THINK INDIA JOURNAL

ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

The Form of Guru in the Sanctum Recorded in Sri Guru Granth Sahib

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The Guru has been of great importance in Indian culture since the beginning. This word denotes a specific concept. The popular meaning of Guru is "to teach". The word "Guru" is the combination of two words "Gu"+"Ru". "Gu-" means darkness and "-Ru" means darkness eliminator. So, the literal meaning of Guru is "enlighter". According to the encyclopedia of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, the word "Guru" has been taken from Sanskrit language. This word has been derived from root word "Gree" signifying "swallowing and making someone understand". The words "Gur", "Guru" and "Guru Shabd" in Gurbani have been usedin the same way. It means "religious message and the priest who preaches".

In Indian Religious literature, the great amount of importance has been paid to the concept of Guru. With the evolution of Bhakti movement, there have been changes in the nature of Guru. According to Indus Valley civilization, people were led by the monks practicing "yoga". In Vedic period, Rishis and Munis enjoyed the repute of being called Guru. Purohits worshipping Brahma in Upnishad age were considered as Gurus. Mahatama Buddha in Buddhism, Teerthankara in Jainism and ShriKrishan in Bhagvad Gita, Ascetics possessing the knowledge of "yoga", Experienced intellectual persons in Saints' tradition have all been accepted as Guru. In Sufism, prophets, apostles have been given the status of Guru.

The concept of "Guru" in Sri Guru Grantha Sahib is closely associated with Indian Guru tradition. Dr. Darshan Singh in his book "Guru GranthaBanivich Guru da Sankalp", states the three variants of Guru in Guru Grantha Sahib:

1. The supreme form of Guru
2. The human form of Guru
3. The word form of Guru

In Gurmat tradition in opposition to Indian Guru tradition, the status of Guru has not been given to any human. Contrary to the body form of Guru, only the knowledge of the Almighty and Almighty himself has been accepted as Guru. Guru is the one who possesses the knowledge by experience and approximation. The God himself is Guru. This is because He expresses himself in the mystic experience into the human soul through words. Gurmat tradition emphasizes on God as Guru. The humans having flow of divine qualities in themselves become forms of Guru. Shabd Form of Guru means knowledge. In "Siddh-Goshti" bani by Guru Nanak DevJi, replying to the ascetics has given the supreme place of Guru to the "knowledge of Shabd". He says:

Pavanaarambhsatgur mat vela

Shabd guru surtdhun chela||

"Rehtnama" in GianiGian Singh's book "Shri Guru PanthPrakash" manifests the fact that Guru Gobind Singh had given Sri Guru Grantha Sahib the status of Shabd Guru. He proves it by quoting lines from a doha by Guru Gobind Singh:

Sabhsikhnkohukamhai

Guru maneyogranth||

The above statements prove the fact that Guru is giver of knowledge. Guru is not any human but a soul dissolved in the God replacing ignorance and enlightens the mind. Guru is a form of God who has gained higherintellectual level and propagates His message through Shabd. Guru is a soul who enlightens others by travelling from abstract into concrete through Shabd. Hence, Bani is Guru.

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

This essay focuses on the concept of Guru in the sanctum "Swayiye" recorded in Sri Guru Grantha Sahib. This research paper has the limitation of discussing the limited scope of the concept of Guru in its mystic form only. "Swayiye" of Guru ArjanDevJi and Bhatts are recorded in Sri Guru Grantha Sahib. Swayiye is a poetic meter (quatrain). Swayiye is a form of expression abiding by all the rules of structure, quality, pause, punctuation creates rhythm. In Chhand-Shastra, on the basis of words, stress and syllables, there are two types of meters. Swayiya is usually of two types. Every quatrain has the same rhyming scheme at its end. If not so, at least two lines should follow the same rhyming. Every quatrain must have 31 or 32 syllables. Varnik meter in Gurmat tradition has 4 parts. It has to have rhyme scheme as compulsory. Guru Grantha Sahib has both types of "Swayiye". Swayiya is the only meter that is used in both Varnik and Matrik forms. Swayiya is the most prominent element of a quatrain. Swayiya may have 4 or more parts. MatrikSwayiya has been used extensively in Sri Guru Grantha Sahib. MatrikSwayiya has 31 syllables, there is a pause after 16 syllables and the next is after 15 syllables. According to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha's Encyclopedia,

"Swayiya is the widely accepted Chhand with many names has two main types- Matrik and Varnik. MatrikSwayiya must have rhyming at the end of all 4 parts, if not so, then at least 2 parts must have alliterative meter."

Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha has mentioned many names of SwayiyaChhand in his Encyclopedia. According to him, Swayiya has Bir, Bann, Somya, Dant Kala, Mlind, Smaal, Drumila, Lalit, Madira, Shatgyand, Chakor, Arsaat, Ramay, Dumil, Sundri, RatanmalikaKiritkundlta, Dhurdhuni, Manoj, Manidhaar, Gangadhar, Utkonn, Sundrivaam, Matakeeg, Aabhark, Sukhmi, Karoch, Balna, Lavanglata, Sarvgaami, Saarda, etc. as its names, but not so frequently used.

Swayiye have been recorded in Guru Grantha Sahib from page 1385 to 1409 in poetic form. Under the same title, 20 Swayiye composed by Sri Guru ArjanDevJi and 123 composed by 11Bhatts have been recorded. These do not have their own name as "Bhatta'n de Swayiye", but, during the editing, have been compiled and rewritten by Guru ArjanDevJi under the name "SwayiyeMahlaPehleke", "SwayiyeMahlaDujeke", "SwayiyeMahlaTeejeke", "SwayiyeMahlaChautheke' and "SwayiyeMahlaPanjveke'. He recorded his own written Swayiye under the title of "ShriMukhVaakMahla: Panjva". Bhatts made use of other Chhands like Sortha and Jhoolna in their writings also. But, due to the large proportion of Swayiye, these works have famously been known as "Bhatta'n de Swayiye". These are in the form of quatrain, sestet, septet and octave stanzas. Breaking away from the ShastriSroop, this SwayiyaChhand has extensively been used for conveying the meaning prior to anything else.

Swayiye composed by Guru ArjanDevJi under the title of "ShriMukhVaakMahla: Panjva" have been recorded in two parts from page 1385 to 1389. In the first part, there are 9 Swayiye and 11 Swayiye have been recorded in the second part. The rest of 123 Swayiye written by 11 Bhatts have been recorded on the page 1389 to 1409. Among these 54 by Bhatt Kal'haar, 5 by Bhatt Jaalp, 8 by Bhatt Kirat, 2 by Bhatt Bhikha, 3 by Bhatt Mall, 1 by Bhatt Bhal, 16 by Bhatt Nal, 13 by Bhatt Gyand, 5 by Bhatt Ball and 2 Swayiye have been composed by Bhatt Haribans.Bhatt Kal'haar had wriiten his Swayiye in praise of five Guru Sahibans. He wrote 10 Swayiye for MahlaPehla, 10 for forMahlaDuja, 9 for MahlaTeeja, 13 for MahlaChautha 12 Swayiye for MahlaPanjva. Bhatt Jaalp had written 5 Swayiye for MahlaTeeja only. Bhatt Kirat wrote 4 and 5 Swayiye for MahlaTeeja and Chautha. Bhatt Bhikha composed 2 Swayiye for MahlaTeeja. Bhatt Mall wrote 1 Swayiya for MahlaTeeje and 2 for MahlaChautha. Bhatt Bhal had written 1 Swayiya in praise of MahlaTeeja. Bhatt Nal wrote 16 Swayiya for MahlaChautha. Bhatt Gyand had written 13 Swayiye for MahlaChautha. Bhatt Mathura wrote 7 for MahlaChautha and 7 Swayiye for MahlaPanjva. Bhatt Bal wrote 5 Swayiye for MahlaChautha whereas Bhatt Haribans had wriiten 2 Swayiye for MahlaPanjva. Bhatt Kal'haar had written 54 Swayiye and as many as 60 Swayiye had been composed in praise of MahlaChautha.

During the compilation of Guru GranthSahib, Guru ArjanDevJi made use of various compositionpatterns. There is invocation used in complete as well as partial manner. Complete

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

invocation to invoke an entirely new concept and partial invocation just to discuss sub –categories of the same topic to create links among the two has been used in Guru Grantha Sahib.

Swayiye are mainly a form of admiration of Guru who is qualitatively equivalent to God. As a whole, there has been the mention of oneness of God and Guru in practical. The complete bani of Guru Grantha Sahib is just in praise of omniscient God and his godliness.The fundamental purpose of Swayiya is also the same. Shri Guru ArjanDevji in the first part of his Swayiye, praises the Guru form of Guru Nanak Devji.

Jan Nanak bhagatdartul, brahmsamsr

Ekjeekiabakhanae||

Ha kebalbal, balbal sad balihaari||

The four Swayiye in the beginning praise the Guru form of Guru Nanak Devji. He is the omniscient form of God. He himself has created the universe and is present in every particle of it. Possessing the godlike qualities, Nanak is also a form of God.

Shri Guru ArjanDevji in Swayiye 5,6,7 and 8, has praised Nanak for his knowledge of the Universe due to which the expansion of knowledge about it beyond human's materialistic thinking has been possible. God who was earlier considered of being beyond the human world manifests himself in man's consciousness. Guru Nanak has made it possible for human to gain this consciousness while living in this world.

Amritharikonamulait,mannsabh such paye,

Jehrasnchakheyotehjantriptaghaaye||

Jeh Thakur suprasannbhuyo, satsangatitehpiyaar||

Harigur Nanak jinparseyo tin sabhkulkioudhaar||

In 9thSwayiya, Guru sahib has described the inclusiveness of Guru and God. Guru is that darkness eliminator through whom the transcendence from the world is possible.

Baliochraagandhermahi,

Sabhkuludhari, ikkNaam Dharma||

Pargatsagalharibhawanmahi,

Jan Nanak guru paar brahma||

There has been partial invocation in the beginning of the second part which further explains the Swayiye of the first part. These Swayiye are based on practicality of philosophical concepts of God in the form of praise in various situations to dissolve into God after life. A man can gain transcendence by getting rid of evils of the materialistic world.

Deendayalpurkhprabhpuran

Chhinchhinsimrahuagamaparahu||

Shripatinath, sarnn Nanak jan, haibhagwant, kirpakrtarahu||

Bin Haribhajansagaldukhpaavt

Jyoprembadhayesoot kehtua

Poojachakr kart sompaka

Anikbhatikhatahikarkhtua||

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

Bhatts composed their writings (Swayiye) in praise of God in continuation with the concept of Guru in Gurmat tradition alongwith the practical explanation of philosophical institutions. They through their bani were not worshipping the Guru as an individual but the "light of knowledge" in him shining through his body. It becomes evident that Bhatts were not any simple poets but their thinking was of so high level that when they met Guru sahibans, all their desires of intellect came to an end and they also became curious to experience the eternal bliss through Guru sahibans. They have discussed extensively about the oneness of God and Guru in their Sawayiye.

Bhatts established Gurmat's Guru tradition separate from Indian Guru tradition. In Indian Guru tradition, Gurus sacrificed all worldly desires and belonging started practicing the asceticism whereas in Gurmat tradition, Bhatts showed Gurus enjoying the materialistic possessions as well as enjoying the eternal bliss bestowed upon them by God. Guru Nanak Devji while living the life of worldly belongings achieves unification with God and tells other people to follow the same practice:

Gavheindrahibhagatprehalidikaatmrasjinjaneyo

Kabkalsujasgavho Guru Nanak raj jog jinmaneyo||

Bhatts have shown the form of God who is free from time and is omnipresent in every phase of time. Bhatt Kal'haar in his Swayiye has shown all Rishi, Muni, Inder, Prahilaad, Jankaavi, Yogi, Siddh, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, Rama, Kans, Saints and Bhakats singing in praise of Guru Nanak Devji. This is the uniqueness of Bhatt bani.They have described the eternal truth of Guru from the primordial times to the end. They have talked about the individual forms of Guru in all times. They say:

Satyugtraemaneyochhleyobalbannbhayyo||

Traetetraemaneyo Rama raghuvanskahayeo||

DuapruKrishanmurariKanskirtarthkio||

The above described form of Guru is present in all times. Bhatt Kal'haar had seen Guru Nanak in every time. This description approves of the firmness of Gurmat's "EkOnkar" principle. They have celebrated the blissful experience of knowledge in every particle of each time exposed to them by God through Guru. This form of Guru they discussed exposes people to such universal experiences by achieving what man can transcend this physical world.

In Bhatts' bani, the inclusiveness of Guru and Brahma comes out inevitably. Guru Nanak Devji got enlightenment through divine bliss. Therefore, the soul of almighty expressed itself through his heart. BhaiLehnaji also got enlightenment through Guru. All the Gurus received enlightenment in the same way. The concept of Guru gets affirmation through Bhatts' bani. Guru is that bliss through whom every man himself becomes Guru.

Jotiroophariaape Guru Nanak kahayeo

Ta teAngadbhayio tat sio tat milayo

Angadkirpadhaar Amar satgurthirkiyio

Amardassamratchhatt Guru Raamhediyio

Guru Ramdassdarshan pars keh Mathura bayan

Mooratpanchparmannpurkh Guru Arjanpikh'hunayan||

Bhatts depict Guru as a power which can win over the whole world. Guru is the one who does not get affected from anything, the one who always lives the state of 'Anand' and achieves 'moksh'.

"Guru always celebrates the ecstatic state because he stays in touch with God, everytime. He eliminates the darkness of ignorance and enlightens the intellect."

Bhatts emphasizing on the importance of Guru call him a pilot who takes them off beyond the world safely:

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ISSN:0971-1260
Vol-22- Issue-14-December-2019

Su kahutalgurseviyae

Ahinissehajsubhaye

Darsanparsiyae Guru kae

Janammarandukhjaaye||

One has to acquire the qualities of Guru to enjoy his bliss. Guru through meditation absorbs the godlike qualities. One who gets the light inside him enlightened by the Guru, he becomes one. That person starts celebrating the God inside him. He becomes the bearer of His light.

Guru propagates knowledge through shabd. The ones who understand the Guru, get wisdom. They live in the company of truth. They receive ecstasy. Bhatts laid more emphasis on Guru's knowledge and Guru's meditation. These two things unite many minds to that supreme Mind.

Guru gyaanardhyan tat sio tat milavae

Sachisachujaniyaeik chit liv lavae

Kaamkrodh vas kraepavanudantnadhavae

Nirankarkae vase des hukambujhbivhaarpavae

Kalmaahiroopkartapurkh so jannaejinkichhkiyio

GurmiliyosoiBhikhakahaesahaj rang darsandiyio||

From the discussion of Bhatts' bani above, it becomes clear that they listened to what Guru Nanak DevJi, Guru AngadDevJi, Guru Amardassji, Guru Ramdassji and Guru ArjanDevji said. They got the bliss of eternal and enjoyed the ecstatic state by meditating and finally became one with Guru himself and sung in his praise. Bhatts were very learned men of Hindu History and Mythology. Even then, they wrote about and explainedGurmat concepts. Their contribution in making people aware about the oneness of "light of Guru" is noteworthy.

On scrutinizing the Sawayiyebani recorded in Sri Guru Grantha Sahib, it becomes evident that Swayiye is an exemplary new form of expression of gratitude and admiration. These compositions make people suspicious to think of being in admiration of body form of individual Gurus in person, but, they are in fact, in praise of status of Guru in Gurmattradion. Motivational effect is chief in Guru ArjanDevji's "Swayiye". He sung these in praise of Guru in the form of Guru Nanak Devji. Based on Guru Nanak's life, he composed these verses to emphasize on the importance of Guru in him and to praise the "Naam" of God which is the prominent element ofGurbani as a whole. Bhatts'bani is also based on these same patterns. They also laid stress on significance of Guru by taking examples from Guru sahibans' lives. Swayiye are intellectual writings far beyond the praise of any person. These verses serve to give base to humans' life. Leading the human life, one can fill the gap between material life and blissful life blessed by God through practicing teachings preached by Gurus. The only motive of these verses "Swayiye" is to help in the implementation of the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev into practical life.

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