



# Sikh Research Journal

**Vol. 2 No. 1**

This article is from \*Sikh Research Journal\*, the online peer-reviewed journal of Sikh and Punjabi Studies

Sikh Research Journal \*Vol. 2 No. 1 Published: Fall 2016.

<http://sikhresearchjournal.org>

<http://sikhfoundation.org>

## THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIKH CALENDAR ART

By Dr. Kavita Singh

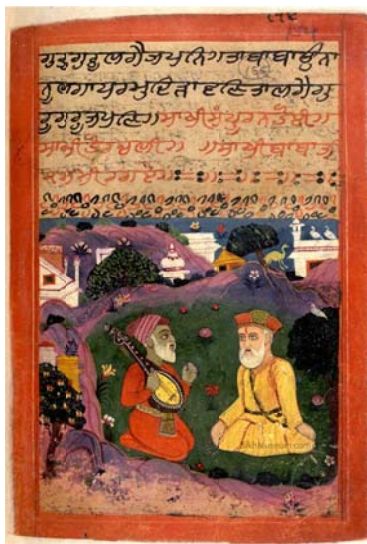
### **Abstract:**

This research paper traces the genesis and development of *Sikh Calendar art/Sikh Popular art* which has systematically evolved into a full-fledged genre of *Sikh art* over the last three centuries as it draws inspiration from the Sikh religion, ethos, philosophical perspectives and glorious history of the Sikhs. The fountainhead of *Sikh Calendar art* is the pictorial narratives based on *Janam Sakhis* drawn by the artists engaged by the earlier preachers of Sikhism and it culminated into the formation of hand-painted *pothis*/manuscripts which had text as well as illustrations. This tradition further blossomed as more and more artists were engaged by devout followers of Sikhism to paint walls of shrines, *thakurdwaras*, *deras*, *sarais*, *dharamshalas*, *akharas* and *havelis* in the form of frescoes and murals to spread the message of Sikhism. With the arrival of art of miniature painting by the Rajasthani artists in Kangra, Guler, Chamba, Basohli, Nurpur and Kotla, the *Sikh art* got further impetus as these artists started adopting Sikh themes to seek greater patronage from the Sikh rulers as Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his courtiers and Sikh aristocrats showed keen interest and appreciation for this classical form of painting which had great aesthetic and artistic merit. The court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh had great splendour and grandeur which attracted hordes of European travelers, artists, generals and historians. The famous European artists brought with them new techniques of painting like oil on canvas, water-colour, pastels, chalk, crayon, woodcut, lithography and zinc etching. These painters profusely painted the Lahore *Durbar* and portraits of the royalties, generals and aristocrats with photo-realistic technique giving emphasis on proper perspective, three-dimensional aspects, flora and fauna, architecture, weaponry and costumes. As they had brought with them the printing presses, prints of the fabulous paintings started flooding the markets in Lahore and Amritsar. Brilliant Sikh artists who were acting as their helpers whole-heartedly picked up their painting techniques. After attaining proficiency in western painting techniques, they started painting Sikh themes and thus *Sikh art* developed rapidly with newer and enchanting explorations and innovations. To make their art available to the masses, prints based on paintings of Sikh themes and philosophy were produced in great numbers and sold in bazaars, fairs, festivals in front of the Gurdwaras, temples and shrines. Walls of nearly every Punjabi home and establishment were adorned with these magnificent and colourful *Sikh calendars* as people adored their thematic content which preached divine and spiritual messages of Sikh Gurus. Generation after generation of artists pursued this genre of art with diligence and deep dedication and today we have a

full-fledged flourishing and ever-evolving genre of *Sikh Calendar art* which has typical characteristics and style and it has even reached the shores of many foreign lands where the Sikh and Punjabi Diaspora is settled.

### THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIKH CALENDAR ART

Broadly speaking, the term *Popular art* is used to refer to all those art forms of India that have a mass audience and use mechanical reproduction in their creation and distribution.<sup>1</sup> *Calendar art* is a generic name for a style of *Popular Print art*.<sup>2</sup> In basic terms, the concise definition of *Calendar art* is visual narration through images describing the theological and mythical themes highlighting the apparent as well as inner essence, philosophy and ethos pertaining to large number of iconic figures belonging to various religious groups, sects and creeds emphasizing on their charismatic deeds, teachings and spiritual messages. The fountainhead of *Sikh Calendar art* springs from the early illustrations of *Janam Sakhis* done in line drawings with occasional touch of bright colours and are mainly contained in the painted *pothis* (manuscripts). (Plate No.1) *Janam Sakhis* which are as popular and sacred in the Sikh tradition as are *Puranas* in Brahmanical and *Jatakas* in Buddhist. In *Gurumukhi*, the literal meaning of ‘*Sakhi*’ is supposed to be a ‘story’ but generally speaking *Janam Sakhis* are the episodes from the life of Guru Nanak Dev.<sup>3</sup>



(Plate No.1)

*Janam Sakhis* are hagiographic accounts of the life of Guru Nanak, popular narratives that have enjoyed a considerable popularity throughout the history of the Sikh religion. The *Janam Sakhis* are

characterised into two basic traditions as Puratan *Janam Sakhi* and Bhai Bala *Janam Sakhi*.<sup>4</sup> These were created by the *Pracharaks* (preachers) with the help of local artists and had a distinctive yet simple stylization which stands on the cusp of line drawings of Rajasthani and Pahari paintings. The pioneers who endeavoured in this direction were chiefly *Udasi*, *Ramraiya* and *Sodhi Deras* (monasteries) all offshoots of the mainstream of Sikhism.<sup>5</sup> However, it is evidenced from one of the *varan* (ballads) written by Bhai Gurdas, a disciple of Guru Arjan and the scribe of the Adi-Granth (Sikh scripture) that there was a well-developed *Janam Sakhi* tradition in vogue during the tenure of Guru Arjan Dev- the fifth Sikh Guru.<sup>6</sup> In the *Janam Sakhi* paintings, the initial emphasis was on the portrayal of anecdotes from Guru Nanak's childhood to his youth and undertaking of four *Udasis* (long spiritual travels) during which Baba Nanak met and interacted with all sorts of people- priests, saints, kings, *Yogis*, *Mullahs*, monks, *Pirs*, demons, cannibals and even sorceresses. These illustrations usually carried suitable labeling of the characters and a brief description of the episode or the story behind the scene depicted in a particular painting. Initially there was less stress on ornamentation of the *hashias* (margins) and the backgrounds were rarely crowded with elements of nature. With the spread of Guru Nanak's message of humanism and universal brotherhood, interesting and engaging works on the subject were produced in great numbers. Slowly yet steadily, there was a marked adoption of symbols and elements of high aesthetic value from the paintings of Rajasthani, Mughal and Persian styles.

The decorative murals and frescoes appeared simultaneously on the walls of shrines, *thakurdwaras* (temples), *deras*, *sarais* (Inns), *dharamshalas*, *akharas* and landmark *havelis* owned by devout followers and preachers of Sikhism. The prominent specimens of this genre of art are mostly in the *thakurdwaras* of *Bairagis* (ascetics) such as the one built by Sant Jagveen Das *Bairagi*, near the Wagah Border at Attari in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> The landmark source in the development of wall painting in Punjab pertains to *samadhi* (structure build on a grave of a religious person or saint) of Bhai Dalla, a disciple of Guru Gobind Singh at Talwandi Sabo, now Damdama Sahib.

The drawings and paintings on Sikh themes flourished as a number of renowned painters from Rajasthan migrated to Punjab hills during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as there was greater patronage and protection for these painters who had fled the kingdoms of Rajasthan due to perennial turmoil and wars between the Mughals and Rajput rulers.

Another vital dimension which was responsible for the extension of Pahari art was the Sikh patronage at the very end of the eighteenth century, when Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, the chief patron of painting in the Kangra valley was forced to seek the aid of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of

the Punjab plains, to put an end to the perennial attacks and disturbances by Gurkhas in 1809. With the result, peace and tranquillity was established after the annexation of Guler in 1813 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and dominance of Sikh rulers was achieved over the hill states. During the years 1810 to 1830, the Pahari artists themselves came forward and approached the Sikh patrons, which envisaged a keen interest in the minds of patrons at Lahore court.<sup>8</sup> The result being cementing of the bond of Pahari painting with *Sikh art* and enriching it with novel, instinctive, artistic and aesthetical enhancements. Thus *Sikh art* became the direct successor of the Kangra School of painting.<sup>9</sup>

During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Kotla, Guler, Kangra, Basohli, Nurpur, Chamba and other hill states of the region one after the other passed under the Sikh sway. This led to close contacts between the plains and the hills and in consequence the artists of the Kangra valley turned to Sikh themes.<sup>10</sup> A large number of them even left the hills and settled in Amritsar and Lahore and they enjoyed rich patronage of the Sikh rulers.<sup>11</sup> **(Plate No.2)**



(Plate No.2)

The prominent artists like Nikka, Gokal, Harkhu, Chhajju and Damodar, all of the Rajol family of artists have established connections with the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Sher Singh and the family of the powerful Sandhanwalia Sardars.<sup>12</sup>

To seek greater patronage from the Sikh ruler- Maharaja Ranjit Singh, these pahari painters started working on themes related to Sikh religion, the Sikh nobility and aristocracy and they infused the fundamental parameters of aesthetic richness as well as visual stylization akin to the classical style of miniature painting richly decorative, sprayed with elements of nature- flora and fauna, landscape and architecture. They glorified the valiant Sikh warriors and generals of Sikh army and created impressive portraits and elaborately descriptive compositions underlining the essence of Sikh religion, art and culture. Usually the rich elite class and aristocrats engaged these master artists to create works of

exquisite beauty either to record and highlight their personal accomplishments or to chroniclise the historic events around them. While this was going on the open-minded Sikh rulers and aristocrats never imposed any hindrance in letting the pahari artists of those Sikh governed areas to divert their creative energies and attentions from the creative work they were pursuing earlier. There were new additions in the themes and artists gladly adopted the subject matter which was to the preference of the Sikh patrons.

The Lahore *Durbar* which had great splendour and grandeur attracted hordes of European artists, travellers, historians and generals to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as the stories of his fabulous wealth and empirical power transcended the boundaries of the Punjab. The well-known among these are August Schoefft, Emily Eden, W.G. Osborne, Baron Hugel, Captain Goldingham, William Carpenter, C.S. Hardingne, the German painter Van Orlich, G.T. Vigne and Russian prince Alexis Soltykoff.

Among the pioneer European painters, a Hungarian painter named August Theodore Schoefft who visited India in 1838 laid the foundations of western style of painting in *Sikh art*. He was renowned for his competence in oil paintings and painted vast canvasses depicting the scenes of Ranjit Singh's court. **(Plate No.3)** Sher Singh, the son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a great admirer of western art and was immensely impressed by Schoefft's style of illustrative work. The Sikh rulers as well as the painters of the Punjab were for the first time introduced to western style of painting through Schoefft's works. His huge canvases painted in oils were the first step towards the journey of development of *Sikh art*, which imbibed western styles, techniques, mannerisms and composition.<sup>13</sup>



(Plate No.3)

The other European artists harboured a burning desire to visit this exotic empire which offered rich patronage to their art and simultaneously improving their economic strata. They brought with them new techniques and technologies which were welcomed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Thus the Sikh painting underwent a sea-change and saw the introduction of various western styles and painting techniques. These painters of extraordinary artistic caliber produced magnificent paintings in charcoal,

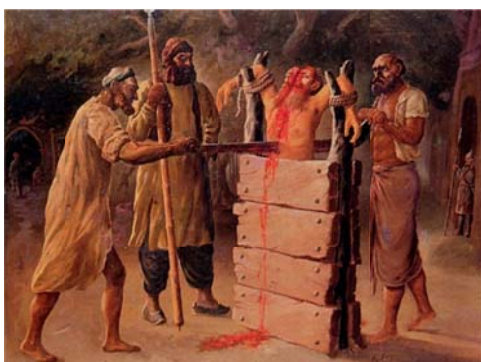
chalk, crayon, water-colours, tempura, gouache, oil colours and even initiated the technique of wood-cut, lithography and zinc etching. Seeing the potential of their works being acquired by rich natives at fabulous rates, they saw it as a great commercial proposition and introduced the printing presses to India. From now onwards, they shifted their attention to the painting of the splendour of the Lahore *Durbar* and produced numerous portraits of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his family members, courtiers, generals, ministers, aristocrats and other prominent personalities. Large mural-like paintings in oil on canvas technique generated incredible interest due to the realism, fascinating depiction of backgrounds and visible mastery over the presentation of colour and linear perspectives. The three-dimensional aspect of these paintings complete with scenic landscapes and architectural marvels like forts and palaces captured in photographic realism enthralled the viewers. This was the trendsetting artistic accomplishment of these great western painters. As the commissions poured in great numbers, the European artists sometimes employed local art assistants and craftsmen to help them in their studios for menial jobs like for the job of a *pankha* man, a water carrier or a carpenter. Interestingly, the enterprising Sikh artists and craftsmen were quick to learn their techniques by merely observing these western artists. Their painting techniques were exposed from one local artist to another- from Lahore to Amritsar. Kehar Singh, Kapur Singh, Kishan Singh, Bishan Singh, Sardul Singh, Bawa, Puran Singh, Amir Singh, Aroor Singh, Ganesha Singh, Azim, Jeevan Lal, Lahora Singh, Malla Ram, Sri Ram Lal, Hussain Buxe and Allah Buxe were amongst the few who made their mark.<sup>14</sup> **(Plate No.4)**



(Plate No.4)

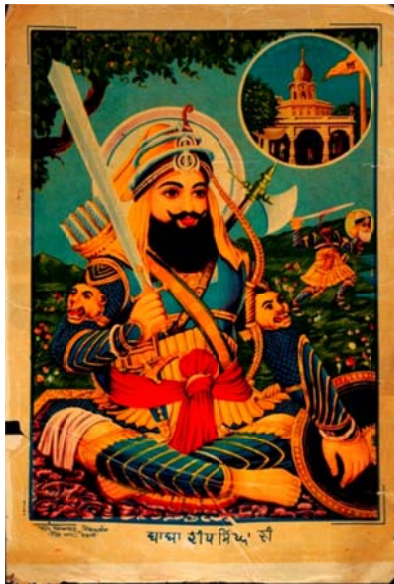
After attaining considerable expertise and skill in handling of western painting styles and techniques, the most poignant and landmark endeavour which revolutionised the *Sikh Calendar art* was the initiation of painting portraits of Sikh Gurus, episodes from Sikh historical perspective,

narration of Sikh ideology, ethos and culture in western styles and mannerisms by the Sikh artists. The manuscript-like drawings and paintings which were being painted earlier by hand in limited numbers were being produced now in large numbers by using the wood-cut and lithography printing techniques. This facilitated availability of reproduction of the original specimens of *Sikh Calendar art* in large quantities and thus it propelled mass production of *Calendar art* works amply serving the purpose of propagation of *Sikh Calendar art* which is aptly referred to as ‘*Bazaar*’ or ‘*Popular art*’. The introduction of Printing presses especially Lithographic printing processes in the 1850s wholly revolutionalised the propagation of *Sikh Bazaar art*. The technique of Lithographic printing was used extensively for printing books some with occasional illustrations and elaborate title covers of the publications. For example the ‘*Tulsi Ramayan*’ in *Gurmukhi* was published in 1871 at Lahore and ‘*Qissa Puran Bhagat Jati da*’ in 1872 with a number of impressive Lithographic images of *Puran Bhagat Janam Sakhis* and important Punjabi love-legends like *Heer Ranjha* were also published by Lithography technique spreading their wider circulation, which became an element of *Popular Sikh art/Sikh Calendar art*. Also available were the much appreciated *dasti*, hand held or portable prints some of which satirize the rapid shifts in Punjab society.<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, it brought these calendars within the reach of common man at nominal rates. The popularity of these calendars/prints primarily was due to the religious content which highlighted Sikh religion. These calendars expressively depicted scenes from the lives of Sikh Gurus and martyrs. **(Plate No.5)** The mushrooming of small printing presses in the lanes of Amritsar and Lahore aptly justify the popularity of these colourful prints. The business establishments and traders freely utilized them for their emotive mass appeal in promoting their respective trades by advertising their products and services underneath the fascinating paintings of these calendars. These calendars were made available for sale in crowded fairs and festivals on the roadside stalls and in front of the shrines. **(Plate No.6)**



(Plate No. 5)





(Plate No.6)

J. Lockwood Kipling, Principal of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore (1875-93) and also Curator of the Central Museum, Lahore, chanced upon seeing these unusually exotic Sikh calendars being sold on the footpaths of Lahore and evinced a keen interest in these calendars so much so he started collecting each available specimen of this art form for his own personal collection which was later on donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London by his son Rudyard Kipling in 1917.<sup>16</sup> This stylized art form passing through the creative hands of Sikh artists saw many phases of transformation from elaborately decorative to photo-realistic versions. Subsequently the touch of individual artistic approach and mannerism exalted expression of divinity and spiritualism, a deep exploration of conceptual essence and visualization marked resonance of the emphasis on visually powerful narration, was witnessed in the works of Sobha Singh, S.G. Thakur Singh, G.S. Sohan Singh (**Plate No.7**), Kirpal Singh, Jaswant Singh, Master Gurdit Singh, Trilok Singh Chitrakar, Amolak Singh, Bodhraj, Mehar Singh, Devender Singh and Jarnail Singh. These artists emerged as torch-bearers of the genre of *Sikh Calendar art*.



(Plate No. 7)

The most significant and stalwart artist who is also referred to as ‘Saint Painter’- Sardar Sobha Singh whose creative, spiritual and philosophical works helped in crystallizing the iconic portrait paintings of Sikh Gurus specially those of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh besides the portraits of Guru Hargobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Baba Sheikh Farid, Bhagat Ravidas and he freely expressed and preached the true essence of Sikhism through other works where love for all mankind, peace and universal brotherhood, equality of genders were narrated in powerful and magnetizing manner.

The iconographic images of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh we see today in Sobha Singh’s work have characteristic elements and features which have been aptly adopted from the earlier line drawings depicted in the *pothis* (manuscripts) of *Janam Sakhis* except the *Rumi Topi* or cap which was commonly depicted in many miniature paintings. In the *Janam Sakhi* paintings of Pre-Partition era, Guru Nanak Dev is presented in many variations and the basic features associated with him were *Saili*, *Topi*, *Rosary*, long *Jama* (shirt), *Tilaka*, *Nimbus*, *Simarini*, a benign smile and the face turned slightly to right or to left. From his *Topi* seems to radiate a circle of light, something like a divine aura symbolising his enlightened state. In *Janam Sakhi* illustrations, a cap worn by Guru Nanak is an essentiality painted vividly, as conical, close fitting and sometimes his best-known *Qalandari*. A shawl or *Chaddar* on his shoulder was depicted to enhance dignity of his bearing. It is sometimes replaced by a *Gudari* symbolical of Kabir’s all assimilating bearing, humility, all embracing, all pervading expanses of his life and mission.<sup>17</sup> Guru Nanak Dev is also shown with his two true devout followers Bala and Mardana.(Plate No.8)



(Plate No.8)

Another broad change which appeared in *Sikh Calendar art* was the portrayal of individual portraits of Guru Nanak and in this context excellent works were produced by legendary painters of *Sikh art* as Sobha Singh, Kirpal Singh, Jaswant Singh, G.S.Sohan Singh and Mohinder Singh marking the

direct emergence of *Sikh Calendar art* wherein the typical features which travelled with the time, were more poignantly painted and preserved. Guru Nanak's portraits especially by Sobha Singh have no reference to any historical situation and are prominently concerned with bringing out such spiritual qualities of the Master as the poise of self-realisation, ecstasy of meditation, glow of contemplation and intensity of divine love. **(Plate No.9 to10)** Kirpal Singh's portraits on the other hand are usually related to some historical situation or another. They depict Guru Nanak as a tireless world teacher, towering in stature with well-defined limbs having the play of a spiritual radiance, missionary zeal and mental poise on his face. Jaswant Singh's work is an attempt to portray the sub-conscious and thus bears the mark of surrealism. **(Plate No.11)** Detail, natural backgrounds, landscape and perspective with ascent on decorative elements set G.S. Sohan Singh apart as an artist of distinguished standing. **(Plate No.12)**



(Plate No.9)



(Plate No. 10)



(Plate No.11)



(Plate No.12)

Passing through the process of reformatory filtration freezing new perceptions and religious manifestations the *Sikh Calendar art* chose to portray Guru Nanak Dev in a style which was far from the earlier conceptual version depicted in the *Janam Sakhi* illustrations and the features which were admired and adopted in this genre were complete replacement of the Guru's cap by a straight turban showing no angle in front; disappearance of *Tilak* mark and *Bairagan*; full view face in most of the cases; continued presence of the Halo, *Saili* and the *Mala* and longer and constantly white beard depicting old age as a sign of spiritual wisdom bringing Guru Nanak in to closer accord with the Khalsa ideal of uncut hair while the whiteness strengthens the image of a venerable sage.<sup>18</sup> **(Plate No.13)**



(Plate No.13)

Close on heels a major feature attained is the remarkable proficiency in painting techniques achieved by the artists where elements of art and aesthetics are abundantly visible and there is a sea change in the colour palette which emphasized a soothing and subtle impact on the audience of *Sikh Calendar art* raising these paintings to the ethereal level with profound presence of spirituality, calm and poise.

The common use of the *Abhaya mudra* (do not fear gesture), symbol widely used in *Popular art* throughout India further strengthened the newly acquired projected image of Guru Nanak in these works and a flowing white beard and hand raised in blessing propagated a general expression of benevolence presenting a distinct impression of the first Guru. Here he emerges as Baba Nanak the Teacher, the Guru; who supremely bestows peace of mind and spiritual enlightenment.

The image of Guru Gobind Singh which at present is profusely painted in the Sikh calendars may have its source in traditions but the modern day projection is distinctive in the lushness and luxuriance of visual presentation of portraying him as royal and majestic personality coupled with an aura of spiritual strength on his face to prescribe to his much loved images as 'Saint Soldier'. A deeper inspection would reveal that sword and daggers are not mere pieces of steel but they are intricately carved and decorated with finely embossed hilts and richly embroidered scabbards. The hilts had symbolic images of lions and tigers sculpted in jade and precious metals signifying the fact that these were the ornaments of a royal king and a mighty warrior. A thought provoking feature which leads us to Guru Gobind Singh's colourful attire with ostentatiously magnificent embroidery work seems to be worn only by a royal personality and accessories such as belts (*Kamarband*), armllets, bracelets and grand pieces of jewellery lay stress on his royal stature. The horse which he rides is usually white or blue and is adorned with a richness matching its Master's array. He is also referred as '*Kalgidhar*

*Padsah*’ literally meaning He is the king with the plume (*Kalgi*) bedecked in his turban decorated with bands of pearls and precious stones. **(Plate No.14)**

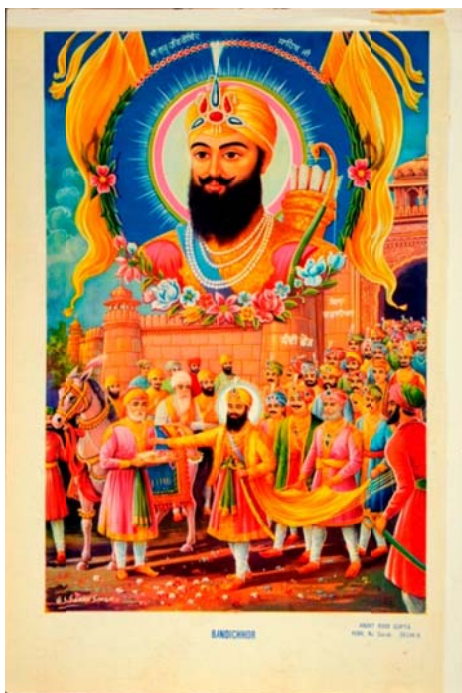


(Plate No.14)

The printed or reproduced versions of Sikh calendars have some essential features and elements which make them unique. Ten Sikh Gurus are shown in oval frames intricately decorated with floral patterns alongwith the Sikh insignia *Khanda-Kirpan*, two flags on the sides showing ‘Miri-Piri’ representing ‘Temporal’ and ‘Spiritual Power’. The images of Sri Harmandar Sahib or Golden Temple are shown in the centre of the Sikh Calendars. Names of the Ten Sikh Gurus are inscribed in *Gurmukhi* script. **(Plate No.15)** Some calendars offer calligraphic designs of *Satnam Waheguru*, *Sarbat Da Bhala*, *Ek Omkar*, *Degh Tegh Fateh Panth Ki Jeet* and *Waheguru ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*. The depiction of various historical Gurdwaras and slices from Sikh history and *Janam Sakhis* are also elaborately painted in miniature format. All these Sikh Calendars have ornamental *hashias* (margins) with floral and geometrical patterns taking a cue from Persian manuscripts. **(Plate No.16)**



(Plate No.15)



(Plate No. 16)

During the last five decades, the prominent patrons and promoters of *Sikh Calendar art* whose contribution is significant and astounding are: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, Dharam Parchar Committee: Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, Punjab and Sind Bank, New Delhi, Bank of Punjab, New Delhi, MARKFED, PNB Finance, other Sikh institutions like Sikh Foundation, Miri Piri Foundation and museums established in the premises of historical Gurdwaras. However earlier the process of production of Sikh calendars was prevalent at such centres which are famous for printing and publishing business, namely Ravi Varma Fine Arts Lithographic Press (1894), Calcutta Art Studio, bow bazaar street, Calcutta; Chitrashala Steam Press, Poona near Bombay (1878); Hem Chand Bhargava, Chandni chowk, Delhi (1900); S.S.Brijbasi (1927-28); Sivakasi National Litho Press, Tamil Nadu (1954); Chor Bagan Art Studio, Calcutta; Lakshmibilas Press, Cawnpore; Kununyalal Lachoomal, Delhi; Anant Shivaji Desai, Bombay; Anandeshwar Press; Arya-Bhushan Press; P.S.Joshi Kalbadevi, Bombay; Rising Art Cottage, Calcutta; Battala Press, Calcutta and Harnarayan & Sons. The popularity of these calendars provided a flourishing and lucrative business to the printing houses as a large number of Sikh calendars were being produced and sold every year not only in Punjab but whole of North India. These were basically copies of the earlier calendars being produced at Amritsar and Lahore. The calendars which truly stand out as authentic specimens due to greater focus on correct historical perceptions, objectives and religious perspectives, duly display the individualistic

stylization and religious content based on Sikh ideology, Sikh identity, Sikh *maryada*, Sikh history and philosophy, thereby establishing a true Sikh image, were brought out with a missionary zeal by prominent Sikh patrons responsible for the promotion of Sikh religion and Sikh way of life. These did not look like the cheap commercial versions of the earlier works being printed by printing presses. Primarily due to the fact that artists engaged in this genre had acquired magnificent control over painting techniques. They used new methods and technologies to improve the quality of artistic and aesthetically sound paintings. The creative elements used by these artists further enhanced the appearance and quality of these *Sikh Calendar art* prints. This genre of *Popular Sikh art* or *Calendar art* has reached the shores of every continent due to digitalization of the works being produced in India and these have become collector's items for second and third generation Punjabi settlers.

### References:

1. **Inglis, Stephen R;** 1995, '*Suitable for Framing: The Work of a Modern Master*', Media and the Transformation of Religion in South Asia, Pennsylvania University Press, Philadelphia, P.53
2. **Uberoi, Patricia;** 2006, *Freedom and Destiny: Gender, Family, and Popular Culture in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, P.49
3. **Daljeet, Dr;** 2004, *The Sikh Heritage-A Search for Totality*, Prakash Book Depot, New Delhi, P.118
4. **McLeod, W.H;** 1991, *Popular Sikh Art*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, P.4
5. **Fauja Singh, Dr.;** March 1969, *A Study of the paintings of Guru Nanak*, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, Patiala, P. 131
6. **Daljeet, Dr.;** 2004, *The Sikh Heritage-A Search for Totality*, Prakash Book Depot, New Delhi, p.118
7. *Ibid*, P.131
8. **Archer, W.G;** 1966, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, Her Majesty's stationary office, London, P.31
9. **Randhawa, M.S;** 1971, *Sikh Painting, Roopalekha*, Vol. 39, No.1, AIFACS, New Delhi, P.21
10. **Fauja Singh, Dr.;** March 1969, *A Study of the paintings of Guru Nanak*, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, Patiala, P .134
11. **Archer, W.G;** 1966, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, Her Majesty's stationary office, London, P.31
12. **Goswamy, B.N;** 1981, *A matter of taste: Some Notes on the context of Painting in Sikh Punjab*, Marg Publications, Bombay, P.67
13. **Aryan, K.C;** 1975, *Punjab Painting*, Punjabi University, Patiala, P.17
14. *Ibid*, P.20



15. **Kessar, Urmi;** June 2003, *Twentieth-Century Sikh Painting: The Presence of the Past*. In Kavita Singh, Ed. *New Insights into Sikh Art*, Marg Publications, P.121
16. **McLeod, W.H;** 1991, *Popular Sikh Art*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, P.20-21
17. **Daljeet, Dr.;** 2004, *The Sikh Heritage-A Search for Totality*, Prakash Book Depot, New Delhi, p.119
18. **Fauja Singh, Dr.;** March 1969, *A Study of the paintings of Guru Nanak*, Punjab History Conference Proceedings, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, Patiala, P .144

**Photographs Courtesy:**

Plate No. 1- [www.sikhmuseum.com](http://www.sikhmuseum.com)

Plate No. 2- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 3- [www.sikhmuseum.com](http://www.sikhmuseum.com)

Plate No. 4- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 5- Central Sikh Museum, Golden Temple, Amritsar

Plate No. 6- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 7- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 8- Central Sikh Museum, Golden Temple, Amritsar

Plate No. 9- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 10- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 11- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 12- Artist G.S. Sohan Singh

Plate No. 13- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 14- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 15- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Plate No. 16- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

**Dr. Kavita Singh**  
Assistant Professor (Stage-III),  
S. Sobha Singh Department of Fine Arts,  
Punjabi University, Patiala (Punjab)  
Ph: 09878220908