

Thousands of people of Dillī came to have *darshan* (ਦਰਸ਼ਨ) (holy sight) of the *Gurū*. The sick were healed and those in distress were comforted at the very sight of the holy Master.

The Emperor sent presents at the arrival of the *Gurū* and expressed a wish to see him but the invitation was refused.

On the instruction of Emperor Aurangzeb, Rājā Jai Singh agreed to test the *Gurū* whether he possessed any superhuman power. His head queen dressed like a maid servant and sat among other maid servants and queens. The *Gurū* was requested to identify the head queen (Rāṇī - ਰਾਣੀ) which he immediately did. Upon this Rājā Jai Singh and his queens acknowledged the *Gurū*'s spiritual power.

Cholera and small-pox were raging fiercely in Dillī at that time. The *Gurū* went through the city, healing the sick and providing them with hope and inspiration. Food, medicine and clothes were distributed among the poor and the sick.

Shortly after the above incident, the *Gurū* was seized with high fever which was followed by small-pox. His mother sat by him and pleaded, “My son, why are you intent on your death? You have only lately been seated on the *Gurū*'s throne, you are still a child, and it is too soon for you to depart.” The *Gurū* replied, “Be not anxious. My safety is in Divine Will. Almighty is the reaper of the crop; it is within Divine pleasure, and sometimes Almighty reaps it while it is still green, half-green and sometimes when it is ripe. The Creator will do what is best.”

The *Gurū* was ill for several days. He knew his end had arrived and said, “Bābā Bakālē (ਬਾਬਾ ਬਕਾਲੇ),” which meant that his successor would be found at village of Bakālā (ਬਕਾਲਾ). He then breathed his last on 30 March, 1664. His body was cremated on the bank of river Jamuna where now stands the Gurduārā Bālā Sāhib (ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਬਾਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ).

Adapted from <http://www.allaboutsikhs.com/gurus/guruHarikrishan.htm>

Reading

Vār (ਵਾਰ)

The word *Vār* comes from Sanskrit (संस्कृत), in which, it is referred to as *Vāri* (ਵਾਰੀ), the brave and *Vairī* (ਵੈਰੀ), the enemy, or in other words, one side striking and the other defending. In the Pañjābī (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) language, the word *Vār* has several different meanings such as: to strike, to attack, war, to surround in a war situation, to stop, to defend, to sacrifice, repetition, to close a door, days of the week, to praise, etc. *Vār* is a well-known form of Pañjābī poetry as well. Due to its popularity with the common folk and its authenticity, Gurū Nānak Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ) along with other *Gurūs* utilized it as a medium to convey their message. Even though this poetic form is included in, and identified with folk songs, it still stands out independently and maintains its own importance. Bards (ਢਾਢੀ) usually performed these *Vārs*. The typical theme in these *Vārs* was of battles and dynastic feuds, of issues of honor fought at the point of the sword and of romantic love.

The *Gurūs* employed this particular form, as opposed to *Kisse* (ਕਿੱਸੇ) or *Jaṅgnāme* (ਜੰਗਨਾਮੇ). In a typical *Kissā*, the theme is of man against society and if man doesn't get what he wants, namely his beloved, then he rejects all of society. In a *Jaṅgnāmā*, there is a description and details of a battle, one side either wins or loses and that's the end of it. In a *Vār*, however, the battle between the opposing forces is endless. Even after one side has conquered the other, the fight still continues. The theme in the *Vārs* of the *Gurūs* is to take the worldly, social perspectives and utilize them in a manner that they can be used to understand the nature of spiritual experience. In this manner, through spiritual experience, the battle with the worldly attachment, *Māiā* (ਮਾਇਆ) and the five *vikārs* (ਵਿਕਾਰ) (*kām* - ਕਾਮ, *krodh* - ਕ੍ਰੋਧ, *lobh* - ਲੋਭ, *moh* - ਮੋਹ and *ahankār* - ਅਹੰਕਾਰ) ensues. The *Vār* describes the internal conflict and confrontation among the attributes of a *Gurmukh* (ਗੁਰਮੁਖ) and a *Manmukh* (ਮਨਮੁਖ) and through this insight of the spiritual doctrine, guidance is given to the individual. Typically, *Vārs* are composed in the form of *paūrīs* (ਪਉੜੀ). Gurū Arjan Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ) during the compilation of the Gurū Granth Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ) added *saloks* (ਸਲੋਕ) of the first four *Gurūs* to the *paūrīs* of the *Vārs* (those not composed by him) and later it is said Gurū Harigobind Sāhib added a regional tune to each *Vār*.

Adapted from <http://www.sikh-heritage.co.uk/arts/musicPunjab/Music%20of%20Punjab.htm>

Dhādhī (ਢਾਢੀ)

Another distinct group, which emerged in the age of the *Gurūs*, was the *Dhādhīs* (named for the small drum, *Dhād* - ਢਡ, which accompanied their songs). Gurū Harigobind Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ) fostered these singers. While *Marāsīs* (ਮਰਾਸੀ), also singers, were Muslims, *Dhādhīs* were not confined to a particular religious affiliation. *Sūfī* (ਸੂਫੀ) *Dhādhīs* sang in praise of a Divine Beloved while Sikh *Dhādhīs* specialized in martial ballads called *Vārs*. The *Sūfī* *Dhādhīs* usually performed at the *Mazārs* of saints and at *Melās* (ਮੇਲਾ) and festivals while the Sikh *Dhādhīs* sang mainly at the *Gurduārās* (ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ). In modern Pañjāb (ਪੰਜਾਬ), both *Sūfī* and Sikh *Dhādhīs* are still very much part of the musical scene.

The *Dhādhīs* are an integral part of Gurmat Saṅgīt (ਗੁਰਮਤ ਸੰਗੀਤ). Gurū Nānak Sāhib himself used to call himself a *Dhādhī* of Vāhigurū (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ).

At the command of Gurū Harigobind Sāhib, the *Dhādhīs* refined their repertoire. Their songs came to deal exclusively with tales of heroism and valor and they accompanied the armies of the *Gurū* and sang to hearten the men and women. Two *Dhādhīs* of that age are still remembered by name: they were Bhāi Nāthā (ਭਾਈ ਨਥਾ) and Bhāi Abdullah (ਭਾਈ ਅਬਦੁੱਲਾਹ). The latter was a gifted poet and sang his own compositions in the *Gurū's* court. These inspiring songs have come down through the ages. However, it must be noted that the singing of *Vārs* (as these heroic ballads are called) has changed over the centuries. The *Dhādhīs* once sang only verses from the Gurū Granth Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ); the contemporary *Dhādhīs* repertoire has broadened to include many kisse and romances.

Some literary forms that are in Gurū Granth Sahib are: Ghoṛīā (ਘੋੜੀਆ), Chant (ਛੰਤ), Vār Sat (ਵਾਰ ਸਤ), Thitī (ਥਿਤੀ), Rutī (ਰੁਤੀ), Bārah Māhā (ਬਾਰਹ ਮਾਹਾ), Karhale (ਕਰਹਲੇ), Vaṇjārā (ਵਣਜਾਰਾ), Birhārē (ਬਿਰਹੜੇ), Alāhaṇīā (ਅਲਾਹਣੀਆ), Añjulī (ਅੰਜੁਲੀ), Sad (ਸਦ), Pahare (ਪਹਰੇ), Din-Raiṇī (ਦਿਨ ਰੈਣਿ), Vār (ਵਾਰ) and Sohilā (ਸੋਹਿਲਾ).

Adapted from: Sikh Research Institute's Poetic Forms Paper



Sikh *Dhādhī jathā* performing inside a *Gurudwārā*



Des Rāj Lakhane (ਦੇਸ ਰਾਜ ਲਖਨੇ) - *Sūfī Dhādhīs*