

Double Sovereignty

Doctrine of Double Sovereignty: With the two swords of Mīrī (ਮੀਰੀ) and Pīrī (ਪੀਰੀ), this peculiar Sikh (ਸਿੱਖ) doctrine took birth, the essence of which is that a person of religion must always owe his or her primary allegiance to Truth and morality. And, that he or she must never submit to the exclusive claim of the secular state to govern bodies and minds of people. A Sikh must always pay allegiance to the laws that are just and moral. Any law created by a secular state that is unjust is to be rejected, regardless of the consequences. In order to achieve this, the Gurū (ਗੁਰੂ) has bestowed sovereignty upon his Sikhs. The whole of subsequent Sikh history must be seen as an unfolding of this Sikh attitude.

George Forester in his book, *A Journey from Bengal to England, London, 1798*, writes: “From the observation that I have made of the Sikhs, they appear to be a haughty and high-spirited people. Once I traveled in the company of a Sikh Horseman for some days, and though I made several tenders to my acquaintance, he treated them all with great reserve... His answer, when I asked him very respectfully, in whose service he was retained, seemed strikingly characteristic of what I conceive to the disposition of the Sikh Nation. He said in a tone of voice and with a countenance which glowed with and was keenly animated by the Spirit of liberty and independence, that he disclaimed an earthly master, and that he was a servant of only the Gurū on High.”

When during a conference in Ludhiānā (ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ), asked by British Charge-de-affairs, Capt. John Murray, from where did Sikhs derive this claim on earthly sovereignty, for legal sanction they had none? Bhāī Ratan Singh Bhaṅgū (ਭਾਈ ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗੂ), as articulated in Srī Gur Panth Prakāsh (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼), was quick to give him a reply:

ਧੁਰ ਦਰਗਾਹੋਂ ਹਮ ਲਈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਪਾਹੀ।
ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਏ ਰਖੇ ਕਿਮ ਕਾਨ, ਐਰੇ ਗੈਰੇ ਕਾ ਸੰਗਹਿ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ।

“The Sikhs’ right to earthly sovereignty is based on the Will of Vāhigurū (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ) as authenticated by the Gurū (ਗੁਰੂ), and therefore, all inferior sanctions are unnecessary.”

In the early 16th century, Gurū Nānak Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ) expressly described the importance of Saṅgat (ਸੰਗਤ), the company of those upon similar paths, to the Sikhs. A half a century later, the *Mañjī* (ਮੰਜੀ) system was established by Gurū Amardās Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ). This system seemed to formalize a growing strength in the Sikhs as a people. The accomplishments of committed and forthright Sikhs were also recognized by Gurū Harigobind Sāhib. He entrusted four head preachers, dhuāns, to propagate and inspire Sikhs in North and Central India. Gurū Harirāi Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਰਾਇ ਸਾਹਿਬ), Gurū Teghḥbahādar Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ਼ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ), and Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ) fortified the dhuāns by commissioning bounties. In 1699, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib entrusted the Khālsā (ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ) with the Pañj Piāre (ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਰੇ), five beloved ones. The administration of Amrit (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ) to Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib from the Pañj Piāre marked an institutional development in the role of the Panth (ਪੰਥ) that began with Gurū Nānak Sāhib. These transitions occurred over a period of 200 hundreds years and were essential, not only for the development but for the survival of Sikhs and Sikhī (ਸਿੱਖੀ).

When the Gurūs appeared in the ten forms of Nānak, antagonists presented themselves before each Gurū in many attempts to corrupt and dissolve the core of Sikhī. Today, the Khālsā stands as the embodiment of the Gurūs but has grown in number and geographic location.

Gurū Granth Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

- Compiled by Gurū Arjan Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ) in 1604 CE
- Contributors
 - *Gurūs* (ਗੁਰੂ)
 1. Gurū Nānak Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 2. Gurū Aṅgad Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 3. Gurū Amardās Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 4. Gurū Rāmdās Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 5. Gurū Arjan Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 6. Gurū Teghbahādar Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ)
 - *Bhagats* (ਭਗਤ)
 1. Bhagat Jaidev (ਭਗਤ ਜੈਦੇਵ) (b. 1170 A.D.)
 2. Sekh Pharīd (ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ) (1173-1266 A.D.)
 3. Bhagat Trilocan (ਭਗਤ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨ) (b. 1267 A.D.)
 4. Bhagat Nāmdev (ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ) (b. 1270 A.D.)
 5. Bhagat Sadhnā (ਭਗਤ ਸਧਨਾ) (b. 13th Century A.D.)
 6. Bhagat Rāmānand (ਭਗਤ ਰਾਮਾਨੰਦ) (b. 1359 A.D.)
 7. Bhagat Kabīr (ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ) (1398-1494 A.D.)
 8. Bhagat Dhannā (ਭਗਤ ਧੰਨਾ) (b. 1415 A.D.)
 9. Bhagat Pīpā (ਭਗਤ ਪੀਪਾ) (b. 1425 A.D.)
 10. Bhagat Saiṇ (ਭਗਤ ਸੈਣ) (b. 15th Century A.D.)
 11. Bhagat Ravidās (ਭਗਤ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ) (b. 15th Century A.D.)
 12. Bhagat Bhīkhaṇ (ਭਗਤ ਭੀਖਣ) (d. 1574 A.D.)
 13. Bhagat Sūrdās (ਭਗਤ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ) (b. 1529 A.D.)
 14. Bhagat Beṇī (ਭਗਤ ਬੇਣੀ) (?)
 15. Bhagat Parmānand (ਭਗਤ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ) (?)
 - Minstrels and Bards
 - Bābā Sundar (ਬਾਬਾ ਸੁੰਦਰ) (1560-1603 A.D.)
 - Satā and Balvaṇḍ (ਸਤੈ ਬਲਵੰਡ)
 - The Bhaṭṣ (ਭਟ) (court poets): at least 10
- Total numbers of hymns: 5867
- Total numbers of pages: 1430
- Total numbers of Ragas: 31

Gurū Granth Sāhib is the only scripture that includes a wide variety of saints, sages and bards, including Hindū *bhagats*, Muslim saints, and other devotees, all of which correspond with the same message as the *Gurūs* and praise Vāhigurū (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ). This affirms that the message is a universal one of all religions and a divine experience for all. All of these contributors bow down to the power of the ‘Message’. We must remember that the *Gurū* was inclusive of all the stratas of the caste system from the high to the low to the untouchable, during a time when the caste system was the way of life and demoralized people. **Why do you think Gurū Arjan Sāhib included other religion’s bāpī? What significance is it to include different classes of the caste system?**