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Creation of Khalsa: Socio-historical background

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Abstract

Guru Gobind is the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. He was just nine years old when his father Guru Teg Bahadur was martyred in Delhi. No doubt the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur had a profound effect on Guru Gobind Singh, but at the same time such fearful behavior of the Sikhs present at the place of Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom in Delhi that none of them came forward to take the holy body of Guru Teg Bahadur for cremation also forced Guru Sahib to think on the lines of creation of an identity to the Sikhs, and from there arose a thought of creation of Khalsa in his mind. As none of the upper class Sikhs came forward, finally a Lubana Sikh, accompanied by some persons of his own caste, came forward for this noble cause and took Guru Sahib's body in his chariot to his hut, avoiding the sight of the Mughal guards posted by the Mughal government, which was located outside the city of Delhi. The hut was set on fire along with all the household items, thus the Lubana Sikh cremated the body of Guru Sahib. Cremation inside the hut, including household items, was meant to show the general public that the house was on fire. On the other hand, the head of Guru Teg Bahadur was taken by a Rangreta Sikh named Bhai Jaita] to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur Sahib, where the head was cremated. The behavior of the Sikhs present during the above two incidents greatly impressed Guru Gobind Singh, as only the Sikhs present at the trial and martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur had shown their religious maturity. Despite the presence of many Sikhs, they did not come forward to retrieve the martyred body of Guru Teg Bahadur for fear of the Mughal government.

Keywords: Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh, Anandpur Sahib, martyrdom, Guru Teg Bahadur

Introduction

Guru Gobind is the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. He was just nine years old when his father Guru Teg Bahadur was martyred in Delhi. No doubt the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur had a profound effect on Guru Gobind Singh, but at the same time such fearful behavior of the Sikhs present at the place of Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom in Delhi that none of them came forward to take the holy body of Guru Teg Bahadur for cremation also forced Guru Sahib to think on the lines of creation of an identity to the Sikhs, and from there arose a thought of creation of Khalsa in his mind ^[1]. As none of the upper class Sikhs came forward, finally a *Lubana* Sikh, accompanied by some persons of his own caste, came forward for this noble cause and took Guru Sahib's body in his chariot to his hut, avoiding the sight of the Mughal guards posted by the Mughal government, which was located outside the city of Delhi. The hut was set on fire along with all the household items, thus the Lubana Sikh cremated the body of Guru Sahib. Cremation inside the hut, including household items, was meant to show the general public that the house was on fire. On the other hand, the head of Guru Teg Bahadur was taken by a *Rangreta* Sikh named Bhai Jaita ^[2] to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur Sahib, where the head was cremated. The behavior of the Sikhs present during the above two incidents greatly impressed Guru Gobind Singh, as only the Sikhs present at the trial and martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur had shown their religious maturity. Despite the presence of many Sikhs, they did not come forward to retrieve the martyred body of Guru Teg Bahadur for fear of the Mughal government ^[3].

These incidents made Guru Gobind Singh aware of the fear in minds of Sikhs' and the threat of Sikhs' faith slipping away from the Sikhism. He felt that all this was a cause of lack of distinct religious identity till the time of Guru Teg Bahadur, due to which Sikhs' present at the time of Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom chose to remain silent ^[4] for fear of the Mughal government and even the government official couldn't recognize them. Guru Gobind Singh decided to allay the fears of the Sikhs that in the future he would make it impossible for the Sikhs to conceal their identities ^[5].

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Instead, they will give the Sikhs such uniqueness that the Guru's Sikh will be seen standing in the thousands ^[6]. Guru Gobind Singh decided to study epic literature (Mahabharata, Ramayana) in depth in view of the need of the hour, putting literary work at the forefront of the task of rebuilding the Sikh community. Guru Sahib was a great scholar and proficient in many languages such as Braj, Persian, Arabic, Gurumukhi script and Sanskrit ^[7]. He was regarded and honored as men of letters. Such a training was arranged by his dad Guru Teg Bahadur in his adolescence. He was fond of letters as of activity in arms and military strategies. He insightfully got a control on information of numerous types, and showed a high ideal and a grand soul. Following his progression, he announced the formation of new religion-Khalsa ^[8]. He intended to make a hero soul just as well as a soul inclined towards learning. He embraced to stir his supporters to another life, and to provide for the wide and general organizations of Nanak a point of precision ^[9]. Simultaneously, he formulated intends to give a perpetual and endless balance to his plans. He asked pandit, Ragnath, to teach Sanskrit to Sikhs, yet he declined on the ground that, being individuals from low positions, they were suspended from the advantage of such training. The Guru was then annoyed from the forecast that sooner rather than later those alleged low positions will become educators of Vedas and Shastras to upper castes ^[10]. He sent five Sikhs in 1685 A.D., in pretense of Brahmcharies to Benars to learn Sanskrit in the Sanskrit Foundation there. They returned to Anandpur in 1695 A.D. filled in as educators to Sikhs. As referenced by Guru Gobind Singh in his incomplete autobiography "Bachittar Natak", he was capable in different dialects as well as different martial arts. That is why he used the knowledge he gained from studying literature for the purpose of religious warfare. During this literary work, Guru Gobind Singh translated old stories of Indian heroines which he met in Purana, Mahabharata, Ramayana, and in this work he also employed twenty-two poets ^[11]. In the wake of ascending the throne, Guru Gobind Singh went through the initial ten years at Anandpur Sahib. During this time the Guru originally created some Bani like Akal Ustat. From the earliest starting point of "Akal Ustat" Guru Ji has portrayed God as "Sarbloh" and "Sarv Kaal", and simultaneously stressed that such a Divine being is my everlasting defender. In "Akal Ustat", Guru Gobind Singh expounded on God that He is available all over and is the everlasting help of the whole way across the limits of various races, dialects, positions and continents ^[12]. The Guru preached a common sermon for the welfare of humanity and disapproved the various religious superstitions followed by Hindus and Muslims ^[13]. In connecting the strict split among Hindus and Muslims, Guru Gobind Singh specifies in the Akal Ustat that there is no contrast between the love in the sanctuary and namaz in the mosque of the two religions, nor is there any distinction in the Dehra (Sanctuary) and Masjid (Mosque), both are equal ^[14]. All people are one however they will in general look many. Tending to people diversely with classification like God, Demon, Yaksha, Gadhra, Muslim, Hindu and so forth is aftereffect of impact of better places and garbs, everybody of them has same eyes, a similar body and same ability to talk and every one of them are made of the earth, air, fire and water. Allah, given to no particular dress as said in Quran, and Brahma depicted in Purans are something very similar. Guru Gobind Singh said that the entire humanity

ought to be perceived as one ^[15]. These early works of Gobind Singh demonstrated that they were not straying from Guru Nanak's teachings of general humanism and one God. Guru Nanak needed each individual to mirror the characteristics of a definitive reality, for example, being valiant and having animosity towards none as cherished in the *mool-mantra* in light of the fact that in Sikhism a fine combination among profound and social qualities is affectionate. Guru Gobind Singh was propelling the way of thinking of Guru Nanak ^[16]. Guru Gobind Singh's perspectives in Akal Ustat compared to those of Guru Nanak's preaching's. During this time, Guru Sahib deciphered the "Chandi Charitra" recorded in the 'Markande Purana' from Sanskrit into the Braj language and numerous significant Persian and Sanskrit books were likewise converted into Bhasa, the vernacular of the country to re-empower and move the Indian masses ^[17].

Afterward, Guru Gobind Singh additionally interpreted Bhai Nand Lal Mogha's creation "Bandaginama" and named it "Zindaginama" ^[18]. Guru Gobind Singh's Bani is scant in Punjabi yet Chandi di War is an illustration of him being depicted as a saint who dispenses with evil and wipes out different devils. Guru Gobind Singh, during his artistic arrangements, was enormously dazzled by the possibility that God sent different defenders into the world, whose work was to ensure reality and kill evil. Guru Gobind Singh likewise considered himself to be a defender. It is likewise depicted in Bachittar Natak that Guru Sahib felt that he too required time ^[19]. God has sent them to lecture reality, to enable the great and to kill the terrible. However, despite this acknowledgment, he was completely mindful that the Sikhs may succumb to Hindu customs and not think about him as God. Hence, he attested to the Sikhs that he was just an individual and that if the Sikhs gave him the situation with God, it would be the specific inverse of religion. Behind this load of scholarly works, Guru Gobind Singh's point was to impart boldness in the powerless and scared, furthering the work of revival of the Sikh Nation ^[20]. Guru Gobind Singh, fully intent on rousing the Sikhs' and setting them up to battle against persecution, yet the Guru was not the slightest bit a war hawk as it was sufficiently clear when he further explained his central goal as the battle for triumph of ethical quality and truth over wickedness and foul play by advancing the exemplary nature and killing of the wicked ^[21], composed this writing simultaneously as Guru Gobind Singh. Keeping in mind the future repercussions, Guru Gobind Singh paid attention to the physical fitness of Sikhs as well, in addition to making them mentally mature ^[22]. He encouraged the Sikhs to engage in all kinds of physical sports or exercises such as horse riding, archery and swordsmanship, etc., where he encouraged his Sikhs to participate ^[23]. A large drum was made and named *Ranjit Nagara* and it was played every morning and evening ^[24]. After it sounded in the evening, Guru Gobind Singh would go hunting with the Sikhs. The daily playing of the *Ranjit Nagara* was a symbol of Guru Gobind Singh's growing power and popularity. A new power was being transmitted within Sikhism. Continuing in this line, Guru Gobind Singh sent orders to the Sikh community to offer arms instead of paying dasvandh ^[25]. Progressively the biennial social affair of Sikhs at the Guru's Darbar on the event of Vaisakhi and Diwali expanded step by step. In 1684, the establishment of Anandpur Sahib was set down, which steadily turned into the origination of the Khalsa and focus point of Sikhism ^[26].

Because of the expanding number of Sikhs in Anandpur Sahib, the hill chiefs got terrified and attempted to stop the developing Sikhs' of Guru Gobind Singh, which prompted Guru going into battle with the hill chiefs. Indeed, even the hill chiefs were desirous of Guru Gobind Singh's developing power [27]. The hill chiefs under the authority of Bhim Chand, the leader of Kahilur state, Hindus to put forth a joint attempt to crush and oust the Sikhs and Guru Gobind Singh from their states [28]. Therefore they all, at the top of an enormous armed force assaulted Panta where the Guru then, at that point was. Simultaneously they paid off the band of 500 Pathans on the proposal of Pir Budhu Shah, enlisted from the Mughal armed force into his military utilized in 1685 A.D. in intrigue with them, proposed to fall on the Guru's depository. In any case, the Guru learnt of treason, where upon the Pathans abandoned him and join the invader [29]. It was during this assault that Guru Gobind Singh, a similar Pathan troopers likewise left Guru Gobind Singh and joined the hill chiefs. Aside from the Pathans, 500 Udasis who had for some time been taking care of upon the pay of the Guru in like manner abandoned him [30]. The Guru presently had scarcely 2500 horse and infantry experience the adversary, and established himself on the banks of the Jamna at around 5 to 6 KM from Paonta. Pir Budu Shah of Sandhuara, having known about the traitorousness of the Pathans who he had suggested for selection, joined the Guru at the head of 2000 disciples and his four sons [31]. This fight was battled at Bhangani's place in 1687 A.D. in which Guru Gobind Singh dispensed a devastating loss on the hill chiefs [32]. The Sikhs sought after them with substantial and got back with colossal goods and prizes of war. The Guru gives clear record of the battle in the Bachitar Natak and portrays how ability and boldness were shown by Sikhs fighters on that occasion [33]. The administrations of every one of the individuals who battled for the Guru were appropriately rewarded [34]. The Pir was given honor, half of the Guru's turban as a sign of differentiation and 5000 rupees for his men in the acknowledgment of their services [35]. The Pir's relatives are regarded and respected by the Sikhs and will at any point deserve that admiration as long as Sikhism lasts [36]. After the battle of Bhangani, Guru Gobind Singh got back to Anandpur in 1689, where he made four forts, Lohgarh, Kesgarh and Fatehgarh. It was at Anandpur that Guru Sahib started to frame the Sikh armed force since he had seen that hired soldiers couldn't be trusted and nobody else could be trusted [37]. After some time, the hill chiefs got into a squabble with the Mughal government over the land revenue, in which hill chiefs would not pay full amount to the Mughal government. They needed to pay by portions, while the govt. officials forced to pay the whole [38]. When frustrated the hill chiefs' requested help from Guru and got troops from Him, whereupon the magnificent powers were steered and some Hill Rajas who favored them were killed and wounded [39]. Guru Gobind Singh battled for the help of the hill realms, overcoming the Mughal general Alf Khan [40]. However when the instance of hill chief with the revenue assortments, was chosen they consented to give up to the Mughal government, yet a military was point by point from Lahore to stifle the Guru [41]. The Mughal powers drove the Sikhs from Anandpur and looting the town, settled at the town of Bhalan, around 5 to 6 K.M. from the town. During the night the Guru made a brilliant assault at scattered the magnificent power with weighty loss [42]. When the information on this catastrophe arrived at Lahore, the

Mughal *subbedar* proposed to send another unit of troops to Anandpur, however wanted to desert that idea [43]. Shockingly, same hill chiefs therefore requested expense of the land involved by Khalsa at Anandpur, while a similar had effectively been paid by Guru Teg Bahadur at the hour of foundation of the city [44]. Whatever the reasons or results of the above battles may have been yet after these battles Guru Gobind Singh probably understood that individuals who are caught in superstitions, rigid customs and castes don't meet up for public welfare issues over contrasts. Since there was no common solidarity among them except for they were separated based on caste, creed and ethnicity [45]. Notwithstanding their social tumbling off and good just as martial spirit, the Hindus had gotten polytheistic and barbarians, while the mountain dwellers were firm believers in goddesses or deities. The priests encouraged the faith with legendary stories. Since Guru Gobind Singh had attempted the raising of the martial spirit among his devotees, and hence, setting up new order of Khalsa and arrangement of Khalsa, his thoughts met resistance from the priests who, as up to this time, were least concerned about the welfare of nation but their own narrow minded ends [46]. Because of such conditions, Guru Gobind Singh taught a universal message to Hindus, Muslims and other social castes to get them out of casteism and to tie them in the string of solidarity and to cause them to embrace sound reasoning, he underlined that commitment without affection is futile. God secures His enthusiasts and destroys the enemy [47]. As right on time as 1699, subsequent to choosing to set up a sound society, Guru welcomed Sikhs from all over to come to Anandpur on the event of Vaisakhi this year [48]. With this call, he requested that Sikhs coming to Anandpur on the event of Vaisakhi celebration ought not cut their hair and beard [49]. As indicated by Scholars of Sikh History, a huge get-together was held at Anandpur Sahib on the event of Vaisakhi. The collected sangat was surprised when Guru demanded five heads from the devotees. After some time, individually, the Sikhs got up from the sangat and offered themselves to the Guru [50]. As indicated by Sikh practice, Guru Sahib would take them individually to the tent for religious sacrifice and come out with a blood-stained sword [51]. This was rehearsed for five times. Then, at that point Guru Sahib, joined by these five Sikhs, emerged from the tent and pronounced that these were Panj Piores (five dearest). At the hour of presenting the foundation of the *Panj Piores*, the Guru gave the accompanying order, while talking before the assembly "there are the sort of Sikhs [52]. I need in the confidence, dauntless and courageous, yet unassuming, God dreading and pious, safeguards of the confidence who won't spare a moment to set out their heads to secure the frail and down-trampled and to wage fight against mistreatment." They will be the backbone of the new nation. The new nation will be known as the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa in 1699 at Anandpur Sahib. It's anything but a ridiculous republic of self-denying Sikhs. The Panj Piores were given the Pahul of the Khanda and the Amrit, a blend of the five Bani's, arranged from a same bowl, and this casteless society was remembered for the alleged Khalsa. Last name Singh was added to the names of the Sikhs who were immersed, implying that they would be the child and Guru would be their father [53]. As per Prof. Harbans Singh "Singh devout and peaceful worshippers of the one God but irreconcilable opponents of injustice and tyranny" [54]. After baptizing the five Beloveds,

Guru Sahib himself baptized them ^[55]. Hence Gobind Rai became Gobind Singh, which means Guru isn't better than the Khalsa. He combined himself with the Khalsa. Creation of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh was an act of great vision and foresight to establish a ethical society based on values of truth, justice and equality, and wages a war against evil and oppression ^[56]. Guru lifted the sword against injustice, and that too if all else fails, and not against Islam itself as is apparent from in his renowned writing Zafarnamah-Epistle ^[57] of triumph addressed to Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb by Guru, "When any remaining methods have fizzled, it is genuine to take plan of action to sword. ^[58]" The Guru had no fleeting desires to fulfill, rather he strived for the foundation of society where human nobility was the most appreciated objective. In spite of the fact that number of fights were battled and won by the Guru, he neither disturbed, procure even a square inch of land nor permitted any of his adherents to fall back on plunder ^[59]. The Khanda in the hand of Khalsa was "not to establish any political power but to defend the weak and downtrodden and to destroy the armies or wicked and the tyrant" ^[60]. By making Khalsa the Guru raised a multitude of marjivare, the individual who were liberated from dread of death and volunteered "to pick up the gauntlet and jump into the battlefield to achieve the ideal of self-realization. ^[61]" The Sikhs who were baptized with khanda bata amrit, started to feel as though they had been reawakened in which they were liberated from their old rigid caste, creed and rituals. The Khalsa embraced the new code of conduct. The Guru had given not only a definite external appearance to the Sikhs when he converted them into Khalsa through *khanda ka Pahul* and made them to keep five symbols, five k's: Kes-whole hair, Kanga-comb, Kachh-short drawers, Kara-iron bractlet, and Kirpan-sword ^[62]. In Khalsa fraternity, the most reduced was equivalent to the most noteworthy. This was progressive change in the social framework. It struck at the actual foundations of the standing and class framework, according to G.C. Narang "he not only reaffirmed the absolute equality of every Sikh in the eyes of God, but altogether prohibited the observance of caste distinctions within the Khalsa." Thus, a new nation was born which manifested itself in the form of saints and soldiers.

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