

Contemporary Evidence on Sikh Rites and Rituals in the Eighteenth Century

Karamjit K Malhotra
Panjab University, Chandigarh

This paper on Sikh rites and rituals analyses the whole range of contemporary evidence on the eighteenth century in three phases for observing continuity and change in the rites of initiation, birth, marriage and death. The Sikh sources are relevant for all the three phases, the Persian sources associated with the Mughal empire are relevant for the first, and the European accounts for the third. Two major findings emerge from this study: the continuity of normative statements on Sikh rites and rituals in which the Brahman priest and Brahmanical scriptures had no role, and there was a large degree of correspondence between the normative statements and empirical evidence on Sikh rites and rituals.

Introduction

No historian of the Sikhs has brought rites and rituals of the Sikhs during the eighteenth century directly into focus. Harjot Oberoi, for example, looks upon rituals as 'a key element in the construction of religious identity', and underlines the importance of the 'rites of passage' for Sikh identity. He maintains that prior to the Khalsa transformation, the Sikhs possessed only a fluid identity, and did not think of 'a distinct set of life-cycle rituals'. The Khalsa introduced new rites related to birth, initiation and death which 'endowed an individual with a new and bounded identity' to demarcate the Khalsa from the rest of the 'civil society'. Oberoi presents these rituals in a few paragraphs on the *Chaupa Singh Rahitnama* which he places between 1750 and 1765.¹

W.H. McLeod approaches the eighteenth century as a formative phase in the history of the Khalsa *rahit*. Rituals figure among 'issues' related to *rahit*, but he does not place any *Rahitnama* in the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The earliest *Rahitnama* for him is the *Tankhahnama* attributed to Bhai Nand Lal which he places within a few years of Guru Gobind Singh's death. The *Rahitnama* attributed to Prahlad Rai and the *Sakhi Rahit Patshahi 10* attributed to Bhai Nand Lal are placed in the 1730s. The *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh is placed sometime between 1740 and 1765. The *Rahitnamas* of Daya Singh and Desa Singh are placed in the late eighteenth century, or the early nineteenth.² McLeod has persistently argued for placing the *Prem Sumarag* in the early nineteenth century.

However, by now views regarding dating of the *Rahitnamas* have changed which has a significant bearing on Sikh rites and rituals. Sikh scholars generally have placed the *Prem Sumarag* in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Among the professional historians, J.S. Grewal and Gurinder Singh Mann have

argued that this work can be placed in or close to the time of Guru Gobind Singh.³ I have argued elsewhere that there is nothing in the text of the *Tankhahnama* to suggest that the original was not composed in the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh.⁴ Grewal has argued that the *Sakhi Rahit* was originally written in the time of Guru Gobind Singh.⁵ Grewal and Mann have argued that the prologue and the *rahit* part of the *Rahitnama* known after Chaupa Singh were composed in the time of Guru Gobind Singh, and the two narratives and the *tankhah* part in the text published by McLeod were added later.⁶ Thus, we find that four *Rahitnamas* in full and a substantial portion of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh can be placed in the time of Guru Gobind Singh. This new perspective calls for fresh interpretation.

Evidence on Sikh rites and rituals is not confined to the *Rahitnamas*. There are several other works which are certainly relevant. The *hukamnamas* have an importance of their own. The earliest of the eighteenth-century Sakhis, the *Parchi* of Sewa Das Udasi compiled in 1708, is also relevant.⁷ For Sainapat's *Sri Gur Sobha*, even 1711 appears to be unsatisfactory and it is argued that this work was started in 1701 and completed soon after Guru Gobind Singh's death in October 1708.⁸ Koer Singh's *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* is generally placed in 1751. The arguments in favour of its composition in the early nineteenth century have been refuted, and it has been analysed consciously as a work of 1751.⁹ Kesar Singh Chhibber's *Bansavalinama Dasan Patshahian Ka* is known to have been completed in 1769. The *Mahima Prakash* of Sarup Das Bhalla is generally accepted as completed in 1776. The *Guru Kian Sakhian* of Sarup Singh Kaushish, placed in 1790, is remarkable for its empirical content in terms of dates, persons, and places.¹⁰ Sukha Singh's *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* is known to have been written in 1797.

Sikh literature, understandably, provides the maximum information on Sikh rites and rituals. However, Persian and European works have their own importance. Their authors profess to provide empirical information. The Persian works are relevant for the early eighteenth century; the European accounts are relevant for the late eighteenth. All these Sikh, Persian and European sources have been used in this essay with a focus on Sikh rites and rituals. Furthermore, this literature has been studied in three phases with an eye on continuity and change: (a) the early eighteenth century, (b) the middle decades, and (c) the late eighteenth century.

It may also be noted that, contrary to Oberoi's impression, Guru Nanak and his successors were seriously concerned with the 'rites of passage' related to birth, initiation, marriage and death. For example, Guru Nanak underlines the futility of the sacred thread which was worn at an important ceremony. He discards the notion of pollution (*sutak*) which was associated with child birth. His song of joy (*Sohila*) is relevant for both wedding and death (as leading to union with God). The *Alahnian* of Guru Nanak were meant to be sung in place of the traditional mourning songs. The performance of *shraddh* to feed the dead ancestors, and the practice of offering rice balls (*pind*) to the dead through the mediacy of Brahmans, are ridiculed. The practice of floating lamps in water as a part of obituary rites is treated by Guru Nanak as meaningless.¹¹ The

Anand composed by Guru Amar Das, celebrating the experience of joy in liberation, began eventually to be sung or recited on important occasions like birth, marriage and death. Guru Ram Das says that this true song of joy is to be sung in the true house. Guru Arjan invites the Sikhs to listen to the *Anand* so that all their wishes are fulfilled. It is probable that this composition was sung to celebrate the birth of his son Hargobind. Guru Amar Das disapproves of *sati* which was practised by the upper castes and upheld by Brahmans, and of the practice of female infanticide which was prevalent in his time. The *Ramkali Sadd* of Baba Sunder makes it absolutely clear that the last wish of Guru Amar Das was to have no Brahmanical rites performed after his death.¹²

The *Ghorian* of Guru Ram Das were meant to replace the folk songs sung by women at the time of the bridegroom mounting the mare (*ghori*) for departure with the wedding party. His *Lavan* eventually became the core of the Sikh wedding ceremony. References to supplication (*ardas*) occur frequently in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Guru Nanak lays emphasis on offering *ardas* with a feeling of complete surrender. Guru Angad enjoins that the Sikhs should stand for *ardas*. Guru Arjan underlines that they should stand for *ardas* with folded hands. A stanza of Guru Arjan's *Sukhmani* (*tum thakur tum pae ardas*) now serves as a prelude to the formal *ardas*.¹³ The mid-seventeenth century *Dabistan-i Mazahib* underscores the Sikh 'custom' of praying 'together'.¹⁴ Bhai Gurdas testifies to the daily religious routine of the Sikhs ending with the prayer, followed by the sharing of *prasad* by all.¹⁵ The practice of praying together and partaking of *prasad* at the end was apparently well established in the seventeenth century.

Bhai Gurdas has used the terms *charan amrit* or *amrit* in his *Vars*.¹⁶ One reading is that the toe of the Guru was dipped into the water which was drunk by the initiate.¹⁷ However, Bhai Gurdas seems to be referring to 'the dust of the feet of the Sikhs of the Guru'. The mode of initiation described in the *Dabistan*, though a variant on Bhai Gurdas, clarifies nonetheless that it was not the Guru's toe.¹⁸ With this background we turn to the evidence directly from the eighteenth century.

The Early Eighteenth Century

In the longer *Rahitnamas* of the period there are references to the rites of initiation, birth, marriage, and death. In the *rahit* part of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh, the author says that a Sikh of the Guru must take baptism of the double edged sword (*pahul*). The Sikh who administers the *pahul* should follow the mode established by the Guru. Five palmfuls of *pahul* should be drunk by the initiate, and five times should it be sprinkled on his head and eyes. The baptized Sikh should exclaim, '*Vaheguru ka Khalsa, Vaheguruji ki fateh*'. He should then be given the sacred formula (*mantra*) of the true name (*satnam*) and instructed in the Sikh way of life. The Sikh who administers *pahul* should be one who observes the *rahit* and who is free from lust, anger, pride and ignorance; he should not be an idler. He should be intellectually wide awake and without a physical or a moral defect.¹⁹

The *pahul* is closely linked with keeping the hair (*kes*) unshorn. The baptized Sikh is called Kesdhari. A Sikh should never keep unshorn hair without taking *pahul*. For him, the *kes* serve as alternative to the sacred thread and the sacred mark. The sanctity of the *kes* is emphasized in various ways. Along with the *kes* are mentioned *kachh* (drawers) and *kirpan* (sword) among the five most important positive injunctions (the remaining two are *bani* and *sadh-sangat*). The sword as 'Sri Sahib' is to be held in reverence, in fact to be worshipped, as it was done by the Guru himself. Among the negative injunctions is not to have any association with the Minas, Dhir Mallias, Ram Raiyas, Masands, and Masandias. A Sikh should never kill an infant daughter and have no association with those who kill their daughters. He should not smoke or inhale tobacco. The three most important injunctions of the *rahit* are against female infanticide, tonsure (*bhaddan*), and the use of tobacco. It may be noted that service of the Sikhs is recommended for those who aspire to become leaders (*sardars*).²⁰

The *Prem Sumarag*, which we regard as one of the earliest *Rahitnamas*, lays great stress on initiation into the order of the Khalsa. The essential feature of initiation is *khande ki pahul* which should be sweetened before it is administered to the volunteer. He should put on a *kachh*, and bear five arms. The minimum number of the Khalsa present at the time of initiation should be five, and five stanzas (*pauris*) of the *Anand* should be recited. An *ardas* is specified: 'This Sikh has come to Sri Guru Akal Purkh and the Khalsa for refuge. He may be given the gift of the faith of the Khalsa of Sri Akal Purkh. His mind may remain steady and all his wishes may be fulfilled'. The Sikhs of the Khalsa pray for him: 'May Guru Baba Akal Purkh fulfil his wishes'. The whole procedure is described in detail. The administering of *pahul* is followed by some general instruction with regard to the beliefs and ethics of the Khalsa.²¹

A married woman could take *pahul* from a Gurmukh. 'She should have education in Gurmukhi, read and love *shabad-bani*'. The baptized Sikh women (*sikhnis*) should associate with one another and reflect on the *shabad*. A widow could also take *pahul*. However, no *kesar* (saffron) was to be sprinkled in her case; she should wear an iron ring on her finger, and observe restraint and chastity. It is explicitly stated that the injunctions given in the first two chapters of the *Rahitnama* are meant for both men and women.²²

Like the authors of the two longer *Rahitnamas*, Sainapat does not describe the ceremony of initiation at the time of the institution of the Khalsa but he does refer to *khande ki pahul* and underlines its importance. The baptized Khalsa adopt the epithet 'Singh', bear arms, and exclaim '*Vaheguruji ki fateh*'. Sainapat is emphatic about the excommunication of the 'five reprobate groups'. The sanctity of the *kes* is emphasized.²³ In the *Parchi* of Sewa Das, Guru Gobind Singh says that the *sangat* would be transformed by handling the sword (*bhagauti*). He declares that his Sikhs would not remain without *kes* and without weapons (*shastar*). All the Sikhs of the Guru adopted unshorn hair and arms in obedience to his declaration. Sewa Das refers to the seal of Guru Gobind Singh, and to a couplet ('*salok*') spoken aloud by Guru Gobind Singh before shooting an arrow. This '*salok*', actually a couplet in Persian, is very close to the

inscription on the seal of Banda Bahadur. It refers to '*deg, teg, fateh*' of Guru Gobind Singh.²⁴

The *hukamnamas* bear witness to the fact that Guru Gobind Singh removed the Masands and instructed his Khalsa not to have any association with them and their followers. The Sikhs are asked to take *pahul*. The epithet 'Singh' appears frequently in the *hukanmanas* of the early eighteenth century. The Khalsa are asked to come to Anandpur fully armed. In a *hukamnama* of Guru Gobind Singh issued to the *sangat* of Benares, the Sikhs are referred to as '*Vaheguruji da Khalsa*' (instead of the earlier 'Guru's Khalsa' or 'my Khalsa'). A *hukamnama*, dated 12 December 1710, refers to '*Sri Akal Purkhji ka Khalsa*', a phrase that appears frequently later in the *hukamnamas* of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi; it also refers to five weapons and 'the *rahit* of the Khalsa'. Like the inscription on the seal of Banda Bahadur, a *hukamnama* of Mata Sahib Devi, dated 10 September 1726, refers to '*deg, tegh, fateh*'.²⁵

In the *Amarnama*, Guru Gobind Singh is emphatic that the Sikhs should take *amrit* to become 'Singhs'. Taking of *amrit* is helpful against the enemy and also at the end of one's life. They should never observe any Brahmanical rite. They should eat food in the *langar* with all others and ensure that no one remained hungry. They should not kill an animal in the Muslim fashion. They should pay no heed to what the Brahmans say. There was no point in performing Brahmanical rites (*kirya karam*).²⁶

The Persian sources of the early eighteenth century contain no detail of the Sikh rite of initiation or the rites of passage, but they do contain a few references with a close bearing on initiation and *rahit*. A report from the court of Emperor Bahadur Shah, dated 24 May 1710, refers to the dismissal of the Masands by Guru Gobind Singh by one stroke of the pen to establish the Khalsa. 'It was settled by him that the Sikhs of the Khalsa would not cut the hair of the head, moustaches and beard and would be known as the Sikhs of the Khalsa'. The report goes on to add that a great disturbance occurred among the community of the Khatri over the new injunctions, due to which marriages between the two groups were given up. Actual fighting took place at Ramdaspur in *pargana Patti*.²⁷ Writing in 1728-9, the author of the *Asrar-i Samadi* refers to the followers of Banda Bahadur as 'Singhs' who wore unshorn hair; he refers also to *deg* and *teg*.²⁸

According to the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh, on the birth of a male child the father should give him the water, in which the feet of five Sikhs have been washed, to drink as *pahul*. If the child was to be brought up as Kesdhari, he should be given *khande ki pahul*. His hair should be kept uncut. His name should be chosen from the *Granth Sahib*. Then he should be bathed with curd.²⁹

For the author of the *Prem Sumarag*, the ceremonies connected with the birth of a child start with conception. The features to figure in these ceremonies are *pahul* for the mother, and the constant sight of weapons like *khande*, bow, arrow, and sword. If a son is born, he should first be made to bow to arms and the *Granth-Pothi*, and the first feeding (*gurhti*) given to him should be touched by a *khande* (double edged sword). An *ardas* should be made. Sanctified food

(*prasad*) should be distributed among the Khalsa and among the kith and kin on the same day. Other ceremonies for the son include *pahul* administered to him by five Sikhs, piercing of his ears for rings made of gold or silver, keeping his *kes* intact, naming him with the epithet 'Singh', and feeding Sikh men and women present on the occasion. The same ceremonies are required to be performed on the birth of a daughter, with appropriate variation in detail. The daughter should also be administered *pahul* and bear the epithet '*devi*' in her name. Her nose as well as her ears should be pierced.³⁰

Regarding marriage, there is only one sentence in the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh which recommends that a Sikh of the Guru should employ a Brahman in the ceremony of marriage. It is not clear, however, whether the Brahman in this situation is a Sikh who could perform a Sikh ceremony or a Brahman priest who is supposed to perform the marriage ceremony according to the Brahmanical rites. The evidence of this *Rahitnama* on other rituals makes it almost certain that the Brahman in question is a Sikh.³¹

The author of the *Prem Sumarag* recommends that betrothal ceremony should precede marriage by one and a half months. The bride should pray to Sri Akal Purkh for a happy union; she should not invoke the blessing of any god or goddess. The marriage ceremony should be performed in the last quarter of the night. The bridegroom should put on arms while riding for wedding to the bride's home. The marriage ceremony should be performed by a Sikh of the Khalsa of Sri Akal Purkh. He should ask both the bride and the bridegroom for their consent to marry each other, and also for the consent of their elders. Fire, like Sri Bhagauti Ji and Sri Khalsa Ji, was to be lighted as a witness to the wedlock. An *ardas* should be made to Sri Guru Akal Purkh for a happy and pious life for the married couple. They should go round the fire clockwise, and each time a stanza of the *Lavan* should be sung and some *ghee* thrown into the fire. After all the four rounds, *khande ki pahul* should be administered to the couple. Five *pauris* of the *Anand* should be sung and then *karha prasad* should be distributed. The couple should make supplication to Sri Vaheguru Akal Purkh alone and should not worship any god or goddess; they should not resort to any *jantar* or magical device and *mantar* or magical formula.³²

According to the *rahit* portion of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh, there should be no mourning on the death of a Sikh. No tonsure (*bhaddan*) should be performed. The Guru's *shabad* should be sung when the dead body is taken away for cremation. *Prasad* should be distributed among the persons present. Ashes of the deceased should be taken to the Ganga for immersion. The *Granth Sahib* should be installed in the home for a complete reading. *Katha* and *kirtan* should be performed for eleven, thirteen, fifteen or seventeen days of *bhog-path*, according to the means of the family of the deceased. The practice of customary charity is recommended. There is emphatic rejection of traditional offerings to the dead (*shraddh* and *pind*), along with fasts, pilgrimages, objects and modes of worship, *mantras*, evening worship (*sandhya*), ritual offering of water (*tarpan*). In fact, a Sikh should have no recourse to a Brahman who is without *kes* and *pahul*. Nor should a Sikh of the

Guru perform any ceremony by putting thread (*dhaga*) over his body, or a mark on his forehead.³³

According to the *Prem Sumarag*, there should be no beating of the breasts by women on the death of a Sikh; all men and women present should sing the *Alahnian*. The men should not remove their turbans. A new pair of *kachh* should be put on the body of the deceased after it has been washed. After dressing it, a sword should be placed on its right. There should be no wailing; God's will should be accepted without any sign of grief. The widow should adopt simplicity and restraint, think of the deceased as ever present with her, and read the *Pothi of Shabad- Bani*.³⁴

The essential procedure in all situations, with appropriate variation in detail, is the same for men and women, for the young and the old, for the married and the unmarried, for the mothers and the childless widows. There should be no mourning. The ashes of the Khalsa could be consigned to a nearby stream or buried in the earth. For condolence, there should be no association with Masands and their followers, and with those who practised *bhaddan* (tonsure). All the three had turned away from the Guru. On death anniversary, all kinds of food should be served to the hungry and the Khalsa, and *kirtan* should be performed.³⁵

Sainapat refers simply to the cremation of Guru Gobind Singh.³⁶ An interesting insight into the norm and practice in the rituals related to death is provided by the *Amarnama*. Guru Gobind Singh was informed of the death of a Singh on the cot, and the other Singhs wanted to know what was to be done. They were told not to worry; the life of this Sikh was marked by humility, and his thoughts were on the Guru at the time of his death; he had certainly gone to heaven. They should perform *ardas* and consign the body to the river. There was no need to call a Brahman, or to wait for the parents of the deceased. The Sikhs consigned the body to the river, uttering 'Vaheguru'. A similar episode is mentioned in this work in connection with a Sikh of Guru Arjan.³⁷

Mirza Muhammad refers generally to new customs introduced by Guru Gobind Singh for the Sikhs of the Khalsa.³⁸ According to Muhammad Qasim Lahauri, after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, his followers assembled from all sides and 'proceeding with their own prescribed rituals, cremated his body with due ceremony'.³⁹

The Middle Decades

For the middle decades of the eighteenth century we have only two sources which refer to initiation and matters related to death: the narratives and the *tankhah* portion of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh and Koer Singh's *Gurbilas*. In the narrative of the *Rahitnama*, we find for the first time a description of what Guru Gobind Singh did for administering the new baptism. He decided to give *kesan di pahul* (baptism of the hair) in 1697. Chaupa Singh was asked to bring a bowl of water, to stir it with a knife, and to recite five of the *savaiyyas*. Diwan Sahib Chand made the request that some soluble sweets (*patashas*) may be mixed with water to make it tasteful. Dharam Chand was

asked to bring *patashas*. When the *pahul* was ready, Chaupa Singh took the bowl in his hand and stood before the Guru. Taking five palmfuls of water, the Guru sprinkled it five times over Chaupa Singh's eyes and five times over his head. Guru Gobind Singh then recited the famous *savaiyya* of the *Chandi Charitra* which starts with '*deh Siva bar mohe ihae*'. With his own hands he gave *pahul* to Chaupa Singh who was asked to exclaim '*Vaheguruji ka Khalsa, Vaheguruji ki fateh*'. Four other Sikhs, named Dhanna Singh, Hari Singh, Mewa Singh and Jodh Singh, requested for *pahul*. Thus, on the first day, five Sikhs were made Kesdhari. For the future, five Sikhs were to be present at the time of administering *pahul*. The persons initiated were to add the epithet 'Singh' to their name and to keep arms. Thirty-five Sikhs were initiated on the second day and sixty on the third. The Guru emphasized that the *kes* were the distinctive mark of a Singh. Distribution of *karha prasad* is mentioned as a part of the ceremony. *Hukamnamas* were issued to the Sikhs that they should not recognize the authority of the Masands. Among many things which the armed Kesdhari Singh were to do was to fight and establish their rule. For this purpose the Goddess was invoked. A lot of space is given to this episode. Nevertheless, the distinction of the new *panth* from Hindus and Muslims is underscored.⁴⁰

The *tankhah* portion of the *Rahitnama* emphasizes the sanctity of the *kes*, beard and turban, the importance of *ardas* and *karha prasad*, and the obligation of responding with '*Vaheguruji ki fateh*' if not preferably saluting with '*Vaheguruji ka Khalsa*'. It is in this part of the *Rahitnama* that baptism of the double edged sword is prohibited for Sikh women. However, association with the five excommunicated groups and with the killers of infant daughters is emphatically prohibited. The second narrative reinforces *kes* as the mark of the Kesdhari Singh; it is the seal of the Guru.⁴¹

Koer Singh too talks about the ceremony of initiation performed by Guru Gobind Singh at the time of instituting the Khalsa. The Guru poured clear water into a vessel of iron and started reciting *mantars*. Kirpa Ram informed the Guru's mother (Mata Ji) that the Guru was going to institute the Khalsa Panth and for this purpose he was preparing the *pahul* for initiation. She came and put *patashas* into the bowl. Having prepared the *amrit*, the Guru made an *ardas*. Then he administered *amrit* to five Sikhs: Daya Singh, a Sobti Khatri of Lahore, Nihchal Singh (Mohkam Chand), a Chhipa of Dwarka, Sahib Singh, a Nai of Bidar, Dharam Singh, a Jat of Hastinapur, and Himmat Singh, a Jhiwar of Jagannath. The first instruction given to the five on this occasion was not to associate with those who cut their hair, who killed their infant daughters, the Minas, the Masands and the 'Turks'. The initiate should discard every other means of worship and take refuge in the Wielder of the Sword. He should bear arms, keep his *kes* unshorn, wear *kachh* and keep a dagger (*kard*). He should clean his *kes* twice a day with a comb (*kangha*).⁴²

Koer Singh mentions that, just before Guru Gobind Singh's death, Mata Sahib Devi expressed her wish to burn herself on his funeral pyre. The Guru told her that this was not to be done. Mata Sahib Devi accepted this and prepared to go to Delhi. The implication is quite clear: the practice of *sati* was forbidden. Before the funeral pyre prepared for Guru Gobind Singh was lighted

by a Brahman Singh, Guru Gobind Singh disappeared, and he was seen by an Udasi who was asked to tell the Khalsa not to mourn but to observe the Khalsa *rahit*.⁴³

The Late Eighteenth Century

Kesar Singh Chhibber's account of the procedure adopted by Guru Gobind Singh for administering *pahul* to the Sikhs for instituting the Khalsa is broadly similar to that given in the narrative of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh. The initiates are instructed to keep their *kes* unshorn. The *kes* are to replace the sacred thread and the sacred mark as a distinct marker of the identity of the third (*teesar*) Panth. One important implication of the sanctity of the *kes* is that no rite connected with tonsure was to be performed. The emphatic injunction in support of *kes* is matched by the strong injunction against tobacco. The Keshdhari Singhs were to bear arms and to wear blue dress. They were not to associate with the Minas, Dhir Mallias and Ram Raiyas, nor with the Masands. The other category of people with whom the Khalsa were not to associate were those who killed their infant daughters.⁴⁴

Sarup Das Bhalla refers to initiation of the double-edged sword in connection with the institution of the Khalsa. Five Sikhs were given *pahul* by Guru Gobind Singh. The rest of the Sikhs were told to take *pahul* from them. The Khalsa were required to keep their hair uncut and wear blue dress. They were to add the epithet 'Singh' to their names. Guru Gobind Singh adopted the same appearance as that of the Khalsa. The attitude of the Khalsa towards the sacred thread is indicated by the statement that one of the *panj piaras*, Daya Singh, removed his sacred thread to tie the sword of Guru Gobind Singh. It is explicitly stated later that the sacred thread and the sacred mark had no meaning in comparison with the true Name. Nevertheless, the Guru tells his followers that the Khalsa should not be compelled either to remove or to wear the sacred thread. This too suggests the irrelevance of the sacred thread for any cherished belief or practice.⁴⁵

The *Guru Kian Sakhian*, unlike several other Sikh works of the eighteenth century, makes no reference to the Goddess. The account of the *khande ki pahul* is the most comprehensive. Even the phrase '*panch kakar*' (for 5Ks) is used, though instead of *kes* the *kakar* recommended is '*keski*' (a small turban worn under the large one). Even so, the *kes* are there by implication. As a prelude to the institution of the Khalsa, the Masands were 'punished' or removed; they were shunned completely, and offerings (*dasvandh*, *chaliha*, *mannat*) began to be sent directly to Anandpur. As instructed by Guru Gobind Singh, a day before the Baisakhi of 1698, Diwan Mani Ram put up five tents, and Bhai Chaupa Rai brought five goats to be tied in each tent. After the *kirtan* of *Asa di Var* and *katha* of a *shabad* by Bhai Mani Ram on the Baisakhi day, Guru Gobind Singh called for a head five times. Bhai Daya Singh, a Sobti Khatri of Sialkot, Mohkam Chand, a Chhipa of Dwaraka, Sahib Chand, a Nai of Bidar, Dharam Chand, a Jat of Hastinapur, and Himmat Chand, a Mehra Sikh of Jaganaath, in turn, responded to the call. They were taken into the tents, one by one, and

asked to slaughter the goat. Then they were dressed afresh with the 5Ks, and the Guru adopted the same form. They all came out. Guru Gobind Singh declared the five Sikhs to be '*panj piare*' (the five beloved ones) as they had passed the test and become *marjivaras* (who were ready to lay down their life for the Guru). The description of the way in which *khande ki pahul* was prepared and administered is equally graphic and detailed, and the injunctions for *rahit* are comprehensive. Nothing important is left out.⁴⁶

Sukha Singh dramatically brings in the context in which the baptismal water was prepared for instituting the Khalsa. He refers to the call for volunteers at Kesgarh to sacrifice their head for the Guru. After the third call, a follower (*sevak*) stood up. He was taken into a tent, given a sword, and asked to slaughter a male goat with one stroke. Blood flowed from the tent. With the sword in his hand Guru Gobind Singh asked for another head. Another *sevak* stood up after the third call. He too was taken into the tent and asked to slaughter a goat. There was murmuring among the Sikhs who thought that this was the evil effect of invoking the Goddess (Bhavani). The Guru came out of the tent with the *panj piaras*. He began to prepare the *pahul* with fresh water into which Mata ji put *patashas*. The *pahul* was meant to rekindle the dead spirit. When it was ready, the Guru made an *ardas* and gave this *amrit* to the *panj piaras* asking them to exclaim 'Vaheguru'. They were instructed to discard the false thread in favour of the sword, and not to associate with the Minas, Dhir Mallias, Ram Raiyas, and the Masandias. Sukha Singh says that the fifth category, apparently those who shaved their head, was not concealed from anyone. Apart from the Wielder of the Sword, there was no refuge and no other object of worship. In this way Guru Gobind Singh created the third (*teesar*) Panth, distinct from and superior to Hindus and Turks. Already at the time of his own '*jagg pavit*', Guru Gobind is said to have told the Brahmans that the Wielder of the Sword had given him the sword as his sacred thread and he would give this protective shield to the Khalsa.⁴⁷

The *Rahitnama* of Desa Singh gives primacy to baptism of the double edged sword to be conducted by five Singhs. The initiate is required to carry arms and wear turban and also have a comb (*kangha*) and a dagger on his person. He should not make *ardas* without weapons (*shastar*), and *karha prasad* should first be touched by the *kard* (dagger) before it is distributed equally among all. As in other *Rahitnamas* the novitiate in this work is required to shun the reprobate groups which included the killers of daughters as well. It may be mentioned that the writer dwells at some length on the proper method of preparing and serving the *langar* as well as the *karha prasad*.⁴⁸

The *Daya Singh Rahitnama* expresses a serious concern for the ceremony of initiation and rites of passage. Bhai Daya Singh requests Guru Gobind Singh to pronounce a *rahitnama* that may serve as the source of liberation. Guru Gobind Singh says that when the Goddess appeared the *mantar* of '*ek onkar satnam*' was given by Shakti (through Guru Nanak), the *jantar* of *Vaheguru* was given by Mohan (Krishna), the *tantar* of *amar-jal* was provided by Varun, sweet was provided by Indra, the vessel of iron was provided by Yamraj, the knife of iron was provided by Kal, the *kes* were given by Chandi, and the *kachh* was given

by Hanuman, the four *padaraths* (*dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksh*) accruing from the *khande ki pahul* were provided by Vishnu, *maida* (fine flour) was provided by Mahadev, and *ghee* was given by Brahma for the *karha prasad*. These divinities were subordinate to Akal Purkh and, therefore, subservient to Guru Gobind Singh. Daya Singh adds that the path for *mukti* was provided by the *Japuji*; the *Anand* was given by Guru Amar Das for peace; and the *chaupai* and the *savaiyyas* were added by Guru Gobind Singh. It is underscored that the *karha prasad* of unequal quantities of flour, ghee and sugar did not reach the Guru. On the occasion of administering *amrit*, jaggery should not be used in place of sugar for the *karha prasad*.⁴⁹

The actual ceremony of initiation is then spelt out in the *Rahitnama*. Anyone of the four *varnas* could take *amrit*. By taking *amrit* even the lowest of the low would attain liberation. The person to whom *pahul* is given should wear *kachh*, bind his hair in a knot and tie a turban. He should stand up with an unsheathed sword in hand. The water of *amritsar* (the sacred tank at Ramdaspur) should be used for preparing *amrit*. First of all, the whole of the *Japuji Sahib* should be recited, followed by the *chaupai*, five *savaiyyas* and five *pauris* of the *Anand*, while *kard* was used for stirring the water to prepare *amrit*. A Singh should then take the permission of the assembly (*sarbat*) and take the bowl in his hands to let the new entrant drink from it. He should place that *kard* in his turban. The person who takes the baptism should place his right hand over the left to drink the baptismal water; he should then exclaim '*Vaheguruji ka Khalsa, Vaheguruji ki fateh*'. In this way he should drink five palmfuls of *amrit*, and it should be sprinkled over his eyes and head. He should be given the *gur-mantar* of *satnam* and a new name. He should make an offering of a rupee and a quarter. Then *ardas* should be performed and the *karha prasad* eaten by all together. It is emphasized that those who administer *amrit* should be devout Sikhs and men of exceptional qualities, because it was first administered by the Guru as the incarnation of Akal Purkh.⁵⁰

Among the European writers, Charles Wilkins was told that if a person showed a sincere inclination to renounce his former beliefs to any five or more Sikhs, he was asked to bring a small quantity of *patashas* which were diluted in pure water; this water was sprinkled on his body and into his eyes, and one of the best instructed Sikhs instructed him to observe the chief canons of their faith for the rest of his life. Wilkins, goes on to add that they were prepared to initiate him into the Sikh faith. Thus, the Sikh faith was open to everyone.⁵¹

Colonel A.L.H. Polier, George Forster, James Browne and John Griffiths refer to the rite of initiation on the basis of what they heard from Sikhs or non-Sikhs, and their statements contain, collectively, a number of features: openness of the initiation to all classes, including Muslims, keeping unshorn hair and beard, bearing arms, wearing an iron bracelet on one arm, the presence of five or more Sikhs on the occasion, exclamation of *Vaheguruji ka Khalsa, Vaheguruji ki fateh*', instructions regarding religious, moral and political duties, and prohibition of the use of tobacco. The intention of the ceremony was to abolish distinctions of caste and its result was the distinct identity of the Khalsa.⁵²

John Malcolm's statement is the most elaborate. Guru Gobind Singh admitted converts from all tribes and classes. All those who subscribed to his tenets were on the same level; the Brahman who entered the fold had no higher claim to eminence than the lower Shudra who swept his house. It was the object of the Guru to make all Sikhs equal. He changed their name from Sikh to 'Singh', which till then was assumed only by the Rajputs. They were required to devote themselves to arms, to have steel about them in some shape or other, to wear a blue dress, to allow their hair to grow and to exclaim '*Vaheguruji ka Khalsa, Vaheguruji ki fateh*' on meeting one another. The blue dress was still worn by the Akalis. Malcolm thinks that perhaps Guru Gobind Singh's idea was to separate his followers from all other classes of India by their appearance as much as by their religion.⁵³

The way in which Guru Gobind Singh first initiated his converts was described to Malcolm by a Sikh. Guru Gobind Singh had initiated five converts in the first place and they were instructed how to initiate others. 'The convert is told that he must allow his hair to grow, he must clothe himself from head to foot in blue clothes, and he is then presented with five weapons: a sword, a firelock, a bow and arrow and a pike'. Sugar and water were put into a cup and stirred round with a weapon; the first chapter of the *Adi Granth* and the first chapter of the *Dasama Padshah ka Granth* were read, and those who performed the initiation exclaimed '*Vaheguru ji ka Khalsa, Vaheguru ji ki fateh*'. After exclaiming this five times the water prepared for initiation was drunk by the proselyte. A sweet drink prepared in a similar manner was sprinkled over his head and beard. After these ceremonies he was told to abandon all intercourse with five categories of people: the Minas and Dhir Mallias, the Masandias, the followers of Ram Rai, those who killed their infant daughters, and the *bhaddanis* who ritually shaved the hair of their head and beard. The initiate was instructed to sacrifice his life and property for the cause of the Khalsa; he was directed to read both the *Granth*s every morning and every evening. It was his duty to share with others whatever he received from God.⁵⁴

Captain Matthews recorded that 'a Sikh wishing to become a Singh' could go to the Akalis at Amritsar and give proof of his determination to discard his former beliefs. With his own hands the proselyte broke his *zunar*, 'the small thread, or cord, worn across the shoulders by most of the Hindoo sects'. After the performance of certain ceremonies, he was given to drink a *sherbat* made of sugar and water by an Akali. After the initiation, he never shaved his beard, nor cut his hair. He became 'heterodox' for the Hindus who considered him as an apostate. He was allowed to eat whatever food he liked except beef.⁵⁵

For marriage, Bhai Desa Singh recommends that it should be endogamous but he does not refer to any rite.⁵⁶ Bhai Daya Singh gives preference to the baptized Khalsa for the marriage of a daughter and lays down that 'marriage should not be performed without the *Anand*' (being recited at the end).⁵⁷

For the ceremonies related to death, Sarup Das Bhalla simply refers to the cremation of Guru Gobind Singh's body. With an implicit reference to the *Sadd* of Baba Sunder, he underlines that Brahmanical rite was to be performed. In fact, Guru Nanak himself told his followers that no Brahmanical rites were to be

performed after his death.⁵⁸ According to Sukha Singh, Guru Gobind Singh told his followers that his end was ordained by God and, therefore, it was a matter of rejoicing for him; none should wail and cry after him; they should sing the praises of God and perform *katha* for forty days, and the lowest of the low should not be debarred from it. All varieties of food were to be prepared and distributed among all the four castes without any distinction. The Khalsa should celebrate the event and organize *chauki-shabad* or *kirtan* by turns.⁵⁹

Kaushish in the *Guru Kian Sakhian* refers to the exclamation of '*Vaheguruji ka Khalsa, Vahguruji ki fateh*' by Guru Gobind Singh as his last farewell to the Khalsa. His body was washed and dressed, and weapons were placed by its side. After the cremation of the body, the *Sohila* was recited, *ardas* was performed, and *karha prasad* was distributed.⁶⁰

Bhai Daya Singh says that the *Japuji* should be recited at death. When the deceased is being bathed, a new *kachh* should be put on him, and a new turban tied on his head. There should be no mourning after death. The *prasad* should be prepared in a clean enclosure (*chauka*), reciting '*Vaheguru*' all the time. Five Singhs should sing *shabads* and make an *ardas*. When the *prasad* is ready, the officiant should offer it first to Sri Guru ji, then to five *bhujangis* (sons of the baptized Singhs), and then to the other Singhs. The *prasad* should be distributed equally among all.⁶¹

Forster observes that widows were expressly forbidden to destroy themselves at the death of their husbands, and allowed to renew the ceremonies of marriage. He goes on to add, however, that adherence to the old practice was strong among the Hindus converted to the Sikh faith. Many of their women were seen ascending the funeral pyre; others could not be induced to enter the connubial state for a second time.⁶² Captain Mathews states that, after cremation, the ashes were thrown into the river. He also refers to the existence of small structures over the spots where some important men had been cremated.⁶³

The Eighteenth Century in Retrospect

When we look back at contemporary evidence for the three phases we have examined, we find that the middle decades, coinciding with the most intense phase of political struggle of the Sikhs, figure only in two sources which refer to the rites of initiation and death. Though the information on the late eighteenth century or the period of Sikh rule is far larger, it relates mostly to initiatory and funerary rites. These are also the rites on which Persian and European sources provide information. The rite in connection with birth finds mention in the first phase and the last phase, in which the Sikh sources cover the ceremony of marriage as well as the initiatory and funerary rites. There is no description in the first phase on how *pahul* was prepared and administered on the day of the institution of the Khalsa. Such descriptions appear first of all in the middle decades. On the whole, the maximum importance is given to initiatory rites, followed at a distance by funerary rites and the ceremony of marriage.

There is no uniformity in the rites and rituals recommended or described in our sources but there is a large degree of consensus. There is a good deal of variation in detail but there is basic agreement on essentials. Consequently, continuity is more remarkable than change for the eighteenth century as a whole. Despite variation in modes, 'Sikh' rites are clearly conceived as non-Brahmanical: the officiants are Sikh, and so are the scriptures. Recitation of the *Anand*, performing *ardas*, and distribution of *karha prasad* appear to have become the common features of Sikh ceremonies.

In all the three phases, there is categorical rejection of Brahmanical rites and rituals. The Pandit and the Padha are bracketed with the Mian and the Mahant: their teaching (*mat*) is rejected in favour of Gurmat. The only means of liberation in the Kaliyuga is *nam*: a Sikh should read the *shabad*, hear the *shabad*, and live in accordance with the *shabad*. He should never sit in front of a Brahman for any ritual (*karam*). What is essential is to recite the *Anand*, do *ardas*, and distribute *karah prasad*. Everything is set right when a Sikh feeds five Sikhs and they do *ardas* in his behalf. The Guru says: 'All the *kiryā-karam* of my Panth have been performed by Satguru Akal Purkh'.⁶⁴ Towards the end of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh it is emphasized that a Sikh of the Guru should cultivate *sikkhi* in accordance with the teachings of the *Granth Sahib*. The Khalsa Panth was made distinct by God for the preservation of *sikkhi* in poverty, wealth and rulership.⁶⁵ In the *Rahitnama* of Daya Singh it is stated that a Sikh should never put on the sacred thread for performing the rites of birth, marriage or death. A baptized Singh should never meet a Brahman. A Sikh who uses the services of a Brahman for any ceremony becomes liable to penance. In everything the *maryada* laid down by the Guru should be followed.⁶⁶ It must be added that the *Prem Sumarag* in the early eighteenth century and the *Guru Kian Sakhian* towards its end were written on the assumption that the Brahman priest had no role to play in Sikh rites and ceremonies. In the literature that we have examined there is little indication on the whole that any Brahmanical rite was recommended for the Khalsa.

This raises the question of *charan pahul* and the Sahajdharis. It may be pointed out that both the terms are used in all the three phases. However, there is very little information about the *charan pahul* or the Sahajdharis in the literature of the period. They are not bracketed with the Minas, the Dhir Mallias or the Ram Raiyas. They appear to be accepted as 'Sikhs'. This makes the evidence of the *Rahitnama* associated with Chaupa Singh rather important. They are bracketed with Kesdharis for a number of important dimensions of Sikh life: daily personal and congregational worship, keeping the beard uncut, proscription against *bhaddan* and the use of tobacco, belief in no *guru* other than the ten Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, and belief in the Guru-Granth and the Guru- Panth. The Sahajdhari has the discretion to keep or discard the sacred thread. For funerary rites he must arrange *bhog-path*, *kirtan*, *ardas*, and distribution of *karah prasad*. The Sahajdhari is a 'Khalsa' but not a 'Singh'. He has not been baptized through *khande ki pahul*. He takes *charan pahul* which is prepared by reciting five *pauris* of the *Japuji* and five *pauris* of the *Anand* when *patashas* are mingled with water in which the lactern of the

Guru Granth Sahib has been washed.⁶⁷ By using the blanket term 'Khulasa' for all non-Singhs, the European writers confused the identity of the Sahajdharis by bracketing them with reprobate groups. Even so, according to European accounts, the non-Singhs were rather small in numbers. Nearly all the Sikh writers identify themselves with the Khalsa Singhs and write for them and about them.

There is unanimity among the Sikh sources on the administering of *khande ki pahul* to five volunteers in the first place, and the obligation of keeping unshorn *kes*, bearing arms and the epithet 'Singh'. The injunction against *bhaddan*, female infanticide, and use of tobacco is also common. No association with the reprobate groups is common, though they are not uniformly the same. There is consensus on the names of the *panj piaras*. There is consensus on recitation from the *Japuji*, the *Jap*, the *Benati Chaupai*, five *savaiyyas* and five *pauris* of the *Anand*. About the 5 Ks, all the five items are present in contemporary literature. In some early works, there is emphasis on three items together: *kes*, *kirpan*, and *kachh*.⁶⁸ In the *Guru Kian Sakhian* alone the five *kakars* are explicitly mentioned. One of these *kakars* is *keski* and not *kes*, but the *keski* itself covers the *kes*. Apart from the *Anand*, the *Lavan* are mentioned in connection with the ceremony of marriage prescribed for the Khalsa. It must be pointed out that the use of a fire-pit in place of the *Guru-Granth* does not make the ceremony Brahmanical. Neither the Brahman priest nor the Vedic *mantras* have anything to do with the ceremony prescribed.

Finally, there is the issue of praxis. The *Rahitnamas* are professedly normative. However, the Sikh narrative literature contains statements on actual practices. The Persian and European writers profess to provide empirical information. The European sources in the late eighteenth century affirm the practice of initiation through *pahul*, removal of sacred thread on initiation, the Akal Takht as the place where *khande ki pahul* was administered by the Akalis, the obligation to keep *kes* and beard unshorn, to add the epithet 'Singh' to the name, to bear arms (spears and matchlocks, besides *kirpan*), to wear *kachh*, preference for the blue turban or dress, and the practice of cremation, in addition to injunction against the use of tobacco and beef, mourning over death, and the practice of becoming *sati*.⁶⁹ John Malcolm writing in the first decade of the nineteenth century refers to the patterns of matrimony but not to any ceremony of marriage. He emphasizes that *pahul* was open to all classes of people, including Muslims. It was the principal institution of the Khalsa, with the obligation to keep unshorn hair, bear arms, have the epithet 'Singh' in the name, and wear blue dress. The ceremonial for baptism introduced by Guru Gobind Singh was described to Malcolm by a Sikh and it is very close to the statements made in Sikh literature.⁷⁰

On the whole, there is a considerable correspondence between the normative and empirical statements. All this gives a strong impression that the Singh Sabha advocacy of uniform Sikh rites and rituals would have been unthinkable without the legacy of the eighteenth century. There is a remarkable correspondence between the norms of Sikh rites and rituals advocated by the Sikh writers of the eighteenth century and the Sikh ceremonies advocated by the

leaders of the Singh Sabha movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Notes

1. Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 61-7.
2. W.H. McLeod, *Sikhs of the Khalsa: A History of the Khalsa Rahit*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 68-72, 83. W.H. McLeod, *Prem Sumarag: The Testimony of a Sanatan Sikh*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 3-4, 9. Subsequently, the late eighteenth century is visualized as the time of the composition of the *Prem Sumarag*: W.H. McLeod, 'Reflections on *Prem Sumarag*', *Journal of Punjab Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1 (Spring 2007), p. 124.
3. J.S. Grewal, 'The *Prem Sumarag*: A Sant Khalsa Vision of the Sikh Panth', *The Sikhs: Ideology, Institutions and Identity*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 158-65. Gurinder Singh Mann, 'Sources for the Study of Guru Gobind Singh's Life and Times', *Journal of Punjab Studies*, vol. 15, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring-Fall 2008), pp. 249-50.
4. Karamjit K. Malhotra, 'The Earliest Manual on the Sikh Way of Life', in *Five Centuries of Sikh Tradition: Ideology, Society, Politics and Culture*, (Essays for Indu Banga), ed. Reeta Grewal and Sheena Pall, New Delhi: Manohar, 2005.
5. J.S. Grewal, 'The Singh Way of Life: the *Rahitnamas*', in *History, Literature and Identity: Four Centuries of Sikh Tradition*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press (forthcoming).
6. Mann, 'Sources for the Study of Guru Gobind Singh's Life and Times', pp. 250-1. Grewal, 'The Singh Way of Life: The *Rahitnamas*' in *History, Literature and Identity* (forthcoming).
7. *Episodes from Lives of the Gurus: Parchian Sewadas*, tr. & ed. Kharak Singh and Gurtej Singh, Chandigarh: Institute of Sikh Studies, 1995.
8. Mann, 'Sources for the Study of Guru Gobind Singh's Life and Time', p. 252.
9. Madanjit Kaur, 'Koer Singh's *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*: An Eighteenth Century Sikh Literature', in *Recent Researches in Sikhism*, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1992, p. 163. Gurtej Singh, 'Compromising the Khalsa Tradition: Koer Gurbilas', in *The Khalsa: Sikh and non-Sikh Perspectives*, ed. J.S. Grewal, New Delhi: Manohar, 2004, pp. 47-58.
10. Bhai Sarup Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Sakhian*, ed. Piara Singh Padam, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1999.
11. *Shabdarath Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, 4 vols., Amritsar: Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (standard pagination), pp. 12-13, 471-3, 583. Ratan Singh Jaggi, *Guru Granth Vishavkosh* (Punjabi), 2 vols., Patiala: Punjabi University, 2002, vol. I, pp. 78-9, 241-3.

12. *Shabdarath*, pp. 917-22. Jaggi, *Guru Granth Vishavkosh*, vol. I, pp. 39-40, 100-2, 141, 212.
13. *Shabdarath*, pp. 576, 774. See also, Jaggi, *Guru Granth Vishavkosh*, vol. I, pp. 75, 463; vol II, p. 463.
14. *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, in *Sikh History from Persian Sources: Translations of Major Texts*, ed. J.S. Grewal and Irfan Habib, New Delhi: Tulika/Indian History Congress, 2001, p. 78.
15. *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, ed. Giani Hazara Singh, Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar, 1962 (7th edn.), p.105, *Var VI, pauri 3 (VI.3)*; also p. 336, XX.10. Bhai Gurdas uses the term 'mahaprasad' for the sanctified food distributed in a Sikh place of worship.
16. *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, p.4, I. 3; p.115, VI. 17; p.367, XXII. 14.
17. *Varan Bhai Gurdas: Text, Transliteration and Translation*, tr. and ed. Jodh Singh, Patiala: Vision and Venture, 1998), vol. II, p. 34. However, elsewhere in his translation, Dr Jodh Singh refers to the *gurmukh* taking the holy water touched by the feet of his companions. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 31, I, 3. *Vishavkosh*, vol. I, pp. 471-2.
18. *Dabistan-i Mazahib* in *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, p. 84, n. 65.
19. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, tr. & ed. W.H. McLeod, Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1987, p. 60.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 60, 68.
21. *Prem Sumarag Granth Arthat Khalsai Jivan Jach (Patshahi Dasvin)* (Punjabi), ed. Randhir Singh, Jalandhar: New Book Company, 1965, rpt., pp.15-59, 79-93.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
23. Sainapat, *Shri Guru Sobha* (Punjabi), ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, Amritsar: Sikh History Research Board, 1967, pp. 32-4, 42-4.
24. Kharak Singh and Gurtej Singh, tr. & ed., *Episodes from Lives of the Gurus: Parchian Sewadas*, p. 146.
25. *Hukamname: Guru Sahiban, Mata Sahiban, Banda Singh ate Khalsa ji De* (Punjabi), ed. Ganda Singh, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967, pp. 164-5. Ajit Singh Baagha, *Banur Had Orders*, Delhi: Ranjit Printers & Publishers, n.d.
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28. *Asrar-i Samadi* (anon), tr. Gurbakhsh Singh, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1972, pp. xiii, 9-10.
29. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, p. 65.
30. *Prem Sumarag*, pp. 17-18, 22-5.
31. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, p. 72.
32. *Prem Sumarag*, pp. 25-6.
33. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, p. 63.
34. *Prem Sumarag*, pp. 39-42.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-85.

36. Sainapat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, ed. Ganda Singh, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967, p. 127.
37. Nathmal, *Amarnama*, pp. 27-36, 46-9.
38. Mirza Muhammad, 'Ibratnama', in *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, p.132.
39. Muhammad Qasim Lahauri, 'Ibratnama', in *Sikh History from Persian Sources*, p. 115.
40. *The Chaupa Singh Rahitnama*, pp. 82-92.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 101-4, 109, 111-12, 114, 121.
42. Koer Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, pp. 128-9.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 186, 269-70.
44. Kesar Singh Chhibber, *Bansavalinama Dasan Patshahian ka* (Punjabi), ed., Ratan Singh Jaggi (*Parkh*, vol.II.), Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1972, pp. 97, 125-33.
45. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Guru Nanak Mahima Prakash*, ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok and Gobind Singh Lamba, Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970, vol. II., pp. 805, 825-9, 831, 892.
46. *Guru Kian Sakhian*, pp. 120-5.
47. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, pp. 34, 170-4, 177, 179-80, 182.
48. *Desa Singh Rahitnama*, in *Rahitname* (Punjabi), ed. Piara Singh Padam, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1995 (reprint), pp. 146-7.
49. *Bhai Daya Singh Rahitnama*, in *ibid.*, p. 68.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-9.
51. Charles Wilkins, 'The Sikhs and Their College at Patna' (first published in 1781), in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, ed., Ganda Singh, Calcutta: *Indian Studies: Past & Present*, 1962, pp. 74-5.
52. Colonel A.H. Polier, 'An Account of the Sikhs': first known connected account of the Sikh people written by a European' (first published in 1787), in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, p.53. George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England through Northern Parts of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Persia, and into Russia by the Caspian Sea (1782-1784)* (first published in 1808), Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970, vol.I, pp.307-9. Major James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks* (first published in 1787), in in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, pp. 18-19. John Griffiths, 'A Memorandum on the Panjab and Kandhar', in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, p.92.
53. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (first published in 1812), New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1986, pp. 44-8, 50-1, 74, 116-17, 148-9, 151.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-5.
55. [Captain Matthews], An Officer of the Bengal Army, 'A Tour to Lahore in 1808', *The Panjab Past and Present*, vol. I, pt. I-II, Patiala: Punjabi University, 1967, p. 112.
56. *Desa Singh's Rahitnama*, in Padam, *Rahitname*, pp. 129-31.
57. *Daya Singh's Rahitnama*, in *ibid.*, pp. 73-4.

58. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mahima Prakash*, vol. I, pp. 345-6.
59. Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, pp. 436, 439, 441.
60. Kaushish, *Guru Kian Sakhian*, p. 202. It may be added that Sukha Singh refers merely to the funeral pyre, *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, pp. 441-2.
61. Daya Singh's *Rahitnama*, in Padam, *Rahitname*, p. 74.
62. George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, vol. I, pp. 308-9.
63. Captain Matthews, 'A Tour to Lahore in 1808', p. 117.
64. *Sakhi Rahit Patshahi 10*, in *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, pp. 33-6.
65. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, pp. 98, 114, 130.
66. *Rahitnama Bhai Daya Singh*, in Padam, *Rahitname*, pp. 69-71-2, 74-5.
67. *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, pp. 57, 59-60, 62-4, 100, 107.
68. Apart from *The Chaupa Singh Rahit-Nama*, the *Sarab Loh Granth* refers to the three symbols of 'kachh, kirpan, kes' and 'kachh, kes, kirpan': Padam *Rahitname*, pp. 147-8. According to Gurinder Singh Mann, the earliest manuscript of *Sri Sarab Loh Granth* is dated 1698: 'Sources for the Study of Guru Gobind Singh's Life and Times', pp. 254-5.
69. 'Sicques, Tigers, or Thieves: Eyewitness Accounts of the Sikhs (1606-1809)', ed. Amandeep Singh Madra and Parmjit Singh, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, pp. 81-3, 129, 131, 141, 151, 189, 202, 228-9, 232, 296.
70. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, pp. 135, 157, 180-6.