

SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIBWALE SHEIKH FARID DI BHAAL (Punjabi)

By Prof. Pritam Singh

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A Review by Prof. Kirpal Singh*

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'Sri Guru Granth Sahib wale sheikh farid di bhaal' is a monograph of the veteran theologian and scholar, Prof. Pritam Singh who is the author of several books.

This book is significant and epoch 'making' as it is decisive for the century old controversy regarding authorship of verses attributed to 'Sheikh Farid' in the Adi Guru Granth Sahib - The Sikh Scripture. The controversy started with M.A. Macauliffe who wrote that "It is certain that it was Sheikh Brahm who composed the Sloks and hymns bearing the name of Farid in the Granth Sahib, though he used to name the founder of his spiritual line as poetical *nom de plume*". Following Macauliffe, several scholars wrote that the verses in the Adi Granth were of Sheikh Ibrahim with whom Guru Nanak had long dialogues, recorded in the '*Puratan Janamsakhi*.' In the dialogue Sheikh Ibrahim quoted some slokas from Guru Granth Sahib. From that it was concluded that the verses had been composed by him.

Prof. Pritam Singh delves deep in this controversy and has been able to produce a monumental work. His book contains a significant discovery of *malafuse* (utterance preserved) in Persian having Punjabi *Dohas* of Sheikh Farid Shakarganj. The manuscript was written during 14th century, long before the birth of Sheikh Ibrahim (popularly known as Sheikh Brahm) and had been preserved at Khuldabad in Maharashtra. His writing in Persian has been scripted by Hazrat Zain Din Shirazi, the disciple of Sheikh Burhanudin. The latter lived at Khuldabad and was disciple of Sheikh Nizamuddin of Delhi was successor of Farid Shakarganj. The *malafuse* where *dohas* of Sheikh Farid Shakarganj have been quoted in local language, viz Punjabi is entitled "*Hidayatul Qalub* and *Anayatul galub*" which means "Guide of Minds" and "Gift for seeker of knowledge of other world."

In Persian grammar when "mim" is added to a verb it becomes negative, viz. 'kun' means 'do' and 'mkun' means 'do not do'. In Punjabi *dohas* of Farid in the *malafuse* the same principle has been applied as in clear from *doha* on page 226 noted hereunder:

Jo tai mari mukyan tin m-mari ghum

to jayin ghar apnay perkap (pir) tinarhelchum.

Here, m-mari means 'do not strike'.

Another finding of Prof. Pritam Singh is the references of Farid Shakarganj's *dohas* in the Rajasthani literature of seventeenth century. He has quoted from Rajab and Gopal Das - both disciples of Dadu and have proved that the *dohas* of Farid quoted these are similar to *dohas* of Farid in Guru Granth Sahib (see pages 112-113).

The book has been divided into five parts. The first part is introductory. It gives a very brief account of life of Sheikh Farid and his verses in the Adi Guru Granth. He also refers to his newly found *malafuse* in Maharashtra and some manuscripts in Rajasthan. The second part deals with the Persian sources of Farid Shakarganj. Detailed notes of the contents of *Fwidul Fawaid*, *Khare-ul-Majalas* and *Syarul Aulya* have been given along with his newly found *malafuze*. Sheikh Farid's *dohas* in Punjab quoted in the Persian have been deciphered for the first time. These have been deciphered correctly to a considered extent. The third

part of the book deals with history of Sheikh Farid Shakarganj and his legacy at various places in India and Pakistan. The fourth part gives detailed bibliography on Baba Sheikh Farid Shakarganj. Books and journals published in Pakistan have also been included. The fifth part gives four appendices dealing with various verses attributed to Sheikh Farid and anecdote relating to him.

In the lengthy dialogue the Janamsakhi writers have included some of the verses of Sheikh Farid contained in the Adi Granth because most of the Janamsakhis were compiled after the compilation of Adi Granth in 1604 A.D. Thus the verses of Sheikh Farid were readily available to the Janamsakhi writers who used them to make their dialogue lively.

Since some of the verses of Sheikh Farid in the Adi Granth have been quoted in the Janamsakhis in the dialogue of Sheikh Ibrahim, Macauliffe inferred that these verses were of Sheikh Ibrahim. This hardly appears to be correct on account of the following reasons:

1. Guru Arjun, the compiler of Adi Granth took care to indicate the authorship of every verse included in the Sikh scripture. It is very significant to note that at every place where authorship of these verses is indicated, he gives the name of Sheikh Farid Shakarganj.
2. It has been admitted by all writers on Farid, the Ganj-i-Shakar or Shakarganj that, besides composing verses in Arabic-Persian, he also composed verses in local dialects. In support of this contention, Dr. Nizami has quoted a verse in Multani from *Siyar-ul-Aulya*, About the author of *Siyar-ul-Aulya*, he writes in his book on Sheikh Farid, "Its author Sayyid Nizami Mohammad Aulya, is very reliable and important source of information for the life of Baba Farid. It was written in 1351 A.D. Amir Khurd belonged to the family which had close contracts with Sheikh Farid Shakarganj. His grandfather, Sayyid Mohammad Kiramani who was a disciple of Baba Farid, had lived with the saint for 18 years and served in the Sheikh's household. Amir Khurd's father Sayyid Nuruddin Mubarak was also a disciple of Baba Farid. Amir Khurd has given in his book whatever he had heard from his ancestor about his spiritual master."
3. In *Siyar-ul-Aulya*, Sheikh Farid-ud-Din Shakarganj has been addressed as Baba Farid, Sheikh Kabir or Sheikh-ul-Islam. In the verses quoted there Farid has been used as pen name implying that Sheikh Farid-ud-Din was their author.
4. Sheikh Farid has also been given credit for converting some tribes to Islam, which he could not have done without having the mastery of the local dialect.

The monograph in Punjabi is valuable addition to the Sikh literature as it clarifies many points relating to the verses of Sheikh Farid included in the Adi Granth. I congratulate Prof. Pritam Singh for his monumental work. It makes valuable reading for scholars in particular, and the lay reader in general.



FANATICISM: A WORLD DEVOURING FIRE

By Alan Bryson

**Published by Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.,
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A Review by Manju Ahluwalia*

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global extremism is a serious threat to all that mankind has worked for.

Alan Bryson, a roving commentator resident of Germany and writer of philosophic monographs, has delved into the teachings of the 19th century founder of Bahai faith, Abdu'l Baha, who is said to have revealed a system for overcoming the threat of fanaticism such as we are facing today.

The book tries to offer a plausible solution to this problem. 'Jihad' operates in a climate of hate. The events of 11th September 2001 unleashed a terrible scenario. Pious Muslims in general were saddened to see their faith - which is really founded on tolerance and good deeds - defamed by the fringe of hardliners fanatics, and those misguided people who sympathized with them.

Bryson warns that the extremists in various parts of the world have established schools (madrassa) and seminaries to indoctrinate children with a distorted view of Islam rooted in bigotry and fanaticism. Suicide bombers and murderers of innocents are portrayed as holy warriors - Jihadis. **This books gives a message of brotherhood and author argues that all religions are based on a common truth. Fanatics deny this, believing that other faiths are false and incomplete.**

Quoting extensively from the teachings of Abdu'l Baha', the author takes a stand that terrorism is a 'spiritual disease' - a malignant tumour that should be treated, and indeed he deals with the treatment from a Baha'i standpoint.

The author points out that the true martyrs of history were motivated by truth and the passion for spreading the message of God's love. In contrast, the fanatics are devoured by hate rage and revenge. They go to extreme lengths to justify their evil acts. In this atmosphere of extreme bigotry it is easy to kill innocent people whom the fanatics consider their enemies.

The author believes that every age has its own problems, but he earnestly argues that the revelations of Baha'ullah could spread the belief in God and bring about a more tolerant world.

Fanaticism is a complex problem and this book tries to offer a limited solution, counselling that the network of terror organizations must be targeted and dismantled. Some of the tools in the hands of the governments are diplomacy, humane education and people's support, to tackle a major hurdle to a peaceful world.

