

Which Banis did the Tenth Guru recite at the time of administering Amrit?

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Which Banis did the Tenth Guru recite at the time of administering Amrit?-Principal Harbhajan Singh, Satnam Singh This information we have culled from Prof. Piara Singh Padam's book 'Rehatnamas' and from the book on 'rehat maryada' published by the Chief Khalsa Diwan. Here to be brief, we will mention only different references given about the 'banis' recited/read at the time of administering 'amrit'. Detailed information can be had from the concerned books.

1. Rehatnama Bhai Daya Singh (Piara): A good Sikh partakes of 'amrit' of Sri Amritsar. First, he reads or recites complete Jap ji, from the beginning to the end and the Chaupai. Which Chaupai (quartet)? (There is no indication.) He reads five different sawaiyas: 1. Srawag 2. Dinan Ki Pritpal 3. Papp smooch Binasan 4. Sat sdaiv suda brat, and 5 five stanzas of Anand Sahib. He stirs the 'amrit' with a kirpan towards himself. Then one Singh places a kirpan beside him. (Note: Here there is no mention of Jaap Sahib and complete Anand Sahib. There is however mention of stirring 'amrit' with a Kirpan.) Bhai Chaupa Singh (Tenth Gurus's Hazuri Sikh): Then the perfect Guru Sahib started testing the Panth. On the seventh day of Sawan, 1756 Sambat, the consecrated drink was sought to be prepared. Guru Sahib said,

"Chaupa Singh, bring water in a bowl." When water was brought, Guru Sahib commanded, "Hold the 'Khanda' (double edged sword) and stir the contents of the bowl." Then all the five started reading out 'swaiyas' each. Which five? Daya Singh.... Sahib Singh.... Himmat Singh.... Dharam Singh.... Mohkam Singh...?. When these five Singhs started reading out 'swaiyas', then Sahib Chand Diwan made a request, "True Sovereign, if 'ptashas' (sugar bubbles) are put in the bowl, it will be better." In the meanwhile, Mata Shakti, Mata Sahib kaur, assuming the form of the 'devi' (goddess) put sugar bubbles in the bowl. The perfect Guru Sahib took five palmfuls and put them on the eyes, and five palmfuls in the hair. Then he recited the following 'swaiya' from the 'Chandi Charitar':

"Deh Shiva war mohey ehay
Shubh karman te kabhon na taron.
Na daron ar siyon jab jaye laron nishchay kar apni jeet karon.
Ar Sikh hon apne hi mann ko eh lalach han gun ton ochron.
Jab aav ki audh nidhan baney
At hi run mein tab joojh maron.
[O God of power, bless me,
That nothing deters me from gracious deeds.

And when fight I must, I fight for sure to win.
That I am instructed in wisdom only by my higher mind,
That I crave ever to utter thy praise.
When comes the end of my life,
I die fighting in the thick of a (righteous) war']

Guru Sahib administered 'amrit' to the five Singh with his own hands. Next day, more Sikhs requested the Master that they too be administered 'amrit'. He said, 'prepare 'Karah Parshad' and have it from the five Singhs after reading 'swaiyas'.

[Note: This 'Maryada' (practice) too does not accord with any current practice or any other practice.]According to Guru Bilas Patshahi Daswin: [Author: Bhai Koer Singh, p-128] It is considered to have been written in 1808 sambat, i.e. 1751 A.D. about 43 years after the passing away of the Tenth Guru]

'Sarita jal leen achhoot mangaye kay,
Patar loh mein tan prabh beray.
Parhtey su udass hai mantron ko,
Prabh thadhey hai app bhaiye so saverey.' (p-25)

[Note: Here there is only a mention of reading 'mantra' (mool mantra)]

2. Bansawalinama: [Genealogical Tree] of the ten Guru Sahibaan written by Bhai Kesar Singh Chhiber (11826

Sambat). According to this writing:

Guru Sahib said: 'Get a bowl of water at once.'

When it was brought, Guru Sahib gave 'karad' (knife) to a Sikh and asked him to stir the water in the bowl. Then Guru Sahib asked him to read aloud Japu Ji Sahib and Anand (Tenth part).

Here it is worth noting that Chhiber has used the word 'karad' instead of Khanda and has mentioned the reading out of two 'banis' 'Jap' and 'Anand'.

[Sikh Sanskar atey maryada-Chief Khalsa Diwan, p-63]

3. History of the Sikhs, written by Khushwant Rai: 1811
sambat, i.e. 1754 A.D. In the preparation of 'amrit' there is mention of reading aloud only five swaiyas. (p-63).
4. Pracheen Panth Parkash, written by Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu, edited by Bhai Vir Singh Ji, published in 1941 A.D. Var Bhagauti, first pauri (stanza) swaiya No. 32, Tribhangi Chhand-Khag Khand.
[Note: Here there is mention of reading or reciting three different 'banis', which are different from those that are read these days.]
5. 'Suraj Parkash' written by Bhai Santokh Singh Ji: Banis read at the time of preparing 'amrit' are: Jap Ji, Swaiyas, five stanzas of Anand Sahib. [Note: Here is no mention of reading out Jaap Sahib and Chaupai. Only reading out

five 'pauris' (stanzas) of Anand Sahib have been mentioned.]

6. Guru Panth Parkash: {Giani Gian Singh), edited by: Singh Sahib Giani Kirpal Singh, p-1573}: 'Jap Ji Sahib-5pauris, Jaap Sahib-5 pauris, Das Sudh, Anand Sahib, and Chaupai.

[Note: Here is mention of reading out five 'pauris' each of Jap Ji Sahib and Jaap Sahib and this too is not clear which 'Chaupai' should be read out-the one in the beginning of 'Akal Ustat' "Pranvo aad ek nirankara" or the 27-pad kabiyo vach Chaupai from 377 ti 404 Chaupadas of Charitar No. 405 of 'Charitro Pakhiyan'?]

7. 'Gurbilas Patshahi 10': written by Bhai Sukha Singh of Patna Sahib: The author has mentioned the reading out of some 'mantras' while preparing 'amrit'. He has not mentioned the reading out of any particular 'bani' or 'banis'.
8. 'Guru Sobha; Likhari, Kavi Senapati (Singh): Guru Gobind Singh's poet Laureate Senapati (Singh) in his book 'Guru Sobha' has not described any method of administering the 'pahul of Khanda' (consecrated drink prepared with Khanda-two edged sword). He has only mentioned the 'kurehats' (breach of Sikh code of conduct) like mundan (tonsuring), smoking hookah and having relations with 'minas' or 'masands'.

9. Sri Kalgidhar Chamatkar, written by Bhai Vir Singh: Bhai Vir Singh Ji writes the following on page 27-28: "At the place where yesterday Sikhi was put to test, today there is a throne around which the devotees are sitting. 'Karah Parsad' (sweet pudding) for 1100 is kept on white sheets. On the throne is sitting Guru Gobind Singh Ji apparelled in white. Before him lies a shining steel bowl containing water with a two-edged sword in it. In front of him are standing the five Sikhs of yesterday, the liberated ones, who had offered their heads. They too are clad in white. Guru Sahib spoke to them-the five-"Waheguru' is the 'gurmantra' chant it with perfect concentration." While the 'Five' got busy in chanting 'Waheguru', Guru Sahib himself started stirring the 'Khanda' in the bowl and reciting 'banis'. Standing before the 'Five' who had offered their heads, he made one of them recite the 'mool mantra' five times. Then he gave him five palmfuls of 'amrit' sprinkled it on his eyes and put five palmfuls in his hair. In this manner he administered 'amrit' to the 'Five.'

{ Note: Here there is no mention of the 'banis' that were read or recited. The Five beloved ones too had been chosen a day before. Next day, one of them was made to recite the 'mool mantra' five times] (Based on the article published in the Khalsa Samachar of 6-13 April 2000).

History does not testify at all that the Tenth Guru, while preparing 'amrit' with 'Khanda' recited the five 'banis', which are recited now-a-days. Making such a claim is like making a ball of salt. In such a situation, what should be done? Our humble submission is that in the entire literature written before the Singh Sabha movement, there is no mention about the recitation of the five 'banis' which are recited these days while preparing 'amrit'. It appears that before the Singh Sabha Movement there was no definite tradition regarding the recitation of 'banis' at the time of administering 'amrit.' It varied from group to group, and 'dera' to 'dera' (seminary). For details see Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi's book on 'Dasam Granth' (page 36-37).

Humble Inquiry:

The new preachers of Gurmat philosophy should kindly tell us on what grounds they wish to change the 'rehat maryada' that has been followed by the SGPC for the last 65 years with the general approval of the Panth. They have no evidence in Sikh history and religious literature for doing so. Without conducting any research, it is baseless on the part of some individuals and institutions to claim that they are in favor of introducing the 'rehat maryada' followed by Guru Gobind Singh Ji on the Baisakhi of 1699. It is based on the imagination and is against Panthic unity. Some persons claim that they support the 'rehat maryada' coming down to them from generation to generation for over three centuries. Such a claim is hollow and ridiculous in view of the evidence adduced above. It can be asked humbly: How did the 'maryada' which did not come down in the same form to Guru's court

writers, contemporary historians and writers, came to our present day venerables belonging to different institutions and groups? Have these honorable men ever thought if Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji had not compiled the entire 'Gurbani' in one authentic volume and had accepted the tradition of passing it on from generation to generation, what our fate would have been today? It should be remembered that the unique, universal, eternal, and everlasting existence of the Panth depends on 'dhur ki bani' 'Guru Shabad' and the immortal directions contained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.