustrates the scene (Illustration 4.12) as below.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Object ID of Illustration 4.12 is 1998.58.7.



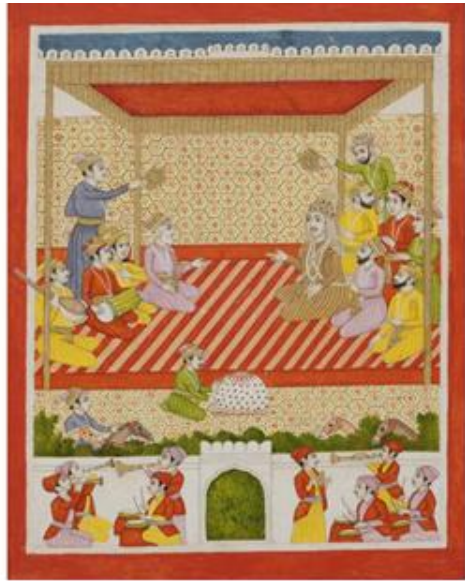


Illustration 4.12: Gurū Nānak’s wedding reception; wedding band at the bottom of the painting.

This painting is a manuscript of the *Janamsākhī*, where the event of “Bābā Nānak’s Betrothal and Marriage” has been recorded in the manuscripts of *B40 Janamsākhī* and *Ādi Sākhīs* (McLeod 1980:184,192). Under the shelter, Gurū Nānak (in light purple, holding his left hand showing welcoming gesture) is sitting along with a group of people on the right side, with one of them (Bhai Mardānā) holding a rabāb and another with a double-headed hand drum (dholak-like instrument). The wedding band at the bottom of the painting consists of eight musicians whose costumes are in similar dressing style and combination of colors (all in red overcoats, and red or pink turbans). Its instrumental combination suggests that of *ceṅṭa mēḷam*.<sup>84</sup> It is a ritual ensemble played

---

<sup>84</sup> Among various folk music ensembles in South Asia, I suggest *ceṅṭa mēḷam* as bearing the closest resemblance to the instrumentation and social functions of the portrait. Another ensemble in a similar instrumental combination is *naubat khānā*, a ritual ensemble played as announcement of prayer times. It



during temple ceremonies in South India. Ceṅṭa mēḷam involves instruments like cylindrical drums (*ceṅṭa*, played with one or two sticks), cymbals (*iḷatāḷam*), shawms (*kuḷal* or *nāgasvaram*); and semi-circular horns (*kompà*, not shown in the portrait). It usually includes over a hundred players, though only eight musicians are shown in the portrait.

There is evidence of employing other stringed instruments to accompany śabad kīrtan singing after the time period during which the Sikh Gurus lived. There are photos and sketches of Sikh musicians performing at gurdwaras before and after the Partition period. In *The Master's Presence: the Sikhs of Hazoor Sahib, Volume I: History*, a photo dated c.1880 records two musicians at the Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded, Maharashtra. The two musicians, both in white turbans and in seated posture, were playing tāūs and jorī, respectively (Nihang and Singh 2008:246). Another sketch in the book, by a European painter William Simpson, illustrates the interior of the Harmandir Sahib (Ibid.116–17). While the Guru Granth Sahib and the canopy are the most distinguished objects in the sketch, there is also a Sikh man's back with his left hand playing the *bāyān* (the left drum) of jorī.

Bhai Baldeep Singh illustrates a photo of Sikh musicians performing at the Dera Sahib Gurdwara, Lahore in his article “What is *Kīrtan*? Observations, Interventions and Personal Reflections (255, Figure 1).” The photo, belonging to the author, is dated 1935 with Bhai Jawala Singh (harmonium), Bhai Avtar Singh (tāūs), Bhai Ratan, and Bhai

---

involves instruments like kettledrums (*ḍhol*, *naqqārā*, and/or *dhūmsa*); cymbals (*jhāñjh*); and double-reed instruments with conical bores (*śahnāī*).

Gurcharan Singh (jorī). Another photo, also belonging to the author, shows Bhai Gurcharan Singh, Bhai Avtar Singh (tāūs), Bhai Kartar Singh, and Bhai Ratan Singh (tablā) in a live broadcast session at All India Radio Station, Jalandhar, Punjab, in 1949 (Ibid., Figure 2). The usage of different instrumentation in these two photos implies two trends. First, jorī and tablā have been used as rhythmic accompaniment of śabad kīrtan singing in the 1930s–50s; second, the imported instrument harmonium and stringed instrument tāūs were played on one occasion as melodic accompaniment of śabad kīrtan singing in the 1930s. The omission of the harmonium in the second photo is related to the performing context, All India Radio, where the air harmonium had been banned from 1940 until 1971 in broadcasts of the national radio (Rahaim 2011).

### **Instrumental Combination of the Gurmat Sangīt Revival**

The AGSS performing stage is shown with varieties of instrumental quantities and combinations. The instrumental combination is a hybridization of Sikh traditional music (Sikh/dhrupad rabāb, tāūs and dilrubā, sarandā, tānpurā, and tablā), Hindustani music (Sikh/dhrupad rabāb, tānpurā, sarangi, swarmaṇḍal, and tablā), Carnatic music (violin and mandolin), and foreign importation (harmonium and Persian/Afghani rabāb). Although stringed instruments of Sikh traditional music are highlighted in the AGSS theme, stringed instruments from other Indian music practices have been appearing on the AGSS stage. As has been the case with other Indian music genres, the harmonium has been criticized for its foreign origin and technical incongruity in accompanying kīrtan singing.

However, it is still accepted on the AGSS stage for its usage to help vocalists stay in tune, to fill as the texture with heterophonic parts, and to provide melody in the interludes.

The number of performers varies from four to twenty with different instrumental combinations. While the decision regarding the number of musicians and types of instruments to be incorporated is made by the leader of each performing group, the basic consensus is to include at least one melodic instrument (stringed instrument and/or harmonium) and one percussion instrument (mostly *tablā*) to provide the melodic and rhythmic accompaniment, respectively. The leader of each performing group is always the lead vocalist. In some cases, there may be two lead vocalists. The leader(s) may sing and play harmonium and stringed instruments (mostly *tānpurā* or *swarmaṇḍal*) at the same time, or they may just sing without playing any instruments. Other musicians, usually students of the vocalist, either play instruments or follow the singing.

Contrary to the flexibility and variety of instrumental accompaniment on the AGSS stage, the AGSS organizer (i.e. the *Jawaddi Taksal*) usually uses two harmoniums, one *tablā*, and one stringed instrument (usually *rabāb*) for common *kīrtan* singing at *gurdwaras*. This arrangement accommodates both existing musical practice at most *gurdwaras* nowadays (a *rāgī jathā* of two harmoniums and *tablā*), and the AGSS objective of re-introducing stringed instruments at the Sikh Gurus' time.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS IN THE GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL**

Apart from the two major performing aspects of the *gurmat sangīt* revival, there are other musical aspects being highlighted as the AGSS annual themes, or presented in

the AGSS-related publication or the AGSS performance. They are *chaṅkī*, *tāla*, and *partāl*. Although these aspects have not been discussed among members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee, they are crucial to *kīrtan* performance, and have been emphasized in different years of the AGSS.

### **Chaṅkī**

*Chaṅkī*, literally sitting or service, refers to a session of *kīrtan* singing conducted by professional *rāgīs* in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. The tradition was established by Gurū Arjun (the 5th Sikh Guru) at the *Dārbār Sahib* (the Harmandir Sahib complex in Amritsar). There have been different speculations about the number of *chaṅkīs* along the history of Sikhism. According to Pashaura Singh 2006, a total of eight *chaṅkīs* of *kīrtan* singing had become part of the daily routine during the time of Gurū Arjun. They are *āsā dī vār dī chaṅkī* (early morning); *bilāwal dī chaṅkī* (after sunrise); *anand dī chaṅkī* (before noon); *sārang dī chaṅkī* (noon); *charan kanwal dī chaṅkī* (afternoon); *sōdar dī chaṅkī* (sunset); *kīrtan sohile dī chaṅkī* (night); and *kanare dī chaṅkī* (late night). Protopapas 2011b quoted a standard layout of 12 *chaṅkīs* from *Gurmat Sangit Da Sangit Vigian* by Varinder Kaur Padam (2005).<sup>85</sup> They are *āsā dī vār dī chaṅkī*, *bilāwal dī chaṅkī* (4 sessions), *anand dī chaṅkī*, *charan kamal dī chaṅkī* (3 sessions), *sōdar dī chaṅkī* (2 sessions), *āratī dī chaṅkī*, *kalyān dī chaṅkī*, and

---

<sup>85</sup> Padam, Varinder Kaur. *Gurmat Sangit Da Sangit Vigian*. Patiala: Amarjit Sahib Prakashan, 2005. Unfortunately, I was not able to locate this book in my field research

*kānarā dī chauṅkī*. In another article by the researcher, she lists a schedule of 15 kīrtan chauṅkīs to be performed daily at the Dārbār Sahib (Protopapas 2011a:345–46).

In each chauṅkī with recommended rāgas, different musical content has been presented including *shān* (instrumental prelude, on stringed instruments with percussion accompaniment), *mangalācharan* (sung recitation of prayer, from selected gurbānīs), selected śabads (performed in prescribed rāgas and dhrupad/khyāl singing style), a *rīt* (śabads singing in prescribed rāgas and light classical style), and *paurī* (śabads singing in folk style).

The theme of the 1997 AGSS centered around the performance of chauṅkīs. Different sessions of chauṅkīs were arranged on 9 November 1997 as follows (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash 1997) (Table 4.5):

<b>Chauṅkī Session</b>	<b>Performing Time</b>
<i>Tirprihe dī chauṅkī</i>	2:45a.m.–4:15a.m.
<i>Āsā dī vār dī chauṅkī</i>	4:15a.m.–7:00a.m.
<i>Bilāwal dī chauṅkī</i>	7:00a.m.–12:00noon
<i>Charan kamal dī chauṅkī</i>	12:00noon–3:40p.m.
<i>Sōdar dī chauṅkī</i>	4:50p.m.–5:50p.m.
<i>Āratī dī chauṅkī</i>	6:20p.m.–6:45p.m.
<i>Kalyān dī chauṅkī</i>	7:30p.m.–8:30p.m.
<i>Samāptī dī chauṅkī (Kānṛhe dī chauṅkī)</i>	8:30p.m.–10:00p.m.

Table 4.5: Performing time of different chauṅkī sessions at the 1997 AGSS.

In the 1997 AGSS, the above sessions of *chaṅkīs* were conducted by different *rāgī jathās*. There were non-*chaṅkī* sessions at the event, such as the session of “(Performance of) *Kīrtans* in Similar *Rāgas*” at 3:40p.m.–4:50p.m.; “(Talk on) Sikh Concept” at 10:00p.m.–10:15p.m.; “Honoring (Reputable and Distinguished Musicians)” at 10:15p.m.–11:00p.m.; and “*Ardās* and *Samāptī* (i.e. closing ceremony)” after 11:00p.m. Musical content such as the performance of *rāgas* had not been mentioned in the program.

The performing time of the above sessions does not correspond to the time dimension of main and mixed *rāgas* as confirmed by the *Rāg Nirnayak Committee*. What’s more, it does not correspond to the schedule of 15 *kīrtan chaṅkīs* as derived from Protopapas’ field research either, or have the same number of *chaṅkī* sessions under different names as provided by Pashaura Singh about the daily routine during the time of Gurū Arjun.

The reasons for the discrepancies between the usual practice (information provided by Protopapas), the practice at the time of Sikh Gurus (information provided by Pashaura Singh), and the schedule in the AGSS 1997 remain to be further investigated.

## **Tāla**

Unlike *rāgas*, *tāla* is not stated in the major Sikh scripture, i.e. the *Guru Granth Sahib*. However, 22 *tālas* are listed along with prescribed *rāgas* in standardized and confirmed details in *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part I* (Sukhwant Singh ed.

n.y.), a corresponding publication of the AGSS. While the tālas are not specific to particular performance of śabads or rāgas, the publication describes the tālas as originating from different percussion instruments (tablā or pakhāvaj) and musical traditions (Hindustani, Carnatic, or folk), and as used in different musical genres (śabad, bhajan, ghazal, gīt, lok gīt etc.). The tālas suggested to accompany kīrtan singing are described in Appendix 8.

### **Partāl**

Partāl literally means “change of tālas” and it is unique to the Sikh tradition. In the Guru Granth Sahib, the word can be found in 55 śabads by Gurū Rām Dās and Gurū Arjun (Appendix 9). It indicates the change of tālas within the same śabad performance. Taking into consideration the AGSS and its corresponding publications, there are no instructions or recommendations on what and where the tālas should be changed. However, there are various guidebooks in musical notations about the partāl performance written by Sikh scholars and musicians, such as *Partāl Gāikī* by Tara Singh (2011). The theme of the 2004 AGSS centered around the performance of partāl with names of performing groups and rāgas stated in the brochure (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash 2004). Meanwhile, sessions were selected to publish in a CD featuring this annual event (Sohan Singh 2010c).

Spanning various years of the AGSS, different themes have been used to revive and promote the Sikh music tradition. For example, the 1991 and 1992 AGSS features

kīrtan singing in prescribed rāgas (main and mixed rāgas, respectively); the 1997 AGSS illustrates the performance of chaṅkīs at the Golden Temple, Amritsar; the 1998 and 1999 AGSS highlights the singing of prescribed rāgas by Gurū Nānak and Gurū Gobind Singh, respectively; and the 2004 AGSS demonstrates the practice of partāl as stated in the Guru Granth Sahib. Under the influence of the AGSS, the practice of singing in prescribed rāgas and accompanying the singing with stringed instruments have been gradually accepted by professional Sikh musicians and adopted in kīrtan performance at gurdwaras over the world. Features like rāga, chaṅkī, tāla, partāl, and stringed instruments are highlighted as important considerations for the “authentic,” “correct,” and “traditional” style of kīrtan performance. Within the standardization of different features in the practice of gurmat sangīt, details of these features are open to the kīrtan performers’ interpretations. For example, kīrtan performers may involve different improvisations in singing the prescribed rāgas and accompanying the singing; select different stringed instruments and tālas to accompany the singing; and decide for the change of tālas for the fifty-five śabads performing in partāl. As a result, personal uniqueness is maintained under the classification and standardization of features for reviving the traditional Sikh music practice.



## **THE COMMON PRACTICE OF SIKH DEVOTIONAL MUSIC AND OTHER EXPERIMENTATIONS IN THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES**

As introduced in Chapter 2, the common performing style of kīrtan singing at gurdwaras usually involves elements of gīt, ghazal, and bhajan, featuring simple melodies and rhythms for congregation to sing along. Indeed, not all Sikh musicians performed in rāgas (either prescribed or non-prescribed), and their singing styles mostly belong to dhrupad or khyāl. While some of these artists may not know how to sing kīrtans in “proper” rāgas (as criticized by master musicians of the Sikh devotional music tradition), others may have the knowledge but they choose to mix elements such as film tunes and Western popular music into the genre.

In this case, Sikh musicians are referred to as kīrtanīyas, but not rāgīs (as many of them are not singing in rāgas), and the singing is usually accompanied by harmonium and tablā. Protopapas (2011b) gives examples of gurbānīs being recited in melodies of Hindi film songs, Urdu ghazals, and Punjabi folk songs at a gurdwara in New Jersey (198–99). In various private conversations with Baba Sohan Singh, several names of famous Sikh musicians who did not perform in prescribed rāgas were mentioned, such as Bhai Samund Singh (1900–1972), Bhai/Sant Sujan Singh (1911–1970), Bhai Bakshish Singh, Bhai Surjan Singh, and Bhai Sohan Singh Rasia. Most of these musicians were active in the 1960s and 1970s and were famous for singing kīrtans in the styles of classical, semi-classical, or light music. For singing in prescribed/non-prescribed/non-rāgas, the differences need to be explored with further research.

Apart from having the harmonium as the imported instrument to accompany kīrtan singing in non-prescribed rāgas or not in rāgas, performance of Sikh devotional music has undergone various experimentations since the 20th century. Unlike the common practice observed at most gurdwaras nowadays, this new type of kīrtan singing involves new instrumental combinations or Western performing styles. These kinds of kīrtan singing can be found at performing venues outside the gurdwaras, and/or countries outside India, and audience members are from different backgrounds that favor the mystical sounds of world beat. Sikh religious messages are still retained in the music, but they are usually combined with other philosophical concepts, creative performance, and physical activities. Cases of Dya Singh and 3HO are examples to illustrate the experimental Sikh music performance in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Dya Singh is the Australian-based musician who formed the Dya Singh World Music Group to tour and collaborate with different musicians around the world. He is described as “the master musical interpreter of the traditional Sikh hymns (shabad) with diverse influences from around the globe” in his website (Dya Singh 2014). The performance of Dya Singh has been controversial because of his performing events, venues, and styles. Instead of gurdwaras, the “authentic” and most common venues of Sikh devotional music performance, worship, and meditation in the past, Dya Singh and his World Music Group perform kīrtans at theatres and concert halls (e.g. Royal Albert Hall in London), and arts festivals (e.g. Singapore Arts Festival, California World Music Festival) and youth camps (e.g. Sydney Youth Camp). In addition to the singing of gurbāṇī kīrtans with harmonium and tablā as the accompaniment, their programs involve

a fusion of other spiritual music genres (such as bhajans, qawwalis, and Gregorian chants), instrumental accompaniment (such as didgeridoo, acoustic guitar, and electric violin), visual elements on the stage (such as clapping and dancing), and audience members from different religious and social backgrounds (involving both Sikhs and non-Sikh youths, and Westerners and members of Asian diasporas). Although the performance of Dya Singh and his World Music Group “remain controversial with traditional Sikhs,” he has received much acclaim in countries outside India, where he aims at promoting “Sikhism and Sikh thought through the universal principles of Gurū Nānak” in the singing (Gurmukh Singh 2003).

3HO was established by Harbhajan Singh Yogi (known as “Yogi Bhajan”) to advance the teaching of Kundalini yoga, a school of yoga focused on meditation, breathing, chanting, and retaining the seated posture. The organization mostly attracted white Americans sporting white turbans for both men and women, and some of them converted to Sikhism to form the Sikh Dharma Movement. According to the official website of the organization, “music has been an important part of the 3HO lifestyle since the early days in the late 1960s (3HO 2014).” The music, based on vocal singing with harmonious accompaniment of acoustic guitars, electronic keyboards, and synthesizers, is used to assist the practice of Kundalini yoga. The songs are either composed or arranged by the practitioners, with some of the lyrics based on gurbāṇīs. This is contrary to the “authentic” Sikh practice of gurbāṇī kīrtans, where only gurbāṇīs are recited in prescribed rāgas as Sikh devotional music, and no Western instrumental accompaniment and body-mind exploration is involved.

The practice of Sikh devotional music mentioned above is very common nowadays; however, it is criticized by some Sikh musicians and scholars for losing “its classical dimension (HT Correspondent 2007).” Sarbpreet Singh (2002) criticized that “rāgīs increasingly switched to popular tunes which required less effort and could be plagiarized from readily available sources such as film music,” as this performing approach is the shortest path to gain popularity and performing opportunities. Besides, “the problem was exacerbated by the ready availability of very cheap mass marketed recordings,” which further strengthened the detriments of the “authentic” Sikh music practice. This is contrary to the “authentic” Sikh music tradition that emphasizes more effort to acquire the skills, performance in rāgas prescribed by Sikh Gurus (instead of attracting the general public through popular tunes), and individual style of kīrtan singing (instead of plagiarism). Furthermore, similar media technology like mass marketed recording has been adopted to promote the “authentic” Sikh music tradition.

According to an article titled “Gurbani Distorted by Untrained Singers: Vedanti Donate Funds to Train Gurdwara Keeps, Tells Devotees,” Punjabi University Vice-Chancellor Dr. Jaspal Singh referred to Gurmat Sangīt as “the best medium to understanding the divine message contained in the Guru Granth Sahib (ibid.).” Although the article does not define gurmat sangīt, it quotes the interview of Akal Takht Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti with the implication that “reciting the gurbānī in the manner specified in the Guru Granth Sahib,” which is against the performance of gurbānī kīrtans in non-prescribed rāgas, non-rāga style, or styles similar to those of Dya Singh and 3HO as mentioned above, requires training of rāgīs and granthīs to look after the gurdwaras.

## **CONTENT OF THE GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL: COMBINATION OF ANCIENT, CONTEMPORARY, SPECIALIZED, AND IMAGINED CONCEPTS**

To conclude, the content of the gurmat sangīṭ revival, where singing in prescribed rāgas and the re-introduction of stringed instruments are the two major performance aspects, is a combination of ancient, contemporary, and specialized knowledge, mixing with ideas suggested by the Rāg Nirṇayak Committee. Indeed, there is no strong evidence that Sikh Gurus required believers or followers to adopt the content into the practice of śabad kīrtan singing thoroughly and strictly. The underlying idea is that how Sikh Gurus sang śabad kīrtans has become the role model of music performance and religious worship, just like the Gurus' religious teachings that Sikh believers seek to acquire and follow.

The content of the gurmat sangīṭ revival is a combination of concepts derived from different sources, time periods, spaces, and practitioners. It mixes knowledge and evidence from ancient sources (historical paintings and manuscripts, Sikh scriptures, and music treaties before the Sikh Gurus' time), contemporary scholarship (Bhatkhande's system in the early 20th century), and specialized knowledge of Sikhism (such as chaṅkī, tāla, and partāl). It is also supplemented by other ideas suggested by the Rāg Nirṇayak Committee, which are based on the committee members' past experiences and imaginations (e.g. accompaniment of stringed instruments during the colonial period and the AGSS). To a large extent, it is contrary to the common practice or other experimentations of Sikh devotional singing at present gurdwaras.

## **Chapter 5 Gurmat Sangīt Revival as the Neo-traditional Practice**

The AGSS is the leading event organized to realize and revive the Sikh devotional music tradition. Apart from its performing aspects (mainly singing in prescribed rāgas and re-introduction of stringed instruments) discussed in the previous chapter, the AGSS and its corresponding activities involve reform in performance and education. The reform responds to meet religious demand, musical expectation, and social need of the worldwide Sikh community in the 20th and 21st centuries. Revealing artistic and religious values to both Sikh and non-Sikh believers, it aims at classicizing Sikh devotional music as a musical genre comparable to other “great” and “authentic” traditions in India or other South Asian communities. It also breaks traditional customs of Sikh devotional music performance at gurdwaras nowadays. In this chapter, I illustrate how the reform has been carried out through corresponding publications, institutionalization and standardization, individualization, and involvement of other musicians.

### **CORRESPONDING PUBLICATIONS**

Confirmation and standardization of musical details at the AGSS have been published in both printed and recorded formats. The printed formats, viz. *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth*, Part 1, and *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth*, Part 2, are

published by the Vismaad Naad Publication House of the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, organizer of the AGSS (Sukhwant Singh ed. n.y., 2006).

This two-volume publication was originally written in Punjabi, and it was later translated into Hindi and English versions. The first volume of the original Punjabi publication illustrates all prescribed rāgas (both main and mixed rāgas) with musical details (āroh, avroh, sur, ṭhāṭ, jāṭī, samān, vādī, samvādī, sukhkh ang, and sur visthār), suggestion of tālas to accompany kīrtan singing, two examples in Indian notation for each prescribed rāga, and twenty watercolor paintings associated with the prescribed rāgas (to be discussed below). The second volume includes numerous essays introducing the concept of music in Sikhism, the tradition of Sikh music, terminology of Sikh music practice, instruments and reputable musicians of the Sikh music tradition, and Sikh music's association with the Guru Granth Sahib.

While the first volume of this Punjabi publication was translated into Hindi and published in the same year with the same title, the English version, titled *Raag Sarup Nirnay: Sir Guru Granth Sahib*, is a shortened version of the original Punjabi publication (Sukhwant Singh ed. 2008). It includes only the musical details as stated in the first volume of the original Punjabi publication. The Vismaad Naad Publication House also released a three-CD set titled *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan: Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti 31 Main Rāgas and 31 Mishrat Rāgas* to accompany the publication (Sohan Singh 2010b). This CD-set is the audio complement of the two examples in Indian notation for each prescribed rāga, and the audio clips were recordings of live performances from the 1991 and 1992 AGSS. Both printed and audio materials have been uploaded to the

Vismaad Naad website for the benefit of the much larger number of audience members from the Internet. The concept of the Sikh music tradition has been standardized and disseminated to the public through the printed publication and release of audio recordings. While the published CD-set has become the major pedagogical material for the Sikh music curriculum at various institutions (listed below), website materials, as derived from the publication and audio recordings, are introduced to the Internet users as the “revived” and “authentic” Sikh music tradition.

Apart from the printed publication and audio recordings released to standardize and introduce musical details of the Sikh music tradition, the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash has included pictorial images describing selected rāgas from the Guru Granth Sahib in *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part I* (Sukhwant Singh ed. n.y). The portrayal series, entitled “Pictorial Garland of Rāga” by Bibi Jasbir Kaur, consists of 20 watercolor paintings by Jarnail Singh and Devinder Singh (Vismaad Naad 2011). One painting portrays the image of Bhai Mardāna (holding a rabāb) talking to Gurū Nānak (symbolized with a ring of light over his head, dressed in yellow and holding the brown *mālā* (garland) on his hand as shown below (Illustration 5.1):





Illustration 5.1: Painting of Gurū Nānak and Bhai Mardānā, painter unknown (Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006).

The painting is shown with two men seated in conversation. Gurū Nānak, symbolized with a ring of light over his head, is dressed in yellow and holding the brown garland in his right hand. He is talking to Bhai Mardānā who is dressed in white, holding a four-string rabāb, and bending towards Gurū Nānak. The remaining 19 paintings give pictorial images of the following rāgas (Table 5.1):

<b>Rāga</b>	<b>Painter</b>
Sirī Rāg	Devinder Singh
Gaurī	Unknown
Soraṭh	Devinder Singh
Bilāval	Devinder Singh
Basant	Devinder Singh
Jaijāvantī	Devinder Singh
Kedārā	Jarnail Singh
Āsā	Unknown
Devghandhārī	Unknown
Prabhātī	Unknown
Mājh	Devinder Singh
Gūjarī	Unknown
Dhanāsarī	Devinder Singh
Rāmkalī	Devinder Singh
Malhār	Devinder Singh
Mārū	Jarnail Singh
Vadhans	Jarnail Singh
Bhairo	Unknown
Bihāgara	Unknown

Table 5.1: Paintings of prescribed rāgas in Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006.

Common images have been found in paintings of prescribed rāgas, such as those related to the Sikh religion (“ik onkar” symbol, candlelight, gurdwara, and Sikh

believers' praying), stringed instruments (rabāb, dilrubā, sarandā, tānpurā), animals (deer, pigeons, and geese), and Sikh Gurus (Gurū Gobind Singh, Gurū Nānak).

Apart from the major printed publication and its corresponding three-CD recording set, the Vismaad Naad has published other audio-visual recordings of the AGSS under various themes. The themes include the prescribed rāgas (e.g. gauṛī in Sohan Singh 2009c); reputable musicians (such as Professor Paramjot Singh, Shiromani Ragi Bhai Balbīr Singh Amritsar, Bhai Samund Singh, and Professor Kartar Singh in Sohan Singh 2010d, 2010e, 2012a, and 2012b, respectively); female musicians (Sohan Singh 2010a); young musicians in the post-80s' and 90s' generation (such as Satnam Singh and Manbir Singh playing the rabāb duet in Sohan Singh 2010f); and unique characteristics of Sikh music (such as gātha, phunhe, and partāl in Sohan Singh 2009a, 2010c, and 2010f, respectively).<sup>86</sup>

#### **INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION**

After the 1991 AGSS, different types of institutions started to include the teaching of prescribed rāgas and stringed instruments in the Sikh music curriculum. They are universities, taksāls, and gurmat sangīt academies and Sikh missionary colleges. These institutions offer official gurmat sangīt programs and courses in India and also overseas in countries like Canada and the U.K.

---

<sup>86</sup> The information on taksāls in India is derived from Gurnam Singh 2001, Karir 2003, Protopapas 2011b, and Interview data.

Punjabi University Patiala is the only university that offers programs specializing in gurmat sangīt. Under an individual department of gurmat sangīt, the university offers both performance-based and research-based programs. Other universities that offer Ph.D. research-based programs in gurmat sangīt involve Guru Nanak Dev University, Delhi University, Chandigarh University, and University of Kurukshetra (Haryana). These programs are under the departments of Sikh studies or music. These universities aim at giving graduates academic recognition for gurmat sangīt research or performance.

Taksāls are the Sikh seminaries where students are trained to become rāgīs, granthīs, and prachāraks. They aim at training students to take up everyday religious duties at the gurdwaras. Here are the taksāls in India that offer kīrtan classes along with other training in religious duties (Table 5.2):<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> The information on taksāls in India is derived from Gurnam Singh 2001, Karir 2003, Protopapas 2011b, and Interview data

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
Damdama Sahib Taksal	Talwandi
Budha Jor Taksal	Punjab
Mastuana Taksal	Sangrur
Taran Taran Taksal	Taran Taran
Damdami Taksal	Chowk Mehta, Amritsar
Daudharpur Di Taksal	Daudharpur
Singhan Wala Taksal	Singhan
Hargana Di Taksal	Haragana
Sewa Panthi Taksal	Punjab
Kalera Wali Taksal	Nanaksar
Jawaddi Taksal	Ludhiana
Rakaganj Taksal	Delhi
Dumali Taksal	Unknown
Yateem Khana <sup>88</sup>	Amritsar
Soorma Ashram <sup>89</sup>	Amritsar
Bhaini Sahib <sup>90</sup>	Ludhiana
Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Anandpur Sahib	Rupnagar

Table 5.2: List of taksāls that offer kīrtan classes along with other training in religious duties.

<sup>88</sup> This is an orphanage that operates in the same way as a taksāl.

<sup>89</sup> This is a home for the blind that operates in the same way as a taksāl.

<sup>90</sup> This is a taksāl for the *Nāmdhāri*/Namdhari Sikhs.

Originally referred to as the place where coins are minted like factories, taksāls are operated under a similar system to train religious officers to work at gurdwaras (Gill and Sekhon 2011 ed 1382–383). Taksāls are the traditional Sikh institutions of learning established after Gurū Gobind Singh, which maintain a standard system of operation. Taking Jawaddi Taksal as an example, it is located at the Jawaddi village of Ludhiana with 150 full-time male students and six full-time officers at the time of July 2012. Attached to Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Jawaddi Taksal is the newest taksāl set up in Punjab. While the Gurdwara was established by Sant Baba Sucha Singh in 1985, Jawaddi Taksal was established in 1992 on public demand at the 1991 AGSS. The officers include Sant Giānī Amir Singh as the Head of the Gurdwara (since 1993), Sukhwant Singh as the principal of Gurshabad Sangeet Academy (since 1995), Baba Sohan Singh as the director of publications, audio-visual productions, and library (since 1991), Baba Harjit Singh as the Head *langarī* (person in charge of the langar) (since 1996), and Bhai Kuldeep Singh as the warden (since 1991). There are two branches of gurdwaras under the administration of Jawaddi Taksal: G. Hargobind Sahib Gadapur and G. Guru Hargobind Sahib Dabrikhana, Faridkot. Apart from full-time officers, there are Sikhs doing daily seva such as assisting the audio-visual production and digitization, preparing food for langar, managing the *jutte ghar* (place for keeping shoes), and distributing prasād. Students from the Jawaddi Taksal also share similar daily work, such as cooking, cleaning the floor, taking care of the cows, serving the administrative officers, and conducting daily gurdwara services.

Similar to other taksāls in India, the Jawaddi Taksal accepts any male students as long as they pass their 10th grade. Students stay at the Taksal, study, and help with all related work every day. They can join and quit the Taksal at any time, and no school fees are charged. Occasionally students are sent out to sing kīrtans or lead prayers for special events like kīrtan darbār, weddings, and gurburb. After four years of study and work at the Jawaddi Taksal, students are awarded a certificate that is recognized throughout India. They can work in gurdwaras as granthīs and ragīs.

Different from other taksāls, Jawaddi Taksal also offers classes for part-time students. Most students live in the neighboring areas, so that they can come to classes to learn kīrtan, tablā, or stringed instruments at certain time periods in the week. While no fixed fees are required, part-time students are expected to make donations to the gurdwaras.<sup>91</sup> The sizes of classes range from eight to over sixty students, and instructors give individual attention to students within the specific time periods. The number of students for each class varies from time to time: in July 2012 when I participated and observed these classes, there were about 40 students in the five-hour tablā class (taught by Pandit Ram Kant), over 60 students in one three-and-a-half-hour kīrtan class (taught by Principal Sukhwant Singh), and about 10 students in another one-hour kīrtan class (taught by Principal Ramandīp Kaur). While students were sitting in a semi-circle and waiting for individual teaching, senior students sometimes assisted the instructor by writing the notations and giving individual instruction to newer students.

---

<sup>91</sup> Although there is a note at the Academy stating the minimum class fee is Rs. 100 per month, at the time of July 2012 when I participated and observed the classes, students either brought money, fruit (mostly mangoes and bananas), sweets, pens, and clothes to the instructor.

Four types of classes are offered at the Jawaddi Taksal: *kīrtan*, *tablā* and *tantī sāj* (stringed instruments), *kathā*, and *santhia* (reading lesson). *Kīrtan* classes are conducted by three instructors in different time slots: Principal Sukhwant Singh teaches in the afternoons (2:30–6:00p.m.) from Mondays to Thursdays, and Saturdays; (Professor) Jatinderpal Singh teaches in the evenings (7:00p.m.–10:00p.m.) on Mondays and Fridays; and Ramandīp Kaur teaches in the early evenings (6:00p.m.–7:00p.m.) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. *Tablā* and *tantī sāj* classes are offered by instructors from Jalandhar: (Pandit) Ram Kant teaches *tablā* on Sundays (9:00a.m.–2:00p.m.), and (Ustād) Bindu teaches stringed instruments on Fridays (12:00noon–4:00p.m.).

All these music classes are conducted at the gurmat sangīt academy, an area with two small rooms (about 300 square feet) and one big room (about 600 square feet). While classes of *kīrtan*, *tablā*, and stringed instruments are offered to both full-time and part-time students at the Jawaddi Taksal, classes of *kathā* and *santhia* are only offered to full-time students. *Kathā* classes are usually taught by (Bhai) Gurmīt Singh daily from 12:00noon to 4:00p.m.; (Sant Giānī) Amir Singh, the head of Jawaddi Taksal, also gives occasional lectures. *Santhia* classes are conducted by (Bhai) Sawarn Singh for *laṛīvār* (sequential, non-stop recitation of *gurbāñī*) from 4:00p.m. to 6:00p.m., and *pad chhed* (separation of words in the *gurbāñī* recitation) from 10:00a.m. to 12:00noon, from Mondays to Saturdays.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> For the Guru Granth Sahib written and recited in a continuous system traditionally, it has been split by śabads or individual verses of *gurbāñī* for training and learning purposes only.



Despite all the standardization and institutionalization of the gurmat sangeet education, the Jawaddi Taksal retains the *gurū-śishya paramparā* (guru-disciple tradition) to a certain extent. Although there are no specific ceremonies recognizing students as formal disciples, a majority of the students pay high respect to the instructor and visit him frequently. I noticed often that students took turn serving meals to Principal Sukhwant Singh, touching his feet for prostration, and massaging his legs during his singing classes. Sukhwant Singh brought students to sing kīrtans at different gurdwaras. On behalf of the Jawaddi Taksal, he also accepted money and/or fruits as his music class fees. The relationships between Principal Sukhwant Singh and some of his students last for over twenty years (Sukhwant Singh was at his early 40s at the time when I was in the field), and some students who have migrated to other countries also go back to the Taksal specially to visit him. Some students even seek advice about their music career, family problems, and marriage arrangement. Nevertheless, Principal Sukhwant Singh has been referred as “Ustād Jī” by his students, suggesting a Muslim relation to the learning system.<sup>93</sup>

Apart from the universities and taksāls, the following gurmat sangīt academies and missionary colleges also arrange Sikh music courses based on the prescribed rāga system standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee:<sup>94</sup>

- Baba Sucha Singh Ji Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Amritsar

---

<sup>93</sup> While some students got job offers under the recommendation of Principal Sukhwant Singh, I have also come across two students getting married under Sukhwant Singh’s arrangement in my field research period.

<sup>94</sup> This list of institutions was provided by Baba Sohan Singh, Principal Sukhwant Singh, and Sharandeep Kaur.

- Baba Sucha Singh Ji Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Taran Taran
- Baba Fateh Singh Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Israna Sahib Panipat
- Guru Nanak Sangeet Academy, Pune
- Baba Harnam Singh Ji Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Zira
- Bhai Mardana Ji Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Ambala
- Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Toronto
- Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Singapore
- Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Malaysia
- Bhai Samund Singh Academy, Ludhiana
- Shaheed Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar<sup>95</sup>
- Baba Sawan Singh Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Ambala
- Khalsa Akal Purkh Ki Fauj Acaedmy, Ludhiana
- Baba Kondan Singh Gurmat Sangeet Academy, Ludhiana
- Sant Baba Isher Singh Academy, Patiala
- Sant Baba Nand Singh Academy, Nanaksar
- Sawar Samund Academy, Mullanpur

---

<sup>95</sup> The major differences between Sikh missionary college and gurmat sangīt academy are that the former is operated by the S.G.P.C. whereas the latter is operated by gurdwaras from different places. Besides, Sikh missionary colleges and gurmat sangīt academies focus on academic training and practice performance, respectively. While both gurmat sangīt academy and taksāl provides practical training of kīrtan performance to the participants, the former is more academic-based while the latter is more practice-based.

In addition to the regular music classes held at the above venues, occasional events such as gurmat sangīt workshops, gurmat sangīt seminars, and kīrtan dārbārs, have been organized at both local and overseas gurdwaras and Sikh music institutions. For example, the Jawaddi Taksal organized a three-day gurmat sangīt workshop with about 1,000 participants (daily) during my field research period in June 2011. Targetted at any interested outsiders, these occasional events focus on introducing the Sikh music tradition, teaching of kīrtan singing, and demonstration of stringed instruments' performance.

#### **INDIVIDUALIZATION**

Along with the annual AGSS, various activities have been organized to standardize and promote what is the “correct” rendition of rāga performance in kīrtan singing. First of all, competitions have been organized to identify students from the younger generation (mostly students of Rāg Nirnayak Committee members) who are able to perform the prescribed rāga “correctly” and “beautifully.” Every year, there is a competition for these young musicians a day before the AGSS. Since the 1990s, gurmat sangeet competitions have been a common activity organized by different gurdwaras and Sikh religious organizations both in India and overseas.<sup>96</sup>

Meanwhile, a number of music awards have been established to honor reputable Sikh musicians who have made significant contributions to the revival of Sikh music

---

<sup>96</sup> Moreover, not all these gurmat sangīt competitions have strict requirement on the “correct” rāga performance.

either by performing, promoting, or teaching, such as the Gurmat Sangeet Award, the Bhai Mardāna Award, and the Shiromani Ragi Award. The Gurmat Sangeet Award was established by the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash since the 1991 AGSS; the Bhai Mardāna Award and the Shiromani Ragi Award were established by the Punjabi University Patiala, and the S.G.P.C., respectively. Recipients of the Gurmat Sangeet Award and their background information are listed below (Table 5.3):<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> Names of these recipients were obtained from the booklet of the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, AGSS pamphlets, the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash website, and interviews.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Background</b>
(Shiromaṇī Rāgī Bhai) Balbir Singh, Amritsar	He is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee; please refer to the section of “Rāg Nirnayak Committee” in Chapter 3.
(Bhai) Avtar Singh and Gurcharan Singh, Delhi	Bhai Avtar Singh is one of the Sikh musicians introduced in <i>Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2</i> ; please refer to “Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries” in the next section.
(Bhai) Harī Singh, Amritsar	He was the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib.
(Bhai) Amrīk Singh, Zaḥhamī	He is one of the Sikh musicians introduced in <i>Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2</i> ; please refer to “Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries” in the next section.
(Dr.) Gurnam Singh, Patiala	He is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee; please refer to the section of “Rāg Nirnayak Committee” in Chapter 3.
(Bhai) Baljīt Singh, Delhi	He is one of the Sikh musicians introduced in <i>Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2</i> ; please refer to “Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries” in the next section.
(Bhai) Gurmīt Singh Shānt, Jalandhar	Ibid.
(Dr.) Jasbīr Kaur, Patiala	He is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee; please refer to the section of “Rāg Nirnayak Committee” in Chapter 3.
(Professor) Kartār Singh, Ludhiana	Ibid.
(Bibi) Jaswant Kaur, Delhi	She received training from (Bhai) Taba from the rabābī tradition, who sang at the Harmandir Sahib before 1947. Bhai Taba (together with Giānī Dyal Singh, 1934–2012) helped Bhai Gian Singh Abbotabad with the writing of <i>Gurbāṇī Sangīt</i> (1961).
(Bhai) Harjindar Singh, Srinagar	He is one of the Sikh musicians introduced in <i>Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2</i> ; please refer to “Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries” in the next section.
(Professor) Paramjot Singh, Ludhiana	He is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee; please refer to the section of “Rāg Nirnayak Committee” in Chapter 3.
(Principal) Baldev	Ibid.

Singh, Delhi	
(Dr.) Jagir Singh, Chandigarh	Ibid.
(Principal) Channa Singh (Majbūr), Hoshiarpur	Ibid.
(Professor) Avtar Singh (Naz)	Ibid.
(Professor) Kulwinder Singh	He was appointed to teach tablā at the Gurmat Sangeet Academy of the Jawaddi Taksal.
(Ḍhāḍī) Sohaṅ Singh, Sitalpur	--
(Ḍhāḍī) Daya Singh, Dilbar	He was honored with the title of "Shiromani Ḍhāḍī " by the S.G.P.C. in 1979 and by Punjab Bhasha Vibhag in 1994. He was jailed during the Punjabi Suba Movement in the 1950s.
(Bhai) Narindar Singh Banarsi, Amritsar	He is the son of Giānī Pooran Singh who used to play pakhāvaj. He studied with Professor Kartar Singh (member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee) of Gurmat Sangeet Academy at Sri Anandpur Sahib, Ropar. He is the hazūrī rāgī at Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar.
(Dr. Bibi) Niveditā Kaur, Patiala	She is one of the Sikh musicians introduced in <i>Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2</i> , please refer to "Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries" in the next section.
(Bhai) Nirmal Singh (Khālsā), Amritsar	Ibid.
(Dr.) Darshan Singh Narula, Malout	Ibid.
(Bhai) Surinderpal Singh, Delhi	Please refer to "Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> Centuries" in the next section.
(Baba) Harnam Singh, Ludhiana	--

Table 5.3: Recipients of Gurmat Sangeet Awards presented by the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash and their background.

Furthermore, Sikh musicians' contributions to the gurmat sangīt revival have been recognized with both prestigious classical music and cultural awards in India. One

example is Kartār Singh from Lahore, Pakistan, who was awarded with the Akademi Award and the Sangeet Natak Academy Tagore Rattan (fellowship) Award in 2008 and 2012, respectively, for “his contribution to the traditional form of gurmat sangit, i.e. playing stringed instruments in rāgas.” Another example is the Padma Sri Award presented to Bhai Nirmal Singh Khalsa in 2009 by the Government of India.<sup>98</sup>

In addition to competitions, awards, and historiography, publications featuring reputable musicians (as discussed in the previous section) are also the practice of individualization that enable individuals to stand out from their counterparts for their superior musical skills. To define the Sikh music tradition and trace its development, the historiography of gurmat sangīt practice has been recovered and recorded by the AGSS under the leadership of Sant Baba Sucha Singh (1991–2002) and Principal Sukhwant Singh (2002–nowadays). In *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2*, the lifetime, musical background, experience, and performing style of the following Sikh musicians have been recorded (Sukhwant Singh ed. 2006:343–99). Based on my analysis of the data collected, the list of Sikh musicians can be categorized as those active at the Sikh Gurus’ time, before the Partition, and in the mid-20th and 21st centuries.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>98</sup> SikhiWallpaper 2009b, Venkat 2012.

<sup>99</sup> While some information is based on Arora 2000, Baldeep Singh 2012, Chaitanya 1967, Dogra and Dogra 2003, Gargi 2003, McLeod 1968, Pashura Singh 2006, and IP Singh 2012, the rest has been obtained from interviews with informants.

## Sikh Musicians Active at the Sikh Gurus' Time

Six musicians have been discussed, and they are (Bhai) Mardānā (1459–1534), (Bhai) Sattā and Balwand, (Bhai) Bābak, and (Bhai) Abdullā and Nathth Mall.<sup>100</sup> They were musicians of the rabābī tradition. Bhai Mardānā has been introduced in Chapter 2 as the rabābī accompanying the singing of Gurū Nānak. He belonged to the mīrāsī, a depressed Muslim caste of genealogists and musicians. According to various sources from *Janamsākhī*, Bhai Mardānā was a prominent follower of Gurū Nānak who travelled to different places and encountered different incidents, such as “Mardānā commanded to throw offering away,” and “Mardānā eats the forbidden fruit.”<sup>101</sup> On one occasion, Gurū Nānak asked Bhai Mardānā to touch the chords (of the rabāb) while the word (from God) descended (Pashura Singh 2006). One *śalōk* (a poetic form) mentioning the name of Bhai Mardānā is in the Guru Granth Sahib (533), says that one’s sins and corruptions can be wiped away by meeting with the saints.<sup>102</sup>

Bhai Sattā and Balwand were rabābīs active from the time of Gurū Angad (the 2nd Guru) to Gurū Arjun (the 5th Guru). Bhai Balwand was also known as Bhai Rai Balwand. One vār of rāmkalī rāga by the two brothers is included in the Guru Granth

---

<sup>100</sup> Comparing with the table of “rabābī lineages associated with the Sikh Gurus” in Purewal 2011, there are deviations in the names of rabābī musicians: in Purewal’s article, Bhai Bābak and Bhai Abdullā are spelt as Bhai Babuk and Bhai Abdul, respectively; the name of Bhai Nathth Mall is missing. However, a lot of other names are found in the article, including Bhai Sajada, Bhai Rajada, Bhai Saloo, Bhai Banoo, Bhai Nathan, and Bhai Madha (373, figure 2).

<sup>101</sup> According to McLeod 1968, similar incidents of Gurū Nānak and Bhai Mardānā have been found in *Janamsākhī* of various traditions, including the Miharbān Janamsākhī, Purātan Janamsākhī, and Bālā Janamsākhī.

<sup>102</sup> There is controversy on Bhai Mardānā as the contributor of the Guru Granth Sahib. Jaswant Singh argued that the *śalōk* (Guru Granth Sahib, 533), although with the word “Mardānā,” bears the name of “Nānak” under rāga bihāgarā. Therefore, he regards the gurbāñī as being composed by Gurū Nānak instead (2008:29).



Sahib (966–68), in which Bhai Balwand wrote the first five stanzas and Bhai Sattā wrote the last three. Bhai Bābak (1642–) was the rabābī active at the time of Gurū Hargobind (the 6th Guru); he also took part in the battle of Amritsar in 1629 where he assisted in the evacuation of the Guru’s family to Jhabal (a village in Amritsar). Bhai Abadullā and Nathth Mall were the Sikh musicians active at the time of Gurū Hargobind (the 6th Guru). They were dhāḍīs from Rajasthan.

### **Sikh Musicians Active before and at the Time of the Partition**

21 musicians have been discussed, and they are (Jathedār) Jassā Singh (Ahluwalia), (Baba) Shām Singh (1803–1926), (Bhai) Maṅshā Singh, (Bhai) Hīrā Singh (1879–1926), (Bhai) Santā Singh (1902–1966), (Bhai) Surjan Singh, (Mahant) Gajjā Singh, (Bhai) Ghulam Muhammad Chand, (Bhai) Samund Singh (1904–1972), (Professor) Tārā Singh (1911–1988), (Bhai) Saran Singh, (Bhai) Harī Singh, (Sant) Kartār Singh, (Bhai) Avtār Singh (1925–2006), (Bhai) Gurcharan Singh (b.1915), (Bhai) Tarlochan Singh (b.1929), (Bhai) Charanjīt Singh (1928-), (Bhai) Munshā Singh (1929–), (Bhai) Prithīpāl Singh (b.1929), and (Bhai) Sammund Singh (1900–1971). Biographies of selected musicians are briefly discussed below:

Jathedār Jassā Singh Ahluwalia was both the chief of army and a kīrtankār.<sup>103</sup> Baba Shām Singh sang kīrtans at the Harmandir Sahib for 90 years. He also played the sarandā. He received his training from Baba Naudh Singh, and he mentioned the

---

<sup>103</sup> Ahluwalia is a caste.

traditions of rāgīs and rabābīs at the Golden Temple in *Hari Bhagati Premākār Granth* (1913).<sup>104</sup> Bhai Maṅshā Singh was the hazūrī rāgī of the Harmandir Sahib at the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780–1839). He was a gifted musician who used to perform kīrtan at the early morning service (Āsā Dī Vār) of the Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar.

Bhai Santā Singh sang classical music and played different stringed instruments. He was the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib, and his masterpiece was rāga sorath. Bhai Surjan Singh was a blind musician famous for his sweet, simple, and melodious voice. He belonged to the Agra gharāṇā. Mahant Gajjā Singh was the head of ashram, master vocalist of Hindustani music and gurmat sangīt.<sup>105</sup> His disciples included the dilrubā player (Bhai) Harnam Singh and the scholar (Bhai) Kan Singh (Nabha).<sup>106</sup>

Bhai Ghulam Muhammad Chand from the rabābī tradition was a disciple of Bhai Lal, and his singing style was based in dhrupad.<sup>107</sup> He is regarded as one of the last great rabābīs surviving today, and his ancestors can be traced back to Bhai Sadha and Bhai Madha at the time of Gurū Tegh Bahadur in Purewal 2011 (Figure 3).<sup>108</sup> According to Arora 2000, basant, sārang, malhār, bhimpalasi, and patdīp were his favorite rāgas.<sup>109</sup> Bhai Ghulam Muhammad Chand was described as dressed “in white donning and a white turban,” and having “a remarkably loud voice . . . . . with impressive quality and clear pronunciation (168–69).” Also known as Bhai Gian, the rabābī usually sang with the

---

<sup>104</sup> This information was obtained from Pashaura Singh 2006:162. However, I was not able to locate the book.

<sup>105</sup> Mahant refers to the head of an ashram; the term is usually associated with Hinduism.

<sup>106</sup> Nabha is a city in the Patiala district of Indian Punjab.

<sup>107</sup> For biography of Bhai Lal, please refer to Arora 2000:164–67.

<sup>108</sup> Please refer to the section of “Sikh Musicians: Rabābī, Kīrtankār, Rāgī, and Ḍhādī” in Chapter 2, for more information.

<sup>109</sup> Bhimpalasi and patdīp are not the main or mixed rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib.

accompaniment of tablā by (Bhai) Bakshi, and harmonium by (Bhai) Chanan. Before the partition, he served as the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib for 29 years. Bhai Chand did not sing kīrtans in Pakistan until he was well into his nineties, and recently he has been invited to sing kīrtans in the U.K. and at Indian gurdwaras.

Bhai Samund Singh was born in the village of Mulla Hamza in Pakistan, where he learned singing gurbāñīs with his father (Bhai) Hazoor Singh, a kīrtankār who also played the tāūs. At a very young age, he started singing at religious conferences and gurpurbs, and he also obtained musical knowledge from other Sikh musicians, including the famous kīrtankār (Bhai) Sher Singh (Gujranwala) and (Bhai) Piara Singh (Rabābī).<sup>110</sup> In the 1920s, he became the chief rāgī of Nankana Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan, for seven or eight years. Apart from kīrtan singing, he also interpreted the śabad to Sikh believers. In his later years, he subsequently did a program of Sikh devotional music at the All India Radio, Lahore. Bhai Samund Singh regarded “the deep knowledge of the classical rāgas and tradition” as one of many qualities for a rāgī (Gargi 2003:98).<sup>111</sup> He was a master of various singing styles, including dhrupad, *dhamar*, khyāl, and *thumrī*. He focused on the clarity of gurbāñīs, and he was talented in changing rāgas smoothly for the continuity of consecutive śabad performance. In 2011, a book and a CD featuring Bhai Samund Singh was published by Paramjot Singh, and released by the Vismaad Naad, respectively.

Professor Tārā Singh obtained a master’s degree in Sanskrit, and his student is Dr. Gurnam Singh, a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. He has composed many

---

<sup>110</sup> Gujranwala is a city in Pakistan Punjab.

<sup>111</sup> Other qualities include high moral character and love for gurbāñīs, understanding of the words’ meaning, clear pronunciation, and understanding of the literary, metaphysical, and spiritual elements of gurbāñīs.

pieces from the Guru Granth Sahib in different rāgas, and he has written 15 books in gurmat sangīt. Bhai Saran Singh is the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, and Gurdwara Punja Sahib, Pakistan. Bhai Harī Singh from the rabābī tradition was the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib for 54 years, and he used to sing kīrtans with sarandā. Sant Kartār Singh was the disciple of Sujān Singh, and he sang kīrtans at the Gurdwara Punjabi Bagh Delhi for 30 years.

Bhai Charanjīt Singh Dīp learned gurmat sangīt from his father (Rāgī) Sundar Singh and (Giānī) Gyan Singh. Bhāī Munshā Singh has been the hazūrī rāgī at the Hamandir Sahib, Amritsar and he started singing at the age of 12. Bhai Avtār Singh and Bhai Gurcharan Singh are brothers, and the former is a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. His background has been discussed in Chapter 3. Bhai Tarlochan Singh sang kīrtans at Gurjaranwala Pakistan and gurdwaras in Delhi before and after Partition, respectively. He had LP and cassette recordings released by HMV. Bhai Prithīpāl Singh learned music from his father, Ustad Sohan Singh, and Abdul Hussain Khan. Bhai Sammund Singh sang kīrtans on the radio in Lahore in the pre-Partition days.

### **Sikh Musicians Active in the Mid-20th and 21st Centuries**

34 musicians have been discussed, and they are (Bhai) Angad Singh (b.1931), (Principal) Chanaṅ Singh (Majbūr) (b.1935), (Bhai) Chatar Singh (b.1939), (Bhai) Gurmej Singh, (Bhai) Sādhū Singh (b.1942), (Bhai) Dilbagh Singh (d.2004), (Bhai) Gulbagh Singh, (Bhai) Sohan Pāl Singh (b.1946), (Bhai) Jaspīr Singh, (Dr.) Jāgīr Singh

(b.1949), (Rāgī Bhai) Nirmal Singh (Khālsā) (1952–present), (Bhai) Kanvarpāl Singh (1956–present), (Bhai) Baljīt Singh, (Bhai) Gurmīt Singh (Shānt), (Bībī) Niveditā Kaur (1969–present), (Bhai) Avtār Singh (1970–present), (Bhai) Somitar Singh, (Bhai) Dharam Singh, (Bhai) Harjindar Singh, (Bibi) Jaswant Kaur, (Bhai) Mahindar Singh (Ṭhumrī), (Bībī) Gurindar Kaur, (Bībī) Gītā Kaur (Paintal), (Dr.) Darshan Singh, (Bībī) Jasvinder Kaur, (Bhai) Amrīk Singh (Zaḥhamī) (–2013), (Bibi) Baljīt Kaur (Khālsā), (Bhai) Surinderpal Singh, (Bhai) Tejpal Singh, (Shromanī Rāgī Bhai) Balbīr Singh (1933–), (Professor) Paramjot Singh, (Dr.) Gurnam Singh, (Dr.) Ajīt Singh (Paintal) (1936–2012), and (Dr.) Jaspīr Kaur. The last five musicians are members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and their backgrounds have been discussed in Chapter 3.

Biographies of other selected musicians are as follows:

Known as the “King of Reets,” Bhai Angad Singh from Delhi sang kīrtans in light classical style and non-prescribed rāgas. Principal Chanaṅ Singh Majbūr is the student of Professor Darshan Singh (Komal), and he is a Punjabi poet.<sup>112</sup> Bhai Chatar Singh was born in the Kasar District of Shakhar in Sindh, Pakistan, and died in Bombay. He obtained the Shromani Ragi Award in 1996. Bhai Nirmal Singh Khālsā is from Amritsar. He is the hazūrī rāgī at the Harmandir Sahib (1979–present), and he has travelled around to sing kīrtans. He received the Gurmat Sangeet Award from the Jawaddi Taksal, and was also the first rāgī to obtain the Padam Shri Award from the Government of India. He wrote some research articles on gurmat sangīt and collaborated with Pakistani ghazal musician Ghulam Ali to record a CD of śabads in 2001.

---

<sup>112</sup> Majbūr is a nickname.

A number of Sikh musicians are from different parts of India and Pakistan, especially the Punjab region. Bhai Sādhū Singh is from Dehradun.<sup>113</sup> Bhai Jasbīr Singh is from Pathankot.<sup>114</sup> Bhai Gurmīt Singh Shānt is from Jalandhar.<sup>115</sup> Bhai Avtār Singh is from Bodal.<sup>116</sup> Bibi Gītā Kaur Painṭal is from Delhi. (Dr.) Darshan Singh is from Narula in Pakistan.<sup>117</sup> Several of them have received the Gurmat Sangeet Award from the Jawaddi Taksal, including Bhai Harjindar Singh from Srinagar and Bibi Jaswant Kaur from Delhi.

Generating a list of Sikh musicians is a way of classicizing the Sikh devotional music tradition, so that gurmat sangīt can be comparable to other genres with biographies of master musicians and their contributions to the “discipline.” It is interesting to discover that not all musicians listed above have performed kīrtans according to the prescribed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib, which implies a contradiction against the AGSS objective. Moreover, many of these musicians have been the hazūrī rāgīs at the Hamandir Sahib, the only gurdwara to have continuous kīrtan singing during its opening hours in India, in which rāgī jathās take turns to perform singing duties. Most musicians on the list are descendants of the Sikh devotional music tradition; those active in the mid-20th and 21st centuries are the initiators and practitioners who have been awarded for their contributions in the revitalization movement of Sikh devotional music tradition.

---

<sup>113</sup> Dehradun is the capital city of the state of Uttarakhand in North India.

<sup>114</sup> Pathankot is a district in Indian Punjab.

<sup>115</sup> Jalandhar is the oldest city in Indian Punjab.

<sup>116</sup> Bodal is a village in Indian Punjab.

<sup>117</sup> Narulā is a region of Pakistan Punjab.

## INVOLVING OTHER MUSICIANS: NON-SIKHS, WOMEN, AND ĐHĀĐĪS

Contrary to the traditional and common practice of Sikh devotional music that only allows male rāgīs, non-Sikhs, women, and đhāđīs have appeared on stages of the AGSS and other related activities.

The AGSS welcoming of non-Sikh musicians on the AGSS stage contrasts with a statement in *The Sikh Reht Maryada* which declares that “only a Sikh may perform kirtan in a congregation (Statement I, Article VI, Chapter V).” The non-Sikh musicians have been mostly Hindus invited to perform at the AGSS mainly because of their excellent singing skills and rare knowledge of stringed instrumental playing. For example, Sri Omprakash and Sri Dharampal participated at the 1991 AGSS and played dilrubā and swarmaṇḍal, respectively. Occasionally, some Hindu tablā players are given the stage, such as Sri Kalarm at the 1991 AGSS. The tablā instructor at the Jawaddi Taksal, known as Pandit Ram Kant, is also a Hindu. Instead of turbans, non-Sikh performers are identified by their temporarily made covers over their heads, such as the violinist in Illustration 4.7.

From the times of the Sikh Gurus until the present, male musicians have been employed to serve at the gurdwaras and lead the singing of śabad kīrtans. Having female musicians to take up the leading role has emerged as one of the latest trends in the gurmat sangīt revival. Sikh women, who are usually vocalists performing with male accompanists, have been found on the stages of the AGSS along the years. They perform

occasionally at gurdwaras as well.<sup>118</sup> Indeed, just like at any gurdwara, any interested people (regardless of their religious background, age, sex, and ethnicity) are welcome to join the AGSS and other related activities at all times. Hindu women also participate in related activities of the AGSS; the example is Shweta Verma, a female Hindu student of Principal Sukhwant Singh at the singing classes of the Jawaddi Taksal. Some Sikh women have become major practitioners comparable to that of the Sikh men in the gurmat sangīt revival. For example, Bibi Jasbir Kaur has been a member of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and organizing committee, and a performer of the AGSS, the guest speaker at gurmat sangeet workshops, and editor of various Sikh music publications.

Since the time of Gurū Hargobind (the 6th Guru), ḍhāḍīs have been singing in folk tunes to fulfill the socio-political functions of praising the martyrs and boosting the soldiers' morale. They are different from rāgīs who take up religious duties at the gurdwaras. In spite of their different functions and social roles in the Sikh community, ḍhāḍīs have been invited to perform at the AGSS but they did not perform in prescribed rāgas. Examples of ḍhāḍī performers include (Ḍhāḍī Jathā) Samrāi Wālīyā (Bībīyān) at the 2007 AGSS, and (Ḍhāḍī Giānī) Tarsem Singh (Moran) at the 2008 AGSS.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup> When I was joining pilgrimage trip to the Hemkunt Sahib organized by the Jawaddi Taksal in 2012, I had encountered a few occasions that Principal Sukhwant Singh's three female students led the kīrtan singing in the gurdwara, with other male students following the singing at the back.

<sup>119</sup> Moran is the town in the Indian state of Assam. Ḍhāḍī Giānī Tarsem Singh came from there.



## **GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL AS THE NEO-TRADITIONAL PRACTICE**

With a combination of ancient, contemporary, specialized, and imagined concepts in the gurmat sangīt revival (as discussed in Chapter 4), practitioners standardize and promote the Sikh devotional music tradition through reform. The reform in performance and education, through organization of the annual AGSS and its corresponding activities, aims at publicizing the Sikh devotional music tradition to mostly Sikhs (but also non-Sikh believers, to a lesser extent). It includes releasing corresponding publications to reveal artistic and religious values of the musical practice; establishing institutions and standardizing revival content to encourage systemic training of the subject; historicizing individual musicians as representative interpreters of the tradition; and involving both Sikh and non-Sikh musicians to promote the equal chance of participation in Sikh devotional music performance.

Apart from publicizing, initiators and practitioners aim at elevating the tradition to be parallel to the mainstream music and religious tradition, such as introducing watercolor paintings (paralleling the rāgmālā paintings associated with Indian classical music), honoring celebrities (paralleling distinguished Sikhs contributing to the religious development), and involving musicians from different background on the AGSS stage (paralleling other “great” and “authentic” traditions practiced by and accessible to people all over the world).

## **PART THREE: CONCLUSION**

### **Chapter 6 Music Revival and Significance**

In this dissertation, I have examined the scene of the gurmat sangīt revival in the 20th- and 21st-century Punjab, where practitioners strive to recover, define, compromise, and promote the Sikh devotional music tradition with its authentic, westernized, unique and hybridized elements. Initiated by Sant Baba Sucha Singh and the Jawaddi Taksal in 1991, the annual AGSS “comprises an effort to perform and promote music that is valued as old or historical,” that is, to revive and promote the “authentic” practice of devotional music performance at the Sikh Gurus’ times (Hill and Bithell 2014:3). As a collaborative effort by Sikh musicians, music scholars, and general believers, the AGSS provides a platform of “reviving, restoring, and reimagining the past” of the Sikh devotional music tradition, “for purposes of the present” as performing “correctly” at gurdwaras, and following the practice at the Sikh Gurus’ times (ibid.4).

The phenomenon of the gurmat sangīt revival illustrates how practitioners contended with the dominant trend of Indian religions and music performance in the 20th and 21st centuries. From my analysis of the annual AGSS, it is apparent that, simultaneously, the revival content has been aligned with and distinguished from the dominant trend of Indian music performance and established knowledge of Indian music. The content involves authentic elements with proofs established through evidence from

Sikh scriptures and art works and ancient musical treatises, neo-traditional and new concepts developed by the core proponents (i.e. Rāg Nirnayak Committee) and the organizer (i.e. the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash/Jawaddi Taksal). In this concluding chapter, I summarize the characteristics and socio-cultural issues of the gurmat sangīt revival. Then, I assess the significance of the gurmat sangīt revival by analyzing local responses and those from overseas. Finally, I evaluate the contribution and significance of this research within the academic studies of South Asian religion and religious music, and Indian music.

#### **MUSIC REVIVAL: CHARACTERISTICS AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES**

In a broad sense, the driving forces behind the gurmat sangīt revival are both connected to the past and present of Sikh history: the forces are based on the ideological imagination and reconstruction of devotional music performance as it existed during the period of the Sikh Gurus, as well as the trend to classicize musics in India in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The revival is reaching the fourth stage titled “The Period of Revitalization” by Wallace (1956), where the gurmat sangīt revival belongs to the “deliberate, organized, conscious attempts by some or all members of a society to construct for themselves, a more satisfying culture” as in the Sikh devotional music performance. Before this stage, the performance of Sikh devotional music was regarded as “being distorted” with “not harmoniously related but mutually inconsistent and

interfering” elements from the time of post-Sikh Gurus to the post-Partition period (at the third stage of “The Period of Cultural Distortion”).

The gurmat sangīt revival, is also a “fight against modernity (Ronström 1996:8–9):” the struggle against modernity is expressed as a moral obligation to save the “authentic” and “pure” devotional music (of the Sikh Gurus’ times) from being mixed with other “popular” and “impure” elements (from the colonial period to the present), such as kīrtan performance in non-prescribed rāgas, or in popular or folk tunes not related to Sikhism. The revival can be further explained with background of its participants, motives of the proponents and participants, and different approaches to promote and consolidate the knowledge of Sikh devotional music tradition.

### **Revival and Its Participants**

Under the concept of the gurmat sangīt revival, performance of Sikh devotional music, as similar to other non-musical practices of Sikhism, should be based on what the Sikh Gurus proposed and did during their lifetimes. It is believed that only through this way, one would obtain spiritual attainment and be united with God. According to Sant Baba Sucha Singh, the core revivalist, kīrtan is the best way to communicate with the Almighty because “the sacred syllables emanate from the music of the spheres” and “singing of hymns from the Holy Granth in the ‘rāgas’ in which they have been composed leads to spiritual ecstasy” (Jasbir Kaur 1991). Originality, i.e. kīrtan singing style by the Sikh Gurus, is regarded as the core value of the Sikh devotional music

performance, as Sant Baba Sucha Singh “exhorts the singers to sing in the original ‘rāgas’ to revive the purity of kīrtan” (ibid.). The authenticity, based on kīrtan singing in rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib, is considered as “pure” and “sacred,” and leads one to spiritual ecstasy and communication with God.

Sant Baba Sucha Singh, together with members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee and other reputable musicians, comprised the core musicians “formulating the revival tradition’s repertoire, stylistic features, and history” (Livingston 1999:71). In the collective effort, the formulation involves discrepancy between the authentic and restored Sikh devotional music tradition, where some information may be retained partially (for some knowledge had not been passed to the next generation through oral tradition), some are retained due to the musicians’ preferences (based on miscellaneous sources of writings that they kept, or different music background of them), or some are deliberately suggested by them (based on their personal experiences of watching, learning, or performing Sikh devotional music). The formulated tradition of the Sikh devotional music performance is announced as official or core values of the annual AGSS; conversely, it has been made official and representative through the regular organization of the event.

### **Motive**

Based on the assumption that “musicians and other agents of revival always have a reason for wanting to perform, promote, or disseminate music from the past (10),” Hill

and Bithell's suggestions of four motivational categories can be observed in this case of the gurmat sangīt revival (2014:10–12). The first motive is based on anti-modernization, where performance of Sikh devotional music in the post-colonial period has been viewed as a distortion from the “natural” path from that being originated from the Sikh Gurus' times.

The second motive is the bolstering of the Sikh identity as religious and ethnic minority in India, the South Asian community from other parts of the world, and virtual social spaces. As an “invented” tradition, gurmat sangīt engages in the soundscape of the gurdwaras, where the music-oriented religious practice creates a “Sikh nation” for both local and overseas believers (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). The AGSS creates a sense of community participated by core revivalist (Baba Sucha Singh), source musicians (members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee), other performing artists (Sikh musicians being invited to perform on stage), and audience members. Meanwhile, the revival influence has been expanded to other social spaces with participants (usually Sikh musicians performing at the AGSS) singing śabad kīrtans at other gurdwaras (both in India and overseas), or recordings of corresponding activities being circulated among the Sikhs or on the internet.

The third motive is political for the revival's inclusion of knowledge (i.e. musical details of rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib) from a certain group of musicians (i.e. Rāg Nirnayak Committee), while excluding others from being the official and legitimized representation of Sikh devotional music tradition. On top of various influences from the AGSS, there are responses against the revival from musicians being

excluded as major contributors (to be discussed in the next section). Including oneself and excluding others can be regarded as a tactic to maintain one's authority as tradition-bearer, and sustain one's artistic life over the others.

The last motive responds to the social and political instability in the Sikh community, where continuous upheaval with different parties (the Muslims and the government of India) between the post-Guru's times and the Partition period suppresses the religious activities including the Sikh devotional music performance. While the musical system belongs to the Sikh Gurus' times, it gradually disappeared as musicians as the tradition-bearers passed away without inheritors engaging in the authentic practice of Sikh devotional music tradition. The AGSS responds to the extinction of the authentic practice by inviting the last few inheritors on the stage in 1991, and engaging members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee in scholarly discussions to discuss details of the practice. The gurmat sangīt revival can also be interpreted as an opposite camp against the Khalistan movement in the 1980s, featuring a violence-free approach to develop a "Sikh nation" in cultural and religious uniqueness.

### **Different Approaches to Promote the Gurmat Sangīt Revival**

In order to promote the gurmat sangīt revival and consolidate the knowledge of Sikh devotional music tradition, the practitioners adopt different approaches under three groupings: restoration, invention, and legitimization; resistance and association; and classicization, hybridization, and technology.

First, the gurmat sangīt revival “strives to ‘restore’ a musical system believed to be disappearing or completely relegated to the past for the benefit of contemporary society (Livingston 1999:66).” Two major objectives of the AGSS, singing in prescribed rāgas and re-introduction of stringed instruments, are the “authentic” and “correct” guidelines for the way that Sikh devotional music should be performed. In this way, the revival serves as cultural opposition and as an alternative to mainstream performing practice at gurdwaras of the 20th and 21st centuries, i.e. singing of śabad kīrtans in prescribed rāgas as opposed to those in non-prescribed rāgas or not in rāgas at all; and singing with the harmonium as opposed to using stringed instruments as accompaniment. Besides, the “restoration” is a modeling of the past being continuously recreated in the present (Handler and Linnekin 1984). Practitioners compiled the “new tradition” from “bits and fragments of various traditions,” such as elements of the Hindustani music, Punjabi folk culture, and individual knowledge (based on oral transmission along generations of Sikh musicians) and innovations under collective agreement (Livingston 1999, Ronström 1996). The combination of these authentic and new elements tradition is discussed and legitimized by the members of Rāg Nirnayak Committee, who are usually the authoritative leaders and representative musicians in the field.

Second, the conflicting approaches of resistance and association are adopted as major content of the gurmat sangīt revival, similar to the concept of collision and collusion in Marathi rāshṭrīya kīrtan (Schultz 2008). Resistance has been revealed through highlighting unique aspects of the Sikh devotional music tradition to stand out from other similar genres. Examples include introducing stringed instruments adopted by



the Sikh Gurus in the distant past; highlighting some names of prescribed rāgas (mostly mixed rāgas) that are found only in the Guru Granth Sahib; and developing Sikh musicology with history, theory, and general knowledge. At the same time, core proponents are fully aware of the importance of associating the Sikh music tradition with other elements of musical genres. For example, they describe the rāgas of the Guru Granth Sahib as coming from different musical traditions including Hindustani, Carnatic, Sikh devotional, and Punjabi regional traditions; some members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee received training and became professional musicians of Hindustani music; many Sikh musicians performing at the AGSS obtained training in Hindustani music and śabad kīrtans at the same time; and some stringed instruments were introduced as being originated from different genres (e.g. the Sikh/dhrupad rabāb) and regions (e.g. the Persian/Afghani rabāb). The purpose of adopting the conflicting approaches is to distinguish oneself (i.e. Sikh devotional music tradition) from other dominant cultures (e.g. Hindustani music) by revealing its uniqueness, and to legitimize its socio-cultural and religious importance by associating oneself with these cultures at the same time.

Last, the gurmat sangīt revival involves classicization, hybridization, and technology in promoting the “authentic” Sikh devotional music tradition. To classicize the Sikh devotional music tradition, practice of the colonial period has been adopted to standardize rāgas’ details, identify individual musicians through awards, ceremonies, and competitions, generate the history of Sikh music, and establish the Sikh musicology. Meanwhile, hybridization of old and contemporary performing practices is also found at the AGSS stage and its corresponding activities, such as the employment of instruments

of different traditions and origins to accompany śabad kīrtans' singing, and participation of non-Sikh and female musicians. Apart from the interpersonal contact between core revivalists and the general believers, the gurmat sangīt revival also relies on the mass media to disseminate the message and expand its significance.

All the above approaches contribute to creating “a strong pedagogical component in order to pass on the tradition in a controlled manner,” so that the revivalist ethos and aesthetic code of the gurmat sangīt revival are disseminated to other geographical spaces (i.e. Sikh communities at overseas countries) and social media (i.e. the Internet) (ibid.73). Since then, visibility of the revival content has been reached to more geographical areas: from the initiator Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash at a micro level; to the Punjabi gurdwaras at the trans-regional level; and finally reaching gurdwaras in other parts of India and overseas countries as the trans-regional level (Slobin 1990, 1993).

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GURMAT SANGĪT REVIVAL**

The gurmat sangīt revival, as arisen by the AGSS, has led to the creation of a worldwide significance in the practice of Sikh devotional music performance and education. Yet, the change as caused by the revival is just at its beginning stage. While some local and overseas Sikh communities have adopted the AGSS content into actual practice, others have not experienced it, or not come in contact with its practitioners, thus being unable to respond to the gurmat sangīt revival. There are even unfavorable

responses against the gurmat sangīt revival, with opposers questioning the legitimacy of the content as promoted in the AGSS.

### **Favorable Responses**

Since 1991, the AGSS has changed the performing scene of Sikh devotional music gradually. In both India and overseas, kīrtan singing and playing of stringed instruments have become important components of educating Sikhs of the next generation. To facilitate the gradual influence of this regular event, academies, learning centers, workshops, and competitions of Sikh devotional music have been set up and organized by gurdwaras and religious organizations, so that knowledge is transmitted through institutionalization, audio-visual and printed publications, and online platforms.

Originated from the state of Punjab in India in the 1990s, the influence and significance of the gurmat sangīt revival have been extended to regions in and outside India in the 2000s and the 2010s. As stated in the last chapter, different types of institutions, including universities, taksāls, gurmat sangīt academies and Sikh missionary colleges, started to include teaching of the prescribed rāgas and stringed instruments in the Sikh music curriculum after the 1991 AGSS. Advanced studies on Sikh music have also been launched. Since 2004, the Department of Gurmat Sangeet at Punjabi University Patiala has offered performance-based courses from diploma to the M.A. levels, and this is the first program offered by an Indian university with Sikh music specialization. At Hofstra University in New York, the Sardarni Harbans Kaur Chair in Sikh Musicology

was established in 2012 to facilitate the research and academic study of Sikh music. It is the first and only academic chair of Sikh musicology established in the Western academic field to date. These academic programs and establishments aim at enhancing the research and transmitting the knowledge of Sikh music at the advanced learning level.

Furthermore, a number of gurmat sangīt academies or kīrtan classes have been established overseas to promote the learning of Sikh music. These gurmat sangīt academies or kīrtan classes are usually attached to or organized by a regional gurdwara whose aims are to promote the religious doctrines and introduce the Punjabi/Sikh ethnic group through learning to sing or play instruments. The participants are local Sikhs who are primarily kids and/or music beginners, where the former usually attend the classes as requested by the parents. Examples of the academies include the SGGS Gurmat Sangeet Academy in Malaysia (attached to the Gurdwara Sahib Saentul in Kuala Lumpur), the Gurmat Sangeet Academy in Singapore (attached to the Gurdwara Sahib Silat Road), Raj academy Conservatoire and the Gurmat Sangeet Academy in the U.K. (independent academies not attached to any gurdwaras). Kīrtan classes are offered at the Sikh Center of San Antonio (U.S.), Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara Gravesend Kent (U.K.), Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar Montreal (Canada), and many others around the world.

On top of the expanding channels to learn Sikh devotional music, the teaching content of these overseas institutions is designed according to the background and experience of their instructors or musicians. Instructors or musicians who received training in Sikh devotional music in India would be more likely to incorporate a major content of the AGSS into their teachings, such case is found with Principal Satnam Singh

from the Jawaddi Taksal as the principal of the Gurmat Sangeet Academy in Singapore. Similarly, prominent Sikh musicians (mostly from India) have been invited to hold gurmat sangīt workshops at overseas gurdwaras occasionally, as Principal Sukhwant Singh from the Jawaddi Taksal ran workshops at Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, Nigeria, and Australia regularly. The teaching content of these workshops basically includes kīrtan singing in prescribed rāgas, and accompanying kīrtans with stringed instruments (mainly rabāb, sarangi, sarandā, and dilrubā).

Different forms of mass media (including printed publications, audio-visual recording, television broadcast, and the Internet) are related to the gurmat sangīt revival in a reciprocal manner. The concept of reviving the Sikh devotional music tradition has been promoted through virtual spaces of social media. Similarly, the increasing number of printed, audio-visual, and online publications in the theme of Sikh devotional music is a result of the success of the AGSS to a certain extent. The different forms of mass media have not only expanded the knowledge of the gurmat sangīt revival, but also provided a platform to define Sikh devotional music collectively.

Prominent Sikh musicians or music scholars published in the content of Sikh devotional music, and these are mostly guidebooks for kīrtan singing with notations and/or audio recordings. In audio-visual recordings, specification of rāgas to be performed can be found in most items, while names of the performing musicians are found in other items as the major selling point to attract potential customers. Some devotional TV channels have started to include kīrtan performances featuring prescribed rāgas accompanied by stringed instruments in the Sikh music programs. For example,

Zee Punjabi (a Punjabi language television channel from India) operates a program titled “Ek Onkar” with sessions introducing eminent ragīs and their kīrtan performances; a FATEH TV (an online television network) program titled “Raag Naad Shabad Sohne (Beauty of the Cosmic Rāga Sound in Śabad)” was hosted by Principal Sukhwant Singh to introduce different rāgas by prominent ragīs in 2014.

Web-pages introducing Sikh devotional music and audio-visual clips of kīrtan singing are attached to websites introducing the Sikh religion. Examples include webpages of “Rediscovering Gurmat Sangeet” and “Videos – Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan” in the Vismad Naad website (2011); “Gurbani Media Center” in the SikhNet website (2012a); the section of “Sikh Musical Heritage” in the Rag Academy Conservatoire website (2014); and “Shabad Kirtan” in the SikhSangeet website (2014). While some webpages contain audio clips featuring kīrtan singing by prominent ragī jathās (such as “Gurbani Media Center” and “Videos – Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Samellan”), others define Sikh devotional music by illustrating prescribed rāgas of kīrtan singing and representative stringed instruments of the gurmat sangīt revival (such as “Rediscovering Gurmat Sangeet” and “Sikh Musical Heritage”).

Favorable responses to the gurmat sangīt revival were observed in gurdwaras in Singapore where I conducted my field research in the early 2000s. At the initial stage of responding to the revival, professional rāgī jathās were employed to perform at three gurdwaras (Katong Gurdwara, Central Sikh Temple, and Gurdwara Sahib Sailat Road) in Singapore. Reputable rāgīs from India were invited to perform kīrtans at gurpurbs, where recordings of the past events were sold (as donations) at the Katong Gurdwara.

Individual, group, or family classes of Sikh music are offered at the Central Sikh Temple and the Gurmat Sangeet Academy in the Sikh Centre of the Gurdwara Sahib Sailat Road. The form of gurmat sangeet classes requires applicants to show their interest in learning tablā, harmonium (written as “vājā” in the form), rabāb, sarangi, dilrubā, isrāj, tānpurā, Indian classical music, ghazal, and Sufi saint music, voice culture, voice training, or Punjabi music, implying that genres other than Sikh devotional music are also taught. The two young instructors, Satnam Singh and Manbir Singh, are both students of Principal Sukhwant Singh at the Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana. The teaching of stringed instruments and the music tutors from the Jawaddi Taksal illustrate the partial content of the gurmat sangīt revival being incorporated in the religious activities of overseas gurdwaras. When asked whether the kīrtan performance at the Singaporean gurdwaras had complied with the major themes of the AGSS, Satnam Singh replied that not much concern had been raised in this aspect, as the authority to invite/employ which kīrtan musicians relied on the religious and administrative board members of the gurdwara who may not know about the gurmat sangīt revival and the AGSS in details (Interview with Satnam Singh 2012).<sup>120</sup>

Responding to the gurmat sangīt revival favorably, the above examples reveal the concern to promote and define the Sikh devotional music tradition in various social spaces, including religious, local, and overseas venues (e.g. gurdwaras and institutions),

---

<sup>120</sup> In the field trip to the Katong Gurdwara in 2011, I purchased about eight MP3 CDs at about US\$10–15 each from the bookstore that only opens on Sundays. These CDs are sold in the Gurdwara but not in the commercial market, and they are labeled with names of musicians or kīrtans only (with no packaging design at all). It reflects that these CDs are mostly reaching to Singaporean Sikh believers who may acquire the CDs as religious experience at home.

social media (e.g. the Internet and television), and commercial markets (e.g. CD recordings and printed publications). Conversely, these examples would prove both the AGSS and the gurmat sangīt revival as a successful event and a significant feature in Sikhism, respectively.

### **No Responses**

Contrary to the favorable responses to the gurmat sangīt revival that practises the “authentic” Sikh devotional music performance in different social spaces, many (especially overseas) gurdwaras are still unaware of the revival, its leading event and corresponding activities. Despite the fact that the AGSS has been organized annually in Punjab for over twenty years, many overseas Sikh communities, usually formed by believers with little or no music knowledge, show no responses to the revival.

The unawareness, obstructing the revival from developing its worldwide significance, is directly related to the practical situations and administrative matters of the gurdwaras. Among gurdwaras over the world, especially those attended by Sikh immigrants or their generations overseas, not all of them would have professional Sikh musicians to give regular performance. There are various reasons for the arrangement: small size of gurdwaras and few Sikh believers to support the performance, lack of professional musicians in nearby areas, or lack of financial support to hire professional Sikh musicians. These gurdwaras usually arrange kīrtan sessions on Saturdays or Sundays, when Sikh believers are off from work with some of them being amateur



musicians who lead the kīrtan singing. It is only at special occasions (like the gurburb) that professional Sikh musicians from India are employed or invited to sing kīrtans. Similarly, kīrtan classes organized by the gurdwaras are usually held by amateur musicians with no formal training. Only when funding is available may the gurdwaras run workshops and invite professional rāgīs from India to conduct kīrtan classes within a short period of time.

The above phenomena are reflected at gurdwaras that I visited for my research a few years ago. Both the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple and Austin Gurdwara Sahib do not have professional rāgīs stationed at the gurdwaras to give daily kīrtan performance, and their kīrtan classes are usually conducted by amateur musicians who are enthusiastic believers in the community.<sup>121</sup> Professional rāgī jathās from the Jawaddi Taksal have been invited several times to give kīrtan performances at the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple for the gurburb celebrations, which is an example of hiring professional rāgīs for special religious occasions at the overseas gurdwaras. The instrumental combination of three musicians with two harmoniums and one tablā was the usual practice at these gurdwaras, where no stringed instruments were found on the stage at the time when I did my field research. A large projector was held alongside the Guru Granth Sahib. Providing English translations for the śabads reflects that some audience members do not understand the Gurumukhi script in the śabads at all.

---

<sup>121</sup> The music scene of the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple described by Khabra (2012) is similar to my field observation in the early 2000s.

At the kīrtan classes conducted in the Austin Gurdwara Sahib, there were thirty Sikhs forming small groups to practice singing and instruments (harmonium and tablā) at the time of my research in 2008. These Sikhs either learned kīrtans from guidebooks with Indian notations, or from other participants who had learnt the kīrtans from recordings or other gurdwaras. The Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple has a similar practice, and it even offers opportunities for students to perform kīrtans at the Dārbār Sahib [main hall] of the gurdwara. The cases of the Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple and Austin Gurdwara Sahib prove that some overseas gurdwaras have not yet been exposed to the revitalization movement of Sikh devotional music at all.

In Khabra's discussion on music of the Sikh diaspora (2012), the music scene of Namdhari Gurdwara in Leicester, U.K. does not show any responses to the gurmat sangīt revitalization movement either. The Gurdwara is run by the Namdhari sect of Sikhism, in which the believers worship a living guru (Guru Satguru Jagjit Singh) rather than the Guru Granth Sahib, and they have their own specific theorization of music. Performance at the Gurdwara involves a fusion of Hindustani classical music and Sikh sacred music, and music with the display of virtuosity which is believed to express "the devotional mood of worship" and enable "the trance-like state required for meditation" (Khabra 2012:152). As a minority (Namdharis are considered a minority in the mainstream Sikh community) within a minority (Sikhs as the minority in U.K.), the appropriation of Hindustani classical music for a devotional role is adopted to express an alternative and distinct identity, while maintaining the solidarity of this community.

It is only to a small extent that the gurmat sangīt revival exerts notable influences in the market and on the Internet. As mentioned above, although the number of printed and audio-visual publications and websites following the trend of the gurmat sangīt revival has been increasing over the years, it engages in a very small proportion in comparison to the overwhelming information presented as the “authentic” Sikh music tradition. Some sources do not follow the content of the gurmat sangīt revival at all. For example, audio tracks have been titled by beginning with a few bāñīs of the śabads without mentioning the rāgas prescribed by the Sikh Gurus; and some Sikh musicians are still singing kīrtans either in non-prescribed rāgas, not in rāgas, or in new musical styles at gurdwaras (as discussed under the section of “The Common Practice of Sikh Devotional Music and Other Experimentations in the 20th and 21st Centuries” in Chapter 4).<sup>122</sup>

Under no influences of the gurmat sangīt revival, or a mixture of different ideas as the concept of Sikh devotional music (while some are related to the gurmat sangīt revival and some are not), the above scenes illustrate how the Sikh communities, especially those from overseas, are unaware of the revival trend, or they just do not put much emphasis on the “authenticity” or “genuineness” of the Sikh devotional music tradition.

---

<sup>122</sup> For audio tracks have been titled by beginning few bāñīs of the śabads without mentioning the rāgas prescribed by the Sikh Gurus, a lot of examples can be found in audio-visual titles at the YouTube website and commercial recordings.

## Unfavorable Responses

Commented on by a few reputable musicians or musicians with the family heritage as rāgīs or rabābī, there are unfavorable responses against the gurmat sangīt revival in which opposers question the legitimacy of the content as promoted in the AGSS.

The standardized details of prescribed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib have been commented by a number of Sikh musicians as an agreement by the majority but not all members of the Rāg Nirnayak Committee. One such musician is Dr. Alankar Singh, professor at the Gurmat Sangeet Department of the Punjabi University Patiala, student of Professor Tara Singh, and an active musician in various events of the gurmat sangīt revival in the 2010s, in an interview with Nirinjian Kaur Khalsa in 2011, claimed that the standardization was just 77% in agreement. Another musician is Bhai Baldeep Singh, the founder of the ANAD Conservatory, maternal grandson of the late Bhai Avtār Singh, and the 13th generation exponent of gurbānī kīrtan tradition from the time of the Sikh Gurus, who suggested that the standardization actually involved blending a few rāga versions together into one composite rāga form. Bhai Baldeep Singh also claimed these newly-created rāga forms as being problematic, as they did not focus on the “authentic” tradition of Sikh devotional music (Bhai Baldeep Singh 2011, Nirinjan Kaur Khalsa 2012).

Although Bhai Baldeep Singh (and his contemporaries) participated in the AGSS on various years, he interpreted the Sikh devotional music tradition in a way contrary to that perceived by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee (2011). Instead of drawing partial knowledge of Hindustani music to perform rāgas prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib,

Bhai Baldeep Singh focuses on the direct linkage to gurbāṇī kīrtan oral tradition. He commented that knowledge of the Sikh devotional music had never been addressed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee or at the AGSS fully. This includes different singing styles for different poetic genres (contrary to the singing in khyāl or popular style as common practice); percussion as equal partner in the gurbāṇī kīrtan performance (contrary to the use of percussion as rhythmic accompaniment); and four elements of gurbāṇī kīrtan: rāgas, tāla, śabad, and *chitt* (due intentness) (while only the first three are emphasized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee or at the AGSS). Meanwhile, he criticized the inadequate understanding of the gurbāṇī, as well as the intent of gaining musical proficiency as the latest trend of the Sikh devotional music performance. As Bhai Baldeep Singh regarded instrument making as part of the Sikh devotional music tradition, he worked on craftsmanship to revive ancient instruments of the Sikh Gurus' times. Instead of following what had been confirmed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee, Bhai Baldeep Singh set up the ANAD Conservatory in Sultanpur Lodhi, Punjab to share both musical and experiential knowledge from his lineage of gurbāṇī kīrtan tradition.

#### **CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MY RESEARCH**

My research on gurmat sangīt revival attempts to offer alternative issues and contradictory views to the existing research on devotional music in India. First, different from Schultz's case of Marathi rāshṭrīya kīrtan (2002, 2008, 2013) to illustrate nationalism in the symbolic appropriation of nativism, neither does Sikh devotional

music performance become political, nor do initiators and musicians become nationalistic actors to propandize political agendas through the gurmat sangīt revival. Moreover, the revitalization of Sikh devotional music emphasizes the uniqueness of Sikh musical culture, thus promoting Sikh nationalism in contrast to different religious and social communities on the general level.

Second, while Ho's research (2006, 2013) traces the roots of the more recently developed, profane genre of Hindustani classical music to the sacred, ancient genre of the liturgical music of the Puṣṭi Mārg, I argue for the gurmat sangīt revival as the reverse – that is, defining the content of gurmat sangīt (as the sacred genre) as originating from elements of Hindustani and Carnatic music, and folk music (as the more recently developed, profane genre). Last, as Slawek's article (1988) presents the similar musical elements in popular kīrtan of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Hindustani music, in order to prove the sharing and interaction of “little” and “great” traditions respectively, my research replaces popular kīrtan with gurmat sangīt as the “little” tradition, and illustrates how the revitalization movement employs concepts and terms from the “great” tradition of Hindustani music. My research of the gurmat sangīt revival aims to contribute to the study of devotional music in India with another “little” tradition (i.e. Sikh devotional music) and concept (i.e. employing elements of “great” tradition in order to increase the legitimacy of gurmat sangīt).

It is not only the gurmat sangīt revival but also its study that has offered an alternative approach to Indian music research. In scholarship on the Indian classical music and religious music, the study of the gurmat sangīt revival has supplemented as an

alternative aspect at a micro level. In contrast to the academic study of other major religions in the Indian subcontinent (either Hinduism or Islam), the study of minority religions like that of Sikhism had been emphasized for its political struggle, and social and religious formation but not on the cultural aspects like music. Contrary to the Indian classical music (either Hindustani or Carnatic tradition) that had long been regarded as the mainstream, serious, and official musical genre in the Indian subcontinent, the study of religious music, such as Sikh devotional music in this case, had been overlooked or regarded as a music category without historiography. As in the corresponding activities of the AGSS, both short biographies of individual musicians and brief introduction of Sikh devotional music tradition contribute to the generation of Sikh devotional music history in academic and printed forms. This also shows the core proponents' ideal and effort to develop music history of their own religious, ethnic, and regional culture.

## Appendices

### APPENDIX 1 TRANSLITERATION TABLE OF PUNJABI

#### 1.1 Letters

ੳ u	ਅ a	ੲ i	ਸ sa	ਹ ha
ਕ ka	ਖ kha	ਗ gā	ਘ gha	ਙ nga
ਚ cha	ਛ chha	ਜ ja	ਝ jha	ਞ nja
ਟ ṭa / Fa	ਠ ṭha / Fha	ਡ ḍa / Ḍa	ਢ ḍha / Ḍha	ਣ ṇa
ਤ ta	ਥ tha	ਦ da	ਧ dha	ਨ na
ਪ pa	ਫ pha	ਬ ba	ਭ bha	ਮ ma
ਯ ya	ਰ ra	ਲ la	ਵ va	ੜ ṛa

.ਕ qa	.ਖ ḵha	.ਗ gā	ਜ za	.ਫ fa	ਸ਼ śa	ਲ਼ ḷa
----------	-----------	----------	---------	----------	----------	----------



### 1.2 Vowels (Independent Form)

ਅ	ਇ	ਉ	ਏ	ਓ
a	i	u	e	o
ਆ	ਈ	ਊ	ਐ	ਔ
ā	ī	ū	ai	au

### 1.3 Vowels (Dependent form – combining “ਕ” with vowels)

ਕ	ਕਿ	ਕੁ	ਕੇ	ਕੋ
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko
ਕਾ	ਕੀ	ਕੂ	ਕੈ	ਕੌ
kā	kī	kū	kai	kau

### 1.4 Nasalization and Germination

ਟਿੱਪੀ	ṭippī
ਬਿੰਦੀ	Bindī
ਅੱਧਕ	addhak

## **APPENDIX 2 RESEARCH ACTIVITIES, FIELD VENUES, INTERVIEWS, AND PERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

### **2.1 Major Activities and Fieldwork Venues**

- 2008 Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, Hong Kong
- 2008 Gurdwara Sahib Austin, Texas, USA
- 2009 AIIS Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology, Gurgaon, India
- 2009 Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, India
- 2009 Department of Sikh Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, India
- 2009 New Delhi Gurdwara, New Delhi, India
- 2009 Jaipur Gurdwara, Jaipur, India
- 2010 Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, Hong Kong
- 2011 Katong Gurdwara, Singapore
- 2011 Gurdwara Silat Road Sikh Centre, Singapore
- 2011 Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, Hong Kong
- 2012 Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana, India
- 2012 Gurmat Sangeet Workshop (8-10 June), Ludhiana, India
- 2012 Pilgrimage Trip (12-19 June) to Hemkhunt Sahib, Uttarakhand, India
- 2012 Punjabi University Patiala, India
- 2012 Gurburb (marriage day of Gurū Arjun), Kīrtan Darbār (2 July) at the Gurdwara Meo, Jalandhar, India
- 2012 Gurburb (birthday of Gurū Hargobind), Dhāḍī Darbār (5 July) at the Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana, India
- 2012 Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan 2012, Live Telecast (November)
- 2012 Khalsa Diwan (Hong Kong) Sikh Temple, Hong Kong

## 2.2 Major Interviews and Personal Communications

- Kant, Rama (Pandit). Tablā musician, Ludhiana. 2012. Personal Communication, Ludhiana, India.
- Kaur, Charanjit. Ramgarhia Girls College, Ludhiana. 2012. Interview. Ludhiana, India.
- Kaur, Gursimran. Amritsar. 2012. Personal Communication. Patiala, India.
- Kaur, Jasbir (Bībī). Punjabi University Patiala, Patiala. 2012. Personal Communication. Patiala, India.
- Kaur, Lakhvinder. Guru Nanak Khalsa College for Women, Ludhiana. 2012. Personal Communication. Patiala, India.
- Kaur, Sharandeep. Guru Nanak Khalsa College for Women, Ludhiana. 2012. Personal Communication. Ludhiana, India.
- Khalsa, Javinder Kaur (Bībī). Dhāḍī, Ludhiana. 2012. Interview. Ludhiana, India.
- Sabar, Jasbir Singh. S.G.P.C., Amritsar. 2009. Personal Communication. Amritsar, India.
- Singh, Ajmer. Vocalist, Lexter. 2012. Personal Communication. Patiala, India.
- Singh, Amardeep. Independent researcher, Singapore. 2011. Interview. Singapore.
- Singh, Amir (Sant Giānī). Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana. 2012. Personal Communication. Ludhiana, India.
- Singh, Baldeep (Bhāī). Chairman of The Anād Foundation, New Delhi. 2009. Interview. New Delhi, India.
- Singh, Bikramjeet Singh. Punjabi University Patiala, Patiala. 2012. Personal Communication. Patiala, India.
- Singh, Jaspal. Vocalist, Patiala. 2012. Interview. Patiala, India.
- Singh, Jogeshwan. S.G.P.C, Amritsar. 2009. Personal Communication. Amritsar, India.
- Singh, Paramjot Singh (Professor). Vocalist, Ludhiana. 2012. Interview. Ludhiana, India.
- Singh, Satnam (Principal). Sikh Music Academy, Singapore. 2011. Interview. Singapore.

—. 2012. Personal Communication. Ludhiana, India.

Singh, Sohan (Baba). Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Ludhiana. 2012. Interview. Ludhiana, India.

Singh, Sukhvinder (Namdhari). Tablā musician, Birmingham. 2009. Interview. Austin, Texas.

Singh, Sukhwant (Principal). Gurshabad Sangeet Academy, Ludhiana. 2012. Personal Communication. Ludhiana, India.

**APPENDIX 3 RĀGAS FROM THE SECTION “ŚĀBAD” OF THE DASAM GRANTH**

<b>Order of the Śabad</b>	<b>Rāga</b>
1st	Rāmkaḷī
2nd	Rāmkaḷī
3rd	Rāmkaḷī
4th	Soraṭh
5th	Kaliāṇ
6th	Kaliāṇ
7th	Tilang Kāphī
8th	Bilāval
9th	Devghandhārī
10th	Devghandhārī

## APPENDIX 4 PRINTED MATERIALS OF THE AGSS

### 4.1 Sticker of the 2010 AGSS



### 4.2 Poster of the 2009 AGSS



#### 4.3 Sticker of the 1999 AGSS



#### 4.4 Banner of the 2004 AGSS





4.5 Poster of the 2007 AGSS

**ਸੱਚਾ ਪੱਤਰ**

ਪਰਮ ਸਤਿਕਾਰਯੋਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਜੀਓ,  
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ।  
ਸੱਚਖੰਡਵਾਸੀ ਮਹਾਪੁਰਸ਼ ਸੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਦੇ  
ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਰ ਲਈ ਆਰੰਭੇ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਤੋਰਦਿਆਂ

**੧੬ਵਾਂ ਅਦੁੱਤੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਸੰਮੇਲਨ**

30 ਨਵੰਬਰ, 1 ਅਤੇ 2 ਦਸੰਬਰ 2007 ਦਿਨ ਸ਼ੁਕਰਵਾਰ, ਸ਼ਨੀਵਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਐਤਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਜਵੱਦੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੇਠ  
ਲਿਖੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਚੌਕੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ (ਸ਼ਾਨ, ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਨ,  
ਧਰੁਪਦ-ਧਮਾਰ, ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੀਤ, ਪਉੜੀ) ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਤੰਤੀ ਸਜਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਰਧਾਰਤ ਰਾਗਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਜੀ।

**ਰੋਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ**

ਨਿਤਨੇਮ, ਆਸਾ ਦੀ ਵਾਰ	ਸਵੇਰੇ 4.30 ਤੋਂ 7.30 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ
ਗੁਰਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰ	ਸਵੇਰੇ 7.30 ਤੋਂ 8.30 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ
ਨਿਰਧਾਰਤ ਰਾਗਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਰਤਨ	ਸਵੇਰੇ 9.00 ਤੋਂ 10.00 ਵਜੇ ਰਾਤ ਤੱਕ
30 ਨਵੰਬਰ 2007 : ਸੰਤ ਸਮਾਗਮ	ਸਵੇਰੇ 9.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੋਂ 1.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ
1 ਦਸੰਬਰ 2007 : ਫਾੜੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ	ਦੁਪਹਿਰ 1.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੋਂ 3.00 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ

29 ਨਵੰਬਰ 2007 ਨੂੰ ਸਵੇਰੇ 9 ਵਜੇ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਾਮ 4 ਵਜੇ ਤਕ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਕੀਰਤਨ  
ਪ੍ਰਤਿਯੋਗਤਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਆਪ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਪ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ  
ਸਮਾਗਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਅਤੇ ਧਨ ਨਾਲ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ  
ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ। ਆਈਆਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੁਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਦਾਸ  
*ਸ਼ਿਵ ਸਿੰਘ*  
(ਸੰਤ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਅਮੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ)  
ਮੁਖੀ, ਜਵੱਦੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ

**ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼**  
ਜਵੱਦੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ-141013, ਪੰਜਾਬ  
ਫੋਨ: 0161-2562596, 5108696, 98721-20274 ਫੇਕਸ: 2560533  
E-mail: jawaddi.taksal@gmail.com Website: www.jawadditaksal.org

ਨੋਟ: ਜਵੱਦੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ ਹਰ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਦ ਮੈਗਜ਼ੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ  
ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਦੀ ਸਲਾਨਾ ਮੈਂਬਰਸ਼ਿਪ ਕੇਵਲ 250/- ਰੁਪਏ ਹੈ, ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਬਣੋ ਜੀ।



**APPENDIX 5 PHOTOS OF THE RĀG NIRNAYAK COMMITTEE (© VISMAAD NAAD)**

**5.1 Bhai Tejpal Singh (left) at the 1992 AGSS**



**5.2 Dr. Gurnam Singh (right) at the 1999 AGSS**



**5.3 Bhāi Prithipal Singh Kang (middle)**



**5.4 Bhāi Avtar Singh (left) at the 1999 AGSS**

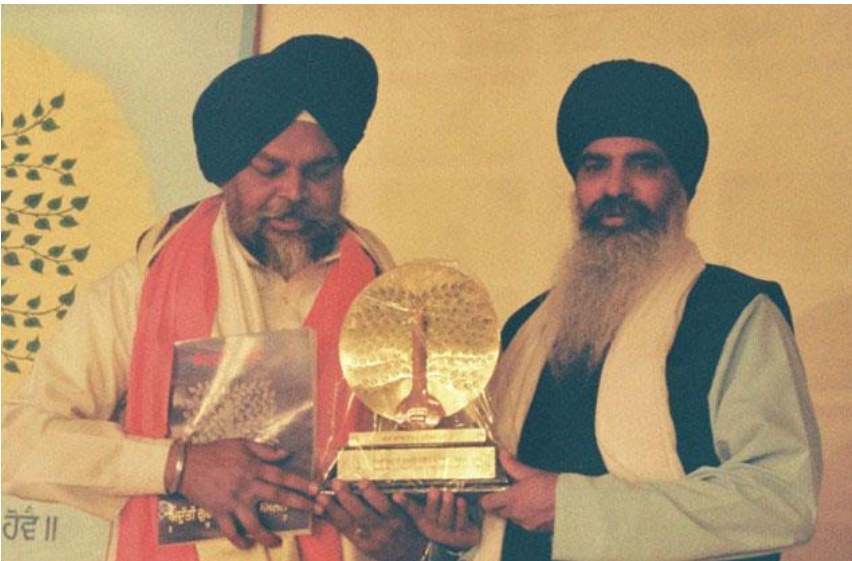




**5.5 Professor Kartar Singh (right) at the 1999 AGSS**



**5.6 Principal Baldev Singh (left) at the 1997 AGSS**



**5.7 Bibi Jasbir Kaur (middle) at the 1993 AGSS**



**5.8 Principal Rajinder Singh (middle) at the 1993 AGSS**

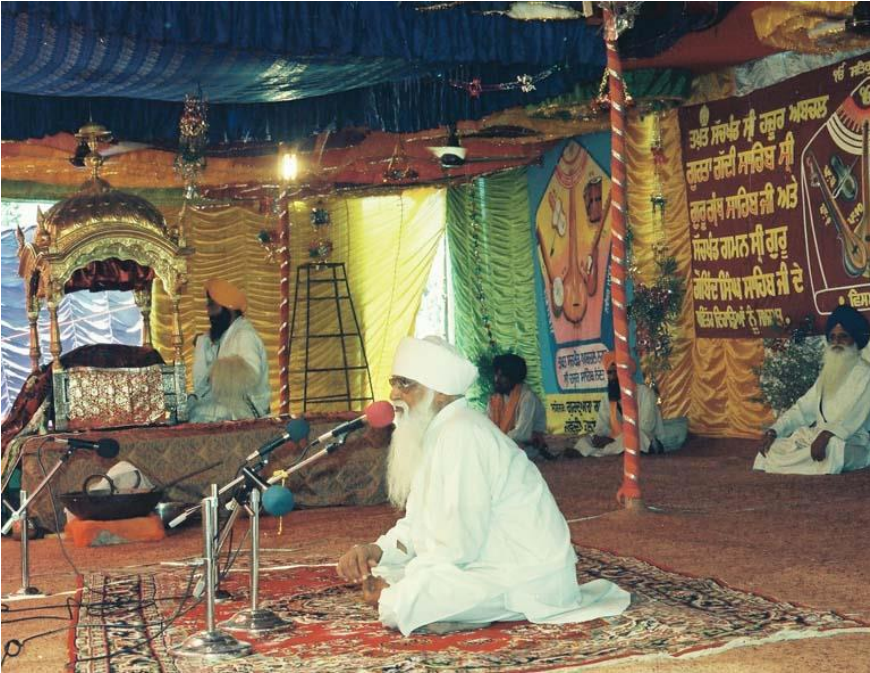




**5.9 Principal Shamsheer Singh Karir (middle) at the 1993 AGSS**



**5.10 Ustad Jaswant Singh Bhanwra (middle) at the 1996 AGSS**



**5.11 Professor Paramjot Singh (middle) at the 2001 AGSS**



**5.12 Dr. Ajit Singh Paintal at the 1991 AGSS**





**5.13 Bhai Balbir Singh (middle) at the 1997 AGSS**



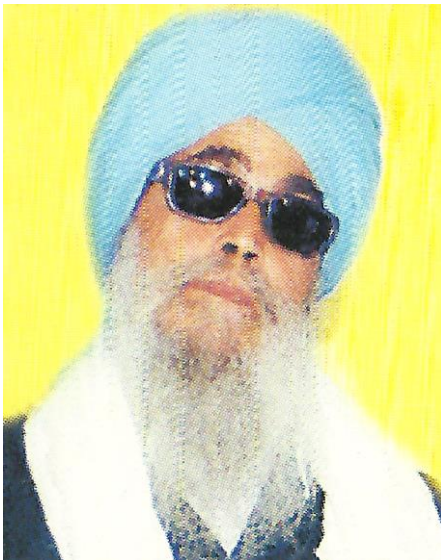
**5.14 Pt. Dalip Chander Bedi at the 1997 AGSS**



**5.15 Professor Avtar Singh (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., booklet in English)**

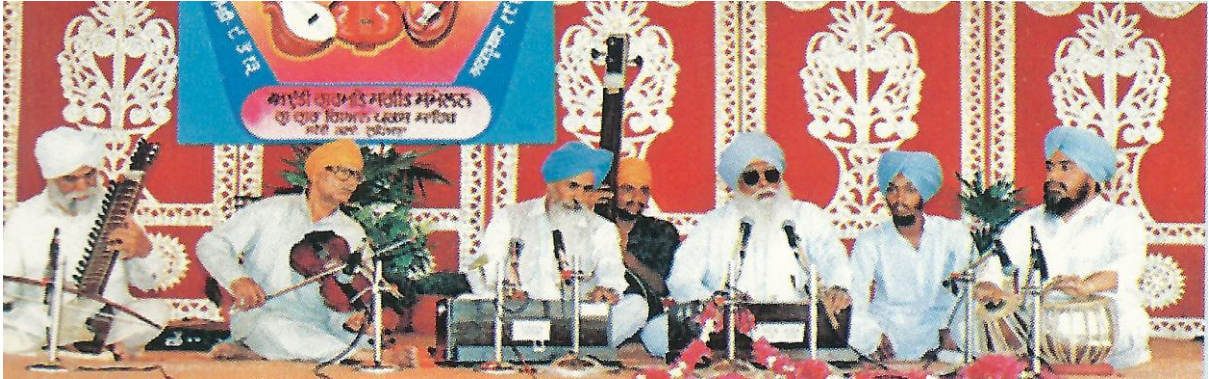


**5.16 Principal Chanan Singh Majbor (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., booklet in English)**





**5.17 Professor Harchand Singh (the harmonium player on the right) (Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash n.y., pamphlet in Punjabi)**



**APPENDIX 6 THE SECTIONS OF “GENERAL COMMITTEE” AND “RĀG DARBĀR” IN  
*ADUTTĪ GURMIT SANGĪT SANMELAN 1991* (SATBĪR SINGH ED. 1991,  
BOOKLET IN PUNJABI)**

Committee

Chief Trustee/Sponsor: Sant Bābā Suchā Singh

Chief Organizer: Baba Sarbjot Singh Bedī

Souvenir Publication Committee

Chief Editor: Principal Satbīr Singh

Editor: Dr. Gurnām Singh

Rāg Darbār (Court of the Rāga)

Chief Advisor: Principal Rājindar Singh, Lucknow

Advisor: Sr. Jasvant Singh Jī Bhanvrā, Bhāī Balbīr Singh, Amritsar

Board of Experts

1. Dr. Ajīt Singh Paintal, Delhi
2. Bhai Sāhib Balbīr Singh, Amritsar
3. Principal Baldev Singh, Delhi
4. Professor Kartār Singh, Ludhiana
5. Bhai Sāhib Paramjot Singh, Mullanpur
6. Dr. Gurnām Singh, Punjabi University Patiala

Kīrtan Committee (Rāg Nirnāik Committee)

1. Sri Dalip Chandar Bedī

2. Dr. Ajīt Singh, Paintal, Delhi
3. Dr. Sāhib Balbīr Singh, Amritsar
4. Principal Baldev Singh, Delhi
5. Professor Chanaᅇ Singh Mazbūr, Hoshiarpur
6. Professor Charanjīt Singh, Ludhiana
7. Dr. Sāhib Paramjot Singh, Mullanpur
8. Principal Rājindar Singh, Lucknow
9. Professor Kartār Singh, Ludhiana
10. Dr. Tejpāl Singh, Dr. Surindarpal Singh (Singh Bīndhū), Delhi
11. Sr. Jasvant Singh Bhanvrā
12. Bhai Prithīpāl Singh Kang, Indore

**APPENDIX 7 LIST OF RĀGĪS PERFORMED AT THE 1991 AGSS**

<b>No</b>	<b>Names of the Rāgī</b>	<b>Rāgas Performed (Dates of Performance in October 1991)</b>
1	(Bhai) Baldev Singh, Delhi	Tukhārī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Prabhātī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Sūhī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
2	(Bhai) Tejpāl Singh and Surindar Pāl Singh (Singh Bindhū), Delhi	Prabhātī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Rāmkalī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Gūjarī (10 <sup>th</sup> )
3	(Dr.) Ajīt Singh (Paintal), Delhi	Bairāṛī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Devgandhārī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Kedārā (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Mārū (13 <sup>th</sup> )
4	(Bhai) Balbīr Singh, Amritsar	Basant (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Kānṛā (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Gaūṛī (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Bihāgaṛā (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Devgandhārī (13 <sup>th</sup> ), Mārū (13 <sup>th</sup> )
5	(Bhai) Nirnam Singh (Khālsā), (Hazūrī Rāgī), Harmandir Sahib	Bilāval (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Tukhārī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Basant (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Kānṛā (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Naṭ Narāiṇ (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Prabhātī (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Vadḥans (13 <sup>th</sup> )
6	(Professor) Paramjot Singh, Mullanpur	Kānṛā (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Naṭ Narāiṇ (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Prabhātī (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Vadḥans (13 <sup>th</sup> )
7	(Bhai) Harī Singh, (Hazūrī Rāgī), Harmandir Sahib	Āsā Dī Vār (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Vadḥans (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Āsā (13 <sup>th</sup> )
8	(Bhai) Shamsheer Singh, Delhi	Āsā Dī Vār (12 <sup>th</sup> )
9	(Principal) Rājindar Singh, Lucknow	Srī Rāg (12 <sup>th</sup> )
10	(Professor) Kartār Singh, Ludhiana	Mārū (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Kaliāṇ (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Rāmkalī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
11	(Bhai) Mahindar Singh (ṭhumarī), Amritsar	Jaitsarī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Tilang (10 <sup>th</sup> )
12	(Professor) Harchand Singh, Ludhiana	Devgandhārī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Mājḥ (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Sorāṭḥ (12 <sup>th</sup> )

13	(Bhai) Dilbāg Singh and Gulbāg Singh, Hoshiarpur	Sārang (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Devgandhārī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Malhār (13 <sup>th</sup> )
14	(Principal) Chanaṅ Singh (Majbūr), Hoshiarpur	Dhanāsarī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Kedārā (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Jaijāvantī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
15	(Dr.) Gurnām Singh, Punjabi University Patiala	Mājh (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Rāmkalī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Bairāṛī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
16	(Bībī) Niveditā Kaur, Delhi	Soraṭh (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Jaitsarī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Jaijāvantī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
17	(Professor) Chanaṅ Singh, Ludhiana	Malhār (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Tukhārī (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Basant (13 <sup>th</sup> )
18	(Dr.) Jagīr Singh, Mohali	Mālī Gaūrā (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Gaund (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Prabhātī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
19	(Bhai) Narindar Singh, Ludhiana	Malhār (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Tilang (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Ṭoḍī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
20	(Bhai) Prithīpāl Singh (Kang), Indore	Āsā (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Vadhans (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Mālī Gaūrā (13 <sup>th</sup> )
21	(Bhai) Gurmīt Singh (Shānt), Jalandhar	Vadhans (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Mālī Gaūrā (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Mājh (12 <sup>th</sup> )
22	(Bhai) Kaliāṅ Singh, Delhi	Naṅ Narāiṅ (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Sūhī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Gūjarī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
23	(Bhai) Mohaṅpāl Singh, Ludhiana	Kedārā (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Kānṛā (11 <sup>th</sup> )
24	(Bībī) Gurindar Kaur, Delhi	Kedārā (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Kaliāṅ (12 <sup>th</sup> )
25	(Bībī) Gītā Kaur (Painṭal), Delhi	Rāmkalī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Srī Rāg (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Bihāgaṛā (13 <sup>th</sup> )
26	(Bhai) Harjindar Singh, Srinagar	Kaliāṅ (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Sārang (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Srī Rāg (13 <sup>th</sup> )
27	Bachan Singh (Ālam)	Jaijāvantī (10 <sup>th</sup> )
28	(Bhai) Amrjīt Singh (Tān), Patiala	Sūhī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Gaund (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Soraṭh (13 <sup>th</sup> )

29	(Professor) Bhāg Singh, Saharanpur	Āsā (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Bhairāū (12 <sup>th</sup> )
30	(Bhai) Khem Singh (Premī)	Bhairāū (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Bilāval (13 <sup>th</sup> )
31	(Bhai) Narinjar Singh, (Hazūrī Rāgī), Gurdwara Gur Giān Prakash	Kedārā (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Gūjarī (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Āsā (13 <sup>th</sup> )
32	(Bhai) Sarbjīt Singh (Rangīlā)	Soraṭh (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Bairāṛī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
33	(Bhai) Mahindar Singh	Bhairāū (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Gūjarī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
34	(Dr.) Darshan Singh (Narūlā), Malot <sup>123</sup>	Basant (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Jaijāvantī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
35	(Bhai) Baldīp Singh, Mohali	Bilāval (13 <sup>th</sup> ), Srī Rāg (13 <sup>th</sup> )
36	(Bhai) Harindar Singh, Harcharan Singh, Patiala	Ṭodī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Naṭ Narāiṇ (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Basant (13 <sup>th</sup> )
37	(Sant) Anūp Singh, Ūna Sāhib	Sārang (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Kānaṛā (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Tilang (13 <sup>th</sup> )
38	(Bhai) Kanvarpāl Singh, Dehradun	Jaijāvantī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Devgandhārī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
39	(Bhai) Mahindar Singh (Sagar), Ludhiana	Jaitsharī (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Bilāval (12 <sup>th</sup> )
40	(Bhai) Avtār Singh, Hoshiarpur	Tukhārī (10 <sup>th</sup> )
41	(Bībī) Jasvindar Kaur, Delhi	Tilang (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Bhairāū (13 <sup>th</sup> )
42	(Bhai) Ravindar Singh, Ludhiana	Gūjarī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Tilang (13 <sup>th</sup> )
43	(Bhai) Gurdev Singh, Batala	Gaūrī (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Devgandhārī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
44	(Bhai) Chatar Singh, (Sindhī Hulām Nagar), Bombay	Malhār (12 <sup>th</sup> ), Kānaṛā (13 <sup>th</sup> )
45	(Bhai) Manjīt Singh, Bombay	Bilāval (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Ṭodī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
46	(Bhai) Gurmīt Singh and	Ṭodī (11 <sup>th</sup> )

<sup>123</sup> Narūlā is a caste name and Malot is a village in Pakistan Punjab.

	Manjīt Singh, Pathankot	
47	(Dr.) Ikbāl Singh, Avtār Singh, Ludhiana	Dhanāsarī (13 <sup>th</sup> )
48	(Professor) Pratāp Singh, Delhi	Srī Rāg (10 <sup>th</sup> ), Bairāṛī (12 <sup>th</sup> )
49	(Bībī) Baljīt Kaur, Jalandhar	Kaliāṇ (11 <sup>th</sup> ), Sārang (13 <sup>th</sup> )
50	(Bhāi) Davindar Singh (Sodhī), Ludhiana <sup>124</sup>	Āsā (10 <sup>th</sup> )
51	(Bībī) Bhupindar Kaur (Sītal), Chandigarh	Bihāgaṛā (11 <sup>th</sup> )
52	(Bhai) Lāl Singh (Maratha) <sup>125</sup>	Gaūrī (10 <sup>th</sup> )

<sup>124</sup> Sodhī is a Khatri clan of Indian Punjab.

<sup>125</sup> Maratha is an Indian warrior caste.

## APPENDIX 8 SUGGESTION OF TĀLA S TO ACCOMPANY KĪRTAN SINGING

### 8.1 Tāl Dādrā

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			0		

### 8.2 Tāl Rūpak

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Bol</i>	<i>ṭin</i>	<i>ṭin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			2		3	

### 8.3 Chapptāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		2			0		3		

### 8.4 Tīn Tāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				2				0				3			

### 8.5 Ek Tāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>ṭiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>ṭiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		0		2		0		3		4	

### 8.6 Chār Tāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>kiṭa</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>ṭiṭa</i>	<i>kata</i>	<i>gadi</i>	<i>gana</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		0		2		0		3		4	



### 8.7 Sūl Tāl (Sūl Phāk)

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>kiṭa</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>tiṭa</i>	<i>kata</i>	<i>gadi</i>	<i>gana</i>
	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		0		2		3		0	

### 8.8 Ārhā Chāl Tāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>
	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		2		0		3		0		4		0	

### 8.9 Tāl Dīpchandī

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	-	<i>dhā</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>tin</i>	-	<i>tā</i>	<i>tin</i>	-	<i>dhā</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>dhin</i>	-
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			2				0			3			

### 8.10 Tāl Pharodsat

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nadhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nadhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhātri</i>	<i>kiṭadhi</i>	<i>naga</i>	<i>dhātri</i>	<i>kiṭadhi</i>	<i>naga</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		0		2		0		3			4		

### 8.11 Tāl Panjābī Tekā (Chotā Tīn Tāl)

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	-	-	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	-	-	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	-	<i>tin</i>	-	<i>tā</i>	<i>tā</i>	-	-
		<i>dhin</i>				<i>dhin</i>								<i>dhin</i>		<i>dhā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			2				0					3			

### 8.12 Tāl Tīvarā

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dī</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>tiṭa</i>	<i>kaṭa</i>	<i>gadī</i>	<i>gina</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			2		3	

### 8.13 Tāl Tilvārḥā

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				2				0				3			

### 8.14 Tāl Dhamār

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<i>Bol</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>dhi</i>	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>dhi</i>	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>dhā</i>	-	<i>ga</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>tā</i>	-
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X					2			0			3		

### 8.15 Tāl Bhānmatī (Chār Tāl Dī Savārī)

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nādhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				2		3		4		

### 8.16 Panj Tāl Dī Savārī (Pancham Savārī)

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	-	<i>tā</i>	-	<i>ka</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ṭā</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nādhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
	<i>dhī</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhīdhī</i>	<i>kata</i>	<i>dhīdhī</i>	<i>nādhī</i>	<i>dhīnā</i>	<i>tīkaṭa</i>	<i>tinā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>tūnā</i>	<i>katā</i>	<i>dhīdhī</i>	<i>nādhī</i>	<i>dhīnā</i>		
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X			2				0				3					

### 8.17 Paorī Tāl – Mātrā Chār

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4		
<i>Bol</i>	<i>ge</i>	<i>tiṭa</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>getā</i>	<i>geti</i>	-	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>tāge</i>	-	<i>tā</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				X					

### 8.18 Jai Tāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nādhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X					2				3		4	

### 8.19 Tāl Jagpāl

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nādhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X					2		3		4	

### 8.20 Tāl Ramtīk

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10½
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>dhāṭa</i>	<i>kiṭadhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhāṭa</i>	<i>kiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X		2		0		3				

### 8.21 Tāl Mahosh

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>dhāge</i>	<i>nādhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				2		3		

### 8.22 Tāl 13½ Mātrā

<i>Māntrā</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13½
<i>Bol</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhin</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>tū</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>tā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhāṭa</i>	<i>kiṭadhā</i>	<i>tiṭakiṭa</i>	<i>dhāṭa</i>	<i>kiṭa</i>
<i>Tāl Chinnah</i>	X				2				0			3		

**APPENDIX 9 55 ŚABADS WITH INDICATION OF PARTĀL IN THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

No	Rāga	Beginning Gurbāṇīs of the Śabad (Transliteration)	By Which Guru	Page Number in the Guru Granth Sahib
1.	Bilāval	<i>Bolh Bhaīā Rām Nām</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	800–01
2.	Bilāval	<i>Mohan Nīd Na Āvai</i>	Gurū Arjun	830
3.	Bilāval	<i>Morī Ahan Jāy</i>	Gurū Arjun	830
4.	Nat Nārāyan	<i>Mere Man Sev Saphal</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	977
5.	Nat	<i>Man Mil Santsangat Subhvantī</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	977
6.	Nat	<i>Koī Ān Sunāvai</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	977–78
7.	Nat	<i>Koū Hai Mero Sājanu Mīt</i>	Gurū Arjun	980
8.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Jagannāth</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1200
9.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Narhare</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1201
10.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Mādho</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1201
11.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Nirbhao</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1201
12.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Govind</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1202
13.	Sārang	<i>Jap Man Sirī Rām</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1202
14.	Sārang	<i>Subh Bachan Bol Gun Amol</i>	Gurū Arjun	1229
15.	Sārang	<i>Kanchnā Bah Dat Karā</i>	Gurū Arjun	1229
16.	Sārang	<i>Rām Rām Rām Jap</i>	Gurū Arjun	1229–230
17.	Sārang	<i>Har Hare Har Mukhahu</i>	Gurū Arjun	1230
18.	Sārang	<i>Nām Bhagat Māg Sant</i>	Gurū Arjun	1230
19.	Sārang	<i>Gun Lāl Gāvao Gur Dekhe</i>	Gurū Arjun	1230
20.	Sārang	<i>Man Birāgaigī</i>	Gurū Arjun	1230
21.	Sārang	<i>Aisī Hoi Parī</i>	Gurū Arjun	1230
22.	Sārang	<i>Lāl Lāl Mohan Gopāl Tū</i>	Gurū Arjun	1231
23.	Sārang	<i>Karat Kel Bikhai Mel</i>	Gurū Arjun	1231
24.	Malhār	<i>Har Jan Bolat Srīrām Nāmā</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1265
25.	Malhār	<i>Rām Rām Bol Bol</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1265–266
26.	Malhār	<i>Gur Manār Paria Daiār</i>	Gurū Arjun	1271–272
27.	Malhār	<i>Man Ghanai Bharmai Banai</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272
28.	Malhār	<i>Paria Kī Sobh Suhāvanī Nīkī</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272
29.	Malhār	<i>Gur Prīt Piāre Charan</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272
30.	Malhār	<i>Baras Saras Āgiā</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272
31.	Malhār	<i>Gun Gopāl Gāo Nīt</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272

32.	Malhār	<i>Ghan Garjat Gobind Rūp</i>	Gurū Arjun	1272
33.	Malhār	<i>He Gobind He Gopāl</i>	Gurū Arjun	1273
34.	Kānaṛa	<i>Man Jāpahu Rām Gupāl</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1296
35.	Kānaṛa	<i>Har Gun Gāvhu Jagdīs</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1296–297
36.	Kānaṛa	<i>Bhaj Rāmo Man Rām</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1297
37.	Kānaṛa	<i>Satgur Chāṭo Pag Chāṭ</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1297
38.	Kānaṛa	<i>Jap Mān Gobid Mādho</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1297
39.	Kānaṛa	<i>Har Jas Gāvhu Bhagvān</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1297–298
40.	Prabhātī	<i>Jap Man Har Har</i>	Gurū Rām Dās	1337
41.	Prabhātī Vibhās	<i>Ram Rām Rām Rām Jāp</i>	Gurū Arjun	1341
42.	Prabhātī	<i>Charan Kamal Saran Tek</i>	Gurū Arjun	1341
43.	Āsa	<i>Koū Bikham Gār Torai</i>	Gurū Arjun	408
44.	Āsa	<i>Harakh Sog Bairāg Anandī</i>	Gurū Arjun	409
45.	Āsa	<i>Kām Krodh Lobh Tiāg</i>	Gurū Arjun	408–09
46.	Āsa	<i>Bikār Māiā Mād Soio</i>	Gurū Arjun	408
47.	Āsa	<i>Bāpār Govind Nāe</i>	Gurū Arjun	408
48.	Dhanāsarī	<i>Har Charan Saran Gobind</i>	Gurū Arjun	683
49.	Dhanāsarī	<i>Halat Sukh Palat Sukh</i>	Gurū Arjun	683
50.	Sūhī	<i>Parīt Parīt Gurīā</i>	Gurū Arjun	746
51.	Sūhī	<i>Rās Mandhal Kīno Ākhārā</i>	Gurū Arjun	746
52.	Sūhī	<i>Tao Mai Āiā Saranī Āiā</i>	Gurū Arjun	746
53.	Rāmkalī	<i>Narnarah Namsakāran</i>	Gurū Arjun	901
54.	Rāmkalī	<i>Rūp Rang Sugandh bhog</i>	Gurū Arjun	901
55.	Bhairo	<i>Partipāl Prabh Kripāl</i>	Gurū Arjun	1153

APPENDIX 10 LIST OF RĀGAS, THEIR WIVES, AND SONS IN THE RĀGMĀLĀ SECTION OF  
THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB (1429–430)

10.1 *Bhairao* rāga

Rāginīs: *bhairavī, bilāvalī, puniākī, banglī, aslekhī*

Putras: *pancham, harakh, disākh, bangālam, madh, mādhav, lalat, bilāval*

10.2 *Mālakausak* rāga

Rāginīs: *gonḍkarī, devgandhārī, gandhārī, sīhutī, dhanāsrī*

Putras: *mārū, mastang, mevārā, parbalchand, kausak, ubārā, khaukhat, bhaurānad*

10.3 *Hindol* rāga

Rāginīs: *telangī, devakarī, basantī, sindūr, ahīrī*

Putras: *surmānand, bhāskar, chandrabinb, mangalan, sarasbān, binodā, basant, kamodā*

10.4 *Dīpak* rāga

Rāginīs: *kachhelī, paṭmanjarī, ṭoḍī, kāmodī, gūjri*

Putras: *kālankā, kuntal, rāmā, kamalkusam, champak, gaurā, kānrā, kalyānā*

10.5 *Srīrāg* rāga

Rāginīs: *bairārī, karnātī, gavri, āsāvarī, sindhvī*

Putras: *sālū, sārāg, sāgrā, gonḍ, gambhīr, gunḍ, kumbh, hamīr*

## 10.6 *Megh rāga*

Rāginīs: *soraṭh, gonḍ, malārī, āsā, sūhao*

Putras: *bairādhar, gajdhar, kedārā, jablīdhar, naṭ, jaldhārā, sankar, siāmā*

## Glossary

- Ādi Granth/Adi Granth* The Sikh scripture compiled by Gurū Arjun in 1604, the scripture was known as the Guru Granth Sahib after Gurū Gobind Singh added hymns of Gurū Tegh Bahādur in the 18th century
- AGSS* Stands for Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan, literally “Unique Gathering of Sikh Religious Music,” an annual three-day performance of Sikh religious music organized by the Jawaddi Taksal since 1991
- Alāuhñā* The category of Punjabi folk song related to death, performed with women gathering in a circle and mourning at the ritual
- Ānand Kāraj* Sikh wedding ceremony, in which lāvāñ from the Guru Granth Sahib is performed
- Ank* Literally “digit,” it is the sign to mark different lines of gurbāñīs in a śabad; the lines help explain the central idea of the śabad that is stated in the rahāo line
- Ardās* Sikh prayer
- Āroh* Ascending form of a rāga, one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Āsā Dī Vār* Literally “A Ballad of Hope,” the composition by Gurū Nānak of the Guru Granth Sahib (462–75), recited in the early morning by Sikh believers or sung as part of the morning service by the congregation
- Avroh* Descending form of a rāga, one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Bābā/Baba* Literally “grandfather,” a term of respect for old man; used as prefix to a male name
- Bāñīkār(s)* The four Sikhs, Bhai Mardānā, Bhai Satai and Bhai Balvand/Balwand, and Bhai Sandar, whose compositions had been included in the Guru Granth Sahib
- Bara Māhā* A form of folk poetry with the changing mood of nature expressing one’s emotions, it is used in the composition by Gurū Nānak (rāga tukhārī) and Gurū Arjun (rāga mājh)
- Bhagat(s)* Literally “devotee,” refers to 15 holy men of various sects whose compositions had been included in the Guru Granth Sahib, these holy men are Kabīr, Sekh Farīd, Rāmānand, Bainī, Nāmdev, Sadhanā, Bhīkhan, Parmānand, Saiñ, Dhannā, Pīpā, Sūrdās, Jaidev, Trilochan, and Ravidās; the compositions were selected from the writings from Hindu Bhaktis and Sufi saints
- Bhāī/Bhai* Literally “brother,” used as prefix to a Sikh male name
- Bhañ(s)* The 11 bards whose compositions had been included in the Guru Granth Sahib; these bards are Kalshār, Ballh, Bhallh, Bhikhhā, Gayand, Haribans, Jālapā, Kirat, Mathurā, Nalh, and Salh
- Bībī/Bibi* Refers to miss or madam, used as prefix to a female name
- Chaubole* A type of composition by Gurū Arjun in of the Guru Granth Sahib (1363–364)



- Chaunḱī(s)* Literally “quarter,” session(s) of kīrtan performance conducted by rāgīs in presence of the Guru Granth Sahib
- Chhant* The poetic form used in the Guru Granth Sahib, the śabads indicated with chhant are to be sung in folk style
- Chimṭā* An idiophone in tongs with rings of cymbals, usually played in pairs to accompany Punjabi folk songs, bhangra, and śabad kīrtans
- Dārbār Sahib* Literally the “Guru’s Court,” it refers to the main hall of a gurdwara, or the main building at the Harmandir Sahib
- Dasam Granth* The Sikh scripture in 1428 pages with most of the text attributed to Gurū Gobind Singh, 10 hymns in six rāgas are stated under the section of “Śabad” (Appendix 3); please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Dhāḍ* An hourglass-shaped drum and the Punjabi folk instrument, played with one hand controlling the strings and another hand’s fingers playing the strokes
- Dhāḍī* Literally “a person who plays the dhāḍ drum,” the performing tradition originated from the time of Gurū Hargobind (the 6th Guru) to sing about the heroic deeds of old warriors in folk tunes; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Dholḱī* A small, double-headed barrel drum used to accompany the Punjabi folk songs, wedding music, and śabad kīrtans
- Dhūnī* Among 22 vārs in the Guru Granth Sahib, 9 are indicated as “dhūnī” and they are to be sung in folk style
- Dilrubā* The bowed-string instrument with Persian origin, introduced by Gurū Hargobind for kīrtan performance; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Gātha* A type of composition by Gurū Arjun in the Guru Granth Sahib (1360–361)
- Ghar* Literally “home,” the caption of each śabad stated along with its rāga and composer
- Ghōṛīān* Literally “of the mare,” the category of Punjabi folk song related to marriage, a śabad by Gurū Rām Dās (the 4th Guru) in the Guru Granth Sahib (575–76)
- Giānī* A person with spiritual knowledge who has achieved unity with God, used as prefix to a male Sikh name
- Granthī* Literally “the one who reads the Sikh holy book,” Sikh priest or custodian of the gurdwara
- Gurbānī(s)/Bānī(s)* Literally “word(s) of the Sikh Gurūs,” commonly refers to the text in the Guru Granth Sahib; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of this term and “gurbānī kīrtan”
- Gurdvāra/Gurdwara* Generally translated as “Sikh temple” in English, place of Sikh worship where at least a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib is kept with respect
- Gurmat Sangīt* Literally “Sikh music;” “gurmat” stands for Sikhism whereas “sangīt” means music; in general it refers to the authentic devotional music of Sikhism; the term has been commonly used by researchers and performers since the 1990s; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term

- Gurpurb(s)* Festival(s) celebrated on special Sikh occasions, such as the anniversary of the birth or death of a Guru, and the anniversary of the installation of the Adi Granth
- Gurū/Guru* Refers to God, ten messengers of God, or the Guru Granth Sahib in the Sikh context; the 10 messengers are also regarded as God in human form, and they are Gurū Nānak, Gurū Angad, Gurū Amardās, Gurū Rāmdās, Gurū Arjun, Gurū Hargobind, Gurū Har Rai, Gurū Har Krishan, Gurū Tegh Bahadur, and Gurū Gobind Singh
- Gurū Arjun/Arjan* The 5th Sikh Guru (1563–1606); compiled the Adi Granth in 1604 in which a collection of hymns are arranged in rāgas; introduced sarandā and tablā to accompany religious singing, established the system of chauṅkī system at the Harmandir Sāhib as Sikh temple routine
- Gurū Gobind Singh* The 10th Sikh Guru (1675–1708); contributed to most of gurbānīs in the Dasam Granth, introduced dilrubā and tānpurā to accompany kīrtan singing
- Gurū Granth Sāhib/Guru Granth Sahib* The principal holy scripture of Sikhism in 1430 pages; being installed in all gurdwaras and present at ceremonial and ritual occasions of Sikhism; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Gurū Hargobind* The 6th Sikh Guru (1595–1644); introduced tāus to accompany kīrtan singing; introduced Sikh ḍhāḍī performance at gurdwaras
- Gurū Nānak* The 1st Sikh Guru (1469–1539); travelled and sang to disseminate God’s message with the rabāb accompaniment by Bhai Mardānā
- Harmandir Sahib* Literally “Temple of God;” the most famous Sikh temple located in Amritsar, Punjab; known more commonly as the Golden Temple by non-Sikhs; there is non-stop kirtan performance at gurdwara’s opening hours (about 3:00a.m.–10:00p.m. every day)
- Harmonium* A portable reed organ introduced to India in the late 19th century; commonly used to accompany kīrtan singing at present-day gurdwaras
- Hazūrī Rāgī* Literally “court musician;” Sikh musician serving at a specific gurdwara; the term usually appears at the end of a Sikh name
- Ik Onkar* The first word in the Guru Granth Sahib; means one God, one supreme reality; the symbol of is formed from the Punjabi figure number one that affirms the unity and oneness of God
- Istrī Satsang* The sacred gathering of Sikhism with women leading the kīrtan session
- Janamsākhī* Literally “birth stories;” narrative manuscripts about Gurū Nānak’s life by different authors
- Jathā* A group; rāgī jathā: a group of rāgī musicians (usually three male musicians: two playing harmonium and one playing tablā); ḍhāḍī jathā: a group of ḍhāḍī musicians (usually four male musicians: three chorus singers playing the two ḍhāḍ drums and one sarangi respectively, and one orator)
- Jathedār* Captain or leader of the Sikh community; used as prefix to a Sikh name
- Jātī* Mode class in a rāga; one musical aspect of prescribed rāgas for its details being agreed by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee

- Jorī* The predecessor of *tablā* to accompany *śabad kīrtans*; in a similar shape but larger in size than the *tablā*; in a louder and deeper sound
- Jutte Ghar* Literally “home of shoes;” place for keeping shoes; worshippers and visitors have to remove their shoes before entering the *gurdwara*
- Kathā* Sermon preaching or religious story telling; an exposition of Sikh teaching
- Kaur* Literally “princess;” the common surname of a female Sikh
- Khālistan* The land where the *Khālsā* rules; includes both present Indian state of the Punjab and the territory under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh
- Khālsā* Literally “pure;” the community of initiated Sikhs founded by Gurū Gobind Singh; the distinctive marks of *Khālsā* identity include the five Ks and the code of conduct
- Kīrtan(s)* Generally translated as “religious hymn(s)” in English; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Kīrtankār(s)/Kīrtanīya(s)* Kīrtan musician(s); please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Kīrtan/Ḍhāḍī Darbār* Literally “court of the *kīrtan/ḍhāḍī*,” refers to the *kīrtan/ḍhāḍī*-singing event at *gurdwaras* or private homes in presence of the Guru Granth Sahib
- Langar* Literally “anchor;” generally translated as “community kitchen;” refers both to the meal and the place where it is prepared and served at the *gurdwara*; the practice of free food to the all visitors was established by Gurū Nānak
- Langarī* The person in charge of the *langar*
- Lok gīt* Punjabi folk song
- Lāvāṇ* Literally “circling;” refers to the ceremony when the couple circumambulates the Guru Granth Sahib four times at the marriage; also the name of a composition by Gurū Rām Dās in the Guru Granth Sahib (773–74, *rāga sūhī*)
- Laṛīvār* Sequential, non-stop recitation of *gurbānī*
- Mālā* A garland, an aid to prayer or meditation
- Mangalācharan* The second session of the ancient *chaṅkī* tradition; a session of invocation or introductory prayer before *kīrtan* singing
- (Bhai) Mardānā A Muslim *rabāb* player (1459–1634) accompanying Gurū Nānak’s singing; three of his compositions are included in the Guru Granth Sahib
- Miśrat rāgān/Mixed rāgas* Names and order of the mixed *rāgas* prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib are stated in Table 2.2
- Mukhkh rāgān/Main rāgas* Names and order of the main *rāgas* prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib are stated in Table 2.1
- Nagar kīrtan* Literally “town and songs of praise;” street procession to celebrate the *gurburb*; Sikhs usually sing, and carry flags with *Khālsā* symbol, with Sikh scriptures carried at the front of the parade
- Nāmdhāri/Namdhari* A sect of Sikhism with contrasting beliefs and practices from the mainstream Sikhs, such as the present Gurū as Jagit Singh (but not the Guru Granth Sahib); musicians performing Indian classical music skillfully had been notable in the history of *Namdhari* Sikhs

- Pad Chhed* Literally “break words;” separation of words in gurbāñī recitation, printing, or writing
- Pada* Literally “poem;” the poetic form used in the Guru Granth Sahib; it is sub-divided into different types according to the number of stanzas in the śabad
- Partāl* Means changing the tāla; singing of the kīrtan in different rhythms; used in śabads by Gurū Rām Dās and Gurū Arjun in the Guru Granth Sahib; the unique musical characteristic of Sikh religious music being highlighted at the AGSS
- Paurī* A stanza from the Guru Granth Sahib and other Sikh scriptures; performed at the last session of the ancient chaṅkī tradition
- Phunhe* A type of composition by Gurū Arjun of the Guru Granth Sahib (1361–363)
- Pothī* Literally “book;” the sacred writings of Sikhism; examples include *Goindvāl Pothīs* (1570–572) and *Kartarpur Pothīs* (1604)
- Prachārak(s)* Sikh preacher(s)
- Prasād/Karāh prasād* Sweets as Guru’s blessing; made of wheat flour, butter, sugar, and water; distributed to the congregation when reading the Guru Granth Sahib at the gurdwaras
- Rabāb* A four-stringed plucked instrument introduced by Gurū Nānak for kīrtan performance; one of the major stringed instruments promoted at the AGSS; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Rabābī* Literally “the one who plays the instrument rabāb;” also refers to the kīrtan style performed by Muslims at the gurdwaras before the Partition; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Rāg Nirnāik/Rāg Nirnayak Committee* Literally “Rāga Selection Committee;” established before the 1991 AGSS to standardize the rāga details as prescribed in the Guru Granth Sahib; please refer to Chapter 3 for its member, formation, and duty
- Rāga(s)* The melodic mode(s) of Indian classical music; there are 31 main rāgas and 31 mixed rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib; please refer to Tables 2.1 and 2.2 for rāgas in the Guru Granth Sahib, and Appendix 3 for those in the Dasam Granth
- Rāgī* Literally “the one who plays in rāgas;” generally refer as professional Sikh musician who sing kīrtans in rāgas; used as prefix to a Sikh male man; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of the term
- Rāgmālā* The last two pages in the Adi Granth/Guru Granth Sahib with a list of 84 rāgas; some of these rāgas belong to the śabads stated in the scripture
- Rahāo* Literally “pause;” it is the line of refrain that generally sums up the central idea of the śabad; the rahāo line is always sung repeatedly
- S.G.P.C.** Stands for “Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee;” an organization responsible for the upkeep of gurdwaras in Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh; it also publishes materials, administrates and sponsors schools and colleges, and a hospital in Amritsar

- Śabad(s)* A type of composition(s) in Sikh scriptures; mostly refers to the general composition(s) stated in the Guru Granth Sahib; please refer to Chapter 2 for discussion of this term and “śabad kīrtan”
- Sāhib/Sahib* Sir; used as prefix to a male name
- Śalōk* A poetic form used in the Guru Granth Sahib, usually the final verse in the gurbāñī
- Śalōk sahskritī* A type of composition by Gurū Nānak and Gurū Arjun in the Guru Granth Sahib (1353–354)
- Samān* Performing time of a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Samāptī* Literally “conclusion,” the ending of a religious event
- Samvādī* The second most important note in a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Sant* Teacher/spiritual guide/saint; used as prefix to a male name
- Santhia* Teaching of the proper pronunciation of the gurbāñīs; according to the Sikh belief, proper pronunciation leads to correct understanding of the religious text in the right context
- Sarandā* A bow-stringed instrument introduced by Gurū Amar Dās and Gurū Arjun; one of the major stringed instruments promoted at the AGSS; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Sārangi/Sarangi* A bow-stringed instrument; there are two types: classical and folk sarangis; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Sardār* Mister; used as prefix to a male name
- Savaiyā* A type of composition in the Guru Granth Sahib and the Dasam Granth; there are 122 savaiyās composed by the bhaṭṭs in praise of the Sikh Gurus
- Sevā/Seva* Literally “service,” the voluntary work that Sikhs would perform at the gurdwara to serve the community; such work includes preparing or serving food, looking after the shoes of worshippers, or other works related to the religious or social welfare
- Shān* The first session of the ancient chaṅkī tradition; the session of instrumental prelude performed by a group of kīrtankārs
- Singh* Literally “lion;” the common surname of a male Sikh
- Siropāo* The Sikh robe of honor presented to display formal respect
- Sukhh ang* Main style of playing in a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Sur* Note in a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Sur vīsthār* Variation of note in a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Svār* Tone or note in a scale
- Swarmaṅḍal* An Indian zither to accompany the Hindustani singing; played by plucking the strings with the thumb

- Tablā* The membranophone introduced by Gurū Arjun for kīrtan performance; the only percussion instrument promoted at the AGSS; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Taksāl* Literally “the place where coins are minted;” Sikh institute of learning where students are trained to become rāgīs, granthīs, and prachāraks; please refer to Chapter 3 for discussion of the Jawaddi Taksal
- Tāla* Organization of time; refers to both the rhythm and meter
- Tānpurā* A typical drone instrument of Indian classical music; introduced by Gurū Gobind Singh for kīrtan performance; one of the major stringed instruments promoted at the AGSS; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Tantī sāj* Literally “stringed instrument,” one major objective of the AGSS is to re-introduce stringed instruments to accompany śabad kīrtan singing
- Tāūs* A bow-stringed instrument with Persian origin; introduced by Gurū Hargobind for kīrtan performance; p one of the major stringed instruments promoted at the AGSS; please refer to Chapter 4 for discussion of the instrument
- Thāṭ* Scale of a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Vādī* The most important note in a rāga; one of the musical details standardized by the Rāg Nirnayak Committee
- Vār* Generally translated as “ballad” in English, a narrative poem commonly performed by dhāḍī musicians; 22 compositions are indicated as vār in the Guru Granth Sahib
- Vismād Nād/Vismaad Naad* Literally “ecstasy sound,” name of the publication house at the Jawaddi Taksal; logo title of the AGSS in Illustration 3.4

## Works Cited

### REFERENCES IN ENGLISH

- Akal Multimedia. 2011. *Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana*, <http://www.jawadditaksal.org/> (accessed 31 May 2013).
- Amrit Kirtan Trust, Chandigarh. N.y. *Amrit Kirtan*. Magazine Issued 1989–1992, 2008–2012.
- . 2012. *Amrit Kirtan*, accessed 4 April 2012, <http://amritkirtan.com/index.html>.
- Arora, Sharan. 2000. “Guru Nanak Dev Ji and the Rababi Tradition.” *Journal of Sikh Studies*: 161–75.
- Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture. 2014. *Asian Art Museum*, accessed 3 July 2014, <http://www.asianart.org/>.
- Bakhle, Janaki. 2005. *Two Men and Music: Nationalism in the Making of an Indian Classical Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Banerji, Aparna. 2001. “Dr. Gurnam Singh: Dean of Gurmat Sangeet.” Article from the website of *Sikhchic* ([www.sikhchic.com](http://www.sikhchic.com)), accessed 4 May 2011, [http://www.sikhchic.com/music/dr\\_gurnam\\_singh\\_dean\\_of\\_gurmat\\_sangeet](http://www.sikhchic.com/music/dr_gurnam_singh_dean_of_gurmat_sangeet).
- Bedi, Daljit Singh. 2010. *Baba Sham Singh*. Patiala: Punjabi University.
- Bhalla, G. S. 1995. “Agricultural Growth and Industrial Development in Punjab.” In *Agriculture on the Road to Industrialization*, edited by John W. Mellor, 67-112. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Bhokal, Balbinder Singh. 2011. “The Hermenuetics of Sikh Music (*Rāg*) and Word (*Shabad*).” *Sikh Formations* 7 (2): 211–44.
- Bor, Joep ed. 1999. *The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas*. Wyastone Leys, Monmouth: Nimbus Records.

- Bithell, Caroline, and Hill, Juniper ed. 2014. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brar, Soniya K. 2008. "Sikh." In *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online, accessed December 20, 2008, [http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/43272pg13?q=sikh+&search=quick&pos=4&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/43272pg13?q=sikh+&search=quick&pos=4&_start=1#firsthit).
- Brown, Kerry ed. 1999. *Sikh Art and Literature*. London; New York: Routledge and Sikh Foundation.
- Cassio, Francesca. 2011. "The Music of the Sikh Gurus' Tradition in a Western Context: Cross-cultural Pedagogy and Research." *Sikh Formations* 7 (3): 313–17.
- Catlin- Jairazbhoy, Amy. 2004. "Sacred Songs of Khoja Muslims: Sounded and Embodied Liturgy and Devotion." *Ethnomusicology* 48 (2): 251–70.
- Chaitanya, Krishna. 1967. *Sikh Sacred Music*. New Delhi: Sikh Sacred Music Society.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 1985. "Invitation to a Dialogue." In *Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Ranajit Guha, 364–76. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Chaudhury, Ajit K. 1987. "In Search of a Subaltern Lenin." In *Subaltern Studies V: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Ranajit Guha, 236–51. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cole, W. Owen. 2004. *Understanding Sikhism*. Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic.
- Cole, W. Owen and Sambhi, Piara Singh. 1990. *A Popular Dictionary of Sikhism*. London: Curzon Press Ltd.; MD: The Riverdale Company.



- Dass, Nirmal. 1991. *Songs of Kabir from the Adi Granth*. Albany: State University of New York.
- . 2000. *Songs of the Saints from the Adi Granth*. Albany: State University of New York.
- Dennen, David. 2010. "The Third Stream: Oḏīśī Music, Regional Nationalism, and the Concept of 'Classical'." *Asian Music* 41 (2): 149–79.
- Doel, Sarah M. Van. 2008. *Sikh Music: History, Text, and Praxis*. Master's Thesis, Tufts University.
- Dorga, Ramesh Chander and Urmila Dorga. 2003. *The Sikh World: An Encyclopaedic Survey of Sikh Religion and Culture*. New Delhi: UBS Publishers' Distributors Pvt. Ltd.
- Falzon, Mark-Anthony ed. 2009. "Introduction." In *Multi-sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research*, 1–24. Burlington: Ashdate Publishing Company.
- Gallo, Ester. 2009. "In the Right Place at the Right Time? Reflections on Multi-sited Ethnography in the Age of Migration." In *Multi-sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research*, edited by Mark-Anthony Falzon, 87–102. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Gargi, Balwant. 2003. "Bhai Samund Singh Ragi." In *The Great Artists of Punjab*, 92–104. Punjab: Guru Nanak Dev University.
- Gill, Mohinder Kaur. 2010. *Bhai Mardana*. Punjabi: Punjabi University, Patiala.
- Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1997. "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." In *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, edited by Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 33-51. Duke: Duke University Press.

- Groesbeck, Rolf. 1999. "'Classical Music,' 'Folk Music,' and the Brahmanical Temple in Kerala, India." *Asian Music* 30 (2): 87–112.
- Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. N.y. *Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash: Jawaddi Taksal, Ludhiana*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. Booklet, 23 pages.
- Handler, Richard, and Jocelyn Linnekin. 1984. "Tradition, Genuine or Spurious." *Journal of American Folklore* 97: 273–90.
- Hannerz, Ulf. 2012. "Being There...and There...and There! Reflections on Multi-Site Ethnography." In *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*, edited by Antonius C.G.M. Robben and Jeffrey A. Sluka, 399–408. Second Edition. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hill, Juniper, and Bithell, Caroline. 2014. "An Introduction to Music Revival as Concept, Cultural Process, and Medium of Change." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 3–42. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ho, Meilu. 1996. *The Liturgical Music of the Puṣṭi Marg of India: An Embryonic Form of the Classical Tradition*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Los Angeles.
- . 2013. "Connecting Histories: Liturgical Songs as Classical Compositions in Hindustānī Music." *Ethnomusicology* 57 (2): 207–35.
- Hobsbawn, Eric, and Terence Ranger ed. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- HT Correspondent. 2007. "Gurbani Distorted by Untrained Singers: Vedanti Donate Funds to Train Gurdwara Keeps, Tells Devotees." *Hindustan Times, Chandigarh*, 14 December.

- Jackson, William. 2000. "Religious and Devotional Music: Southern Area." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5: South Asia, the Indian Subcontinent*, edited by Alison Arnold, 259–71. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Kapoor, Sukhbir Singh. 2003. *Dasam Granth: An Introductory Study*. New Delhi: Hemkunt Publishers (P) Ltd.
- Kaur, Gurdev. 1993. *Sikh Hymns (For Schools)*. Birmingham: Harihar Devtar Publishers.
- Kaur, Inderjit N. 2008. "Discovering the Meaning of *Ghar* in *Shabad* Headings of Guru Granth Sahib." Article from the website of *Sikh Music Heritage Institute* ([www.sikhmusicheritage.org](http://www.sikhmusicheritage.org)), accessed 30 June 2011, [http://www.sikhmusicheritage.org/discovering\\_ghar.pdf](http://www.sikhmusicheritage.org/discovering_ghar.pdf).
- . 2011a. "Traditional Sikh Music (*Shabad Keertan Parampara*)." Article from the website of *Sikh Music Heritage Institute* ([www.sikhmusicheritage.org](http://www.sikhmusicheritage.org)), accessed 28 April 2011, <http://www.sikhmusicheritage.org/Traditional%20Sikh%20Music.pdf>.
- . 2011b. "Sikh *Shabad Kīrtan* and *Gurmat Sangīt*: What's in the Name?" *Journal of Punjab Studies* 18: 251–78.
- Kaur, Jasbir. 1991. *Adutee Gurmat Sangeet Sammelan (A Unique Feast of Sikh Devotional Music)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash. Brochure, 6 pages.
- Khabra, Gurdeep John Singh. 2012. "Music of the Sikh Diaspora: Devotional Sounds, Musical Memory and Cultural Identity." *Sikh Formations* 8 (2): 147–70.
- Khalsa, Nirinjan Kaur. 2012. "Gurbani Kirtan Renaissance: Reviving Musical Memory, Reforming Sikh Identity." *Sikh Formations* 1 (1): 1–31.
- Khalsa, Siri Kirpal Kaur. 2010. *Sikh Spiritual Practice: the Sound Way to God*. Winchester; Washington: Orca Book Services.
- Killius, Rolf. 2006. *Ritual Music and Hindu Rituals of Kerala*. Delhi: B. R. Rhythms.

- Klar, Jagjit et al. 2011. "Bhai Ghulam Chaand: the Rababi from Lahore." *Sikhchic.com* (26 October 2011), accessed 10 September 2014, [http://www.sikhchic.com/music/bhai\\_ghulam\\_chaand\\_the\\_rababi\\_from\\_lahore](http://www.sikhchic.com/music/bhai_ghulam_chaand_the_rababi_from_lahore).
- Livingston, E. Tamara. 2009. "Music Revivals: Towards a General Theory." *Ethnomusicology* 43 (1): 66–85.
- . 2014. "An Expanded Theory for Revivals as Cosmopolitan Participatory Music Making." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hall, 60-69. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ludden, David. 2001. "Introduction: A Brief History of Subalternity." In *Reading Subaltern Studies*, edited by David Ludden, 1–27. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Macauliffe, M. A. 1909. *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors, Vol. 5*. Oxford Univeristy Press.
- Marcus, George E. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95–117.
- Mann, Gurinder Singh. 1993. *The Making of Sikh Scripture*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University.
- Mann, Gurinder Singh, Gurdit Singh, and Ami P. Shah et al. *An Introduction to Punjabi: Grammar, Conversation and Literature*. Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala.
- Mansukhani, Gobind Singh. 1982. *Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kirtan*. New Delhi: Oxford and IBH Publishing Company.
- Manuel, Peter. 1993. *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2000. *East Indian Music in the West Indies: Tān-Singing, Chutney and the Making of Indo-Caribbean Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

- McLeod, W. H. 1976. *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 1989. *Who is a Sikh?* W. H. McLeod.
- . 1999. *Sikhs and Sikhism*. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Merriam, Alan P. 1964. *The Anthropology of Music*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Middlebrook, Joyce. 2000. "Punjab." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5*, edited by Alison Arnold, 650–57. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Miner, Allyn. 2013. "Reviews." Article from the website of Anad Records ([www.anadrecords.com](http://www.anadrecords.com)), accessed 3 October 2013, <http://www.anadrecords.com/reviews-am.htm>.
- Myers, Helen. 1998. *Music of Hindu Trinidad: Songs from the India Diaspora*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Nayyar, Adam. 2000. "Punjab." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5*, edited by Alison Arnold, 762–72. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Nettl, Bruno. 2005. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*. Second Edition. Urbana; Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Neuman, Daniel N. 1990. *The Life of Music in North India: the Organization of an Artistic Tradition*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Nihang, Nidar Singh, and Singh, Parmjit. 2008. *In the Master's Presence: The Sikhs of Hazoor Sahib, Volume I: History*. London: Kashi House.
- Nijhawan, Michael. 2006. *Dhadi Darbar: Religion, Violence, and the Performance of Sikh History*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Paintal, Ajit Singh. 1972. *Nature and Place of Music in Sikh Religion and Its Affinity with Hindustani Classical Music*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Delhi, Delhi.

- Pettigrew, Joyce. 1992. "Songs of the Sikh Resistance Movement." *Asian Music* 23 (1): 85–118.
- Protopapas, Janice Faye. 2011a. "*Kīrtan Chaṅkī*: Affect, Embodiment and Memory." *Sikh Formations* 7 (3): 339–64.
- . 2011b. *Sikh Śabad Kīrtan as a Musical Construction of Memory*. Ph.D. Dissertation, School of Music, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Punjabi University Patiala. 2002. *Punjabi-English Dictionary*. Third Edition. Punjab: Punjabi University, Patiala.
- . 2012. *Gurmat Sangeet Project*, <http://www.gurmatsangeetpup.com/main.html> (accessed 5 April 2012).
- Purewal, Navtej K. 2011. "Sikh/Muslim Bhai-Bhai? Towards a Social History of the *Rabābī* Tradition of *Shabad Kīrtan*." *Sikh Formations* 7 (3): 365–82.
- Qureshi, Regula Burckhardt. 1986. *Sufi Music of India and Pakistan: Sound, Context, and Meaning in Qawwali*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Qureshi, Regula Burckhardt et al. 2013. "India." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed March 16, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/43272pg14>.
- Rahaim, Matt. 2011. "That Ban(e) of Indian Music: Hearing Politics in the Harmonium." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 70 (3): 657–82.
- Raj Academy. 2014. *Raj Academy*, accessed 30 Nov 2014, <http://www.rajacademy.com>.
- Rajan, Anjana. 2004. "Songs of the Singhs." *The Hindu* (6 May 2004), accessed 11 July 2014, <http://www.hindu.com/mp/2004/05/06/stories/2004050600290300.htm>.
- Ronström, Owe. 1996. "Revival Reconsidered." *The World of Music* 38 (3): 5–20.

- . 2014. "Traditional Music, Heritage Music." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 43-59. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Roy, Anjali Gera. 2010. *Bhangra Moves: From Ludhiana to London and Beyond*. Surrey; Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Ruckert, George, and Richard Widdess. 2000. "Hindustani Rāga." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5: South Asia, the Indian Subcontinent*, edited by Alison Arnold, 64–88. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Schofield, Katherine Butler. 2010. "Reviving the Golden Age Again: 'Classicization,' Hindustani Music, and the Mughals." *Ethnomusicology* 54 (3): 484–517.
- Schreffler, Gibb Stuart. 2010. *Signs of Separation: Dhol in Punjabi Culture*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Schultz, Anna. 2002. "Hindu Nationalism, Music, and Embodiment in Marathi *Rāshṭrīya Kīrtan*." *Ethnomusicology* 46 (2): 307–32.
- . 2008. "The Collision of Genres and Collusion of Participants: Marathi *Rāshṭrīya Kīrtan* and the Communication of Hindu Nationalism." *Ethnomusicology* 52 (1): 31–51.
- . 2013. *Singing a Hindu Nation: Marathi Devotional Performance and Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sharma, Parvesh. 2013. "Punjabi University Claims Bhai Mardana's Rabab 'Reconstructed.'" *The Times of India*, 18 March.
- Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. 1994a. "Harmandir Sahib." From the website of *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee* (sgpc.net). Amritsar: Secretary, Dharam Parchar Committee, accessed 9 April 2012, <http://www.sgpc.net/golden-temple/index.asp>.

- . 1994b. “Sikh Reht Maryada: The Code of Sikh Conduct and Conventions.” From the website of *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee* (sgpc.net). Amritsar: Secretary, Dharam Parchar Committee, accessed 13 March 2014, <http://www.sgpc.net/sikhism/sikh-dharma-manual.html>.
- Sky High Webs. 2013. *Principal Sukhwant Singh – Gurshabad Sangeet Academy Jawaddi Taksal*, accessed 31 May 2013, <http://www.principalsukhwantsingh.com/>.
- SikhNet. 2012a. *SikhNet: Sharing the Sikh Experience*, accessed 4 April 2012, <http://www.sikhnet.com/>.
- . 2012b. *SikhiWiki, Free Sikh Encyclopedia*, accessed 4 April 2012, <http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/SikhiWiki>About>.
- Sikh Advisory Board, Singapore. 2008. *Sikhi: A Way of Life*. Singapore: Khalsa Printers Pte Ltd.
- Sikh Saaj. 2013. *Instruments from the Sikh Musical Heritage*, accessed 10 June 2013, <http://www.sikhsaaj.com/index.html>.
- Sikh Sangeet. 2014. *Sikh Sangeet: Tune Your Soul*, accessed 30 Nov 2014, <http://www.sikhsangeet.com/>.
- SikhiWallpapers. 2009a. “Bhai Nirmal Singh Ji Khalsa to get Padma Shri Award, 2009 in India.” From the website of *SikhiWallpapers* (www.sikhiwallpaper.com), accessed 9 January 2014, <http://www.sikhiwallpapers.com/news/245/bhai-nirmal-singh-ji-khalsa-gets-padamshree-award>.
- . 2009b. “Gurmat Sangeet Legend Prof Kartar Singh Ji Gets Akademi Award.” From the website of *SikhiWallpapers* (www.sikhiwallpaper.com), accessed 9 January 2014, <http://www.sikhiwallpapers.com/news/578/prof-kartar-singh-awarded>.



- Simma, Robert. 2000. "Scholarship since 1300." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5*, edited by Alison Arnold, 42–59. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Singh, Amardeep. 2004. "Ghar – a Home near Extinction." Unpublished article.
- . 2006. "Understanding the Musical and Shabad: Framework of Guru Granth Sahib." Unpublished power point presentation, 36 slides.
- . 2011. "Musical Framework of Guru Granth Sahib: "Flow and Pause in Gurbani and Keertan." Article from the website of *Musical Framework*, accessed 28 April 2011, <http://musicalframework.blogspot.com/>.
- Singh, Baldeep. 2011. "What is *Kīrtan*? Observations, Interventions and Personal Reflection." *Sikh Formations* 7 (3): 245–95.
- . 2012. "Bhai Balbir Singh Ragi Will Receive the Coveted Akademi Award." From the website of *Anad Foundation*, accessed 15 July 2014, <http://anadfoundation.org/2012/12/27/bhai-balbir-singh-ragi-will-recvie-the-coveted-akademi-award/>.
- Singh, Chris Mooney. 2002. "Al Rabab to Sri Rabab: Journey of the Chosen Instrument." Article from the website of *Sikh Spectrum* ([http://sikh\\_spectrum.com/](http://sikh_spectrum.com/)), accessed 10 June 2013, [http://sikh\\_spectrum.com/2002/07/al-rabab-to-sri-rabab-journey-of-the-chosen-instrument/](http://sikh_spectrum.com/2002/07/al-rabab-to-sri-rabab-journey-of-the-chosen-instrument/).
- Singh, Dya. 2010. *Dya Singh*, accessed 16 July 2014, <http://www.dyasingh.com/SacredMusic/Sikh/Intro.html>.
- Singh, Gurmukh. 2003. "Dya Singh: 'Our Culture Must Evolve'." *The Sikh Times (U.K.)*, 31 July 2003, accessed 17 July 2014, [http://www.sikhtimes.com/bios\\_073103a.html](http://www.sikhtimes.com/bios_073103a.html).
- Singh, Gurnam. 2001. *Sikh Musicology: Sri Guru Granth Sahib and Hymns of the Human Spirit*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.

- . 2005. *Gur Shabad Keertan [Hymn Singing of the Gurū]*. Patiala: Gurmat Sangeet Parkashan.
- . 2008. *Sikh Sacred Music: Gurmat Sangeet*. Patiala: Gurmat Prakashan.
- Singh, IP. 2012. “For the First Time – SNA Award for a Hazoori Ragi of Darbar Sahib.” *The Times of India*, 27 Dec 2012.
- Singh, Jaswant. 2008. *Know Your Guru Ji: Sri Guru Granth Sahib: The Abode of God*. Singapore: Sikh Centre, Central Sikh Gurdwara Board.
- Singh, Khushwant. 1969. *Hymns of Guru Nanak*. New Delhi: Orient Longmans.
- . 1999. *A History of the Sikhs, Volume II: 1839–2004*. Second Edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- . 2003. *Hymns of the Gurus*. New Delhi; New York: Viking.
- Singh, Kulwant Chandan. 2009. *Sikh Sangeet Reet (31 Raagas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji) (Sikh Music Tradition [31 Rāgas of the Respected Guru Granth Sahib])*. Amritsar: B. Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh.
- Singh, Nikky-Guninder Kaur. 2011. *Sikhism: An Introduction*. London; New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Singh, Pashaura. 2006. “Sikhism and Music.” In *Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions*, edited by Guy L. Beck, 141–67. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Singh, Sarbpreet. 2002. An Introduction to Gurmat Sangeet: History, Evolution, and Topics for Further Research,  
[http://www.amritkirtan.com/pdffdocs/Evolution\\_of\\_Gurmat\\_Sangeet.pdf](http://www.amritkirtan.com/pdffdocs/Evolution_of_Gurmat_Sangeet.pdf)  
(accessed 14 July 2014).
- Singh, Sukhwant ed. 2008. *Raag Sarup Nirnay: Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. Translated by Professor Anurag Singh. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Jawaddi Taksal.

- Singh, Trilochan. 1975. *Hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur*. Delhi: Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.
- Slawek, Stephen. 1988. "Popular *Kirtan* in Banaras: Some 'Great' Aspects of a Little Tradition." *Ethnomusicology* 32 (2): 77–92.
- Slobin, Mark. 1993. *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West*. Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press.
- SriDasam.org. 2013. *Sri Dasam Granth Sahib*, <http://www.sridasam.org/dasam> (accessed 12 March 2013).
- SriGranth.org. 2012. *Sri Granth*, <http://www.srigranth.org/servlet/gurbani.gurbani?S=y> (accessed 1 April 2012).
- Stokes, Martin. 1997. "Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity, and Music." In *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, edited by Martin Stokes, 1–28. Oxford; New York: Berg.
- Stronge, Susan ed. 1999. *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms*. London: V&A Publications.
- Terada, Yoshitaka. 2008. "Temple Music Traditions in Hindu South India: *Periya Mēḷam* and Its Performance Practice." *Asian Music* 39 (2): 108–51.
- The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, New Delhi. 2010. *Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs*, <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/> (accessed 7 April 2012).
- Unknown. N.y. "Gurmat Sangeet Project: Punjabi University Patiala." From the website of *Amrit Kirtan*, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://amritkirtan.com/pdfdocs/GurmatSangeetProject.pdf>.
- Venkat, Vaivasvat. 2012. "Tagore Rattan Award to Honour Kartar Singh's Service to Music." *The Times of India*, 25 April.

- Vismaad Naad. 2011. *Vismaad Naad.org – Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash, Jawaddi Taksal*, accessed 31 May 2013, <http://www.vismaadnaad.org/>.
- Wade, Bonnie C. 2000. "Hindustani Vocal Music." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music 5*, edited by Alison Arnold, 162-187. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Wallace, Anthony F. C. 1956. "Revitalization Movements." *American Anthropologist* 58 (2): 264–81.
- Weidman, Amanda J. 2006. *Singing the Classical, Voicing the Modern: the Postcolonial Politics of Music in South India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Wolf, Richard K. 2000a. "Embodiment and Ambivalence: Emotion in South Asian Muharram Drumming." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 32: 81–116.
- . 2000b. "Mourning Songs and Human Pasts among the Kotas of South India." *Asian Music* 27 (1): 141–83.
- 3HO Foundation. 2014. *3HO: Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization*, <http://www.3ho.org/> (accessed 16 July 2014).

#### REFERENCES IN PUNJABI AND HINDI

- Abbotabad, Gian Singh. 1961. *Gurbāṇī Sangīt*. Amritsar: Shrimoni Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.
- Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. 1997. *Sattavān Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelan (The 7th Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. Brochure, 6 pages.
- . N.y. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelan Dī Laṛī Te Ik Jhāt (Series and A Glance of Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. Pamphlet.
- . 2004. *13 Vān Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelan (The 13th Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash. Brochure, 6 pages.

- Kaur, Jasbīr ed. 2005. *14 Vān Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelaṅ 2005: Kīrtan Viśheśh Ank (14th Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music 2005: Special Issue of Kīrtan)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash.
- Kaur, Jasbīr. 1991. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelaṅ (Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Parkash. Brochure, 6 pages.
- Singh, Balwant. 1995. *Amolak Hira: Jiwan Samachar Bhai Hira Singh Ji Ragi (Precious Jewels: the Historical Life of the Respectable Ragī Bhai Hira Singh)*. Haryana: Gurmat Missionary Publications.
- Singh, Charan. 1958. *Gurmat Sangīt Par Hun Tak Milī Khōj (Recent Research of Gurmat Sangī)*. Parts 1–5. Amritsar: Chief Khalsa Diwan.
- Singh, Gurnam ed. 1997. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelaṅ 1997 (Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music 1997)*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Nad.
- . 2001. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelaṅ 2001 (Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music 2001)*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad.
- Singh, Kanwar Jit. 1999. *Kīrtan Reets of Bhai Sāhib Bhai Randhir Singh Ji (Kīrtan Tradition of the Repsected Bhai Sāhib Bhai Randhi Singh)*. New Delhi: Publisher Unknown.
- Singh, Kartar. 2001. *Gurmat Sangeet Darpan Part 1–3 (The Reflection of Sikh Devotional Music Part 1–3)*. Amritsar: SGPC.
- . 2004. *Guru Angad Dev Sangeet Darpan (The Reflection of Guru Angad Dev's Music)*. Amritsar: S.G.P.C.
- Singh, Paramjot. 2011. *Samund Sāgar: Bhaī Samund Singh Jī Duārā Gāe Sanbdan Reetan Da Sangrih (Samund Sagar: Musical Notations of Hymns Sung by Bhai Samund Singh)*. Amritsar: Singh Bradaraz.
- Singh, Pashaura. 2000. *The Guru Granth Sahib: Canon, Meaning and Authority*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Singh, Satbīr ed. 1991. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmelaṅ 1991 (Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music 1991)*. Ludhiana: Sant Baba Sucha Singh, Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash (Booklet).

- . 1992. *Aduttī Gurmit Sangīt Sanmēlan 1992 (Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music 1992)*. Ludhiana: Sant Baba Sucha Singh, Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash (Booklet).
- . 1993. *Tīsrā Aduttī Gur Shabad Sangīt Sanmēlan (3<sup>rd</sup> Unique Gathering of Sikh Devotional Music)*. Ludhiana: Sant Baba Sucha Singh, Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash (Booklet).
- Singh, Sukhwant ed. N.y. *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part I (The Sacred Book of Gurū Nānak's Music System, Part 1)*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash.
- . 2006. *Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti Granth, Part 2 (The Sacred Book of Gurū Nānak's Music System, Part 2)*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash.
- . 2007. *Rāg Sarup Nirnai: Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. Ludhiana: Gurdwara Gur Gian Prakash, Jawaddi Taksal.
- Singh, Tara. 1997. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Rag Ratnavali (A Garland of Rāgās in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib)*. Patiala: Punjabi University.
- . 2011. *Partāl Gāikī (Partāl Performance)*. Second Edition. Patiala: Gurmat Prakashan.

#### AUDIO-VISUAL REFERENCES

- Singh, Sohan (producer). 2009a. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan 2007: Gaatha*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 Audio CD.
- . 2009b. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan 2007: Phuneh*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 Audio CD.
- . 2009c. *Kīrtan Sukhamanī Sāhib (Rāg Gauṛī)*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.
- . 2010a. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan: Bibian Da Kirtan*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.
- . 2010b. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan: Guru Nanak Sangeet Padhti 31 Main Rāgas and 31 Mishrat Rāgas*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 3 Audio CDs.

- . 2010c. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan 2004: Partaalaan*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.
- . 2010d. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan: Prof. Paramjot Singh*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.
- . 2010e. *Bachitar Natak: Shiromani Ragi Bhai Balbir Singh Amritsar*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 Audio CD.
- . 2010f. *Rabāb Dī Jugalbandī (The Duet of Rabāb)*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 VCD.
- . 2012a. *Gurmat Sangeet Legend: Bhai Samund Singh Ji*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.
- . 2012b. *Adutti Gurmat Sangeet Sammellan: Gurmat Sangeet Legend Prof. Kartar Singh Ludhiana*. Ludhiana: Vismaad Naad. 1 MP3 CD.