

Language changes with time and is a creation of a society. Pañjābī (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) spoken today is very different from our *Gurū Sāhib*'s time. Gurbānī (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ) uses several different Indic languages and therefore may seem complex in grammar. The language of Gurbānī is the language of the saints developed between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is based on the local dialects. Many words used in Gurbānī are not used today and in some cases their meanings may have changed. The *Gurū Granth Sāhib* is comprised of eight different, spoken languages. This clearly shows us that the *Gurūs* were highly educated and well-versed in poetry of all these languages.

### Arrangement

*Gurū Arjan Sāhib* arranged the compositions in a very systematic arrangement. The 1430 pages are divided into 33 sections:

- Pre-rāg (ਰਾਗ): Nitnem at the time (Jap - ਜਪੁ, Rahrāsi - ਰਹਰਾਸਿ, Sohilā - ਸੋਹਿਲਾ)
- Rāg: 31 *rāgs*
- Post-rāg: Assorted verses, i.e. *saloks* (ਸਲੋਕ), *savayes* (ਸਵਯੇ) of *Gurūs* and bards

Each *sabad* is preceded by a number (*Mahalā* - ਮਹਲਾ), indicating the name of the contributor. The *Gurūs* are respectively in order from the first to the ninth.

Under each *rāg* the hymns are further arranged in the following order;

- Caūpadā (ਚਉਪਦਾ) (hymns of 4 verses)
- Aṣṭpadī (ਅਸਟਪਦੀ) (hymns of eight verses)
- Chant (ਛੰਤ) (hymns of 6 lines)
- Short bāṇīs
- Vārs (ਵਾਰ) (consisting *paūrī* - ਪਉੜੀ, with any or no *salok*)
- Hymns of *bhagats* in the same order of *rāgs*

Note the hymns may be further classified according to the musical *ghar* in which each are to be sung. It can be summed up as the Gurbānī being arranged, first according to the *rāg*; second, according to the meter of the *sabad*; third, to the contributor; and, fourth, by the *ghar* (ਘਰ).

### Message of Gurū Granth Sāhib in brief:

- Description of Vāhigurū—One Universal Creator
- Very introspective
- Guide to a spiritual and meaningful living
- Way to become a *Gurmukh* (ਗੁਰਮੁਖ) (Gurū-oriented individual)
- Spiritual knowledge, guides the path of life
- Vāhigurū's attributes and praise
- Path of Love is key to Vāhigurū—realization and living in bliss
- How to Identify the human soul with Vāhigurū and the obstacles that stand in the way, along with how to overcome these obstacles
- Eternal message
- Truthful living/no conduct higher than truth itself

### Gurū Harirāi Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਰਾਇ ਸਾਹਿਬ) (1630-1661)

Gurū Harirāi Sāhib was the grandson of Gurū Harigobind Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ). He was born at Kīratpur (ਕੀਰਤਪੁਰ). Gentle and kind hearted, he opened a hospital where medicines and treatment were given free. He spread the message of the previous *Gurūs* (ਗੁਰੂ) and is particularly known for his love towards animals. He made special hospitals for them and also made a zoo for all species of animals and birds and gave them his utmost love. He propagated the use of herbal medicine as well.

One day as a child, while passing through a garden, his loose flowing robe (*Colā* – ਚੋਲਾ) damaged some flowers and scattered their petals on the ground. This sight affected his tender heart and brought tears in his eyes. Upon seeing this, his grandfather told him that it was not only important to be empathetic but to also do something about it. After that he always walked with his *Colā* tucked up, and resolved never to harm anything. When he grew up, he carried the same spirit with him. He used Bābā Pharīd's (ਬਾਬਾ ਫਰੀਦ) quotation frequently: “All human hearts are jewels; to distress them is not at all good; if you desire the Beloved, distress no one's heart.”

Gurū Harirāi Sāhib was most generous. His food was very simple. Whatever valuable offerings were made to him, he used to spend on his guests. On the advice of his grandfather, Gurū Harigobind Sāhib, he kept twenty-two hundred mounted soldiers. In the afternoon he used to go to the chase. The *Gurū* freed some of the animals he obtained from the chase, and protected others in a zoological garden, which he had made for the recreation of his Saṅgat (ਸੰਗਤ). In the evening the *Gurū* used to hold his *divān* (ਦੀਵਾਨ), listen to hymns sung by his choir, and then give divine instructions.

When Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān's (ਸ਼ਾਹ ਜਹਾਂ) eldest son Dārā Shikoh (ਦਾਰਾ ਸ਼ਿਕੋਹ) was seriously ill, Gurū Harirāi Sāhib sent herbal medicine which cured him. Thus, relations with the Mughals remained on a good footing for a short time. Shāh Jahān kept his eldest son Dārā Shikoh near him. He made his second son, the governor of Baṅgāl (ਬੰਗਾਲ). The third son, Aurāṅzeb was appointed governor of Dakhan (ਦਖਨ) and Murād Bakhsh (ਮੁਰਾਦ ਬਖਸ਼) received the province of Gujrat (ਗੁਜਰਾਤ). However, their ambition was not satisfied and each one of them eagerly sought to become emperor. To this end they combined wealth and armies in their respective regions. When Shāh Jahān became ill and showed no signs of recovery, a war of succession broke out. Dārā Shikoh dispatched Rājā Jai Singh (ਰਾਜਾ ਜੈ ਸਿੰਘ) against Shujah Mohammad and sent Rājā Jasvant Singh (ਰਾਜਾ ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ) of Jodhpur (ਜੋਧਪੁਰ) to Dakhan. Jai Singh defeated Shujah Mohammad, but the combined armies of Aurāṅzeb and Murād forced Jasvant Singh to retreat. Upon this Aurāṅzeb prepared to retaliate and tried to seize the reigns of empire.

Aurāṅzeb imprisoned his father in Āgrā (ਅਗਰਾ) and his soldiers, as well as those of his youngest brother Murād's, forced Dārā Shikoh to flee towards Pañjāb (ਪੰਜਾਬ). Gurū Harirāi Sāhib was visiting Goindvāl (ਗੋਇੰਦਵਾਲ) where he met Dārā Shikoh, who had come to receive his blessings. Dārā Shikoh remembered that the *Gurū Sāhib* had been responsible for saving his life when he was sick. Dārā Shikoh was both an intellectual and liberally tolerant towards other religions. He was a great admirer of the Muslim Sufi Saint Mīām Mīr (ਮੀਆਂ ਮੀਰ) who in turn was a great admirer of the *Gurūs*. Gurū Harirāi Sāhib granted Dārā Shikoh an audience and received him with due courtesy.

After some time Dārā Shikoh was eventually captured by the forces of Aurāṅzeb. Aurāṅzeb had Dārā Shikoh executed, killed his own youngest brother Murād, and appointed himself as the emperor.