

Ragmala:
a re-appraisal in context of *Sri Guru*
Granth Sahib

Madan Singh
11 Apollo Way
Perry Barr
Birmingham B20 3ND

Dedicated to

The Sikh Scholars
Who Ventured to Research, and
Tell the Truth About *Ragmala*

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Foreword

Guru Nanak Dev *ji*'s mission is based on logical search of the 'Truth'. There is no place for rituals and farcical beliefs in this modern religion. The Guru logically challenged the age-old beliefs of the Hindus such as casteism, yag, bathing in rivers etc. Those who came to the sanctuary of the Guru became his followers to search and seek the 'Truth' logically; they were called the Sikhs (disciples). However, there were some who liked Guru's teaching but were unable to distinguish them from the prevalent religion of the masses. Some Hindus also felt the new religion to be a challenge to their age-old practice. Persons of these two categories either out of ignorance or intentionally distorted historical facts and even tampered with Guru's writings.

It is a common sight to see couplets such as '*Nanak Nivan Jo Chale, Lage Na Tatti Vao*' on the backs of lorries in India. This is a testimony of '*Kacchi Bani*' which still prevails despite the warning of Guru Amar Das *ji* during his life time. An uninitiated Sikh gets confused whether such couplets are *Gurbani*. Many ignorant Sikhs have been heard to ask the reference of this couplet from *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

So much so *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* was tampered with either by an unidentified ignorant Sikh or an over jealous Hindu who appended *Ragmala* without realising that how much damage will it cause to the Sikhs masses in general. This appendix has created a long-term controversy that is still unresolved despite it being reasoned out that *Ragmala* is not *Gurbani*. A majority of Sikh scholars opine that *Ragmala* has no thematic coherence with *Gurbani* but those with blind faith consider it to be integral to *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* merely because it is printed at the end. However, the *Panth* at large has decided that *Ragmala* is not the 'word' of Gurus, and *bhog* be performed after *Mundavani Mehla 5* and *Shalok Mehla 5*.

Sikhism is under constant threat from Hindu fanatics as they cannot tolerate a separate entity of the Sikhs. Many historians have warned about this hostility. For instance, in 1899, Max Arthur MacCaulfe wrote in the preface of his book 'The Sikh Religion' that 'A movement to declare the Sikhs as Hindus in direct opposition to the teachings of the Gurus is wide spread for long duration.'

Therefore, the Sikh youth, who have to counter anti-Sikh propaganda must have proper understanding of historical perspectives in Sikhism. They need to study vast literature to come to appropriate conclusions, and liberate us from those who are out to malign and confuse the Sikh issues and Gurus' writings.

This compilation is an attempt to re-analyse the composition and contents of *Ragmala* and to relate it to the divine theme and style of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The major objective is to inform and enlighten the Sikh masses about this issue so as to enable them to arrive at logical conclusions. We expect that all who read this compilation will be able to make their own judgement whether or not *Ragmala* is integral to recitation during *Akhand Path* or *Path*.

Perhaps this is the first ever researched compilation on *Ragmala* in English which addresses the expectations of Sikh youth residing in the western world.

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Madan Singh

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The *Ragmala* appearing at the end of *Guru Granth Sahib* after *Mundavani*, has been the subject of controversy for more than the last three centuries. It is now clear to the modern scholars as well as the general readers that *Ragmala* does not fall in line with the system adopted by Guru Arjan Dev in compiling and editing the holy *Adi Granth Sahib* in 1604 AD. Each *Rag* in the holy scripture is an individual entity without any wife or son (sub-*Ragas* or sub-sub-*Ragas*). Guru Arjan Dev worked out his own system, for instance Gauri Rag has more than two dozen varieties and at other places two *Ragas* have been combined. It is therefore said that this '*Ragmala*' is an interpolate made by some innocent or mischievous person. This addition has caused great damage to the Sikh *Panth* which is divided on the issue. The majority of so called Sikh saints (holy men) and their followers maintain that since *Ragmala* appears at the end of the holy scripture it must be read at the *bhog* ceremony irrespective of its relevance to the divine message of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The other segment of Sikh *Panth*, that came under the influence of *Singh Sabha* movement challenges *Ragmala* as part of *Gurbani*. It comprises several scholars of repute who refute it as it does not bear the name of the author-Guru. They feel that the entire verse *Ragmala* does not conform to the numerical system of the holy scripture which the compiler Guru adopted to check interpolation.

A bird's eye view of Sikh history shows that from the very beginning of the Sikh movement there have been some who worked to interpolate into the holy verses of the Sikh Gurus. Quite a number of versifiers had cropped up even during the lifetime of the Gurus who would write verses in the style of the Gurus and would mislead the Sikhs. Even in Guru Arjan Dev's compilation of the holy scripture – *Adi Granth Sahib*, there appear verses carrying *Mahalla* sixth and seventh in some *birs*. The fact is that the sixth and seventh Gurus never wrote a single line for inclusion into the holy *Granth*.

From the very onset, Brahmanical influences have always remained hostile to the Sikh movement. A few instances would show how with this influence on people in general, some subverts were at work to subvert the movement from within. The move was so subtle that truth could not be sifted for long. Perhaps it took a century or two to find out. For instance, there was one Koer Singh who wrote *Gur-Bilas Patshai Dasmī* in 1751, 43 years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh. He was a *Vaishnav* Hindu – Bishan Chand. He admits that he was a Sikh only by name. He invented a myth that before the creation of the *Khalsa* Guru Gobind Singh worshipped mythical Hindu goddess Durga and that he was blessed by other mythical gods and goddesses of the Hindus. He propagated that all Gurus of the Sikhs were in fact, *avtars* – incarnation of Lord Vishnu. This is pure blasphemy as we know from the study of *Gurbani*. He did not stop short there. He wrote a ballad (*vaar*) in praise of Guru Gobind Singh under the pen name *Bhai* Gurdas Singh and had it added as *vaar* 41 of *Bhai* Gurdas who was contemporary of the Sikh Gurus (from third to sixth Guru). This *vaar* 41 mislead the Sikhs in believing that *Khalsa* was created by Guru Gobind Singh to put an end to the religion of Prophet Mohammed. This goes against the basic principles of the Sikh Gurus (*ref: Pauri 16 and 17*).

Another mischievous attempt to subvert the Sikh doctrine was made by a Brahmin who was a 'Sikh' in name only. Kesar Singh Chhibbar wrote *Bansawali nama* (family

tree) of the tenth Guru in 1769. In that, he states, that the Sikh struggle was nothing but anarchy. He could not reconcile to the inclusion of lower castes into the fold of *Khalsa*. He also states that goddess Durga blessed and ordered Guru Gobind Singh to create *Khalsa Panth* to fight against the Mughal demons. It is all a hang-over of the Hindu way of thinking.

These attempts to subvert the Sikh doctrine are not confined to some distant past either. To our shock in the 21st century, it was discovered that within *Gur-Bilas Patshahi Chhevin*, there contained many utterances that were considered by many a Sikh scholars to be contrary to the Sikh theology. The book has since been banned. It takes centuries to sift truth from myths.

The few instances given above will help the reader to understand that some unscrupulous persons had been at work in the past, as some are indulging even today in the same dirty game of subverting the Sikh theology as well as the Sikh history. Inclusion of *Ragmala* in the hand-written versions of the holy *Adi Guru Granth Sahib* may also be seen from that angle. G.B. Singh in his book '*Pracheen Biran Bare*' proves it beyond doubt that Guru Arjan Dev did not include *Ragmala* in the original manuscript written by *Bhai* Gurdas in 1604 AD. Rather, it was included later on when the Sikh *Panth* was fighting a battle for its own existence and there was nobody to stop these unknown subverters from playing this mischief.

No doubt the *Nirmalas* and the *Udasi-Sadhus* looked after the Sikh shrines as well as Sikh theology during their struggle for existence in the eighteenth century. It took another century to realise that a mischief had been played. In the early 20th century modern Sikh theologians and the conventional Sikh saints were vertically divided on the issue of *Ragmala*. Modern Sikh scholars considered it anathema, while others looked upon *Ragmala* as something sacred without giving any reasonable argument.

The modern scholars were: *Kavi Santokh Singh*; *Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha*; Prof. Piyara Singh Padam; *Bhai Ashok Singh* – a research scholar, SGPC, Amritsar; S. Kartar Singh Dakha; *Bhai Randhir Singh Narangwal*; *Babu Teja Singh Bhasaur*; *Giani Gurdit Singh*; and *Kavi Raj Giani Arjan Singh* (see Annex 1).

The opposing traditional saints and scholars were: Dr *Bhai Vir Singh*, Dr *Bhai Jodh Singh*, *Akali Kaur Singh* and *Giani Gurbachan Singh* Head of *Jatha Bhindranwala* and a few other saints.

Jathedar Bhai Mohan Singh Nagoke summoned a joint meeting of the saints and scholars in 1945 AD at *Sri Akal Takhat Sahib* with the sole objective of resolving the issue once and for all. *Jathedar Nagoke* himself performed the initial *ardas* (prayer) and affirmed that if it is proved after mutual discussion and debate that *Ragmala* is not *Gurbani*, it would never be read at the Akal Takhat Sahib.

The pro-*Ragmala* group could not give clear cut proof to establish that *Ragmala* is *Gurbani*. They walked out in disgust. Thereupon *Jathedar Nagoke* declared that in the interest of maintaining *Panthic* unity the reading of *Ragmala* was to be optional. Those who want it read after *Mundavani* may, but after this decree from Takhat Sahib nobody should raise the issue for or against it. He also declared that henceforth it would not be recited at the Akal Takhat Sahib.

After a few days, Master Tara Singh, who was President of *Shiromani Akali Dal*, sent a special emissary – *Giani Lal Singh* of Sikh Missionary College Amritsar (ex-chairman Punjab Public Service Commission Patiala) to *Giani Gurbachan Singh* to ascertain as to whether he would be abiding by the decree of Akal Takhat Sahib. *Giani Lal Singh* returned after a week's stay at Bhinder Khalan, with a written message that *Jatha Bhindran* bows before the decree of Akal Takhat Sahib. The veracity of the said message can be gauged from the fact that as long as *Giani Gurbachan Singh* lived the issue was never raked up by him. In the meantime *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC)* included the contents of the decree in the Sikh code of conduct (*Sikh Rehat Maryada*). This was universally acclaimed by all. Since the Sikh nation as a whole accepted that *Ragmala* was not written by Guru Arjan Dev *ji bhog* ceremonies were performed after *Mundavani Mehla 5* and *Salok Mehla 5*. Many historical Sikh Gurdwaras such as Nankana Sahib, Khadur Sahib, Taran Tarn Sahib adopted this practice. However, some Sikh saints have been raking the issue of *Ragmala* again and again for their selfish motives.

The major controversy for *Ragmala* was created when *Bhai Jasbir Singh* became the *Jathedar* of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib during the recent turmoil in the Punjab. He ordered the recitation of *Ragmala* at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib and imposed code of practice of *Bhindran Jatha* for *Rehras path*. This command was in contradiction to the earlier directive of *Jathedar Mohan Singh Nagoke*, and was done without taking the whole Sikh nation into confidence. However, the general masses never accepted this change.

It is also worth mentioning that when the associates of *Bhai Vir Singh* assumed the control of Chief Khalsa Diwan and SGPC they also started advocating the recitation of *Ragmala* at the *Bhog* ceremony. However, unlike *Bhai Jasbir Singh* they did not dare to challenge the command of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib of not reciting *Ragmala*. Because of their influence, *Ragmala* began to be recited at Sri Harmandir Sahib and some other Gurdwaras but not at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib.

It is also recorded that in *Bikrami 1906 Pandit Sobha Singh Dilwali* who used to reside at *Bhai Dial Singh Dera* in Amritsar called upon all the Sikhs saints and scholars on *Diwali* day at Amritsar to discuss the issue of *Ragmala*. After a long discussion it was decided that *Ragmala* was not *Gurbani*. *Ragmala* in four *birs* was defaced with black ink there and then. All present signed the *Gurmata*. *Giani Gian Singh*, then about 25 years old, was also among the signatories (See '*Ragmala Di Asliat*' by *Giani Hardit Singh, Chandigarh*).

According to *Bhai Gajinder Singh*, Chairman of Dal Khalsa *Sant Jarnail Singh* was an ardent supporter of *Ragmala*, yet he never interfered with the practice of *Path* at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib during his abode in Harmandir Sahib in 1984. *Bhai Gajinder Singh* wrote an article in *Des Prades* weekly on 28.7.89 pages 39-41 "ਮਰਯਾਦਾ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਤੇ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼". He wrote, "੧੯੮੪ ਤਕ ਦਮਦਮੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਮੁਖੀ ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਰਹੇ । ਪਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਥੇ ਚਲੀ ਆ ਰਹੀ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਕਦੇ ਖੁਲ੍ਹੀ ਬਹਿਸ ਦਾ ਇਸ਼ੂ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਕਦੇ ਧਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਾਗੂ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ । ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਜ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਦੀ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਨੀ ਟਕਰਾਉ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਦੇਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਲਾਂ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕੀ ਉਹ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਸਮਝਦਾਰ ਨੇ ਜਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਨਾਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਨੇ ਕਿ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਸੂਰੇ ਨੇ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਲਈ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਦਾ ਹਕ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦੀ ਕੀਮਤ ਵਸੂਲਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ ।" " Until 1984 *Sant Jarnail Singh ji*,

Head of Damdami Taksal, was in the Harmandir Sahib complex. Neither he made *Maryada*, being followed there, an open issue of discussion nor he tried to enforce it with force. Are all those Singhs who are now fighting it out more intelligent than him (*Sant ji*) or do they want to prove that they are more powerful (than *Sant ji*) or are they trying to collect the payment of *Sant ji*'s leadership of *Panth* and for his martyrdom?"

Another controversy about *Ragmala* was created by *Bhai* Rashpal Singh Usman who owned the responsibility of writing threatening letters to Prof. Darshan Singh, former *Jathedar* of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, and to the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. In these letters it was wrongly stated that *Bhai* Ram Singh of Akhand Kirtani Jatha wrote a *bir* without *Ragmala* and tried to install it forcefully at Akal Takhat Sahib. He was also charged with writing of four such *birs* and trying to install them at four other Gurdwaras under the control of SGPC. The letters demanded that *Bhai* Ram Singh should be punished and excommunicated. In reply to these threatening letters a clarification was issued by five *Panthic Jathebandies* (bodies) in the Punjab Tribune, Chandigarh on 1.11.90. *Bhai* Kulwant Singh press Secretary of Babbar Khalsa replied that *Ragmala* was not used to be recited at Akal Takhat Sahib during the period of *Sant Jarnail Singh ji*. Once Sawarn Singh, a nephew of *Sant ji*, recited the *Ragmala* at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib. *Sant ji* held him an accuse of interfering with Akal Takhat Sahib's *Maryada*, and himself caned him for his misconduct. *Sant ji* used to say that the previously taken decisions can only be changed by the whole *Panth*. The reply also took a serious note of accusations made on *Bhai* Ram Singh.

Bhai Ram Singh of Akhand Kirtani Jatha also issued his clarification. He refuted the charge that he ever tried to install his hand-written *bir* either at Akal Takhat Sahib or at any other Gurdwara. He also falsified the claim that he had written or got written four *birs*. He, however, expressed that he always does *bhog* after *Mundavani*, and that is why he did not include *Ragmala* in the said *bir*. He further stated that his was not the only *bir* without *Ragmala*; there are many ancient *birs* within and outside the country that finish at *Mundavani*. He also contended that there existed several such *birs* in the 'Sikh Reference Library' in Harmander Sahib Complex before the big fire was alighted during the army attack in 1984. According to him, among others, there also existed a *bir* without *Ragmala* that was specially brought from Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib.

A clarification to the fact that no body ever approached the SGPC for installing a hand-written *bir* without *Ragmala* at Sri Akal Sahib or at any other Gurdwara was issued by the Shiromani Parbandhak Committee Amritsar. The statement took a strong view of letters of *Bhai* Rashpal Singh.

It is not out of place to mention that in the *Sikh Rehat Maryada* published by SGPC in 1938 it is written that *bhog* be performed after *Mundavani* and *Ragmala* should not be recited. However, the controversy about *Ragmala* did not end. Therefore, in the 1945 edition of *Sikh Rehat Maryada*, it was modified to read; '*bhog* should be performed at *Mundavani* or after *Ragmala* according to the local practice. There still exists a controversy about *Ragmala* in the *Panth*.' When *Bhai* Harbaksh Singh of Chatham enquired about *Ragmala* from Sri Akal Sahib he was given a very clear directive on 4.7.70 (see annex 2) that "*Ragmala* is not read at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, it does not

have a *Mehla* in the title and the *Granthi* who does not read it is not a *Tankhaya* (accuse).”

It may be mentioned that at inaugural ceremony of the new building of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib on *Baisakhi* day of 1997 during the *Jathedarship* of *Bhai* Ranjit Singh and SGPC presidency of Gurcharan Singh Tohra *Ragmala* was recited at the *bhog* of *Akhand Path* despite the *Ardas* performed to the contrary in 1945. A decree issued from the Akal Takhat Sahib cannot be withdrawn, and those who violate the command do it against the Sikhi spirit.

RAGMALA AND ITS COMPOSITIONAL ATTRIBUTES

What is a *Ragmala*?

The word '*Ragmala*' means 'index of the musical measures of a particular Indian Classical system'. It is a nomenclature system of *Ragas*. There are several *Ragmalas* with different characteristics of *Ragas* depending upon difference of opinion of musicians and or the regional influences. With the passage of time great musicians invented their own systems. The following six systems have been primarily widely recognised:

1. Shiva system
2. Krishna system
3. Bharat system
4. Hanumant system
5. Sidh Sarswat System
6. Ragarant System.

Each system has its own family tree for the facility of the learner. These classifications observe the same rules of 'wives' and 'sons' as seen under the conventional human family tree with which we are all familiar.

According to *Bhai Kahan Singh* many musicians recognise *Bhairav*, *Malar*, *Sri Rag*, *BaSant*, *Hindol* and *Deepak* as major *Ragas*. Others think *Malav*, *Malar*, *Sri Rag*, *BaSant*, *Hindol* and *Karnat* (six) as the major *Ragas*. *Bharat* system recognises *Bhairav*, *Kaushak*, *Hindol*, *Deepak*, *Sri Rag* and *Meg Rag* as the six major *Ragas*. *Hanumant* system recognises *Sri Rag*, *Bhairav*, *Megh*, *Deepak*, *Malkaus* and *Hindol* as the six major *Ragas*. These systems may change a major *raga* of other system into a sub-*rag* (*ragani*) and vice-versa. The music-experts have classified *Ragas* in three categories on the basis of the use of 7 keys, i.e. *Aurav* of five keys; *Saurav* of 6 keys and *Sampuran* of 7 keys. However, all this should not confuse us because our Gurus have established their own system called *Gurmukhi Rag* system; we must follow it for singing. *Pandit Hari Ram Chaurasia*, India's most famous flute player, guided a PhD student on *Gurmukhi Rag* system. He thinks that the system followed by the Gurus is unique and different from other Indian classical systems.

Compositional attributes of *Ragmala* in comparison to the style of *Guru Granth Sahib*

It is interesting to examine the compositional style of *Ragmala* in comparison to the style of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

1. *Differnece in use of words*: In the fifth line of *Ragmala* the word *Pun* (ਪੁਨਿ = द्विः; ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਪੁਨਹ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ) has been used. This is a derivation of Sanskrit word *Punah*. On the other hand, in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* wherever the dervation of Sankrit word *Punah* has been used it occurs in its prevelant Punjabi version, i.e., as *Phun* (ਫੁਨਿ). No where it has been written as *Pun* (ਪੁਨਿ). Prof. Sahib Singh thinks it to be a strange

occurrence of this word in *Ragmala* since no Guru ever used this word in *Gurbani* to mean what is conveyed in *Ragmala*.

2. *No authorisation*: Unlike *Gurbani* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* there is no *Mehla* in the title of *Ragmala*. According to style of the holy book after any *Rag* there is an indication of authorship by *Mehla*, e.g. *Mehla 4* etc. The whole of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is unambiguous in this respect. There is no *shalok* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* where Sikhs have to guess about its author. Why should it be so in *Ragmala*?

3. *Difference in serialisation of stanzas*: If we closely study *Shabad*, *Ashtpadia*, *Chhand* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* we find that there is a unique system of serialisation of stanzas with numbers. When a *band* or couplet ends, it is given a number to indicate its position in the hymn, and that it can now stand alone, and is complete in its meaning. The fifth Guru evolved a hierarchical system of numbering where the total number of couplets and *Shabads* are explicitly mentioned as totals and grand totals that run concurrently. This nesting is so distinctive that it does not allow any one to add or delete a couplet without disturbing the numbering system. This is a fool proof method for the protection of originality of *Gurbani*.

Now compare it with the unorganised system of numbering in *Ragmala*.

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਸਾਦਿ ਰਾਗ ਮਾਲਾ ॥
ਰਾਗ ਏਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਪੰਚ ਬਰੰਗਨ ॥ ਸੰਗਿ ਅਲਾਪਹਿ ਆਠਉ ਨੰਦਨ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਰਾਗ ਭੈਰਉ ਵੈਰਹੀ ॥ ਪੰਚ ਰਾਗਨੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਉਚਰਹੀ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਭੈਰਵੀ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੀ ॥ ਪੁੰਨਿਆਕੀ
ਗਾਵਹਿ ਬੰਗਲੀ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਅਸਲੇਖੀ ਕੀ ਭਈ ਬਾਰੀ ॥ ਏ ਭੈਰਉ ਕੀ ਪਾਚਉ ਨਾਰੀ ॥
ਪੰਚਮ ਹਰਖ ਦਿਸਾਖ ਸੁਨਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਬੰਗਾਲਮ ਮਧੁ ਮਾਧਵ ਗਾਵਹਿ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਲਲਤ ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਗਾਵਹੀ
ਅਪੁਨੀ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਭਾਂਤਿ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਭੈਰਵ ਕੇ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗਾਇਨ ਪਾਤ੍ਰ ॥ ੧ ॥

See the style of describing *Bhairav Rag* in 8 lines of a *Chaupai*. There is ॥ ੧ ॥ after eight lines of *Chaupai*. But note that in the last two lines all the 8 sons of *Bhairav Rag* could not be included. *Lalit* and *Bilawal* are in the next couplet (*Dohra*), and there is also ॥ ੧ ॥ at the end of this *Dohra*. This type of inadequacy in indicating a complete family of a *Raga* is also seen for other *Ragas*. Apparently the system of *Ragmala* has no similarity with that followed by the Great Guru.

In *Ragamala* ॥ ੧ ॥ is used althrough and at the end it occurs twice ॥ ੧ ॥ ॥ ੧ ॥. Clearly, the style does not follow that used in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The Guru could have not violated his own system just for *Ragmala*.

4. *Stanzisation does not stand alone*: See the following couplet where the last line of *Band* (couplet) describes that from the next *Band* will start *Deepak Rag*.

ਸੁਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਭਾਸਕਰ ਆਏ ॥ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਬਿੰਬ ਮੰਗਲਨ ਸੁਹਾਏ ॥
ਸਰਸਬਾਨ ਅਉ ਆਹਿ ਬਿਨੋਦਾ ॥ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸਰਸ ਬਸੰਤ ਕਮੋਦਾ ॥
ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਮੈ ਕਹੇ ਸਵਾਰੀ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਆਈ ਦੀਪਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੧ ॥

This way the couplet does not stand alone as is the system followed in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

5. *Grammatical incoherence with Gurbani*: Guru Arjan Dev *ji* evolved a unique system of grammar for *Gurbani*. This system is also followed by *Bhai* Gurdas in his poetry of *Vaars*. It is surprising to read ਰਾਗ ਏਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਪੰਚ ਬਰੰਗਨ ॥; there is no *Aunkar* (.) below ਰਾਗ ਏਕ to indicate plurality or singularity of ਰਾਗ and ਏਕ. However, both words here indicate singularity that any one *Raga* has five wives and eight sons. Similar examples of use of *Mukta* and *Sihari* in *Ragmala* that do not follow the grammar of *Gurbani* exist. Neither Guru Arjan Dev *ji* nor *Bhai* Gurdas *ji* could have varied the style of *Guru Granth Sahib* just for *Ragmala*. Obviously, it was neither written by *Bhai* Gurdas *ji* nor vetted by the fifth master.

6. *Meaning of Mudavani or Mundavani*: According to *Mahan Kosh* of *Bhai* Kahan Singh, page 986 both mean the act of stamping and closing (ਮੁਦ੍ਰਣ, ਬੰਦ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ; ਜਾਂ ਛਾਪਣਾ, ਮੁਹਰ ਲਾਉਣੀ). He explains it with a system of sealing and stamping of food by a Food Officer after preparation for presenting to kings in India. This food is then opened in the presence of the king after examining the seal or stamp. He compares this idea with *Mundavani* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. 'ਏਹ ਮੁਦਾਵਣੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਾਈ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਭਾਲ' (ਮ: ੩, ਵਾਰ ਸੋਰਠਿ). His interpretation is that Guru's teaching has been implanted in the heart of Sikhs and this way the Guru has stamped the code of conduct with approval so that no one should alter it afterwards.

The second reference is 'ਮੁਦਾਵਣੀ ਮ: ੫' which is a title and means that it indicates the end-seal in *Guru Granth Sahib*. He writes that the Guru advises us to do *Bhog* after this end-seal. Another meaning of *Mundavani* (ਮੁਦਾਵਣੀ) is a riddle (ਬੁਝਾਰਤ) which seems to be inappropriate here.

The origin of *Ragmala*

According to Prof. Piara Singh Padham, *Ragmala* is a part of love story in verse written by poet 'Alam' from Sanskrit/Praksit sources in 1583 AD. He wrote the story in Hindi '*Madhav Nal Katha*'. It has 353 stanzas. Prof. M.R. Mojumdar (Lecturer in history at Baroda College) wrote the following to Mr Padam:-

The story appears to have been popular mostly in western India (Gujarat). The Hindi version of the story was composed by a Muslim poet Alam styled Madhav Nal Katha, in Hijri 991 (1640 Bikrami) or 1583 AD. It was written only a decade after the conquest of Gujarat by Akbar, at the express desire of Raja Todar Mal (cabinet minister) for the pleasure of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. It has been corroborated from the foreword of the poet who says in his opening lines that this versified love story is for the pleasure of emperor Akbar.

This kind of versification of love stories may be likened to the love stories of Heer – Ranjha, 'Mirza Sahiban' and Sohni Mahiwal of Punjab. Many prose writers or poets did bring out their works on these stories in their own way.

The votaries of *Ragmala* wanted to create confusion by claiming that Alam poet of 1708 AD stole *Ragmala* from *Guru Granth Sahib*. Their claim, however, does not stand in view of the twelfth report on the search of Hindi manuscripts 1923, 1924, 1925, Vol. 1. Page 192 which reads as under :

‘Alam Kavi, author of *Madhavna Kama Kandala Nataka* wrote his work in 1583 AD during the reign of Akbar, the great, whom he praises as the depository of knowledge and wealth and as the Guru of the world. He is distinct from another Alam who flourished during Bahadurshah’s reign (1707-1719) and wrote on erotic subjects. (see *Ragmala Nirnay* by Shamsher Singh Ashok pp. 10).’

To justify the inclusion of *Ragmala* in the holy *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, many have coined a new theory that Guru Arjan Dev adopted the same kind of classical *Raga* scheme which has six main *Ragas* as mentioned in the said *Ragmala*. If this theory is put to test, it fails to explain how Rag Malkaus, Rag Deepak and Rag Megh – the three main *Ragas* out of the six, do not find any place among the 31 *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The theory, therefore, fails.

Each main *Raga* of the *Ragmala* has five wives and eight sons, whereas among the 31 *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib* there is not a single female *Rag* (*Ragni*). Therefore, it goes to prove that this *Ragmala* does not belong to the system of *Ragas* used by Guru Arjan Dev.

It will be interesting to note that names of some of the family members of the said *Ragmala* underwent a sea change in the hands of those who copied it from its Hindi version (Table 1).

Table 1. Original-correct names of *Ragas* and their incorrect names used in *Ragmala*

Correct Name	Incorrect Name
Mistang	Mustang
Barbal	Prabal
Kalinga	Kalanka
Malve	Saloo
Soohive	Soohow
Jaladhar	Jablidhar

Ragmala verse is in Hindi. It has *sorthas*, *doheras* and *choupayees*. Complete *Ragmala* (story) has 179 *doheras*, whereas, from no 33 to 38, have been inserted at the tail end of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* to give the impression that it is the true index of *Ragas* of the holy *Guru Granth Sahib*. Those who dilate upon *Ragas* and *Ragnies* of *Ragmala* to give a divine meaning and relate them to the concept of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* are not short of blasphemous. This way, perhaps one could have been well advised to find some divine meaning in the entire 179 stanzas of the story of a debauch and a court concubine (see later).

Sayad Waris Shah says at the end of the story of Heer and Ranjha – a Punjabi couple in love, that one could give a divine meaning to the entire love story if ones’ imagination runs amuck. One wonders how such a mundane and lascivious story should have found place in a holy scripture, which concentrates only on the praise of God and guides the entire humanity on how to seek and meet the ‘Lord of the Universe.’

THE REAL STORY BEHIND *RAGMALA*

The Sanskrit love story got translated into many Indian languages such as Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi. Alam poet got it from Gujarati source after emperor Akbar conquered Gujarat in 1580 AD. The poet rendered it into verse in 1583 AD at the behest of Birbal who was a Minister with the Great Mughal Emperor.

The story has two main characters. One is Madhav Nal, the court priest as well as a competent top class expert in classical Indian *Ragas*. The other is Kamkandla, a court dancer and concubine. Both the characters were of matchless excellence. Kamkandla was a Muslim woman.

When the story begins, Madhav Nal is seen in the court of Raja Gobind Chand of Pushpavati state, about five kilometres from Jabalpur – Madhya Pradesh. Madhav usually discharged essential religious ceremonies at the court, besides which he would perform concerts at the pleasure of the king. Madhav was not only young but extremely handsome. So much so that young women felt amorous about him. They could not control their passions at the sight of this handsome young man.

The subject of the small state complained to the king and requested him to banish his court priest. After due verification the king bade farewell to his talented priest-musician.

Disgusted and dejected Madhav Nal left Pushpavati state. He travelled to another state called Kamvati Nagari, ruled by Raja Kamsen. He had a court dancer by the name of Kamkandla. It would be interesting to note that state Kamvati is ruled by Raja Kamsen who has a concubine dancing girl called Kamkandla. In Sanskrit '*kam*' means 'sex'. The entire story is built around a sexually surcharged environment.

When Madhav Nal arrived at Kamvati, the entire court as well as the king Kamsen were enjoying the musical dance of Kamkandla. It was quite natural for Madhav to feel attracted towards such an entertaining programme. He requested the sentry at the gate to let him in, but he was under strict orders to prohibit the entry of anyone without the proper entry pass. The guard at the gate could not be discourteous to the stranger who was a Brahmin and an ex-court priest. Madhav Nal could hear the musical notes being played. He noticed that there was something wrong with the drummer in that a beat or two were being missed every time. He came to the conclusion that the drummer did not have a thumb on his right hand which led to the missed beat. He remarked that those who were witnessing the entertainment including the king were a pack of fools. "Go and tell your king that the drummer is playing the *tabla* with only four fingers on his right hand" said Madhav Nal in a rage.

The sentry went to the king and told about the remarks of the stranger at the gate. The drummer was checked. The king was amazed to see his thumb missing; but replaced by an improvised thumb of wax. He ordered the sentry to let the stranger in. The entire assembly were wonder-struck at the good looks of the Brahmin descending the steps. Kamkandla was herself overwhelmed and sexually attracted towards the stranger.

The king rose from his seat and beseeched the court-priest beside him. At this point of the story, Alam- the poet, displays his beauty and portrays an image so attractive that even the gods from heaven would have descended to have a glimpse of the young Brahmin. The king decorated him with a crown worthy of a court-priest and presented him with robes of honour and gifts. Kamkandla then started her dance with a new zeal.

Alam at this point gives valuable information of the *Ragas* which the team of players of musical instruments played in the company of the dance by Kamkandla. He deals with this portion in quite an academic way in stanzas from 33 to 41 and dilates upon a particular system which does not correspond to the system adopted by Guru Arjan Dev. However, some illiterate or a mischievous brain interpolated this portion at the end of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

To come back to the story, Kamkandla in her ovation sang all six *Ragas* (complete with their wives and sons) in one sitting on that day in that assembly. Madhav Nal was so filled with ecstasy that he rose from his seat and offered the dancing girl – Kamkandla whatever gifts he had obtained from the king. This he did in appreciation of the excellent performance of Kamkandla. The king was annoyed at it and rebuked the priest and in his rage drew his sword to kill him, but was deterred due to the fear of *Brahmin-Hatiya* which entails ‘*Kilvikh Paap*’. It is one of the worst kind of sin. He ordered him there and then to leave his kingdom immediately. In the same breath he forbade his subject to give shelter to this unknown priest.

The Brahmin priest stayed with Kamkandla for two nights. Alam describes this point of the story in highly charged sexual language. The Brahmin departed with great pain on the morning of the third day. The dancing girl also pained for him. The priest went to Bikramadit the King of Ujjain who honoured him and asked if he had any wish. Madhav Nal requested the king to get him his beloved Kamkandla.

To end the story, Raja Bikramadit attacked Kamavati State, but before the actual battle, the king of Kamavati surrendered Kamkandla. Thus the priest had his wish fulfilled.

The reader would observe that the *Ragmala* has a setting in a sexually explicit environment. Those who still believe that it has some divine connotations must read the original text in Punjabi verse. We have cut short most lecherous part of the story. Think of the mischief and the stupid person who interpolated the *Ragmala* in the holiest of the holy *Adi Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

THE FAMILY TREES OF RAGAS IN RAGMALA

During the course of this chapter, we are going to discuss in detail the system of the *Ragmala* which is being claimed by the conventionalists to be part of *Guru Granth Sahib*. From the love story of Madhav Nal and Kamkandla the reader knows that the court-dancer was quite well versed in one of the Indian classical system of *Ragas*. The band of musicians who played on various instruments with her, were also trained musicians. For them all, Alam – the poet while composing his verse especially from stanza 33 to 38 uses plural verbs to denote that they sang all the six *Ragas* to the accompaniment of the dancing girl. If it was intended to be the index of the 31 *Ragas* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, it should have been in some other form. From this the reader can conclude that it was an unintelligent interpolation by some mischievous hand, who was unable to provide the correct number sequence to each couplet of the *Ragmala*. What we find is that at the end of each couplet figure || 1 || i.e. one throughout the entire composition. This clearly proves that the subverted had little knowledge of the numbering system of the holy *Gurbani* compiled by the Great Guru.

We now give below the original verse as well as its translation:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਸਾਦਿ ਰਾਗ ਮਾਲਾ ॥	One Universal Creator God. By The Grace Of The True Guru: Raag Maalaa:
ਰਾਗ ਏਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਪੰਚ ਬਰੰਗਨ ॥ ਸੰਗਿ ਅਲਾਪਹਿ ਆਠਉ ਨੰਦਨ ॥	Each Raga has five wives, and eight sons, who emit distinctive notes.
ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਰਾਗ ਭੈਰਉ ਵੈਕਰਹੀ ॥ ਪੰਚ ਰਾਗਨੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਉਚਰਹੀ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਭੈਰਵੀ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੀ ॥ ਪੁੰਨਿਆਕੀ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਬੰਗਲੀ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਅਸਲੇਖੀ ਕੀ ਭਈ ਬਾਰੀ ॥ ਏ ਭੈਰਉ ਕੀ ਪਾਚਉ ਨਾਰੀ ॥	In the first place is Raag <i>Bhairao</i> . It is accompanied by the voices of its five Raaginis: First is <i>Bhairavee</i> , then <i>Bilaavalee</i> ; then the songs of <i>Punni-aakee</i> and <i>Bangalee</i> ; and then comes <i>Asalaykhee</i> .
ਪੰਚਮ ਹਰਖ ਦਿਸਾਖ ਸੁਨਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਬੰਗਾਲਮ ਮਧੁ ਮਾਧਵ ਗਾਵਹਿ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਲਲਤ ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਗਾਵਹੀ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਭਾਂਤਿ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਭੈਰਵ ਕੇ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗਾਇਨ ਪਾਤ੍ਰ ॥ ੧ ॥	Then, there are the eight sons of <i>Bhairao</i> : the sounds of <i>Pancham</i> , <i>Harakh</i> and <i>Disaakh</i> ; the songs of <i>Bangaalam</i> , <i>Madh</i> and <i>Maadhav</i> . <i>Lalat</i> and <i>Bilaaval</i> — each gives out its own melody, in the hands of those who make music. 1
ਦੁਤੀਆ ਮਾਲਕਉਸਕ ਆਲਾਪਹਿ ॥ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਾਗਨੀ ਪਾਚਉ ਬਾਪਹਿ ॥ ਗੋਂਡਕਰੀ ਅਰੁ ਦੇਵਗੰਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਗੰਧਾਰੀ ਸੀਹੁਤੀ ਉਚਾਰੀ ॥ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਏ ਪਾਚਉ ਗਾਈ ॥ ਮਾਲ ਰਾਗ ਕਉਸਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਲਾਈ ॥	In the second family is <i>Maalakausak</i> , who brings his five Raaginis: <i>Gondakaree</i> and <i>Dayv Gandhaaree</i> , the voices of <i>Gandhaaree</i> and <i>Seehutee</i> , and the fifth song of <i>Dhanaasaree</i> .
ਮਾਰੂ ਮਸਤਅੰਗ ਮੇਵਾਰਾ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਬਲਚੰਡ ਕਉਸਕ ਉਭਾਰਾ ॥ ਖਉਖਟ ਅਉ ਭਉਚਾਨਦ ਗਾਏ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਮਾਲਕਉਸਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਲਾਏ ॥ ੧ ॥	This chain of <i>Maalakausak</i> brings along <i>Maaroo</i> , <i>Masta-ang</i> and <i>Mayvaaraa</i> , <i>Prabal</i> , <i>Chandakausak</i> , <i>Khau</i> , <i>Khat</i> and <i>Bauraanad</i> singing. These are the eight sons of <i>Maalakausak</i> . 1
ਪੁਨਿ ਆਇਅਉ ਚਿੰਡੋਲੁ ਪੰਚ ਨਾਰਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਅਸਟ ਸੁਤ ॥ ਉਠਹਿ ਤਾਨ ਕਲੋਲ ਗਾਇਨ ਤਾਰ ਮਿਲਾਵਹੀ ॥ ੧ ॥	Then comes <i>Hindol</i> with his five wives and eight sons; it rises in waves when the sweet-voiced chorus sings. 1
ਤੋਲੰਗੀ ਦੇਵਕਰੀ ਆਈ ॥ ਬਸੰਤੀ ਸੰਦੂਰ ਸੁਹਾਈ ॥ ਸਰਸ ਅਹੀਰੀ ਲੈ ਭਾਰਜਾ ॥ ਸੰਗਿ ਲਾਈ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਆਰਜਾ ॥	There come <i>Taylangee</i> and <i>Darvakaree</i> ; <i>BaSantee</i> and <i>Sandoor</i> follow; then <i>Aheeree</i> , the finest of women.
ਸੁਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਭਾਸਕਰ ਆਏ ॥ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਬਿੰਬ ਮੰਗਲਨ ਸੁਹਾਏ ॥ ਸਰਸਬਾਨ ਅਉ ਆਹਿ ਬਿਨੋਦਾ ॥ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸਰਸ ਬਸੰਤ ਕਮੋਦਾ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਮੈ ਕਰੇ ਸਵਾਰੀ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਆਈ ਦੀਪਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਰੀ ॥ ੧ ॥	She is also embellished with sons: <i>Surmaanand</i> and <i>Bhaaskar</i> come, <i>Chandrabinb</i> and <i>Mangalan</i> follow. <i>Sarasbaan</i> and <i>Binodaa</i> then come, and the thrilling songs of <i>BaSant</i> and <i>Kamodaa</i> . These are the eight sons I have listed. Then comes the turn of <i>Deepak</i> . 1
ਕਛੇਲੀ ਪਟਮੰਜਰੀ ਟੋਡੀ ਕਹੀ ਅਲਾਪਿ ॥ ਕਾਮੋਦੀ ਅਉ ਗੂਜਰੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਦੀਪਕ ਕੇ ਬਾਪਿ ॥ ੧ ॥	<i>Kachhaylee</i> , <i>Patamanjaree</i> and <i>Todee</i> are there; <i>Kaamodee</i> and <i>Goojaree</i> accompany <i>Deepak</i> . 1
ਕਾਲੰਕਾ ਕੁੰਤਲ ਅਉ ਰਾਮਾ ॥ ਕਮਲਕੁਸਮ ਚੰਪਕ ਕੇ ਨਾਮਾ ॥ ਗਉਰਾ ਅਉ ਕਾਨਰਾ ਕਲਾਨਾ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਦੀਪਕ ਕੇ ਜਾਨਾ ॥ ੧ ॥	<i>Kaalankaa</i> , <i>Kuntal</i> and <i>Raamaa</i> , <i>Kamalakusam</i> and <i>Champak</i> are their names; <i>Gauraa</i> , <i>Kaanaraa</i> and <i>Kaylaanaa</i> ; these are the eight sons of <i>Deepak</i> . 1
ਸਭ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗ ਵੈ ਗਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਰੰਗਨ ਲਾਵਹਿ ॥	All join together and sing <i>Siree Raag</i> , which also has

ਬੈਰਾਰੀ ਕਰਨਾਟੀ ਧਰੀ ॥ ਗਵਰੀ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਆਸਾਵਰੀ ॥ ਤਿਹ ਪਾਛੈ ਸਿੰਧਵੀ ਅਲਾਪੀ ॥ ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗ ਸਿਉ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਥਾਪੀ ॥ ੧ ॥	five women: Bairaaree and Karnaattee, the songs of Gawree and Aasaavaree; then follows Sindhavee. These are the five wives of Siree Raag. 1
ਸਾਲੂ ਸਾਰਗ ਸਾਗਰਾ ਅਉਰ ਗੋਂਡ ਗੰਭੀਰ ॥ ਅਸਟ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਸ੍ਰੀਰਾਗ ਕੇ ਗੁੰਡ ਕੁੰਭ ਹਮੀਰ ॥ ੧ ॥	Saalo, Saarang, Saagara, Gond and Gambheer — the eight sons of Siree Raag — Gund, Kumb and Hameer. 1
ਖਸਟਮ ਮੇਘ ਰਾਗ ਵੈ ਗਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਰੰਗਨ ਲਾਵਹਿ ॥ ਸੋਰਠਿ ਗੋਂਡ ਮਲਾਰੀ ਧੁਨੀ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਆਸਾ ਗੁਨ ਗੁਨੀ ॥ ਉਚੈ ਸੁਰਿ ਸੂਹਉ ਪੁਨਿ ਕੀਨੀ ॥ ਮੇਘ ਰਾਗ ਸਿਉ ਪਾਂਚਉ ਚੀਨੀ ॥ ੧ ॥	In the sixth place, Maygh Raag is sung, with his five wives in accompaniment: Sorat'h, Gond, and the melody of Malaaree; then the harmonies of Aasaa are sung. And finally comes Soohau. These are the five with Maygh Raag. 1
ਬੈਰਾਧਰ ਗਜਧਰ ਕੇਦਾਰਾ ॥ ਜਬਲੀਧਰ ਨਟ ਅਉ ਜਲਧਾਰਾ ॥ ਪੁਨਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸੰਕਰ ਅਉ ਸਿਆਮਾ ॥ ਮੇਘ ਰਾਗ ਪੁਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮਾ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਖਸਟ ਰਾਗ ਉਨਿ ਗਾਏ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਾਗਨੀ ਤੀਸ ॥ ਸਭੈ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਰਾਗੰਨ ਕੇ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਦਸ ਬੀਸ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੧ ॥	Bairaadhhar, Gajadhhar, Kaydaara, Jabaleedhar, Nat and Jaladhaaraa. Then come the songs of Shankar and Shi-aamaa. These are the names of the sons of Maygh Raag. 1 So all together, they sing the six Raagas and the thirty Raaginis, and all the forty-eight sons of the Raagas. 1 1

In ancient hand-written *birs* of *Adi Granth* beside many types of *Ragmalas* there also are verses of unapproved *bani* (*kachi bani*). To quote a few, (ੳ) ਜਿਤ ਦਰ ਲਖ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ, (ਅ) ਬਾਇਆਤਾਸ ਜੋ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਤੁਰਕੀ ਅਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੀ ਸੀ । (ੲ) ਹਕੀਕਤ ਰਾਹ ਮੁਕਾਮ (ਸ) ਰਾਗਮਾਲਾ, (ਹ) ਸਿਆਹੀ ਦੀ ਬਿਧੀ (ਕ) ਚਰਿਤ੍ਰ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤ ਸਮਾਉਣ ਦੇ, (ਖ) ਸਾਖੀ ਮ: ਪ, (ਗ) ਰਤਨਮਾਲਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਸਿਵ ਨਾਭ ਕੀ ਆਦਿ ॥

It is said that the authors of various *Ragmalas* used to render into verse the names of the entire members of its family because it helped their students to remember the sequence. It was for the sake of memorising them.

Guru Granth Sahib has 31 *Ragas*. These *Ragas* do not have wives and sons. It means the disputed *Ragmala* does not correspond to the system of *Ragas* used in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Therefore, *Ragmala* has been interpolated. It is absolutely absurd to dig out spiritual connotations merely from the family tree of each *Raga*. It may be mentioned here that out of 84 *Ragas* as mentioned above, only 18 *Ragas* have found place in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The rest stand rejected (Table 2).

Table 2. A comparative list of *Ragas* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and *Ragmala*

Ragas in Sri Guru Granth Sahib	Ragas in Ragmala	Remarks
Main Ragas 31: Sri Rag; Maajh; Gaurhi; Aasa; Goojri; Devghandhari; Bihagrha; Vadhans; Sorath; Dhanasari; Jaitsari; Todi; Bairarhi; Tilang; Soohi; Bilawal; Gaud; Ramkali; Natt; Maali-gauda; Maaru; Tukhari; Kedara; <i>Bhairo</i> ; BaSant; Sarang; Malar; Kanrha; Kalyan; Parbhathi; Jaijaiwanti	For detail of Ragas in <i>Ragmala</i> see Figs.1 and 2. There are six Ragas; each has five wives or raganian. Thus there are 30 Raganian. Each Rag has 8 sons making a total of 48 sons.	Discrepancy: It is very strange that some <i>Ragas</i> used in <i>Sri Guru Granth Sahib</i> do not find a mention in <i>Ragmala</i> . However, it describes several <i>Ragas</i> which do not find a place in <i>Sri Guru Granth Sahib</i> .
Six additional Ragas that can be combined with other Ragas are: Lalit; Aasawari (It is mentioned withing Raag Aasa); Hindol; Bhopali; Bibhas; Kaafi.	Grand total: 6 Raag + 30 Raganian + 48 sons = 84	
Grand total = 37 Ragas		

The family trees of clusters of *Ragas* in *Ragmala*

Given in Figures 1 to 3 are the family trees of six *Ragas* contained in *Ragmala*.

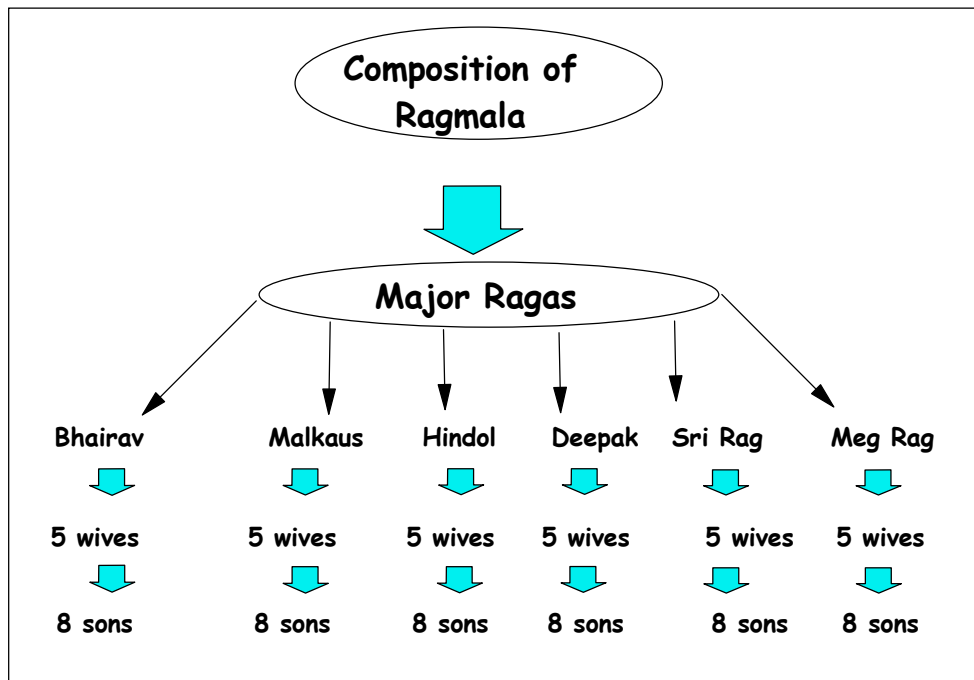


Fig.1. Compositional structure of *Ragmala* where six *Ragas* have five wives and eight sons

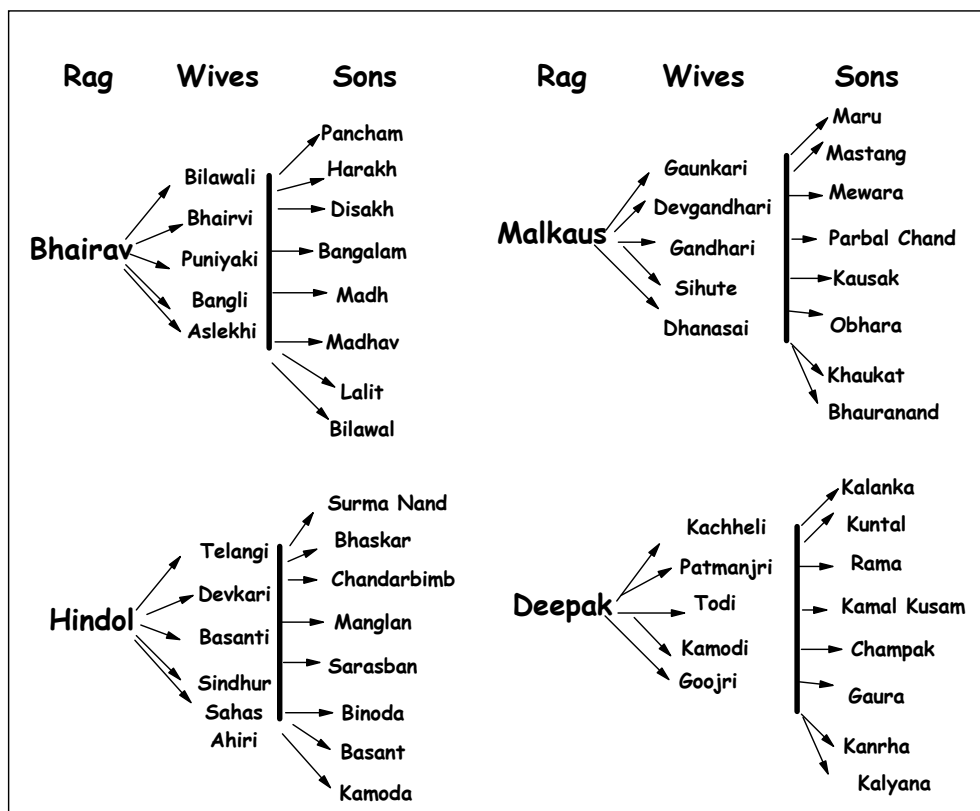


Fig.2. Family tree of four *Ragas*, i.e., *Bhairav*, *Malkaus*, *Hindol* and *Deepak* with names of their wives and sons

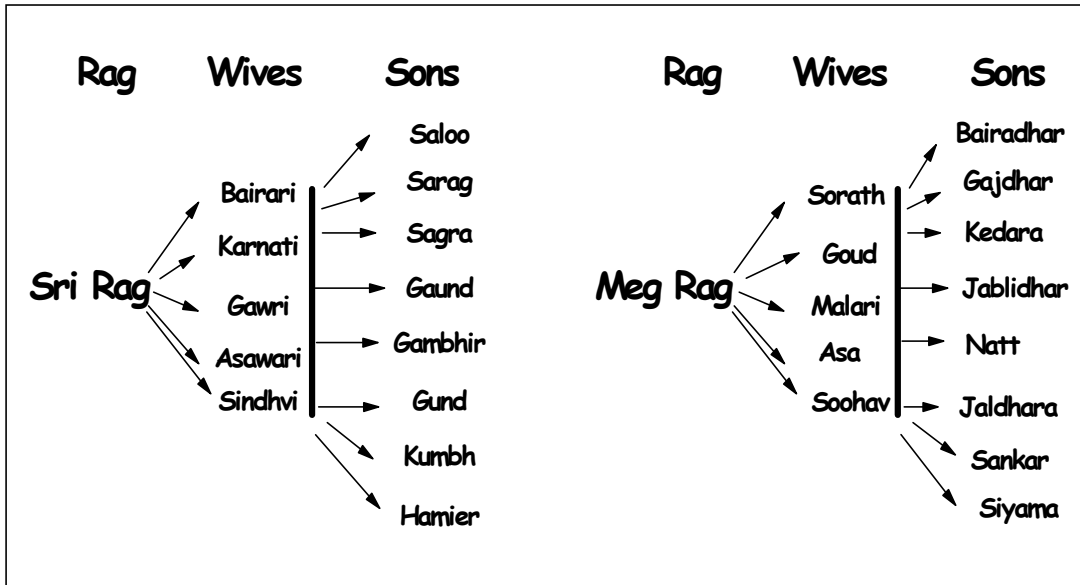


Fig.3. Family tree of Sri Rag and Meg Raga with names of their wives and sons

DISCUSSION

Sant Tehal Singh published '*Ragmala Mandan Parbodh Granth*' in 1908 and presented arguments in favour of it to be *Gurbani* of fifth Guru that was hand-written by *Bhai* Gurdas *ji* under Guru's stewardship.

Several letters of appreciation and agreement with the thesis of *Ragmala* being *Gubani* are presented in the beginning of the booklet. One such letter is from Dr Charan Singh father of *Bhai* Vir Singh. The latter maintained the line of his father and was a staunch supporter of *Ragmala* as *Gurbani*. However, all arguments were later discussed at *Akal Takhat Sahib* by experts who found them inadequate to convince that *Ragmala* was Guru's creation. We shall discuss some major issues presented by *Sant* Tehal Singh in his publication.

1. *Why the appender was not punished by the Panth?*: He argues that if *Ragmala* was appended by some Sikh then why he was not punished by the 5th to 10th Gurus and later by the *Panth* whereas *Baba* Ram Rai was disowned by his father Guru Har Rai for altering a single word of *Gurbani* in the court of Aurazzeb.

In fact, no one has been able to identify and trace the person who appended *Ragmala* otherwise the controversy would have been resolved by now. Thus raising this question is irrelevant. He further argues that he has seen ancient *Birs* with *Ragmala* so *Ragmala* is *Gurbani*. This point again does not hold ground as these so called ancient *birs* are the root cause of the present crisis and they are the ones that have confused the whole issue.

To plead that many ancient hand-written *birs* have *Ragmala* does not prove that *Ragmala* was written by Guru Arjan Dev *ji*. The author has seen many old hand-written *birs* without *Ragmala*, and some with many irrelevant writings too, i.e., "ਸਿਆਹੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਧੀਆਂ, ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤ ਸਮਾਉਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਥਿਤਾਂ"। Even now one can see at least 20 such *birs* at the residence of *Giani* Gurdit Singh (a Sikh scholar of repute; editor and author of *Singh Sabha* magazine) in Chandigarh. One *bir* still with Master Amar Singh of Derby, UK contains several *banies* additional *banies* beside the *Ragmala*. There also exists one ancient hand-written *bir* with Dr C.S. Chan of Coventry, UK that does not contain *Ragmala*. In fact, in old times there were no printing presses, no research centres and no typing facilities. Hand-written copies were made from already existing hand-written *birs* with blind-faith. Thus mistake once made, crept on, and no body could dare challenge delete anything.

Several books, in Hindi and English, written by non-Sikh scholars also prove that *Ragmala* was composed by Alam *kavi* in 1583 AD, and not by Guru Arjan Dev *ji*.

2. *No Mehla in the title and no 'Nanak' at the end also exists in Gurbani elsewhere*: *Sant* Tehal Singh compares *Jap(u) ji Sahib* that does not have *Mehla* and some *Pauris* do not have 'Nanak' at the end and concludes that if *Jap (u) ji* is considered *Gurbani* then why not *Ragmala*.

There is no doubt about *Jap (u) ji Sahib* being Guru's writing. 'Nanak' occurs in the first *Shaloka* from where *Jap (u) ji* starts ॥ ਜਪੁ ॥ ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ

ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥ ੧ ॥ and also it occurs in the end-*Shaloka* ॥ ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਤੁ ॥ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ੧ ॥ .

Note that the first and last *Shalokas* have] 1] at the end. The first *Pauri* ‘ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥ ----- ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ੧ ॥’ By thinking, He cannot be reduced to thought, even by thinking hundreds of thousands of times.----- O Nanak, it is written that you shall obey the Hukam of His Command, and walk in the Way of His Will. || 1 ||’ also ends with ॥ ੧ ॥ and this numbering progresses to 38 for the last *Pauri* after which the end *Shaloka* is given. Both *Shalokas* have ‘Nanak’ in them. All *Pauris* from 1 to 38 are in a serial order according to the numbering system of Guru *Granth Sahib* and are authenticated with Guru’s name at the appropriate places. You cannot pick up a *Pauri* from within a *bani* to prove a point out-of-context; the whole *Jap (u) ji* should be taken intact for any interpretation or comparison with *Ragmala*.

According to *Bhai Gurdas Jap (u) ji* had become a part of *Nitnem* (daily prayer) during the time of Guru Nanak Dev *ji* when he returned to Kartarpur. *Bhai Gurdas* wrote:

ਫਿਰਿ ਬਾਬਾ ਆਇਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰਿ ਭੇਖੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਗਲ ਉਤਾਰਾ॥-----

ਸੋ ਦਰੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾਪੁ ਉਚਾਰਾ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ; ਪਉੜੀ ੩੮)

(When Baba Nanak came to stay at Kartarpur; he discarded his ascetic robes. -----

In the evening, *Sodar* and *Aarti* were sung, while at dawn the *Jap (u) ji* was recited by his followers.)

At that time the morning prayer consisted of only one *bani*, i.e., *Jap (u) ji*. However, at dusk one *Shabad* of *So-dar*, one *Shabad* of *Aarti* (ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲ---*Gagan mein thaal*---) used to be sung. This form of *Nitnem* was continued by Guru Angad Dev *ji*, Gur Amar Das *ji* and Guru Ramdas *ji*.

Therefore, there is no scope to doubt about *Jap (u) ji* being not *Gurbani*. Further proof it being the writing of the first Guru after settling in Kartarpur is that it has been placed in the beginning of *Guru Granth Sahib* according to the style of *Guru Granth Sahib* where *Mehla 1* is always given the first place in any *Rag* by the fifth Guru.

His further objection is that there is no ‘Nanak’ in *Mool Mantra*. His comparison of *Mool Mantra* with *Ragmala* is falsified with the fact that *Mool Mantra* occurs several times in *Guru Granth Sahib*, and is rather the most important and central to the theme of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Bhatt bani and some other *banis* also are cited where the authour is not explicit. Again one must study the numbering system followed by the Guru and then it is easy to establish the authourship for any *Shaloka*. Prof. Sahib Singh used the numbering system of stanzas to prove that there were 11 *Bhatts* (balads) and not 10, 17 or 19 as concluded by some other scholars. That means that the system of sequential numbering of stanzas used by the Guru is perfect. If you take away any stanza then

the hierarchical system of numbering will immediately guide you to detect the deficiencies. In fact, there is no stanza in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* where one is in doubt about its authorship. One should not take away some lines and use them out of context to prove a point.

3. *If Mundavani means seal then why bani continues when it occurs first time in Vaar Sorath?:* *Mundavani* occurs twice in *Guru Granth Sahib*. The first occurrence is in 8th *Shaloka* of *Sorath Ki Vaar* by *Guru Amardas ji*. The second time it occurs in *Mundavani Mehla 5* at the end of the holy book. If it is a seal or stamp to close, he argues, then why *bani* flows after the *Shaloka* of *Sorath ki var*; rather the *Granth* should have ended there.

Professor Sahib Singh explains that both words mean the same thing and the central idea of both hymns is not different. The first mention in a *shalok* of *Guru Amardas ji* is without a 'Tippi' and the second is a title of a hymn. Both are derived from the word *Mudar* which means to please or that which provides spiritual happiness. Meanings of *Mundavani* should also be seen in light of those given by *Bhai Kahan Singh* (explained in a previous section).

The closing '*Mundavani Mehla 5*' is a title-seal and indicates the pleasure of the Lord. The end-seal can only be in a title and not within a hymn, i.e. in *Sorath Ki Vaar*. After this there is *Shalok Mehla 5* as thanks-giving to the Lord for His grace and kindness to empower the Guru to complete the great task of *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Gurbani* does not flow beyond it.

Looking it from an other angle, the last *Shalok Mehla 5* after *Mundavani Mehla 5* is a *Shabad* of *Manglacharan* for ending. Similarly, there is a *Manglacharan* in the beginning of the holy book in the form of *Mool Mantra*. There could be nothing beyond *Manglacharan* and there cannot be two *Shabads* for *Manglacharan* to include *Ragmala* in it. Thus *Ragmala* falls outside the *Manglacharan* and is an appendix.

4. *By writing Ragmala the fifth Guru proved that he knew all systems of Ragas:* *Sant Tehal Singh* states that the Guru used *Sri Rag* as the main *Rag* in *Gurbani* but by writing *Ragmala* he proved to the musicians that he was not averse of the other system that starts with *Bhairav Rag*. According to him there are two systems of four *Matt* (ਮਤ, system) of *Ragas*. *Shiv matt* and *Krishan matt* start with *Sri Rag* and end with *Parbhati Rag*. On the other hand, *Hanumant* and *Bharat Matt* start with *Bhairav Rag*. He argues that by including *Ragmala* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* the two systems of 4 *Matt* have been addressed. The Guru wrote the whole *Granth* to address the first system of *Sri Rag* but concluded with *Ragmala* to address the second system of *Bhairav rag*. Not all castes of Hindus were allowed to sing in the two systems and by including both in the *Granth* the Guru assured that all four castes were eligible to read and sing.

He draws another illogical parallel to prove that the fifth Guru wrote *Ragmala*. He writes that *Sri Rag* is fifth *Rag* in the *Ragmala* and coincides with the fifth Guruship of *Guru Arjan Dev ji*. He pleads that, that is why, *Guru Arjan Dev ji* gave first position to *Sri Rag* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

He also mentions that 31 *Ragas* have been used in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* but there are 84 *Ragas* and sub-*Raags* in the *Ragmala*. He pleads that by adding *Ragmala* at the end of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* the Guru proved to the musicians that Guru's knowledge was beyond 31 *Ragas*. It is a misleading plea. The true Guru is a transcendental form of God (ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ; ਗੋਡ ਮ: ਪ; ਪੰਨਾਂ ੮੬੪; Consider Guru and God as one) and is perfect in all respects. The true Guru would never want to prove his knowledge to anybody.

Further, *Sant Tehal Singh* argues that in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* although only *Ragas* have been used in the holy *Guru Granth Sahib* yet the *Gurbani* recognises the importance of *Ragnia* (sub-*Raga* and sons sub-*Ragas*) and hence their occurrence in *Ragmala* is justified. He cites an example from *Anand Sahib* ਰਾਗ ਰਤਨ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਪਰੀਆਂ ਸਬਦ ਗਾਵਣ ਆਈਆਂ. He pleads that thus the fifth Guru accomplished the task of describing the family trees of *Ragas* in *Ragmala*. He also argues that if *Raga* and *Ragnia* mentioned in *Anand Sahib* are pious then what is the harm in reading *Ragmala*.

These arguments are trivial and illogical that mislead illiterate and un-informed masses with superstitious dictates. If we read *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* all music measures are much below *Naam*. They only become pious if mingled with Lord's praise; they do not have their independent entity in divinity. ਗੀਤ ਰਾਗ ਘਨ ਤਾਲ ਸਿ ਕੂਚੇ ॥ ਤਿਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਉਪਜੈ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਦੂਚੇ ॥ ਦੂਜੀ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਛੂਟੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਦਾਰੂ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ॥ ੩ ॥ ਪੰਨਾਂ ੮੩੨; ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਮ: ੧) The various songs, tunes and rhythms are false. Trapped by the three qualities, people come and go, far from the Lord. In duality, the pain of their evil-mindedness does not leave them. But the Gurmukh is emancipated by taking the medicine, and singing the Glorious Praises of the Lord. || 3 || Bilaval Mahala 1; page 832.

Another example is from ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ਸਲੋਕ ਮ: ੪ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਉਤਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਗਾਵਿਆ ਕਰਿ ਨਾਦੁ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਰਾਗੁ ॥..... ਮ: ੩ ॥ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਤਬ ਹੀ ਕੀਜੀਐ ਜਬ ਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਰਾਗ ਨਾਦ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਜਾ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥ ਰਾਗ ਨਾਦ ਛੇਡਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੀਐ ਚੁਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ ੨ ॥ VAAR OF BILAAVAL, FOURTH MEHL: SHALOK, FOURTH MEHL: I sing of the sublime Lord, the Lord God, in the melody of Raag Bilaaval.THIRD MEHL: Be happy and sing in Bilaaval, when the Naam, the Name of the Lord, is in your mouth. The melody and music, and the Word are beautiful, when one focuses his meditation on the celestial Lord. So leave behind the melody and music, and serve the Lord; then, you shall obtain honor in the Court of the Lord. O Nanak, as Gurmukh, contemplate God, and rid your mind of egotistical pride. || 2 || page 849.

In *Vaar Malar* it is made clear that the lord is not pleased by *Ragas* and sub-*Ragas* except the *Naam*. ਵਾਰ ਮਲਾਰ ਕੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧; ਪਉੜੀ ॥ ਸਚਾ ਅਲਖ ਅਭੋਉ ਹਠਿ ਨ ਪਤੀਜਈ ॥ ਇਕਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਰਾਗ ਪਰੀਆ ਰਾਗਿ ਨ ਭੀਜਈ ॥ ਇਕਿ ਨਚਿ ਨਚਿ ਪੂਰਹਿ ਤਾਲ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਕੀਜਈ ॥ ਇਕਿ ਅੰਨੁ ਨ ਖਾਹਿ ਮੂਰਖ ਤਿਨਾ ਕਿਆ ਕੀਜਈ ॥ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਹੋਈ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਕਿਵੈ ਨ ਧੀਜਈ ॥ ਕਰਮ ਵਧਹਿ ਕੈ ਲੋਅ ਖਪਿ ਮਰੀਜਈ ॥ ਲਾਹਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਜਈ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਅਸਨੋਹਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਘੀਜਈ ॥ ੧੭ ॥ ਪੰਨਾਂ ੧੨੮੫. VAAR OF MALAAR, FIRST MEHL, PAUREE: The True, Unseen,

Mysterious Lord is not won over by stubbornness. Some sing according to traditional ragas, but the Lord is not pleased by these ragas. Some dance and dance and keep the beat, but they do not worship Him with devotion. Some refuse to eat; what can be done with these fools? Thirst and desire have greatly increased; nothing brings satisfaction. Some are tied down by rituals; they hassle themselves to death. In this world, profit comes by drinking in the Ambrosial Nectar of the Naam. The Gurmukhs gather in loving devotional worship of the Lord. || 17 || Page 1285

Kabir *ji* also emphasise that music devoid of *Naam* is not divine, e.g., ‘ਭਗਤਿ ਨਾਰਦੀ ਰਿਦੈ ਨ ਆਈ ਕਾਛਿ ਕੂਛਿ ਤਨੁ ਦੀਨਾ ॥ ਰਾਗ ਰਾਗਨੀ ਡਿੰਡ ਹੋਇ ਬੈਠਾ ਉਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿ ਕਿਆ ਲੀਨਾ ॥ ੩ ॥ ਪੰਨਾਂ ਏਪੜ’ Loving devotional worship does not enter into your heart; pampering and adorning your body, you must still give it up. You sit and play music, but you are still a hypocrite; what do you expect to receive from the Lord? || 3 ||; page 654

It is clear that without the divine praise no *Raga* is pious in itself and has no importance in the Sikh theme unless it is engrossed with divine hymns. *Ragmala* does not meet these criteria.

5. *Is there no divinity in Ragmala?* If *Ragmala* is not divine then, *Sant* Tehal Singh cites, a number of titles of *Shabadas* and *vaars* in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* to be undivine. For instance; ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ, ਜੋਧੇ ਵੀਰੇ ਪੂਰਬਾਣੀ ਕੀ ਧੁਨਿ title is not a divine message. Similarly, *bani* such as ਅਸੰਖ ਮੁਰਖ ਅੰਧ ਘੋਰ lacks divine message. If these are considered *bani* then *Ragmala* should also be taken as *bani* has been argued by him.

The Gurus have given instructions for singing the hymns before *Vaars* and *Shabadas*. No body can question their authenticity. When these instructions are combined with *Gurbani* that follows them, they become divine. However, there is no divine thought that combines with the contents of *Ragmala*.

Gurbani addresses multiple issues including description of *Naam* and praise of Almighty, advice to human beings to shun wordly affairs and come to the fold of God. The line referred to in *Jap (u) ji*, and also many such hymns, explain the vastness of God’s creation where there are countless fools who do not contemplate on *Naam*. *Gurbani* also then advises how the fools can become wise. Then how is it that there is no divine message?

Let us take another *Shabad* quoted by *Sant* Tehal Singh ਜਿਨ ਸਿਰ ਸੋਹਨ ਪਟੀਆਂ ਮਾਂਗੀ ਪਾਇ ਸੰਧੂਰ. He thinks that there is no divine message in this *Shabad*. It is, however, ignorance to express like this. This *Shabad* describes an historical happening to advise us to remember God. It describes Babar’s attack on India. Guru Nanak Dev described that all those who forgot God and were engrossed in wordly enjoyment had to suffer. In the hour of suffering no body comes to their rescue and they are humiliated. It all happened because they forgot the *Naam*. The advice is that if human beings contemplate on *Naam* when they are happy then they could avoid suffering at later stage.

Does *Ragmala* give such a message? No, there is no such advice. Then how could one compare it with *Gurbani* for its divine contents.

6. *Confusion about Alam poet:* Sant Tehal Singh writes that Alam poet who wrote Madhavnal did not live 21 years before the compilation of *Granth* but wrote *Ragmala* 51 years after *Guru Granth* was compiled. He also presents 3 different *Ragmalas*. He does not agree with the theory that since *Ragmala* of *Guru Granth* is available outside as Alam's writing it is sufficient to prove that it is not *Gurbani* as couplets similar to *Gurbani* are available outside *Granth Sahib*. He suggests that some saints have such couplets that resemble *Gurbani*. Does it mean that those couplets of *Guru Granth Sahib* that resemble the ones existing outside are not *Gurbani*.

This argument does not hold as it has been researched and proved by several authors (see later) that *Ragmala* was written by Alam who lived before the compilation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. For the second argument it is known that many saints used to take and twist verses from the *Granth* and use them to their benefit for befooling the general public. This is done even today by Radha Soami, Naamdhari and Nirankari sects who preach for a living Guru in body form. Also *Kacchi bani* (false *bani*) was written by many and it resembles *bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. To make it authentic they also added 'Nanak' in them. However, if you study them closely they are much inferior in style and rules of poetry (*pingle*).

7. *Rejection of various authors:* Sant Tehal Singh rejects all those who favoured that *Ragmala* was not *Gurbani* and uses derogatory language against them. He thinks all of them either were trying to do it for some personal gain or were insane.

Let us take *Giani* Gian Singh who wrote about *Ragmala* that, 'it does not have *Mohala*, no mention of Nanak, its poetic flow is not similar to *Gurbani*, it does not contain all *Ragas* that are given in *Guru Granth*, it does not have a divine message, it is contained in Madhavnal book written many years before the *Granth* was compiled.'

Sant Tehal Singh pleads that the *Giani* wrote earlier that Alam was like other *Bhagatas*. A part of his *bani* was approved by the fifth Guru and the rest was returned to him. The same way the Guru did not accept all *bani* of *Bhagatas*. Then how the *Giani* refuted afterwards by writing that *Ragmala* was not *Gurbani*. He argues that the *Giani* had gone half-mad being very old. So his latest ideas should be rejected. He rejects the idea of revision of one's thesis if more facts are revealed afterwards.

He also rejects *Bhai* Kahan Singh Nabha and *Bhai* Santokh Singh, and *Pandit* Tara Singh Narotam on very flimsy grounds. He thinks that the later wrote against *Ragmala* under the influence of *Bhai* Sobha Singh. *Bhai* Sobha Singh was an ardent opponent of *Ragmala*, and Tehal Singh, illustrates a superstitious story about him. An *Ardas* was performed at Akal Takhat Sahib that if *Ragmala* was not *bani* then *Bhai* Sobha Singh should remain healthy for one year. If he does so then all will stop reading it. However, if it was factually *Gurbani* and it was a sin not to read it then his tongue be infected with germs and he suffers from leprosy for its criticism. It is stated that within eight days of *ardas* *Bhai* Sobha Singh fell ill, and his tongue was infected with germs, and he wrote on a paper that he committed a sin. Further, he pleaded to record this incidence in *Roznamcha* (daily record register) of Akal Takhat Sahib. However, no such record is available. It is a false story created to confuse the Sikh masses.

This type of fear creating (curse-oriented) contention is against Sikhi spirit, and follows a Brahmnical system that is typically dear to saints. In Brahmnical system where a person commits sins he is cursed by gods. However, according to Sikhi, God and Guru are ever so kind and see no difference in a friend and foe. God sustains even ethists. There is no recorded history in *Panth* where a fear psychosis is created among masses to make them agree to a view point.

Further, during the later meetings at Akal Takhat Sahib it could not be proved that *Ragmala* was written by the fifth Guru and was stopped from reading. Why the then *Jathedar* did not suffer from such a curse and why all *Granthies* who did not read *Ragmala* afterwards escaped Guru's rath. Clearly the argument of *Sant* Tehal Singh does not hold ground.

8. *Damdami and other Birs*: He mentions a number of ancient *Birs* that contain *Ragmala* as well as signatures of *Guru ji*.

This is the whole riddle that no authentic *bir* is now available that can prove the point. In fact a number of *birs* also exist that do not have *Ragmala*. It is not known where is the real *Damdami bir* otherwise it could have been verified if the 10th Master approved of *Ragmala*. One such *bir* was specially brought to the Sikh Reference Library in the Harmandar Sahib Complex that was destroyed in the fire during the army attack in 1984.

CONCLUSION

This compilation is not the first attempt in researching the origin and relevance of *Ragmala* to the divine content of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. Numerous scholars have already proved beyond doubt that *Ragmala* is not *Gurbani*. This compilation is only a re-appraisal of the issue and puts together the evidence with the sole aim of informing the Sikhs in general and the youth in particular. The evidence presented here proves that *Ragmala* is not the creation of Guru Arjan Dev *ji* and is not integral to *Bhog* ceremony of *Akhand Path* or *Sahej Path*. It should be made clear that the author is an ardent follower of *Guru Granth Sahib* and considers it as an eternal Guru of the Sikhs. He is the true disciple of *Shabad Guru* and has no faith in body Guru. Therefore, it will be a gross injustice to him if some one misrepresents some paragraphs in this compilation out of context, and advocates any type of disrespect to *Guru Granth Sahib*.

It is the sincere feeling of the author that all Sikhs must come to the fold of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib and follow the prescribed code of practice (see annex 2) and code of conduct (*Rehat Maryada*) for *Nitnem* (daily prayer) and *Path of Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (recitation of *bani*) by putting aside the narrow perspectives of *Jatha* or Sainly groups or other associations on a level much lower than the whole *Panth*. A uniform code of conduct must prevail for all Sikhs.

ANNEX 1

VIEWS OF SOME SIKH SCHOLARS

1. *Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha*

He was author of the first encyclopaedia of the Sikh Community '*Mahan Kosh.*' He says that:

“Alam poet wrote the love story of Madhavnal and Kamkandla in verse. *Ragmala* is part of that epic poem. *Ragmala* is not according to the spirit of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* which dwells on divine subjects such as Devotion, Spiritual knowledge and Divine love.”

“Some people think that the issue of *Ragmala* was raked up by the *Singh Sabha* movement. It is absolutely wrong. *Kavi Bhai Santokh Singh* who wrote 'History of the Ten Gurus' in verse in 1843 AD clearly writes “*Ragmala* is not *Gurbani*. Alam *Kavi* wrote the love story of Madhavnal and the dancing girl. In that story he has given the names of a few *Ragas* and *Ragnies*.” *Singh Sabha* movement started in 1873. Alam versified the epic in 1583 AD i.e., twenty one years before the compilation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* in 1604 AD. So it cannot be from the pen of Guru Arjan.”

2. Prof. Piara Singh Padam

Prof. Piara Singh Padam is a Sikh scholar of repute who has written many books and research papers on Sikhism. He writes as below:

“As we come across in Punjabi literature about the love stories of Heer-Ranjha, Sohni Mahival, Mirza Sahiban, versified by many poets, similarly in Hindustani literature the love story of Madhavnal and Kamkandla has been versified in many languages by many poets. One of my friends, Prof. M.R. Mojumdar of Baroda college, who is a literary research scholar of repute, wrote to me the following”:

“This story appears to have been popular mostly in Western India. Only a very late period after did it come to be adopted in Marathi. The Hindi version of this story by a Muslim poet 'Alam' styled Madhav Nal Katha, was composed in Hijri-Sumat 991 (1583 AD). Only a decade after Akbar's conquest of Gujarat at the express desire of Raja Todar Mal for the pleasure of Emperor Akbar”

The above thesis has been accepted by notable literary scholars *Pandit Ram Chand Shakal*, *Ganga Parsad*, and *Dr Hira Lal* on the basis of indisputable source material. It would be of interest for the readers to know that another poet *Damodar* versified the story in 1680 AD and the story finds place in *Charitra Pakhyan* (stories of female flirtation) as number 91 story.

There is no trace of Jodh Kavi, who is said to have written Madhav Nal story, among the Sanskrit poets, and for reference, 'History of Sanskrit Literature' may be consulted.

Some people confuse Alam poet (a Hindu who was court poet of Guru Gobind Singh) with the real poet of Akbar's times. They could not substantiate their claim."

He further gives a detailed list of Sikh Scholars of the 20th Century who do not consider *Ragmala* to be *Gurbani*.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Pandit Tara Singh Nirotam | 16. <i>Giani</i> Nahar Singh |
| 2. <i>Giani</i> Dit Singh of Singh Sabha Movement | 17. Principal Dharam Anant Singh |
| 3. Prof. Gurmukh Singh of Singh Sabha | 18. S.G.B. Singh |
| 4. <i>Giani</i> Gian Singh | 19. Principal Teja Singh |
| 5. Sadhu Gobind Singh Nirmala. | 20. Principal Ganga Singh |
| 6. Pandit Hazara Singh | 21. Prof. Dr. Ganda Singh |
| 7. Ba <i>Sant</i> Singh | 22. Prof. Dr. Sahib Singh |
| 8. <i>Bhai</i> Kahan Singh | 23. S. Shamsher Singh Ashok. |
| 9. <i>Bhai</i> Randhir Singh | 24. <i>Pandit</i> Kartar Singh Dakha |
| 10. Master Mota Singh | 25. Bawa Harkishan Singh |
| 11. <i>Giani</i> Sher Singh | 26. Prof. Kartar Singh |
| 12. Baba Teja Singh | 27. Prof. Gurbachan Singh Talib. |
| 13. Master Mehtab Singh | 28. S.Randhir Singh Research Scholar |
| 14. Master Tara Singh | 29. <i>Giani</i> Hira Singh |
| 15. Dr Tarlochan Singh | 30. Principal Gurmukh Singh |

Note: None of these scholars except *Bhai* Randhir Singh belonged to Akhand Kirtani Jatha. There was no such *Jatha* during the life time of *Bhai* Randhir Singh; it came to existence after his death.

He further writes that in 1849 AD at the *Baisakhi* gathering of the *Khalsa Panth* at Amritsar it was unanimously adopted that *Ragmala* was NOT *Gurbani*.

3. Rattan Singh of UK

Sardar Rattan Singh in one of his articles throws light on *Ragmala*. He writes that there are so many *Ragmalas* of the classical Indian *Ragas* having common wives and sons and so on. He enumerates a few leading systems of the classical *Ragas*.

1. Shiv *Rag* System – It has six *Ragas* with Sri *Rag* at the top. Each *Rag* has six wives.
2. Kalinath System – It resembles the Shiv *Rag* system, but with a slight difference.
3. Bharat *Rag* System – Baiju Bawra belonged to this system. It also has a *Ragmala* which resembles the *Ragmala* of *Guru Granth Sahib* but it has in addition eight daughter-in-laws.
4. Hanumant System – It has five *Ragmala*.
5. Sidhsaraswat System – It has only one *Ragmala* which has seven *Ragas* in it.
6. Ragarwan System – It also has one *Ragamala*.

The idea of detailing six more systems is to inform the readers that there has been a tendency with the old teachers of these *Ragas* to create their own *Ragmalas* for the facility of their students to memorise. *Ragmala*, therefore should be looked upon as the list of *Ragas* included in the *mala*. Those who try to explicate some kind of inner divine meaning in them, try to mislead people for nothing, because

they do not know *Gurbani* grammar which is quite helpful in getting at the depth of the verse.

Guru Arjan Dev *Ji* introduced each *Raga* as male. *Ragas* do not have human bodies, nor do they have any religion – Hindu or Muslim. The reader would be amused to know the following facts about the veracity of *Ragmala*.

- The *Ragmala* has given *Bhairav* the first position in the ‘*mala*’, but in the *Raga* system of *Guru Granth Sahib* *Sri Rag* has the first position whereas *Bhairav* has been relegated to 24th position. This has made most of the scholars doubt its relevance to the *Raga* system of *Guru Granth Sahib*.
- Out of the six main *Ragas* of the *Ragmala* from *Ragas* – Malkausak, Hindol, Deepak and Megh, do not find any place in the holy *Guru Granth Sahib*.
- Out of 31 *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*, this *Ragmala* does not give any information about the following nine *Ragas*:- Majh, Bihagra, Wadhans, Jaisri, Ramkali, Mali-Gaura, Tukhari, Prabhati and Jai Jai wanti.

Suffice to say that the research scholars found the *Ragmala* deficient in many respects, hence they considered it not to be representative of the *Raga* system of the holy *Guru Granth Sahib*. Nor can the thesis, that Guru Arjan Dev wrote this *Ragmala* (without giving his name at the top) be accepted. The fact is that supporters of *Ragmala* have not been able to vouch safe a suitable rejoinder to the questions raised above. They do not have any answer to the query why, for instance, the *Ragmala* should detract from the numerical system adopted uniformly to enumerate each *Shabad*, *Ashtpadi*, *Pauri*, or *Chhanda* whereas each couplet of *Ragmala* has been numbered one (1).

4. Shamsheer Singh Ashok

He was a senior research scholar of Punjab appointed by the SGPC. He has written a complete treatise on the controversial *Ragmala*, which has been well acclaimed by all Sikh scholars.

He tells us that quite a number of Muslim *Soofi* poets translated love stories in Hindi. For example he quotes in the ‘Foreword’ of his said book as under:-

1. Shaikh Kutban – 909 Hijri (1502 AD)
2. Malik Mohamad Jaisi – 947 Hijri (1540 AD)
3. Alam – 991 Hijri (1583 AD)
4. Usman – 1022 Hijri (1615 AD)
5. Nur Mohd – 1157 Hijri (1750 AD)

Out of the five *Soofi* poets only Alam is known to the Sikhs because some unlettered person through mistake or mischief entered a portion of the love story of Kamkandla at the end of holy *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The most unfortunate situation is that with the passage of time many saints have been sermonising their Sikh followers that it belongs to *Gurmat* System of music. This *Ragmala* occupies its place in the love story of Kamkandla from stanza no. 33 to 38. The story appeared in Hindi literature 21 years before the compilation of the holy *Guru Granth Sahib* in which poetical

Gurbani throws light on the Greatness of God Almighty. Alam's story, however, dilates upon the romantic relationship between two lovers.

“Dr *Bhai* Vir Singh has been a supporter of *Ragmala* as *Bani*. I asked him if Alam was not the author of *Ragmala* then who was the author? On three occasions I asked him this question but I received three different answers. First he said Guru Arjan Dev Sahib, only to quote *Bhai* Gurdas the second time. On the third meeting he attributed the authorship to Guru Nanak Dev.”

His father Dr Charan Singh in his book *Gurmat Sangeet Nirnaya* says that *Bhai* Gurdas wrote it at the instance of Guru Arjan Dev *ji*, but he does not present any evidence in support of this contention. Many people like them have written in support of *Ragmala* without any documented evidence. They have based their arguments on surmises. They have not been honest in their approach.

There are two Alam poets. First Alam poet was author of the love story of Madhav Nal and Kamkandla. He was a Muslim and belonged to *Soofi* cadre of Kadri group. Besides the above he also translated in Hindi the eleventh Chapter of ‘*Bhagwat*’ regarding ‘*Krishna Leela*’. His works are in *Dohras* and *Chopayis*. His creative work can be safely placed between 1550 to 1600 AD. He did not know Sanskrit, therefore, he would first listen to the story and then create his work in Hindi.

The second Alam was a Hindi poet and contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, i.e. 1675 AD to 1700 AD. He was a scholar of Sanskrit and Hindi. He used to write in *Kabits* and *Sawayias*. He abjured his faith for the sake of a Muslim lady whom he married later on.

We reproduce from the search papers of Hindi manuscripts of 1904, 1908 and 1923-24 to set at rest some misgivings and doubts of the votaries of *Ragmala*.

Baba Shyam Sunder Das of Banaras writes as under from the source material – Annual report on the search of Hindi manuscripts for the year 1904 – page 15:-

“In the year 1583 in which the poet Alam wrote his book, Todarmal was busy with his reforms of civil and revenue administration and must have won the great fame which has come down to the present day. The surname of Akbar was Abul Fatah Jalal-Ul-Din Mohammed and he reigned from 1556 to 1605 AD. It therefore seems certain that this poet flourished in the time of Akbar-the Great, and consequently was different from another poet of the same name who was in the service of Muazzam Shah son of Aurangzeb noted by me last year!!”

5. Dr Hira Lal

He writes as under:

“Alam Kavi: Author of Madavanal Kamkandla Natak wrote his work in 1583 AD during the reign of Akbar-the Great, whom he praises as the repository of knowledge and wealth and as the Guru of the whole world. He is distinct from another Alam poet who flourished during Bahadur Shah's reign and wrote on erotic subjects.....”

“Alam is a well known poet on erotic subjects. He was a Brahmin but became convert to Islam in admiration of the poetical talents of a Muslim woman whom he made his wife. He flourished about 1700 AD.” (From the Twelfth report on the Search of Hindi manuscripts for the year 1923-24 and 1925. Vol I pp 1920).

See page 110 of *Ragmala Nirnya* by late Shamsheer Singh Ashok.

The Pro-*Ragmaliyas* unnecessarily create a confusion that it was Alam poet of Guru Gobind Singh’s time who was the author of *Ragmala*. Little do they realise that both the poets are placed more than a century apart, as a result of which their language and literary prose has to be different. The fact remains that Alam, contemporary of Akbar-the Great, was the real author of *Ragmala* who wrote it in 1583 AD, 21 years before the compilation of *Guru Granth Sahib*, not after. Recent researchers also show that there was no Jodh poet who could be the author of *Ragmala*. Pro-*Ragmaliyas* have been shifting their stand to confound the matter. It goes without saying that they do not have a firm base.

6. Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer

Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer has written a large number of research books on Sikh philosophy, Sikh culture and Sikh history. He too has presented his thesis about *Ragmala*. To quote Dr. Dilgeer:

“Every word of *Guru Granth Sahib* has some message in it. What to talk of a “message”, *Ragmala* does not even mean anything. An attempt to give any meaning to its stanzas could be called as an attempt at falsification of truth.

The *Ragmala* is nothing but a “catalogue” of some of the Indian *Ragas*. Even this catalogue is not based on the sequence of *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Some of the *Ragas* mentioned in this *Ragmala* do not appear in *Guru Granth Sahib* whereas some *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib* do not figure in this catalogue.

It seems that someone, probably out of ignorance, added this *Ragmala* (which is in fact a part of a long romantic poem written by Aalam, a poet) in one volume of *Guru Granth Sahib* and those who prepared further copies of *Guru Granth Sahib* from that volume did not bother to omit or ignore it.

One writer had tried to present it as “index” of the *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. As discussed above it is not even a “catalogue” or an “index” of the *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Moreover, even if it would have been really an index of the *Ragas* of *Guru Granth Sahib*, it could not be considered a part of the main body of the text of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Further, no one reads the index or the contents of a book as such. An index or the contents are just for reference only. If one insists that this index should be recited as a part of the complete recitation of the book then why should not one read the contents of that book? In fact, *Ragmala* is neither *Gurbani* nor an index of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The Sikhs should resolve through a *Gurmata* to denounce it as soon as possible. The intellectuals should assert the truth without any hesitation, partiality or fear.”

About the book

This book provides an in-depth analysis of *Ragmala* in the context of *Gurbani*. It makes a logical appraisal to prove that *Ragmala* lacks qualitative and quantitative measures of *Gurbani*. Many proofs are presented that were not available hitherto. Historical, grammatical and poetical evidences are presented to come to the conclusions. The book is addressed to scholars of Sikhism, and all those concerned with the correct interpretation of *Gurbani*, particularly the youth on whose shoulders lies the burden of carrying Sikhism forward. For the illogical, blind-faithed and pre-conditioned mind the book may be another critique of *Gurbani* though it is totally untrue.

About the author

Bhai Madan Singh is a well known writer on Sikhism. He has been regularly writing religious articles for a number of magazines and newspapers such as Des Pradesh, Punjab Times International, Sant Sipahi, Spokesman etc. His articles are logical and discard superstitions in light of *Gurbani*.

He is a practising *Amritdhari* (baptised) Sikh with a strong faith in *Gurbani*. He lives a simple life according to the Sikh code of conduct. His simple style of outer appearance with flowing beard rarely gives the impression of him being an MA. He is a living example of Sikh way of life. He was one of the early settlers in the UK in early sixties. For all these years his way of life has not changed. He has been preaching Sikhism through various means along with his wife *Bibi* Kirpal Kaur. Apart from being active in *Gubani* recitation and *kirtan*, *Bhai Sahib* has been disseminating Sikh message by importing and distributing books on Sikh religion to individuals and Sikh organisations in the UK and other countries. This way he has been making a proper use of *Daswandh*.