

THE SIKH RAJ

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The learned author of *The Hindu Polity* makes the following observation, at the conclusion of his book:

But when there was a Hindu revival in the time of Sivaji and the Sikhs, the Sikhs as a polity failed, because they could not connect themselves with the Past. They followed a system which prevailed around them and established a polity of one man's rule. Guru Govinda wanted to remedy it, but the attempt brought out no man's rule. It was the Padshahi, the Moghul form, in success and in defeat, in rise and in fall. [1]

It is necessary to examine this observation so as to clarify certain implications of our main thesis. The problem of the origin, distribution and exercise of power is the basic question of polity and goes to the very roots of human civilization. This question, therefore, has naturally engaged the attention of the ancient Hindu thinkers, which is the Past and the background of the Sikhs and the Sikh doctrines.

In the *Rgveda*, the monarchy appears as the only and the normal form of government. In the *Aitreyabrahmana* supplement of the *Rgveda*, it is asserted that the Law can never overpower lawlessness except through a monarch:

The devas, the gods and asuras, the antigods, were at war. . . . and the asuras were victorious; they defeated the devas. The devas said, 'it is on account of our having no king that asuras defeat us. Let us have a king. To this all agreed. [2]

Do these *devas* and *asuras* represent the invading Indo-Aryan and aboriginal Dravidians of Harappa and Mohenjodaro respectively in the second millennium B. C. ? Did the Rgevedic Aryan borrow the institution of monarchy from their non-Aryan adversaries of northwestern India, and did they abandon their original republican tradition owing to the exigencies of war? Whatever the truth in these speculations, a thousands years' later, *Mahabharata* is quite clear that the republic or non-kingly forms of government are improper and unvedic. [3] In the third century B. C., Megasthenese recorded it as the accepted opinion that monarchy was the original and was prior to the republican form of Government in India. [4]

In ancient India, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, all appeared to be unanimous that though kingly form of government is the most approved and desirable form of government, all the same it was an unfortunate necessity and in 'silver' ages of the past, a government itself was wholly unnecessary; "*na tatra raja rajendra na danda na c a dandikah, svadharmenaiva dharmajnaste raksanti parasparam*" [5] which means that 'in the earlier ages, there was no king and no state apparatus, no penal code and no one to administer it, for, everyone faithfully performed his duties and obligations.' Kingship came into existence to preserve, as much as was possible, of the golden age, in a period of all-out decline and degeneration in the current iron age' (*Aitreyabrahmana*, i. 14, *Taittiriyanisad*, i. 5). These earlier texts visualise the king as merely a war-leader, such as Indra is portrayed in the *Rgveda*, to protect and preserve the pure-race, the aryaans from external attacks, but later on, it would appear that, apprehension of lawlessness and fear of anarchy, *arajakata*, that is non-government chaos, preoccupied the minds of the sacerdotal theorists. The legend in *Mahabharata* (*Santiparava*, xii. 67) informs us that in the ages gone by, once upon a time, men met to keep the peace and to expel evil-doers. The agreement was, however, more honored in breach than in observance, as students of political affairs know only too well, as the normal human situation, and so men waited upon the Creator of the world, Brahma, who then ordained Manu as the first King, a good-hearted soul. He, however, declined the assignment on the true enough ground that government, politics and politicking involved much evil and sin, but the people overcame Manu's honest scruples by promising him a share of their crops and herds and also of whatever religious merit they might earn.

This is the origin of the theory of the divine king who derives his authority primarily from the Creator-god, Brahma, but who also bases his prerogatives on human consent that authorizes him to levy taxes.

There is another story in the *Mahabharata* (*Santiparva*, xii. 59) according to which not lawlessness and social chaos but religious decline, irregular performance of sacrificial ceremonials, Yajna, threatening the cosmic order and existence of the gods themselves that obliged Brahma to compose the basic text on Polity, where upon the gods approached the Preserver of the Universe, Visnu, who then, out of his own mind, *sankalpa*, created a miraculous and supernatural being to rule over men and to ensure that the latter performed their religious duties duly.

This *Mahabharata* story further tells that the first king was Virajas, who in fullness of time was succeeded by a self-willed, progressive-minded king, Vena, who promulgated a new Hindu Code, so to speak, legalising inter-caste marriages, thus inaugurating social chaos, *sankaravarna*, and this king Vena was then summarily destroyed by his priestly counselors, the *rishis*.

This is the origin of the fundamental Hindu right of the people to revolt against the State.

The points of this *Mahabharata* legend are clear, (1) the king is a divine figure nominated by gods in heaven and he does not derive any part of his authority from the consent of the people, (2) this king is the servant of the gods and he owes no obligation to men, his duty being to maintain religion and the social order sanctioned by it, and (3) the people may revolt against and destroy him if the king does not serve the gods well and faithfully.

The other polarity of the doctrine of the origin of kingship is enshrined in the Buddhist legend (*Digh-nikaya*, III. pp. 92-3) as the 'Mahamat's Doctrine' according to which 'the Hon'ble chosen one', the king, was elected at an enormous gathering of the people at a time when private property and family were being subject to all kinds of arbitrary ceilings, and unnatural interference in natural generation, *santansanyam*, and the king was appointed to maintain freedoms of lawfully acquired property and normal propagation of progeny and as his fees for performing these duties he was to be entitled to levy taxes in cash and kind.

This is the earliest version of Rousseau's doctrine of Social Contract, making the king as a mere servant of the people.

The earthly *Arthasastra*, however, tells us that the divine-king theory as well as the civil-servant theory might both be pressed into the service of political propaganda. At one place, *Arthasastra* (xiii,1) advises the king to instruct his Public Relation agents to make it known that the king is divine, while at another place (X. 3) the king is told to say before his troops that he is a paid servant, just as they are, of the state.

In this legendary background a picture emerges from pre-Christian centuries onwards, after the raid of Alexander into the Indian satrapy of the Persian empire, and the establishment of the Mauryan empire, in which the republican form of government, to the existence of which the Greek writers and the Buddhist chronicles bear ample testimony, almost disappears from India for the coming two and a half millennia and monarchy becomes the only accepted and prevalent form of government, till the establishment of the Republic of the Union of India in 1950. Obviously, it was this hoary Hindu tradition to which Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried to link the destinies of the Sikh nation and not to "the Padshahi, the Moghul form", as Dr. Jayaswal erroneously thinks, and as we shall see, the Sikh polity failed or received a temporary setback, precisely because of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's desire to 'connect the Sikhs with the Past', in disregard of the clear injunctions of Guru Gobind Singh to the Khalsa,

to march to securer stability and more enduring prosperity by renouncing Brahmanic traditions and the leadership of the priestly Brahmins, which is a pre-requisite of the Divine aid to the Cause of the Khalsa. [6]

For, "the only essential tenets of Hinduism are recognition of the Brahman caste and divine authority of the Vedas. Those who publicly deny these doctrines as the Buddhists, Jains, and the Sikhs have done, put themselves outside the pale." [7] It was the desire of this one strong man, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who imposed it upon an unwilling nation, to revert to the pale of Hinduism, that forced the Sikhs to try the fatal experiment of Hindu monarchy which resulted in the failure of the Sikh polity in the first half of the 19th century.

This monarchy as the form of government, declared and accepted as the only proper form of government for the Hindus was, as we have seen, accorded divine sanction, as, in the *Manavadharma-sastra* it is laid down that, "God Himself created the King to protect people from lawlessness." [8]

Since the King ruled by divine right, he was a god, unamenable to the control or opinions of the people, as for as theory goes and, therefore, "Even an infant King must not be despised, as though a mere mortal, for, he is a great god in human form." [9]

The king, to be formally invested with godhead, must, however, be anointed with the *abhiseka* ceremony by the Brahmin priest, for, an unanointed king is an unlawful king whom the gods do not favor. An unanointed king is a term

of contempt in Hindu politics, and it is declared that, “Such barbarous customs are the hallmark of dirty westerners and foreigners.” [10]

So far as Hindu king is subject to the control and influence of God Almighty and His Brahmins only, the earthly *Arthashastra* of Kautiliya decrees, somewhat inaccurately, that “A single wheel cannot turn and so government is possible only with assistance. Therefore, a king should appoint ministers and listen to their advice.” [11]

This is the eternal triangle of Hindu monarchy, the god-king, the priestly Brahmins, and the ministers by royal choice. Here is a king who has no legislative powers and whose function it is to uphold the social structure of *varnasramadharma* as laid down in the Brahmanic sacred texts, whose formal installation is dependent upon the approval and good will of the hereditary priestly class of Brahmins, and who is constantly surrounded by a clique of ministers of his own creation, who tend to usurp his powers and replace him. This Hindu polity ensures a static, conservative society which abhors social progress and change as intrinsically un-desirable and dangerous, for *Manavadharmasastra* bids a citizen to—” walk in that path of good and virtuous people which his father and grandfather followed; while he walks in that, he will not suffer harm.” [12]

It further ensures that this Society is upheld by an autocratic king, who rules not only by divine right but as a divine being, answerable to no mortal on earth as far as the theory goes. As a necessary consequence, this form of government ensures the intellectual leadership of the Hindu Society to the priestly Brahmins, who are, ex hypothesi, committed to the *varnasramadharma*, the fourfold economic-political structure of the Hindu social pyramid. The concept of human, man-made, legislation, as an instrument of social change, social justice or amelioration of human inequalities, simply cannot arise in this polity, for, as Henry Ward Beecher has rightly said, “Laws and Institutions are constantly tending to gravitate. Like clocks they must be occasionally cleansed, and wound up and set to true time.” And this leads to another, equally grave, consequence. The continuity and stability of State depends upon a permanent, well-trained and loyal Civil Service, and a permanent Civil Service stems out of the concept of impersonal law and the rules to which this law gives birth, the day-to-day implementation of which is the function of such a Civil Service. The concept of the impersonal law alone can give birth and validity to the modern concept of ‘State’. In an autocracy, there is no rule of law, but the rule of the fiat, and it is the whim and the will of the ruler which is paramount and supreme. If there is no rule of law, there is no State, but only the personal domain of an individual, which is born with every new ruler and dies away with him. In such a polity, there can be no permanent Civil Service, but only a team of personal minions and there can be no loyalty to any supra-individual state, which does not exist. All is personal favor and personal loyalty, preferment and courtier-ship, fiat and whim, presided over by a paranoic individual, under the delusion that he is a god, subject to the control of no man on earth but, in practice, a prisoner of the priestly Brahmins and his own creation, the ministers.

True enough, there is no proper concept of ‘State’ understood or recognized in Hindu polity. There is the concept *raja*, the king, and the concept of *rajya* ‘the kingdom’ or, more accurately, ‘that which pertains to a king’. True, it was recognized that there are seven *praktis* or characteristics of a kingdom and this is the maximum approximation to the western concept of ‘State’ in Hindu polity, a concept of a State in an embryonic form, by no means even remotely comparable to the Platonic or Hegelian ‘State’. In a text on Hindu polity, called *Sukraniti*, a vastly more developed concept of ‘State’ is given, derived from the formula of the Seven *Praktis*, but it has now been finally established that *Sukraniti* is a composition of the 19th century by a Brahmin, who was well-acquainted with the government Regulations of the East India Company and the Marathas administration. Government, in Hindu polity is extension of the king and the king’s duty is to protect social order which is fixed and predetermined. This the king does through *danda*, punishment and coercion, for, as it is put in the *Manavadharmasastra* tersely, “a sinless and straight man is hard to find.” (VII. 38). There is a mystical nexus between the *raja* and his *rajya*, the king being the microcosm of his kingdom. A righteous king not only produces good citizens but also good crops, the right weather, peace and prosperity: *raja kalasya karnam*, as *Sukraniti* puts it, ‘the king causes the times to be what they are’. This idea is unambiguously expressed in the Greek inscription of Asoka discovered in 1957, at Kandhar, in the Kabul Valley : Now, owing to the piety of the King, everything prospers throughout the world. [13]

It is not exactly a cause and effect relationship but something mystical and extra-rational that conceives of the king and his kingdom as an integral unity. And both must live and perish together as is the case with the body and the soul.

This is the whole weakness and tragedy of the Hindu polity, the Hindu theory of monarchy, a stateless kingdom, a lawless government, without a permanent Civil Service and a polity, grounded in a triangle of king, Brahmins and

ministers, with inherent seeds of self-destruction. This is the key to the recurrent impermanence of all great kingdoms of ancient and medieval India, the Maurya empire, the Gupta empire, the Harsha empire, the Pala kingdom of Bengal and Bihar, the Pratiharas of Kanyakubja, the Kalchuris of Tripuri, the Chalukyas of Gujarat, the Senas of Bengal, the Pallavas of Kanci, the Chaulukyas of Kanci and Vengi, Rastrakutas of Mankheta, Cholas and Hoyaslas of Tanjore, Yadavas of Devgiri, Kaktiyas of Warangal, Pandvas of Madurai, the Vijyanagar empire, and the modern Maratha empire and the Sikh empire. It is the same story again and again; the god-king dies, is defeated or disappears otherwise; there is no state, no corpus of secular law, no legislating organ, no permanent Civil Service there to ensure continuity, and chaos follows in the wake of brilliant achievements of individuals, and decay supervenes after remarkable peaks of civilisation and culture reached. More often than not, a minister succeeds in obtaining complete control of a kingdom and the king becomes a denizen of the land of the dead, or a mere puppet. This happened more than once in ancient India, as in the middle of the 4th century B. C. Mahapadma Nanda, the emperor of Magadha, was a virtual puppet in the hands of his minister, Chanakya, who later on helped Chandragupta to found the Mauryan empire; this happened in the Vijyanagar empire, where the aged Ram Raj who lost the battle of Talikota (1565), was not the legal king, but the hereditary minister of the insignificant Sadasiva; this happened in the Maratha state, where the descendants of Sivaji were completely eclipsed by the peswas, and the same thing happened in Nepal till only recently. It was precisely this eternal trend of the Hindu polity which so heartlessly destroyed the Sikh empire through low conspiracy, vile treachery, and rank betrayal, in the vain hope of replacing the descendants of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by the descendants of minister Dhyani Singh Dogra.

And, what about the Islamic polity, the mughal pattern of administration, which our learned critic, Jayaswal, tells us, Maharaja Ranjit Singh followed that led to one-man rule?

A *hadith* of the Prophet tells us that 'king is the shadow of God on earth.' [14] A Persian manuscript [15] of twelfth century informs that, 'if there were no king, men will devour each other.' On the authority of Alchemy of Felicity [16] by famous Al-Ghazzali, (1058-1111) we learn that 'king is the heart of the organism of the State'. Mujjaddad, the famous Indian Muslim theologian, a contemporary of Akbar and Jehangir asserts in his letters [17] that, 'king is the soul and people the religious frame.'

What does all this language of images and symbols mean in simple words? It means that the ideal of an Islamic state is not self-government by the people but the observance of the laws of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet. The begetter of the idea of the Islamic state of Pakistan, now transformed somewhat unisimally into the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, has tersely summed up the ideal of an Islamic State, by exhorting its citizens: "Repudiate democracy and representative forms of Government and become efficient law-abiding slaves of the Islamic State."

[18]

In an Islamic State the ruler is the administrator of laws laid down by God Himself and the 'Ulema, the theologians, consider themselves to be the persons best qualified to explain those laws. The Caliph, the Sultan or the Amir, is merely the executive officer whose task it is to see that the divine rules, as interpreted by the theologians, are duly observed. These are the fundamental features of an Islamic State and its feudal or agrarian economic framework is a mere superstructure, a secondary character of this state.

What had Ranjit Singh's Government in common with such an Islamic State except that its military organization, its fiscal system and its structure of feudal levies and agrarian laws were similar to those of the prevailing Mughal pattern, which 'blemish' was shared by the Marathi Pad-Padshahi also in equal measure?

But this tradition of Hindu polity of monarchy, or the Muslim polity of Islamic State, are not the only traditions familiar to Hindus. As we have suggested earlier, there are reasons to believe that this tradition was alien to the early Indo-Aryans and they apparently accepted it subsequently, when they came in contact with the Mohenjodaro civilization and peoples who along with other ancient contemporary civilization of the second and third millennia B.

C. had a universal tradition of god-kings. We consider it as alien to the pristine Indo-Aryan tradition, for it is not supported by any reference in the earliest and the main corpus of the *Rgveda* and it finds mention only in its supplemental corpus and in the later Vedas, in particular, the *Atharva*, which is admittedly "the least ancient and which shows marked Semitic influence." [19] Though undoubtedly a repository of much that is ancient and pristine, while the earliest and the main corpus of the *Rgveda* suggests and adumbrates another and republican tradition of organization and exercise of power. Further, this tradition of monarchy in Hindu polity, stoutly upheld by the Hindu thinkers in the historic period, is strangely reminiscent of the similar, identical and older tradition of the civilizations

of Sumer, Assyria and Babylonia which were, if not anterior to, certainly contemporaneous with the Mohenjodaro civilization. This Mohenjodaro civilization which, under the military shock of the Indo-Aryans, deliquesced into Hinduism and Hindu civilization, [20] was not, as was believed a few years ago, confined to the Indus Valley and the Punjab alone, but extended over the most part of Northern India, as archaeological excavations undertaken during 1950-51 and more recently, reveal and this great civilization was in constant commerce and contact with its mighty contemporaneous civilizations and peoples across the Persian gulf.

It is in this context that the now famous Code of Hammurabi, acquires a lively significance for us while considering the Hindu polity. Hammurabi was the king of Babylonia during 2123-1081 B. C., about four thousand years ago. He promulgated a Code of Laws in his dominions, a copy of which came to light in 1902 when this Code engraved on a diorite cylinder that had been carried from Babylon to Elam in about 1100 B. C. as a war trophy, was unearthed at Susa. [21] One side of this cylinder shows the king, Hammurabi, receiving the Laws from the God on High, the Sun-God, Shamas, Himself. The prologue on the other side of this cylinder says:

When the lofty Anu, King of the Anaki and Bel, Lord of Heaven and Earth, He who determines the destiny of the land, committed the rule of all Mankind to Marduk. . . . When they proclaimed the lofty name of Babylon, when they made it famous among the quarters of the world and in its midst established an everlasting kingdom whose foundations were firm as heaven and earth—at that time Anu and Bel called me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, the worshipper of the gods, to cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong oppressing the weak.

Is not the doctrine of divinely appointed god-king, as laid down in our *Manavadharmasastra*, '*raksarthamasya sarvasya rajanam-sarjata prabhuh*' [22], almost a paraphrase of parts of this prologue contained in the Code of Hammurabi? And, is not the functional claim of Hammurabi made in this Code strangely reminiscent of the functional purpose of the Divine Incarnations, as laid down in the Bhagavadgita: *paritranaaya sadhunam vinasaya c a duskrtam, dharma sansthapanarthaya sam bhavami yuge yuge*. [23]

This Code of Hammurabi contains 285 laws, all secular in character, arranged almost scientifically, under the headings of Personal property, Real estate, Trade and Business, the Family, Injuries, Labour, etc., and the prototypes of these laws were the Sumerian laws which during the days of Hammurabi, were already two thousands years old.

This is the Hindu polity, and this is "the Past" with which Maharaja Ranjit Singh attempted to connect the political destiny of the Sikhs, which resulted in the failure of the Sikh polity and consequent enslavement of the Sikh people, a condition to which Guru Gobind Singh had specifically bidden them, never to submit. This "Past" is, in important essentials, is the same as "the Moghul Padshahi," the Islamic monarchy, because the origin of both is the same, the ancient semitic civilizations of Sumer, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and the civilisation of Mohenjodaro. In the Islamic monarchy, the king assumes the status of Mohammed's apostle instead of that of god, though by no means less exalted, as is apparent from the claim, which the Moghul emperors validly made for themselves, of being the *Zilli-Ilahi*, the Shadow of God, on earth. The laws of the static conservative society which a muslim monarch is required to uphold are derived from the Qur'an and the *hadith*, instead of the Vedas and the *dharmasastras*, and the hereditary intellectual leadership of the Brahmins is replaced by the arrogant and presumptuous prerogatives of the 'Ulema. Likewise, the Islamic monarch has his ministers, selected and appointed by royal arbitration, whose functions are excellently and truly summed up by Sadi, the Persian didactic poet (1184-1282), in the famous quip to the effect that a minister's "loyal duty is to say, 'Sire, look, how beautifully shine the moon and the stars', whenever His Majesty, the King, asserts at midday, 'It is night'" [24]. Such ministers, whether of Hindu monarchy, Maratha Pad-padshahi, Mughal Badshah, or a Sikh Maharaja, can hardly be anything but obsequious courtiers to, and surreptitious intriguers against the very monarch, who creates them, and they cannot, as a rule, provide any real assistance or check and counter-balance to the will and wishes of their king.

The long glorious history of the Hindu kingdoms, the illustrious and long story of the Muslim monarchies, and the sad solitary tale of a Sikh kingdom, broadly support the analysis of this theory of monarchy.

What was the pristine Indo-Aryan or, more correctly, Aryan tradition of polity at which we have hinted, a few pages *supra*, and which tradition flourished amongst Aryans of Greece and the Aryan settlements of northern India till, in the latter case, it was destroyed completely under the impact of monarchical *ekraja* systems and Huna invasions by the 5th century and which tradition, in the former case, after many vicissitudes, has flowered into the republican democracy of

the United States of America and the constitutional monarchy of Great Britain ? For, it is to this star of tradition and polity that Guru Gobind Singh has hitched the wagon of the Khalsa, and through them of the Hindu race and the whole mankind, for their sure progress on the road to unlimited prosperity, happiness, freedom and spiritual expansion.

The idea of a *samiti* or a Folk-assembly is adumbrated in the *Rgveda* itself, where there is a prayer for “a common assembly and a common policy.” [25] In the later *Atharvaveda* there is a reference to the continuity of this tradition, where “a general session of this, the folk-assemblies” [26] is spoken of. The same Atharva declares this *samiti*, the Sikh equivalent of which is the *sangat*, as “a daughter of God,” [27] i.e. eternal or *sui generis* sovereign. It is this doctrine which the Sikh Gurus revived when they declared that “the Guru’s sovereignty is full, of twenty measures, but that of the *sangat*, as the mouth-piece of the people, is of overriding paramountcy, of twenty-one measures.” [28] The Sikh doctrine of the *sui generis* and inalienable sovereignty of the Khalsa perfected by Guru Gobind Singh, stems out of, and is grounded in, this pristine Aryan tradition of polity. The same hymn of the *Atharva* refers to the ‘common Assembly’ of the *Rgveda* as *sabha*, adumbrating the principle of collegial representation, when every citizen’s personal representation, becomes impracticable.” The *samiti* and the *sabha* are the two daughters of the *prajapati*, god,” [29] it declares, implying that the principal of indirect representation in no way detracts from the sovereign character and authority of the representative *sabha*. This representative Assembly of the People, is given the name of *narista* in the same hymn. [30] *Sayana* the medieval commentator of the Vedas, in his *Sayanabhasya*, explains this term, *narista* to mean that which is final and cannot be violated, “*narista*”, he says, “from its inviolability, the same is derived.” [31] The *samiti* and the *sabha* consist of, or, are representative of the whole People, *visah*, [32] and there is no defranchised secondary citizenship, slaves or *zimmis*, inferior citizens of the Islamic law, in this pristine Aryan polity. This representative Assembly of the People, the *sabha*, though sovereign, is still subject to certain eternal principal of good conscience and *bonafides* and through transgressing these principles the Assembly loses its representative and sovereign character. This dictum is preserved in a Buddhist Pali Jataka which says that

the Assembly which has no well-meaning and honest members, is no Assembly, the members who do not speak and act bonafides, are no honest members, and the honest and well-meaning members are those who are not swayed by bias or favor and who speak out truthfully and fearlessly. [33]

These are the roots out of which the main doctrine of the Sikh polity grow. These doctrines constitute a septinate of the following order:

- (1) The *sangat*, meaning, the local folk assembly of direct representation.
- (2) The *Panth*, which is the whole Commonwealth represented by the Peoples’ Assembly of indirect representation.
- (3) The *Khalsa*, which postulates the *sui generis*, inalienable sovereignty of the People.
- (4) The condominium of *Guru Granth* and *Panth*, which implies that the exercise of power is always subject to *bonafides* and good conscience.
- (5) The *Panjpiaras* which is the doctrine of collegial leadership in the direction of State policies. [34]
- (6) The *Gurmata* which is the symbol and form of the authority of the Collective Will of the people duly formulated.
- (7) The *Sarbat Khalsa* doctrine of completely equalitarian free democracy.

Did a republican polity ever function in India, of which any credible evidence is available? And did the Sikhs ever attempt to put principles of their polity into practice?

The answers to both these queries are in the affirmative.

In 330 B. C. Alexander, the Macedonian, defeated Darius III, the last of the Achaemenids, and entered on a campaign to subdue the whole of the Persian empire of which the Gandhara and the Hindush, the present Pakhtunistan and the West Punjab of Pakistan, were satrapies or provinces. After a long campaign in Bactria, the Oxus region Alexander crossed Hindu Kush to occupy the Kabul region. He crossed Indus in the spring of 328 B. C. after the king of Taksasila, Ambhi, had submitted to him, and he crossed Jhelum in the winter of the same year to defeat Paurava, the local chief, by a strategy which would render him a war criminal in the eyes of the International conventions or laws of those days, for, it was an accepted Aryan convention not to attack the enemy at night, and never without a forewarning, both of which conventions, the chivalrous Paurava took it for granted, would be observed by the enemy in this case, but which the world-conquering Greek hero violated at the first opportunity to win an un-Aryan victory over his Oriental adversary. It is interesting to recall here that only a year earlier, at the battle of Arbela, in 331 B. C. Alexander had spurned the suggestion of Parmenio to surprise the hosts of Darius by night attack, saying, “No, I will

not steal a victory.” Obviously, the tradition of Europeans to relax their morals on crossing the Suez into Indian Ocean is of ancient origin. Justly did Vrahmihira, the astronomer, whom Indian writers [35] place in the second century before Christ, while European writers [36] in the 6th century bemoan in his *pancasidhantika* that “although the Greeks are well advanced in the sciences, they are otherwise uncivilized”. [37]

After this victory, Alexander advanced farther east, meeting with stiff resistance from small republics and local militias, till at the western banks of the river Beas, his soldiers lost heart, and the conqueror was obliged to beat a retreat, across the Punjab and down the Indus, throughout meeting with stiff opposition from local republics and tribal democracies. Before he could reach his homeland, Alexander, though he survived Hindu military attacks, was finally overpowered by the febriclose toxin-injected in nocturnal un-Aryan raids into his European veins by Hindu mosquitoes of the anopheline caste, as a consequence of which he died of high fever at Babylon, in 323 B. C. and the last of his generals, Endamus, was obliged to vacate the overrun portions of north western India in 317. B. C. When in 305 B. C. Seleucus Nicator, another general of Alexander, once again tried to reassert Greek dominion over this north western India, he met with such a severe defeat at the hands of Chandragupta Maurya, ‘Sandrocottus’ of Plutarch, that Seleucus had to cede Kabul valley and give the hand of his daughter in marriage, as terms of the peace treaty to the victor. It was an ambassador of Seleucus, Magasthenese, at the Mauryan court at Patliaputra, who wrote a detailed account of India, the first eyewitness record of a foreign traveller, which gives such valuable information about the social and political conditions of the country in the 3rd century B. C. Though no manuscript of Magasthenese’s description of India has survived, many Greek and Latin authors had made use of it, from which Magasthenese’s *Indica* has been reconstructed.

Magasthenese definitely states that two forms of government, monarchical and republican, were then prevalent in India.

They report everything to the king where the people have a king and to the magistrates where the people are self-governed. [38]

One such republican people, referred to by Greek writers, are the forefathers of the modern Majhails, the back-bone of the Sikh people, who, just before Alexander’s raid, had inflicted a defeat on the valiant Paurava, and who, though hopelessly outnumbered by the Greeks, fought Alexander by the *sakata-vyuha*, or ‘waggon-formation,’ which the Greek phalanx could not pierce, and who refused to submit formally. The Greek writers call them “Kathians” and describe them as a nation, residing to the east of Hydraotes or the river Ravi, the present districts of Lahore and Amritsar of the West Pakistan and Indian Punjab, respectively.

The Kathians themselves enjoyed the highest reputation for courage and skill in the art of war. [39]

It will be recalled that the descendants of the “Kathians,” the Majhail Sikhs, were the leaders of the Sikh mass of about 30,000 unorganized men, women and children at village Kup, near Malerkotla, in the Indian Punjab, who were surprised and attacked by the 100,000 strong veteran Afghan horsemen of Ahmad Shah Abdali, on the grey raw morning of 5th February, 1762, killing over 15,000 Sikh women and children, mostly in the first onrush, and as many men more in the next few days of the Sikhs’ retreat towards Barnala in the Patiala District. In this carnage, called the ‘Great Holocaust’, *wadda ghalughara* in Sikh history, the Sikhs defended themselves by means of the same *sakatavyuha* with which they had met the equally overwhelming numerical odds of the Greek invaders, and once, though literally decimated to a man, they refused to submit. The capital city of these “Kathians” is mentioned by the Greek writers as “Sankala,” which most probably occupied the site at which the Sikh Gurus built Amritsar at the end of the 16th century. To the west of this Majhail republic, adjoining their territory, was a republic state of the “Sophytes,” whom Dr. Sylvain Levi has identified with the Sambhutis [40] whose territory extended upto the Salt Range, the frontier of the territory of Paurava. Their cities

were governed by laws in the highest degree salutary. . . . and their political system was one to admire. [41]

It was from this region that the ancestors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh arose to help build the foundations of the Sikh Commonwealth which the Maharaja converted into a monarchy. Two city states are further mentioned as republics, on the west Beas, but their names, unfortunately are not given. [42] When the army of Alexander reached Beas, he received intelligence that across the river there was the territory of a republic, which was

exceedingly fertile and the inhabitants [of which] were good agriculturists, brave in war and living under an excellent system of internal government. [43]

The territory of this republic extended, it would seem, upto Jamuna, beyond which was the empire of Mahapadma Nanda. The citizens of this trans-Beas republic, had, according to Arrian, elephants of superior size and courage and in greater numbers, and so the Greek invaders “now began to lose heart,” and “positively asserted that they would follow no further.” [44] The citizens of this republic were the forefathers of the Sikhs who founded the cis-Sutlej Sikh states in the 18th century, which endured upto 1956, when they were finally merged in the state of Punjab of the Indian Union.

Thus Alexander retreated. On his retreat, upto Baluchistan, almost all the people Alexander met, were republican. The most powerful republics amongst these people are mentioned as “Oxydrakai” and “Malloi” the Kshudrakas and Mallavas. Their cities were along the river Chenab, and their capital was on the river Ravi, probably, at the site now occupied by Lahore. These two republics in a confederacy, mustered, according to Curtis, [45] 100,000, soldiers to block the retreat of Alexander, whereupon,

the Macedonians lost their heart at the prospect of meeting this army. . . . When the Macedonians found that they had still on hand a fresh war in which the most warlike nation in all India would be the antagonists, they were struck with an unexpected terror, and began again to upbraid the KING in the language of sedition. [46]

It was, while assaulting this capital city or some other city of this confederacy that Alexander almost lost his life. Greek writers assert that this confederacy was defeated, but Patanjali in his Mahabhashya shows the Ksudrakas as emerging out victorious. [47] These ksudrakas and Mallavas are, undoubtedly, the ancestors of most of the Majha misls of the Sikhs of the 18th century, who, as we shall presently show, organised themselves on the basis of republican polity, before they were absorbed into the Sikh empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Next republic mentioned by the Greeks is “Sambastai.”

They were a people inferior to none in India, either for numbers or for bravery, and their form of government was democratic. [48]

Alexander made peace with them. The next “independent nation” which Alexander encountered were the “Xathroi”, or Khattris. Most of Sindhi sahajdhari Sikhs, now settled throughout India, and particularly in the Bombay area, are the modern descendants of these republican people. Another republic mentioned by the Greek writers is, “Musicani”, which, from the scanty information given, is difficult to identify now. Their realm is described as “most opulent in India”. [49] It is said about “the Musicani” that they took their meals in a common kitchen, a practice revived by the Sikh Gurus, in the well-known institution, Guru-ka-langar. The institution of Guru-ka-langar, (langar Sanskrit, analgrha, meaning ‘fire-place’ (kitchen) which was used by the Sikh Gurus as a powerful lever for equalitarian uplift of the people, by demolishing caste-barriers and the economic apartheid of *varnasramadharm*, is a pristine Aryan institution, non-Brahmanic, but having Vedic sanction. A reference to the community kitchen, a sort of Guru-kalangar, occurs in the Atharvaveda, [50] which says, “Identical shall be your drink, in common shall be your share of food.” These “Musicani,” whoever they were, are certainly the spiritual, if not endemic, progenitors of those, now a Sikh people. Another city republic, called “the country of the Brachmins”, is mentioned by the Greek writers. [51] “These philosophers”, bewails Plutarch, [52] “gave Alexander, no less trouble” than others. To the south of this ‘city of brachimns’ was the republican state of “Patala”. ‘Patala’ has been identified with Haidarabad Sind, whose ancient name, Patalpuri, is still remembered. Before Alexander arrived, the whole population of this republic migrated to avoid submission.

This seems to be an ancient tradition of republican Aryan freemen, to prefer migration to submission. It is recorded in the *Jataks* and the *Mahabharata* that the citizens of the Vrsni republic migrated from Mathura to Dwarka to avoid submission to Jarasandha. ‘Sibis’ of the Punjab migrated to Rajputana and some of them migrated to Kangra hills in the area now called, Dada Siba, under similar circumstances. The Mallavas of the Punjab, migrated to Malwa in central India under the impact of White Huna invasion, and later on established powerful states there, as Agnikula Rajputs. The Powars or Parmars, a branch of these Agnikula Rajputs founded the Malwa state, with its capital at Dhar, whose most powerful king was Bhoja (1018-1060), not to be confused with his namesake of Kannauja. Bhoja was a scholar of legendary repute, and a patron of learning having the reputation of an ideal Hindu monarch. He is the author of numerous works on astronomy, architecture and poetry and he adorned his capital, Dhar, with many fine buildings,

one of which was a Sanskrit college, now a mosque, and the great irrigation lake at Bhojpuri, measuring 250 square miles in area, which he constructed and which was breached by Muslims in the 14th century, and has never been repaired since, was a remarkable feat of engineering. When Dhar was overrun by Muslim invaders in the fourteenth century the whole population of the ruling Powars, original Mallavas of Alexander's time, migrated towards Punjab, their original habitat and established their headquarters at village, Kangar in the Patiala region, to which place Guru Gobind Singh, repaired in 1706 to write a letter of admonition to emperor Aurangzib, inviting the emperor for personal interview there and assuring him of a safe conduct and a friendly reception [53].

These people are now known as Dharwar or Dhaliwal Jats, and are found in Patiala, Ludhiana and Amritsar Districts mostly. The veteran General, Akali Phula Singh of Nowshera fame, was one of those whose ancestors had thus emigrated from Dhar. It was the same spirit and tradition of republican independence, which impelled the Sikhs of the West Punjab, along with their endemic Hindu groups, to choose instinctive migration from Pakistan in 1947, while no such reaction was evinced by the Indo-Mongol East Bengal Hindus.

During the pre-Christian era, the Greek invaders throughout the major portion of the Punjab and Sindh, encountered only two of three monarchical systems of government which, in all probability, were elective monarchies, and all others, scores of them, were republican.

This story of political organisation in northwestern India in ancient times, revealed by foreign observers, finds some corroboratory support in ancient Sanskrit literature as well.

Panini, the illustrious Professor of Grammar at the Taksasila University, modern Taxila, is placed by European scholars at the close of the 6th century B. C. on the basis of political data found in his *Astadhyayi* Grammar. Without doubt, this Grammar is one of the greatest intellectual achievements of any ancient civilisation and it is the most elaborate and scientific grammar composed by any one in the world, before the 19th century. But it is so terse, that without a preliminary study, it is difficult to follow without the aid of a suitable commentary. Later Indian grammars are mostly commentaries on Panini, the most famous of which is the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali of about three centuries later and *Kasikavritti* of Jayaditya and Vaman of thousand years later (6th century A. D.). Panini says "that the word *sangha* is in the meaning of *gana*." [54] *Gana* means numbers, the people, the majority of them. That is why Kasikavritti explains, "*Sangha* is in the meaning of *gana*; why, because it is the majority which is the essence of *sangha*." [55] That *gana* means a republican government becomes quite clear from *Mahabharata* where Yudhishtra puts the question to Bhishma:

I desire to hear O wise and sagacious teacher, how the *ganas* achieve prosperity and how they counteract the enemy sabotage, and how they are victorious, gain alliances and expand, Disunity apparently is the root cause of their ruin, and their greatest weakness, I think, is to keep the resolutions of the state secret, on account of their large numbers.

[56]

There is no manner of doubt that these republics or *sangha* were in existence in the north western India, as Panini himself enumerates these republics by name, in which are included the Ksudrakas and the Mallavas encountered by Alexander. [57] Some of these republics, Panini describes as *ayudhyajivinis*, in which all able-bodied citizens bear arms. Earlier, we have noticed that the Greek writers found the Ksudrakas and Mallavas as being famous for their military skill. Do we, here, have the prototype of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, whose members are required to bear arms and to acquire skill in them with a view to protect and maintain their political independence and way of life? [58]

Another point Panini while enumerating the *sanghas*, adds that they are situated in the *vahika* land. The *kasikavritti* explains that the Ksudrakas and Mallavas of Greek fame were *vahika sanghas*. [59] *Mahabharata* explains that the *vahika* land is 'away from the Himalayas' [60], i.e. does not include the mountainous Himachal Pradesh .

This *vahika* land is precisely the Sikh Homeland, the land of origin of Sikhism, and the republican roots of the Sikh polity sprout out of those hoary republican traditions of the race to which Guru Gobind Singh belonged. The territories of the Sikh Raj under Maharaja Ranjit Singh comprised this *vahika* land and the sub-mountain Himalayan lands of Jammu and Kangra, in addition to the exotic Kashmir Valley and the Little Tibet. The Bonapartist political policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as we shall see presently, was beset with mutually contradictory trends of the republican temper of the *vahika* [61] land and the autocratic monarchical proclivities of the Himalayan *trigartas*, Jammu and Kangra, and the Sikh empire eventually blew up in 1849 by the incendiary powder of this mutual ideological conflict

between the policies and aims of the republican Khalsa Army and the despotic monarchical trends and aims of the civil apparatus of the Government under the exclusive control of the hill dogras, Dhyana Singh and Gulab Singh.

These *ganas* or republics were, by no means exclusively confined to the *vahika* land though the *vahika* land may be said to be the traditional birthplace and homeland of republicanism in ancient India. In the ancient Hindu literature *ganas* functioning in other parts of India are also frequently mentioned into the details of which it is not necessary to go here. These republics struck their own coins, some of which have been unearthed during the present century, and are now preserved in museums and private collections. These coins are struck in the name of the *gana* and not any individual, which fact provides a further link between these ancient political institutions and the Sikh political tradition. These coins bear heraldic legends in the then current Indian script of the pre-Christian era, and declaim in the following strain : "Victory to the *gana* of *Arjunayans*", "Victory to the *Yaudheya-gana*." [62] The Sikh greetings, coined and made current by Guru Gobind Singh, "The Khalsa is of God, Victory to God", apparently has this ancient republican slogan as its prototypal idea and impulse.

Guru Gobind Singh's "light passed into the Great Light", *joti-jot-samae*, on the 8th October 1708, the preceding midnight. A little earlier he had dispatched Banda Singh Bahadur to the Punjab to establish the Sikh Raj, with detailed instructions on the strategy to be followed [63] and the pattern of the government to be established. [64] Precisely two years after demise of Guru Gobind Singh, in November 1710, the Sikhs, thus making the imperial rule of Delhi untenable over the whole of India. The coin which they struck, as a symbol of their sovereignty, bore the following heraldic legend.

This coin is struck as token of Our sovereignty Here and Hereafter.

This divine bounty flows from the central doctrine of Nanak (*teghi-nanak*), and the Victory and Felicity is the gift of Guru Gobind Singh, the King of Kings, the true Master. [65]

An official Seal of Sovereignty was also adopted and introduced, to the effect that,

"The ever expanding prosperity, the strength of arms, and continuous victory and common weal

Are all guaranteed to mankind by Guru Gobind Singh, the Nanak. [66]

It was an ancient tradition of the republics of the pristine Aryan polity to have an official heraldic legend and a seal, called *lakshnam* and *ankam* respectively, as is implied by Panini. [67] After a brief spell of sovereignty of five years the Sikhs faced a fifty years' persecution, pogroms and systematic genocide campaigns of the Mughal and Afghan tyrants, till in 1760, they again proclaimed their formal sovereignty at Lahore under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, and they adopted the legend of the official Seal of Banda Singh Bahadur, as their heraldic legend as well as the official seal citation, *lakshnam* and *ankam*, both. For five years after this, the Sikhs had to face another genocide pogrom and campaign of the redoubtable Ahmad Shah Abdali, after which, in 1765, they reoccupied Lahore, and formally reasserted their sovereignty, again sticking to the ancient pristine Aryan tradition and the precepts of Guru Gobind Singh of republicanism, and adopting the identical legends for coins and the official seal, first introduced by Banda Singh Bahadur, in 1710.

This position and this tradition, was first compromised by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, gradually, progressively and purposely.

For almost twenty-five years, the general governance of the Sikh Raj at the capital of Lahore remained entrusted in the hands of a triumvirate of Sikh captains, and in the meantime, the Sikhs continued the struggle for liberating the whole of the Punjab, from the Jamuna to the Indus, from the yoke of foreigners and their collaborators and culturally foreign elements, and every captain jathedar or sirdar, who thus freed and liberated a territory for the Sikh Raj, had it entered in the records which were maintained by the Custodian-General at Akal Takht, Amritsar, in separate files, which in Arabic is *misl* (*misl* in Punjabi) till the time that the Sikh Raj would be duly regularized and established with a constitution based on the principles of Sikh polity. This is the origin of the Sikh *misls* or, confederacies, as they are somewhat loosely called. There were twelve such *misls*, autonomous Sikh militias, in charge of territories, each with a definite clear objective of conquest and preliminary consolidation before itself, it being tacitly understood throughout

that the ultimate aim was to establish the Sikh Raj in the land based upon the true principles of Sikh polity in accordance with the ancient precedents, and the precepts of Guru Gobind Singh. [68]

This tacit understanding is explicit in every Sirdar personally reporting the details of the area liberated by his militia, twice a year, to the Custodian-General at the Akal Takht, and in having the fact duly recorded in the Commonwealth Files, *the misls*; and he reported also, on the interim pattern of government which he set up in the territory under his militia's temporary control. Sir George Campbell, a foreign observer, giving eyewitness account, testifies that the internal government of Phulkian *misl*, out of whose territories subsequently stemmed the ruling states of Patiala, Nabha and Jind,

was much more than a mere village, a municipal government; it was diplomatically recognised as a state and had its own administration and state justice. . . . There was no chief or hereditary ruler; the state was governed by its panchas or representative elders . . . Mehraj continued a completely independent, self governing republic down to my own time. [69]

The same writer generally testifies that,

the Sikh system is very much like that out of which the German system sprang. They formed misls or confederacies. Twelve misls were recognized in early days. Each *misl* elected its own supreme chief and sub-chief, and every horseman had his rights and his share in the common conquests. The combined misls formed the Khalsa or the Sikh Commonwealth. Just as in Germany, the tendency was to an elective supreme chief who had very little power and whose place was not hereditary. [70]

What is this doctrine of *panca* which is enumerated in the very first pages of the Guru Granth, the *Japu* of Guru Nanak, which doctrine was given the form of the basic principle of Sikh organization and polity, the *panjpiaras*, by Guru Gobind Singh ?

Literally, the expression, *panca* means five. The number 5, is basic to the decimal system of enumeration, a gift believed to be, of Hindu genius to the world. It represents the five fingers of the human hand, including its master tool, the thumb, which has made homo-sapiens superior to the apes in technic-skill. The fingers of both the human hands add up to 10, which is the ultimate number. 5, as one term of this system of computation, is the number of the Hindu arithmetic, now adopted by the whole world. The Babylonian system of counting by 12's and 60's, which has been the basis of Indian coinage, weights and measures from times immemorial, till quite recently, when it has been replaced by the original Hindu system of decimals, is also derived from the number, 5, as one term of this system of computation. The number 12, the other term, represents the twelve months of the solar year, or twelve zodiacs of the sky, and the number 60, is obtained by multiplying it with 5. The other normative number 16, which forms the basis of old Indian coinage, is simply the square of 4, that is, 4x4, 'four' representing the four quarters of the Space and the perfect number of Hindu numerology. The expression, *pancha*, occurs in the *Atharvaveda* itself, where in a hymn, referring to election of a representative chief by the people, it is said:

The people elect you to exercise power, the whole people of five directions, *pradesah pancha*, whose is the glory, for ever and for ever. [71]

The 'people of five directions' means all the people of the four directions of the compass and those who represent them at the centre, the venue of the Assembly. In the similar election hymns of the *Atharva* the expression *pancha*, frequently occurs as indicative of the whole assembly. In classical Sanskrit, however, this word, *panca*, has acquired a secondary meaning, that of 'moral intellect', *srestabuddhi*, and also one who is endowed with this 'moral intellect', integrity and conscience. The expression *panca* which occurs in the *Japu* of Guru Nanak, has to be interpreted in this context and background, where the text says:

The *panca* is the true doctrine. The *panca* are supreme. The *panca* must be recognised in the organisation of power, (literally in the courts of kings.) The *panca* alone are fit to occupy seats of supreme authority for exercise of power. The guiding light of the *panca* is their common objective of divine guidance. [72]

It was in exegesis of this text of the Guru Granth, apparently, that Guru Gobind Singh, while glorifying the *panjpiaras*, declared, I am ever present, unseen, in the collective deliberations of the *panca*, and there is no higher guidance on earth, besides. [73]

It was in 1799 that Ranjit Singh, the Sirdar of the *Sukracakia-misl*, occupied Lahore, through fifth column activities and evicted the Sikh triumvirate from the control of the city and the neighboring territory. In 1801, on the Baisakhi day, he had the pre-requisite ancient ceremony of Hindu monarchy, *abhiseka* performed and he assumed the un-Sikh title of Maharaja. His native peasant shrewdness, however, warned him that he was sabotaging the very bases of the Sikh polity, and apart from choosing the Baisakhi day for his coronation, therefore, he had other spectacular Sikh ceremonies performed by the revered Bedi Sahib Singh of Una to consecrate his sabotage, and he declared, which declaration and camouflage he scrupulously maintained throughout his life, that he was to be styled and addressed as His Majesty the Maharaja, only by the non-Sikhs, the Hindus, the Muslims and others, but under no circumstances, by the Sikhs, for the Sikhs, he was always, a simple, *Singh Sahib*, an honorable member of the Khalsa. Within a few years of his coronation, he reduced into desuetude the supreme authority of the Sikh polity, the *gurmata*, and entrusted the control of the government of his expanding territories to a cabinet of his own choice, in accordance with the ancient Hindu monarchical tradition but *qua* his own person, in whom he had gathered all the power and authority of the state in accordance with the un-Sikh, Hindu doctrine, he never claimed independence from the *gurmata*. On one occasion, when the Custodian-General of the Akal Takht took exception to a certain conduct of his in private life, he readily and humbly bared his back for receiving public flogging as chastisement for his un-Sikh like moral failing, as the humblest member of the Khalsa would. Gradually, he replaced the original Sikh patent of Banda Singh Bahadur on his coins and royal seals, with the cryptic, *Akalsahaya*, "May God help," without making it clear as to for whom the help of God was being officially invoked, for the Khalsa or for his Majesty, the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and in the latter half of his reign, when he became securer in his position, he had the heraldic device of the *pipal, ficus religiosa* leaf minted on his coinage, to give his kingdom and dynasty a truly Brahmanic basis, divorced from the mores of Sikh polity. The royal "Daily Diaries" of the closing years of his reign are full of uninteresting and boring details of lavish and indiscriminate alms-givings to Brahmins, a duty which every Hindu monarch is enjoined to perform scrupulously and without fail in the ancient Hindu texts. Since the expansion, consolidation and protection of his empire throughout remained wholly dependent upon the arms of the Khalsa and the Sikh Army, he never styled his government as anything but the *Sirkar-i-Khalsa*, the Khalsa Commonwealth. Anybody who saw through the game, was demurrer or opposed to these un-Sikh trends of his policy, was tactfully, but without fail, eliminated from all effective voice in the councils of his government. Accordingly, General Hari Singh Nalwa, Baba Sahib Singh Bedi of Una, and Jathedar Phula Singh Akali, were kicked up or away or made otherwise ineffective. The antagonism inherent between his policy and aims, and the true principles and traditions of the Sikh polity, obliged him to debar virtually the employment of Sikhs in superior civil posts of his government, which were reserved for Muslims and Hindus only, as a rule. In pursuance of this policy of his, he raised the alien hill Dogras, Dhyansingh, Khushal Singh and Gulab Singh, almost from the gutter to positions of supreme authority in the civil apparatus of his government, and Teja Singh, an insignificant Brahmin of the Gangetic Doab, and Lal Singh, another Brahmin from Gandhara valley, were granted such influence which eventually raised them to the supreme command of the Sikh Army, and thus he dug his own grave, the grave of his descendants, and paved the way to the eventual enslavement of the Sikh people.

Once the true basis and the republican foundations of the *Sirkar-i-Khalsa* were thus well knocked out, the way was cleared for personal ambitions and intrigues in complete disregard of public interest or national good. The Dogras, the hill-aliens, indulged in low suicidal conspiracies to destroy and barter away the state in order to secure their own preeminence in the hill territories of the Sikh realm. The Chiefs of the state shamelessly placed their personal and family interests above the interests and safety of the state. The successors of Ranjit Singh themselves concentrated their entire individual energies to secure and strengthen their own illusory regal status even at the cost of the state's territorial integrity.

Only the Sikh Army, the military arm of the Khalsa remained true to the Sikh polity approved and sanctified by the Gurus and they kept their faith and preserved their integrity up to the last. They could not save the Sikh state but in their defeat they upheld the eternal torch of true Sikh polity ensuring its emergence in the future on a securer and firmer basis.

Maharaja Kharak Singh the weak and gentlemanly successor of Ranjit Singh was slandered with the accusation that he wanted the *Sirkar-i-Khalsa* to be reduced to vassalage of the British East India Company and thus his promising son,

Prince Naunihal Singh, was permanently estranged from his father by documentary forgeries purporting to be diplomatic communications between Kharak Singh and the Governor General at Calcutta and under these circumstances he was finished through slow poisoning. Prince Naunihal Singh died or was murdered under dramatically suspicious circumstances the same day and thus Rani Chand Kaur, the widow of Kharak Singh became the Queen Regent of the State.

On the 20th July (1841) Clark reported the opinion of Dhean Singh that his endeavors do not afford any promise of stability of the government at Lahore. The doubts that the raja expresses of the intentions of British government excite little corresponding sentiments in the Khalsa. They are more under the influence of a feeling of rancor towards him than of enmity to the British government. As it is usually understood amongst them that the British government rejected an offer of the half of Punjab from Chand Kaur to interfere to set her up as a Sovereign, they believe that the British government desire the adjustment of their internal distractions. They would like to get rid of the hill rajas first, after that they might not be disinclined for a rupture with the British government.” [\[74\]](#)

Queen-Regent Chand Kaur was soon murdered in the palace by her maid servants under circumstances that squarely fix the blame on the “hill rajas”, Dhyan Singh in particular, and,

on the 20th January (1842) Shere Singh obtained possession of the (Lahore) fort and on the 27th finally succeeded to the throne. The anarchy in Lahore continuing, it was thought right to have a British force ready to help Shere Singh— in all 10,000 men under Major-General Lumley. Mr. Clark having informed the Governor General that he had a communication with a confidential advisor of Shere Singh with respect to affording of the aid of British of the troops on the condition of cession to the British of the Lahore territories to the north of Sutlej and the payment of 40 lakhs of rupees. [\[75\]](#)

Next year Sher Singh was publicly murdered by regicide committed by his Sandhanwalia kinsmen recently returned to Lahore from under the protection and hospitality of the British officers and thus Rani Jindan, a young widow of Ranjit Singh became the Queen Regent with Dalip Singh, the infant son of Ranjit Singh, placed on the throne,

The Ranee (Jindan) now reviews the troops unveiled and dressed as a dancing woman which pleases the old and gratifies the young but her irregularities are so monstrously indecent that the troops have held her horse and advised her to be more chaste or they would no longer style her the Mother of all the Sikhs. [\[76\]](#)

and further,

It appears to be true by Broadfoot’s report that at one moment the plan of the Ranee was to have urged the troops to move against the English to force our interference, to disavow the act of the troops and to trust that we should restore their Government after we had destroyed the army on the basis of Lord Auckland’s subsidiary arrangement of 1844.

[\[77\]](#)

What about the Chiefs of the Realm?

These Chiefs are mostly adventurers, with a few exceptions and their desperate condition desire the destruction of the army and their restoration to power. [\[78\]](#)

It was in this atmosphere and background that Rani Jindan brought over Raja Gulab Singh, the Dogra Chief from Jammu to preside over the final dissolution of the Sirkar-i-Khalsa and the independence of a sovereign Punjab and Gulab Singh was well qualified for this job.

The man whom I have to deal with, Gulab Singh, is the greatest rascal in Asia. [\[79\]](#)

All these ‘pillars of the Sikh State, the Sirkar-i-Khalsa, were each pulling in directions opposite to each other, but they were united in one aim, their treacherous and perfidious desire to destroy the only true, genuine and loyal, standard-bearer of the Khalsa, that was the Sikh Army. The contemporary state records, both of the Sikh state as well as the diplomatic documents of the East India Company, make no secret of the compulsive desire of the perfidious Dogras to achieve what they referred to as, *Tadaruk-i-Sikhan*, literally, ‘repulsion of the Sikh people’, but in its contextual meanings, ‘destruction of the fighting machine of the Sirkar-i-Khalsa, ‘atomisation of the collectivity of the Sikh

nation', or as the modern diplomatic euphemism would put it, 'final solution of the Sikh problem'. Only such a destruction of the backbone of the Sikh power could remove obstacles that stood in the way of establishing institution of Hindu monarchy, primacy of personal and family ambitions over the requirements of public interests and uncompromising hostility to the genuine Sikh impulses aiming at a social revolution that would lead to the emergence of an equalitarian, forward-looking and just social order. Perceiving the true nature of these anti-Sikh trends being persistently fostered by the civil apparatus of the Sirkar-i-Khalsa, by the successors of Ranjit Singh and the perfidious Dogras, the Sikh Army during the closing months of 1845 :

under the designation belonging to the Sikh Sect, before Ranjit Singh became a monarch, viz., Khalsa Ji da Panth, the Khalsa Panth, they assumed the Government (of the State). [80]

And

They sent letters, bearing the seal inscribed merely with the name of God (Ekonkar Waheguru Ji ki Fateh) to all civil authorities and military leaders and nobles and grandees of the Sikh Darbar (the royal court), requiring their presence and obedience. [81]

It is on record that no person or no authority of the state either demurred or hesitated in rendering loyal obedience, such was the obvious justice and correctness of the position that thus emerged, namely, the sovereignty of the people as led by the Khalsa in repudiation of the monarchical claims of the successors of Ranjit Singh, the dynastic interests of the feudal and vested cliques and low, ignoble compulsive urges of the individual to assert himself in opposition to the social good and collective interests.

It was at this critical juncture of the evolution of Sikh polity that the evil, that is, the external and foreign influences in affairs of men and government, the hubris of History, intervened to stifle the true Sikh political impulse. The British Governor General at Calcutta conveyed, in no uncertain terms, to the Sikh Darbar or the Royal Court, through formal diplomatic channels that the Hon'ble British East India Company would refuse to accord diplomatic recognition to any form of government at Lahore except a monarchical Government. After Waterloo, the British statesmen in particular and the European statesmen in general, were firmly persuaded that monarchy was an enduring institution of divine sanction and that the first postulate of all political organization was, the rule of 'legitimacy' which regulated the succession of state authority from one monarch to another.

It was thus that the genuine impulse of the Sikh polity was frustrated in its natural development and almost snuffed out.

The true standard-bearer of the Sikh polity as taught by the Sikh Gurus, which was the Khalsa Army, thus found itself between the devil and the deep sea, the anti-Sikh social impulses of the Sikh Darbar and the British menace to the existence and viability of the Sirkar-i-Khalsa the political instrument which the Sikh people had forged for achieving the Sikh social aims of creating a just egalitarian, forward-looking, open and plural society as an exemplar for the future World Society. They were well-aware that the evil men of the Lahore Darbar were plotting to cause their destruction by hurling them against the British and then stabbing them in the back.

Had the shrewd Committees of the armies (the Khalsa pancayats) observed no military preparation on the part of the English, they would not have heeded the insidious exhortations of such mercenary men as Lal Singh and Tej Singh (to march against the English). [82]

But the Sikh army knew that the British were plotting to destroy the Sirkar-i-khalsa and sovereignty of the Punjab as they knew that the Lahore Darbar was plotting to destroy the Sikh Army.

The resolve of their rulers anyhow and by whatever means, to destroy them was known even by the Sikh army itself; but such had been the stern discipline of the Pancha. . . . such the real belief that the intentions of the British were aggressive. . . and such their devotion to their mystic faith that one single dogged determination filled the bosom of each soldier, the word went round, 'We will go to sacrifice' (*panth lai shahidi*). [83]

The whole of this tragedy of history, this resistless, over-powering maelstrom of destruction, of singular banefulness for the historical evolution of this region of the world, finds its seed-bed in the split psyche of Ranjit Singh.

Ranjit Singh's true character as a spiritually mis-shapen Sikh became more than evident when at his death bed he put the arm of his 'heir-apparent' into the hands of the perfidious Dogra Dhyani Singh, for safeguarding his dynasty, completely forgetting that the Sirkar-i-Khalsa was a creation of the Khalsa arms and could not otherwise be maintained except through the cooperation and devotion of the Khalsa, and he displayed no realization whatever of the fatal implication of the Dogra power which he had planted amidst the Khalsa as a counter-check, so he thought, to the latter. Nor did he seem to recollect the basic tenet of Sikhism at his last hours on earth, that God, the Guru--Akal Purkh, alone is the dispenser of life and goods and that the sovereignty, the Raj, is the prerogative and responsibility of His Khalsa, to which dynasties and cliques are irreverent irrelevancies. The banal and farcical character of these proceedings was grotesquely highlighted by Dhyani Singh when he pretended to go through the movements of trying to immolate himself at the funeral pyre of his erstwhile sovereign and the next morning embarked upon the conspiracy to destroy the entire line of Ranjit Singh's descendants to clear the way for putting his son, Hira Singh, on the throne of the Punjab. It was this Hira Singh, guided by the evil genius of Pandit Jalla, with whom the much maligned Khalsa Army had to join issues in a mortal combat, which ultimately led to the destruction of that most remarkable body of men in arms that the human History has ever known, the Khalsa Army, and the enslavement of the Sikh people, within a period of ten years after the demise of Ranjit Singh. On this "sensual and debauched" [84] Hira Singh, was conferred "the title of the Blessed Son, of Good Fortune and Lofty Dignity—Farzand-i-khas, by Ranjit Singh in a rescript issued under his personal seal in Gurmukhi and endorsed by his Secretariat at a Lahore on 21st Baisakhi, Samvat 1892 (April 1835), and in the same re-script Pandit Jalla, a gambler and a debauch, a person of "extremely cruel and immoral character" [85] is described as, "the God-Man,—the brahmasarup Pandit Jalla, the special confidant of Raja Hira Singh."

It is puerile to argue that he endeavoured to consolidate the Sikh Commonwealth by absorbing the 'unruly' Sikh misls, for, in fact, he sabotaged the natural development of the whole Sikh polity, behind which lay the traditions of the people, of many millenia past, and which was purified and sanctified by the Sikh Gurus themselves. Given suitable opportunities, these traditions and instincts of the Sikh people were bound to flower into a political system akin to that developed by the Anglo-Saxon communities in Great Britain and the United States of America, and there was no question of a permanent chaos, of "no man's rule," as Dr. Jayaswal suggests in the paragraph quoted in the beginning of this chapter, and this "no man's rule" is certainly not inherent in the polity approved by Guru Gobind Singh, as the learned doctor hints.

The very basis of true democracy and republicanism is the dignity of individual as an end in itself and as the ultimate source of all civic and political power. It is this aspect of the Sikh character and demeanor which strikes his country men and some other unsympathetic observers as somehow anarchistic, generative of "no-man's rule." But, in fact, it is the self-respect, the awareness of his own ultimate significance in the Creation of God, which imparts to a Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh that olympian air and independence which fits ill with any totalitarian or autocratic monarchical system of organization of power.

The Sikh soldiers are the finest men I have seen in Asia, bold and daring republicans. [86]

It is to this trait of character, that, there occurs a reference, with regard to the citizens of the ancient Vaishali republic, in the ancient Buddhist *Lalitvistara*, that, they,

do not recognize anybody as low, middle, high or elder amongst them, and every one of them says, 'I am subject to none,' 'I am a king'. [87]

Monarchy of the Hindu pattern was not an answer to this attitude, spirit and character of the Sikhs but the democratic republican government of Guru Gobind Singh's precepts, with collegial leadership and responsibility, securely resting on the individual and national spirit of Sikh discipline. For, the concept of Panth, which is the cornerstone of Sikh polity, is the most effective check conceivable, against the individualism of the great cats of the jungle and the colorless collectivism of the bee-hive or the ant-hill.

That this polity with the postulates which support it, has astounding inner strength was made evident when the well-trained mercenaries of the Gangetic Doab and British soldiers seasoned in Peninsular wars of Europe invaded the cis-Sutlej territory of the Sikh empire after the demise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, led by the brave British veterans of Waterloo fame, 'backed by the might and prestige of the greatest expanding empire' of the 19th century, [88] and

clashed with the Sikh soldiers, whose supplies of arms and rations had been cut off by a treacherous civil government at Lahore under dogra Gulab Singh and whose son-Sikh generals had treacherously sold their tactical plans and their lives to the crafty enemy. In the battle of Mudki, on the 18th December, 1845, the Sikh army was considered as loser, simply because their titular General, traitors Lal Singh Brahmin, after issuing attack orders, himself ran away with the munition stores, in accordance with a plan previously approved and agreed to, by the enemy. In the battle of Pherushahar, on 21st December, 1845, although the Generals Lal Singh and Teja Singh shamelessly repeated their tactics of three days earlier, the Sikh soldiers, who had gone without food rations and who had been deprived of their reserve munitions through treachery, inflicted such heavy and crushing losses on the enemy that according to the admissions made by Sir Robert Cust himself in his Log Book entry, dated the 22nd December, 1845, the British command had formally [89] decided to “surrender un-conditionally” before the Sikh army. It was again the ignominious sabotage and treachery of Lal Singh and Teja Singh which saved the British Indian empire the next morning when they deceived and persuaded the fresh reinforcements of the Sikh army to refrain from pressing the previous evening’s advantage by attacking the badly beaten enemy. Before the Sabhraon battle of 10th February, 1846, the civil government at Lahore, through its head-executive, Gulab Singh dogra had already entered into secret entente cordiale with the enemy that the Sikh civil government would render all possible help and aid to the enemy to inflict a defeat on the Sikh Army, with a view to facilitate occupation of Lahore by the British forces. [90] The Sikh soldiers, led by the retired General Sham Singh of Attari, fought the battle of Sabhraon in full knowledge of their predicament, “to save the honour of their motherland, to preserve its independence and in so doing to win or die, as free men should” [91], incidentally, a sentiment almost foreign and unknown to Indians and other Asiatic peoples in the first half of the 19th century. The ill-equipped, ill-fed and in gloriously-betrayed Sikh soldiers fought the enemy with such bravery and ferocity that the enemy had to make hurried special contacts with Generals Lal Singh and Teja Singh to save the situation for them, who readily obliged by retreating with munitions, guns and the battalions of dogra and Gorkha soldiers, across the Satluj, from where they trained a formidable battery of guns at the back of the fighting Sikh Army, after destroying the boat bridge on the river. Thus, the sure defeat of the enemy was converted into years of occupation of Lahore by the British and consolidation of their hold on the country. When the remnants of Sikh soldiers, without any backing from their state, challenged in battle the British army at Chillianwala on 13th January, 1849, the rout of the British was so decisive and complete that even patriotic British historians are obliged to admit that they were defeated. The great grand father of the writer of these lines, who fought in this battle, used to narrate that the Sikhs, for full twelve hours pursued the scattered British soldiers in all directions, who when overtaken would fall on their knees to beg for mercy, saying “ham tumhara gai” (I am like unto a defenseless cow to you), on the sight of a Sikh soldiers. [92]

This spirit and this strength is inherent in the postulates on which Sikh polity is based and it would have changed the history of India, of the British empire, and consequently of the whole world, in the beginning of the 19th century, but for the intransigence, cupidity and ideological immaturity of one man, who, became Maharaja Ranjit Singh, with the sobriquet, “Lion of the Punjab” appropriated to himself, though it naturally and in all fairness should have thus distinguished all of them, who are the *singhs* of Guru Gobind Singh.

These postulates are three, which sharply separate them from their Hindu ancestors. The significance of the individual is the first, the equality of individual, the second, and the validity of the socio-economic life as the proper context for the highest spiritual activity is the third. The Sikh republic democratic tradition is grounded in these postulates which ensure national strength and health.

In Hinduism and Buddhism, both, one of the basic metaphysical concepts is, most of which basic concepts Sikhism commonly shares with them, though as rule, after reinterpreting them differently, that the fact of individuation is an evil *per se*, and *nirvana* or *mukti* is just another name of its destruction. The stress of whole of the religious discipline and activity here is at the dissipation of individuality of which the personality is the flower. Nirvana is the extinction of personality in Buddhism; and to a Hindu, the birth and growth of personality is another name for *samsara*, the chain of transmigration, the supreme evil which every Hindu must fight to destroy. Thus, in the whole of Hindu thought and attitude, the individuality or personality has no value intrinsically, it has secondary significance only, in the social context, as a limb of other secondary group-formations, such as, family, marriage-unit and the *varnashrama*, the caste-class, for the benefit of which group-formations and individual must sacrifice himself and may freely be sacrificed. This conceptual reasoning is really the basis of the concept of Hegelian State, which in recent times has given birth to totalitarian systems of political thought. It is this concept which also supports the doctrine and the institution of an autocratic divine Hindu monarch. The Sikh idea on the subject of individuality is in the main, in consonance with the Hindu notion that the individual is not a fixed entity living a single isolated, once-for-all, life on earth as the Western

thought postulates. An individual is neither wholly himself by himself nor is he whole by himself. Thus, Sikhism is one with Hinduism in not accepting such an individual entity as the mainspring of political and religious traditions, as does the West. But here the stress is shifted in Sikhism. An individual is not an evil mirage to be destroyed and disregarded, but the very foundation on which the whole of human religious activity is to be built, and the full development of which is, in fact, the *summum bonum*, the *mukti*, the *liberation*. It is liberation from its limitations and sickness, and it is not its dissipation or destruction,

The individuality is a chronic disease no doubt, but its principle of health is also inherent in it [93]

is declared in the *Guru Granth*. God Himself is viewed as Person in the Sikh thought, as is laid down in the opening formula in the *Guru Granth*. The *mukti* is not by thwarting or dissolution of personality but by its development, by its growth through struggle with evil in the socio-political context." Live a life of endeavor and enterprise and thus produce and earn your living, for, this is the happy way of life." [94] Thus, the concept of the Rights of Man, which has played such a dynamic part in the modern growth of democratic political thought in Europe, finds a warm, full-blooded and sympathetic echo in the Sikh heart, while to the Hindu mind and attitude, it is no more than a vanity and illusion.

The second postulate is the equality of man in which the Sikh democratic republican tradition is securely grounded. The Hindu concept of karma, the Law of Universal Causation, is accepted by the Sikhs, as both axiomatic and demonstrable in the deep down recesses of human heart." This Law is there in the deepest recesses of human heart."

[95] But to the Hindu social classes and the economic apartheid of the *Varnaashram dharma* is the visible expression of the Law of karma, and, therefore, social classes and inequalities are eternal and God-ordained. Sikhism repudiates this nexus between the karma and social inequalities based on iniquities. Karma expresses itself, according to Sikhism, not in, the so-called, pre-determined individual's significance and place in human society, but in his gifts and powers and the consequences, social and personal, to which these gifts and powers inevitably lead.

Hearken, my soul, to this deep truth, The human birth is by karma, And the joys and sorrows that flow from it should be accepted as such. [96]

Thus, though men are not equal in ability, they are entitled to equal judgment and value, and social equality. Another consequence of their interpretation of the Law of Karma is the Hindu evaluation of women. Although she is treated with great tenderness and reverence in the Hindu texts, throughout the ages, her social position has always been inferior and subordinate to man in Hindu Society. According to the best Smritis, she is always a minor at law.

As a girl, she was under the tutelage of her parents, as an adult, of her husband, and as a widow, of her sons. Even under the liberal rules of Buddhism, a nun, however, advanced in the faith, was always subordinate to the youngest novice among the brethren. Early law books assess a woman's wergild as equivalent to that of a shudra, whatever her class. [97]

This inferior social status of women is also regarded as a visible expression of the Law of Karma by Hinduism. As, however, the Greeks discovered by experience, as was evidenced in the Islamic society, equality cannot endure for long if it is confined only to the male half of the society. Sikhism, as already shown, not only repudiates this nexus between karma and the social status of woman, but declares her 'as the very essence of social coherence and progress' and condemns any suggestion of 'relegating her to an inferior status in any manner', whatsoever. [98] This ideological position of the Sikhs is another source of vitality and strength for their democratic republican traditions and polity.

The third postulate of Sikhism, which sharply distinguishes them from their Hindu brethren, is their attitude to the material universe and the socio-political activity which is grounded in it. Sikhism accepts the concepts of the *samsara* and *maya*, but interprets them otherwise. Sikhism agrees that the universe, as revealed through physical senses, the *sensibilia*, and as molded into perceptual entities and patterns is not in accord with the fundamental Reality and that the universe so revealed is appearances as contrasted with the Reality. Besides, Sikhism, in agreement with Hinduism, repudiates the scientific determinism of Western scientific outlook which postulates that, real is that which is capable of invoking sensori-motor reactions in man. Sikhism however, is not world-renouncing like Hinduism and it does not look upon the material universe as a mere dream and insignificant phantom, a play of the gods in their imagination, of no abiding interest to a serious-minded person. Sikhism accords to the material universe the same essence of reality as

belongs to ultimately Real, though not the same immaculation and intensity.” All that has been created by the Real is real.” [99] The Reality is not somewhere away and apart from the material universe but is revealed to man through a change of mode of his perception. [100] The transformation of this mode of perception is the sole purpose of religious discipline. It follows, therefore, according to Sikhism, that there is no true and genuine religious activity except in the socio-political context.

The ultimate Reality is present in the human socio-political activity; endeavor to realize this through an understanding of the Testament of the Guru. [101]

It is out of this divergence of Sikh thought from the Hindu thought that the urgency and extroversion of the Sikh Character springs, in sharp contrast to the supreme unconcern and self-absorption of the Hindu.

This is the basic question:

O, man what have you done, after taking human birth on earth ? [102]

The human life on earth is a rare opportunity; it cannot be repeated very often. [103]

The night is wasted in sleep and the day in eating; this human life is precious like a jewel but is given away for a mere conchshell. [104]

Another attitude of Sikhism, though not basically peculiar to Sikhism in contradistinction to Hinduism, being more a matter of stress, is faith in reason, as the only reliable guide in human affairs, and this stress is a necessary corollary of the Sikh view of Reality and the ontological status of empirical knowledge. It is a basic ingredient of the Sikh attitude to life, as laid down by Guru Gobind Singh, that he, a Sikh, “must cultivate fortitude and patience and make reason as his guide in all matters.” [105] This respect for, and reliance on, reason, makes the Sikhs peculiarly fit for politico-democratic activities, and renders them instinctively sympathetic to the modern democratic tradition.

The Constitution Act of India promulgated in 1950, indeed, seems to have taken silent cognizance of these basic resistances embedded in the Hindu thought and soul, to the democratic idea and political set up, and it is based on the postulates of Sikhism, as contrasted with those of Hinduism.

But the really important question is this: Will the Hindu soul, unless it accepts the teachings of the Sikh Gurus without reservation, sincerely accept and adapt itself to the basic postulates of the Indian Constitution?

In what way may this question be answered? By applying the following three tests, in the main:

- (1) Do those who come into power through the electoral democratic device, in their day to day functioning, regard themselves as the instruments of the Will of the people, concretized in the impersonal legislation and rules, or do they regard themselves as repositories of power in their own personal rights?
- (2) Do the judicial organs of the state, apply and implement the law of the land as instruments of the spirit and letter of the law itself or, as the famous phrase says, they are ‘corrupt with the hope of promotion and awe-struck by the frown of power?’
- (3) Do the public and the Press readily react to and fearlessly protest against despotic and corrupt attitudes and acts of commission and omission of the executive and judicial authorities, or do they obsequiously accept them as manifestations of the basic nature of the State power, as ordained by gods, and therefore, outside the day to day concern and vigilance of the citizens?

Unambiguous answers to these three question alone can make it clear whether Indians are yet ready and fit for the Sikh Raj, or whether the ancient Hindu soul of autocracy and tyranny is reasserting itself, surreptitiously, for the Prince of Darkness himself cannot conceive of a worse despotism than that camouflaged as democracy and a more terrible tyranny than that clothed in law. [106]

How does this Sikh Raj fit into the two world-contending political systems of today, the Totalitarianism and the Democratic liberalism? For, a polity is nothing unless practical and germane to the live problems of mankind. Totalitarian systems, we might say, are those, which repudiate the liberal and rational tradition in favor of an attitude of mind, the main ingredients of which are

- (a) distrust of reason,
- (b) denial of possibility of universal judgments on morals and politics,
- (c) denial of the idea that the individual has any rights, except those which he enjoys at the pleasure of the group to which he belongs, and
- (d) denial that the national state has any duties or obligations towards other states.

These ideas, par excellence, find a concrete expression in the Communist State, the theoretical aims of which favor a Universal State, founded on social equality and rigid social justice achieved through regulation of all human activities in such a manner as to produce the maximum social good. The opposite picture to this Communist utopia is furnished by the Democratic liberalism, which dreams of a World Society in which individual freedom is at its maximum, and in which the social good comes about through the release of personal energies. Such a World Society would find its logical constitutional expression in a Universal Federal State and a universal Customs Union.

Whether the doctrine of Totalitarianism, which encompasses Fascism, Nazism, Leninism, Stalinism and Maoism is a logical development of Marxian thought and Hegelian philosophy is not a matter which is strictly relevant here, though it is difficult to reconcile Marx's temperament which was essentially humanistic and which implicitly recognized the worth of individual personality, with the totalitarian reality which uses the goal of Marxian apocalypse for securing absolute power for individuals or groups of individuals, a power to be exercised for its own sake. The crucial point is whether the inner autonomy of the individual should be destroyed so that the last semblance of human dignity is erased and man is reduced to a mere cipher, in the name of the amorphous chimera of the classless society or, it should be given the freest scope to enlarge itself so that its resistances to, and contradictions with, the social good may gradually but surely disappear.

From what we have said in the foregoing pages, there should become recognizable the guidelines by which it can be judged which pattern of political organization, as it develops gradually in its various stages of evolution, is fit to receive recognition and accord by the Sikh polity.

[1] K. P. Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, p. 351.

[2] devasura va ashu lokeshu samaytant. . . . tansttoasur aatayehnu | deva akshru vannajatya vai to jayanti rajan karvamha eti tatti || --Aitreyabrahmana I. 4.

[3] narajkeshu rastreshu vastavehmiti vaidkam || --Santiparvam (Kumbhkoram recension). Mahabhart 66. 5 .

[4] McCrindle, Ancient India as described by Magasthenes and Arrian, pp. 38-40.

[5] na tatr raja rajendre na dando na ch dandikai | asavdharmennaiv dharamgiaste rakshanti parasparam ||

--Bhishma Parvam, Mahabhart 66. 5

[6] jab lag rahe khalsa niara, tab lag tej diyo mey saraa. --Khalsa Rahitnameh, X.

[7] Charles Eliot, Sir, Hinduism and Buddhism, I, p. 40.

[8] ohrajko hi lokeasisansard to vidru te bheyato | raksharasye sarvase rajanmasrajatprabhuya ||

--Manu Smriti, VII. 3.

[9] baloappi navmantayo manushe eti bharmipai | mahto devta hamosha naropen tishriti ||

--Ibid., VII. 8.

[10] bhavishentoh yavna dhamamrtai kamtaoarthte | jaiv madurcha bhishiptaste bhavishyati naradhipay ||
--Vayupurana (Pargiter), p . 56.

[11] sahai sadhyam rajtwam chakremekam ba vartate | kurvit sachivanstasmateshaman ch rshurnuyanmatam ||
--Arthashastra, 1. 7. 15.

[12] yehnase pita yata yehn yata pitamaha | ten yaysatam marg tengachentrishyate ||
--Manavadharmashastra, iv. 178.

[13] (Un Editio Billingu Graeco-Aramaico di Ashoka' . Serie Orientale Roma, XXXI, Rome, 1958.)

[14] raja prithvi uppar rabb da parchchava hai.

السُّلْطَانُ ظِلُّ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ

[15] aadaab allarab va ass-sujaat

آداب الحرب والشجاعت

[16] keemiaaye suadat

کیمیائے سعادت

[17] maktoobat sujadad alifsanee

مکتوباتِ مجددِ آلفِ ثانی

[18] loktantar toe doorr reh, pakke kar vale islamic tantar da gulaam hoe ja.

گوریز از طرفِ جمہوریِ غلامِ پختہ کار سے شو۔

[19] kal meh bedd atharban hooa, nao khudayi aloh bheya.

--Var Asa, M-1, GGS, p. 470.

[20] "But were our knowledge less one-sided, we might see that it would be more correct to describe Indian religion as Dravidian religion stimulated and modified by the ideas of Aryan invaders, for the greatest deities of Hinduism, Krishna, Shiva, Rama, Durga, and some of its most essential doctrines, such as, metempsychosis and divine incarnations, are either totally unknown to Veda, or obscurely adumbrated in it. The chief characteristics of mature Indian religion are characteristics of an area, not of race, and they are not characteristics of religion in Persia, Greece or other Aryan lands." --Charles Eliot, Sir, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, I, p. xv.

[21] This world-famous Code of Hammurabi is now in the Louvre, Paris.

[22] Lord Krishna briefs Arjuna that God has created the king for the protection of all the people and that He seeks birth in every Yuga for the protection of the good and destruction of the evil, with a view to establish the Rule of Dharma on this Earth. --Bhagavadgita, IV 8.

[23] Lord Krishna briefs Arjuna that God has created the king for the protection of all the people and that He seeks birth in every Yuga for the protection of the good and destruction of the evil, with a view to establish the Rule of Dharma on this Earth. --Bhagavadgita, IV 8.

[24]

اگر شاہ روز را گوید شب است این
باید گفت اینک ماه ویردین

--Muslih-ud-din sadi, *Gulistan*.

[25] samano mantre smitih samani samanam maneh sah chitratmedham | --Rgveda X 191. 3.

The expression sangrama, in this text, literally means, inter-village gathering i.e. a representative session of all constituents of the realm. Since such general sessions were, as a rule, convened only for deliberating over some extreme natural emergency, such as war, the expression, sangrama, has acquired, 'war' as its secondary meaning.

[26] ye grama yadranyam ya sabha adhi bhumayam, ye sangramasamittahasteshu charu vdemate | --Atharvaveda, XII,1. 561.

[27] Atharva, VII. 12.

[28] Guru bees bisve, Sangat ikis beesve.

This dictum repeatedly occurs in the Sikh literature from the earliest times, as the basic principle of organization and exercise of power in the Sikh society.

[29] sabha ch ma samtikchavtam prajapterdohitrao samvidane | --Atharveda, vii. 12. 1.

[30] vidh te sabhe naam narista naam va artrao || Ibid., 12. 2.

[31] narista ahinsita prairna(i) bhveya | --Sayanabhasa

[32] vishastva sarvam vachhantu ma tavdrantramdhi bhrashat || --Rigveda X. 173.

[33] na sa sabha yath na santi santo na bhannati dhamam | ragam ch dosam ch pahaye moham dhamam bhannanta ch bhavanti santo || --Jatak, V. 509.

[34] "The collegiality of leadership," said Lenin, "means that all party matters are accomplished by all party members directly or through representatives, who all are subject to the same rules." —Quoted in the Paper issued by the U. S. State Department, published in *The New York Times*, dated June 10, 1956 (p. 6-9) purporting to be the text of the speech delivered on February 25, 1956, by Mr. Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the Twentieth Congress.

[35] B. S. Rao, *Life of Varahamihra*.

[36] A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, p. 490.

- [37] malaichchhah(i) yavnaasteshu shastramidam satyam | ruchhivat tehaapi poojantey punarvedvit eij(i) ||
- [38] McCrindle, Magasthenese and Arrian. xii.
- [39] Arrain, Anabasis, V. 22, p. 115.
- [40] Journal Asiatique, viii. 15, p. 237 ff.
- [41] Diodorus, xvii,91.
- [42] Arrian, v. 24.
- [43] Ibid., v. 25.
- [44] McCrindle, Invasion of India by Alexander, p. 121.
- [45] Curtis. ix. 5.
- [46] Op cit, p. 234.
- [47] ekaki bhi kshudrkaijitam | Patanjali, 3. 52.
- [48] McCrindle, Invasion of India by Alexander, p. 252.
- [49] Idem, Ancient as described in Classical Literature, p. 41.
- [50] samani parpa sah voananbhaga samane yokatre sah vo yunjim | samyacho agri saparyataye namimevabhita ||
--Atharvaveda III 30. 6.
- [51] Diodorus, xvii, 103.
- [52] Plutarch, Alexander, LIX.
- [53]

کہ تشریف در قصبہ کانگر کند
ذ ذرہ دریں راہ فطرہ تراست
بیاتا سخن خود زبان کنیم

وزاں پس ملاقات ماہم شود
ہمہ قوم بیواڑ حکیم مر است
بروئے شما مصر بانی کنیم

-- Zafarnameh 58-60.

The Dhaliwal Jats still commemorate Kangar as their foundation back in Punjab by paying the first gift to the hereditary geneologist of Kangar, at marriages etc. on the ground that "it is the first halting place on the way back home". (eY' gfj bk o[gfJnk eKrV e/ fwok;h dk, eKrV gfj bk w[ekw j?). Even this cis-Satluj part of the Punjab, which only till recently was described in official records as "Jungletract", was rechristened as Malwa by these returning immigrants.

- [54] sanghe havo gann prashansye: III. 3. 86.
- [55] gann prashansye kim | sanghat | Kasika, p. 214.

[56] gnanavrtimichchhami shritum matimtavarn | yatha ganna prachand na bhidante ch bharat | orinsch virjigashante sahride prapnuvinte ch | bhedmulo vinashehi gnanamo palakhshe | mantram savrannam du vahunamiti me mat(i) | --Santiparvan, Mahabharta, 107, 6-8.

[57] Panini, V, III, 116-17.

[58] It is interesting that in the first half of the 19th century, when the expanding British power in India made an objective appraisal of the basic character of the Sikh Raj in the Panjab, as reflected in its fundamental organ, the Khalsa Army, it concluded that the Sikh Raj was a "war-like republic." In a letter written from Kasur, dated Feb. 1848 Sir Henry Hardinge, the British Governor General, observed : " If I can arrange to make Gulab Singh and the Hill tribes independent including Kashmir, I shall have weakened this war-like republic." Quoted by Ganda Singh in his Correspondence, Anglo-Sikh Wars, p. 105, fn.

[59] vahokeshu ya ayudhjivi sanghastdvachitam. . . kshaodrave malva | p. 455-56.

[60] Karanaparva Mahabharata, XLIV, 6.

[61] The word vahika still exists in the Punjabi language and the peasants of the Panjab call themselves vahikas but in the secondary sense of the word, a cultivator, owner of land (tkjhe, tkjheko). The original meaning of vahika(SK) is, "the land of rivers", from the verb veh to flow, from which is derived, vahini meaning, a river. The Punjab and the Indus Valley have, from times immemorial been known as 'the land of rivers.'

[62] A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, pp. 77-79. Plates, VI. VII; V. C. Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, i, pp. 166-170.

[63] See Gurpratap Suraj Granth, III, ii, 6,15.

[64] The Guru had enjoined on Banda Singh Bahadur "to remain pure in conduct and never to touch another man's wife; to be true in word and deed ; to look upon himself as a servant of Khalsa, who would be the Guru in future, and to act always on the advice of the five (representative) Sikhs" - Teja Singh & Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, p. 80.

[65]

یسکھ زرد پروردو عالم تیغ نانک و اصیب است -
فتح گویند سیکھ شاہ شاہان فضل تچا صاحب است -

[66]

دیگ و تیغ و فتح و نفرت بید رنگ -
یافت از نانک گورو گویند سیکھ -

[67] --IV. 7. 127. Kashikavritti (Comments) p. 350.

[68] L. Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*, 1870, p. 16; James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs*, as quoted by Ganda Singh and Teja Singh in *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, p. 61.

[69] George Campbel, *Memoirs of My Indian Career*, I, p. 42-43.

[70] Ibid.

[71] --Atharva, III. 4. 2.

[72] panch parvan panch pardhan; panche paveh dargeh mann; panche sohe dar rajan; pancha ka gur ek dhiyaan. --Japu, SGGs, p. 3.

[73] panchan meh nitt bartat hoe mei panch mileh veh peeranpeet. --Gurpratapsurya, III(I) vi, 41-42.

[74] Ellenborough Papers, Private Correspondence of Ellenborough with the Queen, 30/12, II(i).

[75] Ibid.

[76] Hardinge to Ellenborough from Agra dt. 23rd Oct., 1845, (Public Record office, London).

[77] Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private), Calcutta, 3rd June, 1845, op. cit.

[78] Ibid.

[79] *Hardinge Family Papers*, Penhurst, Kent (Hardinge to his wife) Camp Lahore, 2nd March, 1845.

[80] Broad foot to Currie, (Sep. 22, 1845), 167/34, Punjab Government Records, Lahore.

[81] *Kingdom of the Punjab*, p. 409.

[82] J. D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p. 299.

[83] Hugh Pearse, *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner*, p. 265-66.

[84] Charles Francis Massy, Col. *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, I, p. 314. and Lepel, H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, p. 262.

[85] Nur Ahmad. Chisti Maulvi. *Tahqiqat-i-Chisti*, p. 783.

[86] Hardinge to Ellenborough (Private), Calcutta, 19th March, 1846, *Hardinge Family Papers*, Penhurst, Kent (England).

[87] *Lalitvistara III*. (Now edited and translated by Rajendar Lal Mitra, in *Bibliotheca Indica* 1896-98).

It was this tradition and spirit which re-appeared out of the subconscious racial mind of the people, in the 18th century during the Sikh resurgence in the Punjab, when every Sikh made the claim, aham mir, aham mir, as his prototype the Vaisalian had made some 2500 years ago, aham raja aham rajeti. This phase of Sikh resurgence is known to Sikh chroniclers, distortedly described by them as hanne hanne miri i.e., in every horse saddle a king. Mir is the Turkish equivalent of Sanskrit, raja. It must always be remembered, however, that this aham mir claim by the Sikhs, has at no state of their history, refused to submit to, and dared to defy, the collective will of the Panth duly formulated.

[88] kehat matak ab panth ke oopar, jhuk nahee nandak saree, lashkar bharee. --Matak, *Jangnamah Singhan te Firangian* (ed.) Piara Singh Padam), Chhand 26, p. 90.

[89] "News came from the Governor-General that our attack of yesterday had failed, that affairs were desperate, that all the state papers were to be destroyed. . . This was kept secret by Mr. Currie, and we were concerting measures to make an unconditional surrender. . ."

--Sir Robert Cust. N, *Linguistic and Oriental Essays*, VI,48.

[90] The "understanding" with Gulab Singh was that "the Sikh army should be attacked by the English and that when beaten it should be openly abandoned by its own Government; and further that the passage of Sutlej should be unopposed and the roads to the capital laid open to the victors."

--Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 32.

[91] pagga dareeya dee rakho laaj yaro, muth meetee see eys Panjab dee jee, enha khol ditta sara pajj yaro, Shah Muhammad marr ke maro ithe, kade raj na hoye muhtaj yaro.

--Shah Muhammad (1780-1862), *Jangnama Singhan te Firangian*, "Chhand' 87, p. 77.

[92] "Chillianwala was not a victory. When the news of Chilianwala reached England, the nation was stricken with profound emotion. A long series of military successes had ill-fitted it to hear with composure of British guns and British standards taken and of British cavalry flying before the enemy. . ."

Adams, *Episodes of Anglo-Indian History*, p. 228-29.

[93] homai deeragh rog hai daroo bhi is mahe. --Var Asa M-1, GGS, p. 466.

[94] udam karendia jio too kamavdia sukh bhunch --Ibid., p. 522.

[95] hukam rajai chalana nanak likhia nall --Ibid., p. 1.

[96] too sun kirat karuma poorab kamaiya, sirr sirr sukh sahunsa seh su tu bhala --Tukhari, M-1, SGGS, p. 1107.

[97] A. L. Bashman, *Wonder That was India*, p. 177.

[98] soe kyo manda akhiye jit jamme rajan, bhando hee bhand opajeh bhande bajh na koe --Var Asa, M-1, GGS, p. 473.

[99] aap sat kiya sabh sat--Sukhmani, M 5, GGS, p. 294.

[100] bujanhar koe sat sabh hoe--Sukhmani, M-5, GGS, p. 285.

[101] vich sangat har prabh varatda bujho shabad vichar--Kanare ki Var, M-4, GGS, p. 1314.

[102] ey sareera meriya iss jag meh ayeke kiya tudh karam kamaye --Ramkali M 3, SGGS, p. 921.

[103] Kabir manas janam dulumb hai hoe na bare barr--Sloka Kabir, Ibid., p. 1366.

[104] renn gavayee soye ke divas gavaye khayee, heere jessa janam hai kaudee badale jaye --Ibid., p. 156.

[105] dheeraj dham banaye ihe so deepak jiyo ojiare --Krsnavatar, DG, p. 570.

[106] For, "What constitutes a State? Not high raised battlements, or labored mound, Thick wall or moated gate. Nor, cities fair, with spires and turrets crown's, No, men, high minded men, With powers as far above dull beasts endued in forest, brake or den, As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude. . . . Men who their duties know, But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain, Prevent the long aimed bow, And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain." --Alcaeus, *The State*, (c. 660 B. C.), as adopted by Sir William James