

# Doris Jakobsh Slanders Sikhism

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The latest addition to the Mcleodian fraternity is Doris R. Jakobsh. What aroused her interest in Sikhism? One can only speculate. Maybe it was because of fraternity's recruitment drive to fill its ranks with mercenaries to stunt Sikhism's growth. Or it could be that she was assured of optimal help in her doctorate scholarship at Vancouver's University of British Columbia (UBC), one of Western Universities, where Mcleod and his clones are perceived to wield influence. Virtually all the Sikh Studies doctorate graduates of Mcleodian clique are products of these Universities where the Sikhism's erudite scholars and intelligentsia have no scrutiny. Harjot Singh Oberoi's appointment to the Punjabi Language and Sikh Studies chair at UBC must have been a windfall for

In any case whatever her motive was, her published doctoral thesis '**Relocating Gender in Sikh History** *Transformation, Meaning and Identity*' makes it crystal clear that it wasn't due to her amicable inclinations towards Sikhism. Since **Relocating Gender in Sikh History** is Doris Jakobsh's doctoral studies subject, the religious orientations, indoctrinations, affiliations, allegiances and gender of her educators and examiners are of vital interest. And what are their credentials; i.e. their educational qualifications and expertise in scriptural anthology and history of Sikhism?

We know her doctoral studies educator/supervisor was the Punjabi Language and Sikh Studies chair at University of BC, Harjot Singh Oberoi who riled the Sikh community with his book **Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition**. The disappointed Sikh community, that had put up the funds to establish the chair, asked for removal of Harjot Singh Oberoi, who was appointed to the chair without Sikh community's consultation, from the chair. We are told he got the chair and himself reinstated by soliciting funds from Asa Singh Johal, a prominent B.C. Sikh businessman and philanthropist.

Her doctoral thesis readers were Mandakranta Bose, a Bengali Hindu feminine sounding name and Kenneth Bryant, a Christian male sounding name; and the examination committee Chairperson Joy Dixon and members, Gloria Goodwin Raheja, Margery Fee, Tineke Hellwig, all European Christian feminine sounding names. Maybe, they all expected the type of content in Doris Jakobsh's (anti-)thesis, that castigates Sikh Gurus, reformist Singh Sabha and Sikh Panth for the alleged discriminatory treatment meted out to the Sikh women folk, to further their feminism cause and detract Sikhism's cause.

Few years ago I met Doris Jakobsh when she had returned after studying at Punjabi university in Patiala and her kid/s and my grand children were enrolled at Westridge school in Burnaby North. I, as a Sikh, was naturally glad at the time to see a non-Sikh, young Caucasian lady interested in the study of Sikhism.

Doris Jakobsh, seemed to me an amiable, intelligent and liberal person. She did not reveal any bias regarding Sikh religion or community except for placid support for Harjot Singh Oberoi during a cursory discussion on his controversial book '*Construction of Religious Boundaries*' and its critique '*Invasion of Religious Boundaries* coauthored by thirty two prominent Sikh scholars and academicians, almost all D.Litt./Lit. D holders.

Recently, in mid November '06, I was asked for my input into '*A Critical Analysis*', of her published thesis '*Relocating Gender in Sikh History Transformation, Meaning and Identity*' written by Baldev Singh Ph. D. Reading the excerpts from her book in the *Critical Analysis*, I was disenchanted as it provided an insight into Doris Jakobsh's anti-Sikh mindset, typical of W. H. Mcleod and his protégés whose literary works have been subjects of critical controversies amongst analytical minded prominent Sikh scholars.

Reading Baldev Singh's '*A Critical Analysis*' it seems Doris Jakobsh, with her published thesis has joined the ranks of contemporary literary clique of multi-religious scholars and historians including pseudo-Sikhs inimical to Sikhism. In my opinion the concerned Sikh community needs to make a concerted effort to refute the mistranslated, misinterpreted, distorted and blasphemous propaganda of Sikh scriptures and history. So I too, for whatever it is worth, have undertaken to write a critique of such works that are available to me.

Many non-Sikh European scholars, past and contemporary, have written books on Sikh scriptures and history. Their works reflect various degrees of knowledge of Sikhism and their attitude, goodwill or ill will towards Sikhism. **Duncan Greenlees** the author of '*The gospel of Guru Granth Sahib*' writes, "My attempt is sort of presumption, but I trust my goodwill may compensate in some degree for my inadequacy." That goodwill isn't apparent in Doris Jakobsh's thesis.

Doris Jakobsh questions. "*If women and men are inherently equal in Sikh tradition in terms of roles and status why are they not given similar representation in the pages of Sikh history?*"

### **Tradition**

The English dictionaries define Tradition as, 'the (unwritten) knowledge, doctrines, customs, practices, etc. transmitted from generation to generation'. As for the representation in terms of roles and status in a tradition, Sikhism is no worse than other religions' history. Even before the institutionalized religions

the ancestral human sub-races, tribes, clans and families, adopted and performed gender roles according to gender anatomy, physique and nature. Endowed with the male reproductive anatomy, stronger physique and aggressiveness, the man assumed the roles of the sire (father), protector and provider i.e. a hunter and/or cultivator. The woman equipped with the congruent female reproductive anatomy, patience, tolerance and fortitude assumed the roles of a mother, nurturer and homemaker. The English dictionaries describe homemaker as ‘one who manages a household, especially a wife and mother’. Until recently, even in the western hemisphere the two genders have performed the respective traditional roles.

In a society, community, religion, family, et al people working as a team have played different roles for eons. The status of one member in a given ideal institution is not necessarily superior than the other. Ironically the traditions and the historical accounts of all the societies, communities and religions of the world portray mostly men playing the leading, good, bad or ugly roles. If Doris Jakobsh had done even rudimentary, comparative study of men’s roles and women’s treatment and status in the other ancient and contemporary global societies and religious communities she wouldn’t have heaped diatribes on Sikhism.

Before I delve into Doris Jakobsh’s book *‘Relocating Gender in Sikh History’ Transformation, Meaning and Identity*, let me point out that some of her questions and concerns are valid. There is no denying that there is gender bias against women folk in Sikh community too. However, compared to some other religious and socio-cultural communities, it evidently is far less pronounced. Here are some brief accounts of *Roles and Status of Women in Human Tradition and History*,

### **The First Woman**

18 And the Lord God said, “It isn’t good for man to be alone; I will make a companion for him, a helper suited to his needs.” .....21 Then the Lord God caused the man to fall into deep sleep, and took one of his ribs and closed up the place from which he had removed it, and made the rib into a woman, and brought her to the man. Bible Genesis 1:1-2:25

The serpent was the craftiest of all the creatures the Lord God had made. So the serpent came to the woman. “Really,” he asked. “None of the fruit in the garden, God says you mustn’t eat any of it?”

2.3 “Of course we may eat it,” the woman told him. “It is only the fruit from the tree at the center of the garden that we are not to eat. God says we mustn’t eat it or even touch, or we will die.”

4 “That is a lie!” the serpent hissed. “You will not die! 5 God knows very well that the instant you eat it you will become like him, for your eye will be opened--you will be able to distinguish good from evil!”

6 The woman was convinced. How lovely and fresh looking it was! And it would make her wise! So she ate some of the fruit and gave some to her husband, and he ate it too. 7 And as they ate it, suddenly they were aware of their nakedness, and were embarrassed. So they strung leaves together to cover around the hips.

8 That evening they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden; and they hid themselves among the trees. 9The Lord God called to Adam, “Why are you hiding?”

10 And Adam replied, “I heard you coming and didn’t want you to see me naked. So I hid.”

11 “Who told you, you were naked?” the Lord God asked. “Have you eaten fruit from the tree I warned you about?”

12 “Yes,” Adam admitted, “but it was the woman you gave me who brought me some, and I ate it.”

13 Then the Lord God asked the woman, How could you do such a thing?”

“The serpent tricked me,” she replied.

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “This is your punishment: You are singled out from among all domestic and wild animals of the whole earth-to be cursed. You shall grovel in the dust as long as you live, crawling along on your belly. 15 From now on you and the woman will be enemies, as will your offspring and hers. You will strike his heel, but he will crush your head.”

16 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “You shall bear children in intense pain and suffering, yet even so, you shall welcome your husband’s affections, and he shall be your master.”

And, perhaps, that is why the proverbial slang ‘**Keep them (women) pregnant and keep them barefoot**’ was so popular amongst the jolly old men’s gatherings in the predominantly Christian Western World until recently.

“The **Incas** chose women from ayllus (communities) to become wives of Sun god. Physically attractive and very young to assure virginity, these girls (acllas or momaconas), were removed from their communities. They were reserved for one of the three roles: to be celibate servants of the gods and to officiate in rituals; to be second wives or concubines to royal or official men; or, if they were physically and morally perfect, to be sacrificed in important state rituals.” Marilyn French, From Eve To Dawn, Page 65

“A seventeenth century observer, Hernandez Principe, describes the (ceremonial) procession (of) the four girls (ten to twelve years old), without

blemish, of consummate beauty, children of nobility. He saw the golden Inca throne, statues of the gods, the pouring of chicha (Inca food) and the slaughter of a hundred thousand Llamas for the feast. Then the girls were lowered into a waterless cistern and walled in alive.” ibid page 66

“Yet Buddhist texts contain the most woman hatred outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The ‘Tale of King Udayana of Vatsa’ for example, calls women evil, more detestable than ‘the dead snake and dog’. ibid Page 120

“**Veiling** was known in Rome and seclusion occurred in pre-Islamic Persia and Byzantine Empire.

Mohammad forbade people from entering his house, unless they were invited, and speaking to his wives without a curtain between them. At first only Mohammad’s wives were veiled, but the dictate was later extended to Muslim women. Mohammad soon barred menstruating women from the mosque, then from praying during their periods. ”ibid, pages 258, 260

“Mohammad was disturbed by..... and the burial alive of infant daughters practiced not only in Mecca but throughout Arabia.” Koran, Surah (chapter) 6:137, (*John Noss, Man’s Religions*), ‘**Mankind’s Search For GOD**’, Page 287

“Muslim attitudes towards women hardened simultaneously in Judaism and Christianity (too). The Jewish women sat with men in synagogues until the tenth century, when they were segregated, and menstruating women forbidden to enter at all. A similar process occurred in Bible reading in Europe over the centuries from Gutenberg to the twentieth century.”

“Muslim men debated conditions under which women might be excluded from mosques and finally banished them in tenth century, claiming that dogs, donkeys (unbelievers) and women disrupt prayer just by passing too near a temple. Women are unclean always; not just when menstruate; baby girls’ urine is more polluting than boys.” Marilyn French, *From Eve To Dawn*, Pages 280-281

“**Greeks** regularly killed female infants, as demonstrated by a law requiring days of purification for abortion, childbirth or child exposure.” “No literature in the world vilifies women more viciously or more often than the Greek, depicting them as violent, emotional, barbaric monsters; or like Aristotle (*who describes them as*) ‘deformed men’, an inferior species.” ibid Pages 79, 208.

“The great power held by some (Italian) women in this period intensified the virulent woman-hatred that pervaded Christianity. This vicious misogyny (woman-hatred) is rooted in its Judaic and Greek sources. In Judaism woman lures man to disobedience (called ‘original sin by Christian Augustine); in the Greek tradition woman is an inferior species a deformed male.”

“(Christian) Priests and monks blamed their lust on woman’s filth and corruption. Not just eve, but Woman is weak frivolous, fallen. Jerome challenged Gregory’s judgment that *‘since menstruation was an innocent part of nature, menstruating women could take communion’*, writing: *‘Nothing is so unclean as a woman in her periods....What she touches she causes to become unclean.’* By the third century menstruating women could not approach the alter. By late sixth century Christians had adopted the Judaic belief that childbirth was contaminating, requiring priestly purification. Men were lords over women, who should be meek, quite, gentle; free from anger and stay at home.” Ibid Pages 237, 238

The Hindus too forced the above dicta; in addition to the deadly ritual of Sati (voluntary or involuntary burning alive of a Hindu widow on the deceased husband’s pyre as a test of her chastity and fidelity. Manu, an ancient Brahmin sage, scholar, writes,

*In season or out of season, her lord,  
who wed her with sacred (Hindu) rites,  
ever gives happiness to his wife,  
both here and in the other world.*

*Though he, be uncouth and prone to pleasure,  
though he has no good points at all,  
the virtuous wife should ever worship her lord as a god. Ibid, Page 145*

Brahmins, who constituted and structured Hinduism (read Brahmin-ism), deluded parents to offer their juvenile daughters to the Hindu temples. The hapless maidens, purported to be Dev-daasis (votaries) of a demigod of Hindu Trinity, spent their entire lives in servitude and prostitution according to the tradition amongst India’s general population. And according to Hindu code, the woman is in the same league as a thief, animal, idiot, and Shuder, the lowly Hindu; and deserves to be disciplined.

Chor, passu, gunvaar, shuder, naari, eh panchon tardun ké adhikaari. **Manu simrti**

**Translation:** Thief, animal, idiot, low-caste Hindu and woman, they all deserve scolding.

The male dominated Muslim society’s dictatorial Muslim clergy and autocracy force women to veil their faces and/or shroud themselves head to foot to spare their polygamous men-folk the sensual temptations). And whereas Muslim women are punished, (including execution by stoning) for so much as alleged romantic overtures, the known adulterous men are exonerated without so much as a stigma. Even today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, women languish in Afghanistan prisons for so much as disobeying their husbands or refusing to

enter into arranged marriages. Because their children, including infants, have no other place to live, they too are imprisoned with the mothers in medieval type jails.

If Doris Jakobsh had done even an elementary comparative study of religions, she would have known that in comparison the Sikh Gurus and congenial Hindu and Muslim holy sages strived to abolish social and gender inequality scourge at the time when both Muslim and Hindu male dominated societies relegated women to the inferior status and treated them like dirt. The Sikh scriptural anthology and history testify that Sikh mentors promoted social and gender equality and proscribed Sati, Purdah, female infanticide and gender inequality through education and propagation, the only means available to them.

ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨਾ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮਤੀਅ ਲਗ ਜਲੰਨਿ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ॥ ਰਾਗੁ ਸੂਹੀ, ਮ: 3, ਪੰਨਾ 787

Chaste are not those who burn themselves on the (husband's) pyre.

Nanak; chaste are those who pine due to separation pangs (from God). P.787

"Sikhism teaches equal rights for all regardless of sex, race or background."

**Max Arthur Macauliffe**

### **Blatant Distortion of Sikh Scriptures**

Doris Jakobsh's gross miscomprehension of Gurbani (Sikh scriptures) is certainly due to her own admission, "As a disclaimer let me point out that I am not a scripture scholar. I have heavily relied on contributions of scripture scholars from the discipline of Sikh studies." Introduction, page 4.

Evidently these scholars include Mcleod, Harjot, Grewal J. S. S. S. Bal and many non-Sikhs, who seem to harbor critical views about Sikhism. For obvious reasons none of the worthy Sikh scholars are included in the list of her contributors; because they didn't fit into her mentors, educators and examiner's stance on Sikhism.

If she and her mentors, educators, tutors and examiners were diligent students or scholars of Sikh Scriptures, they wouldn't have been oblivious to the true concepts, substance and style of the Sikh scriptures. The inspirational Sikh scriptures authored in poetry are replete with metaphors and analogies to instill moral discipline, religious virtues and socio-cultural values. The poetic compositions differ from the prose; i.e. the poet takes liberties with the choice of a word and its spellings and place so that the verses rhyme rhythmically. And there are references to the other religions' beliefs to which the Sikh philosophy may or may not subscribe.

It is absolutely imperative that an aspiring student of Sikh studies understands the unique fundamentals of Sikh scriptures. Also excellent knowledge of Gurmukhi, i.e. Sikh scriptural language and its grammar are essential.

The excerpts from Doris Jakobsh's book reveal that either, she has prejudicial mindset pertaining to Sikh scriptures and history or she has been indoctrinated by her mentors. She goes after the Sikh scriptural anthology, co-authored by the revered Sikh Gurus, eminent Hindu and Muslim Saints, with a vengeance. She reveals her mindset by questions and statements with foregone conclusions that she supports with grossly distorted and/or misinterpreted verses from sacrosanct Guru Granth. To refute her distortions the same verses in Gurmukhi along with the English interpretations of the erudite Sikh scholar Dr. Sahib Singh's Punjabi translations are given below her excerpts.

### **Maya, a Sensual Woman?**

*“And yet numerous passages in (Sikh) scripture associate woman with Maya that which is sensual.”*

*Attachment to progeny, wife is poison,*

*None of these at the end is of any avail. (AGGS, P. 41), page 11*

O brother: God is my friend and companion.

Materialistic attachment to son, wife is poison (bane to piety).

In the end none will be (your) companion. G.G.S. P. 41, Derpun, Vol. 1, P. 317-8

*‘Maya attachment is like a loose woman’ (G. G. S page 795-6) Page 11*

**MWIEAW MOHU DRKTI NWIR] BUMFI KWMIX KWMIXAWIR]  
RWJU, RUPU JUTW IDN CWIR] NWMU IMLY CWNXU AMIDAWIR]  
RWGU IBLWVL M:1, PMNW 795/6**

**MWIEAW DW MOH IEK IVBCWRN IESQRI DY MOH SMWN HY,  
MWIEAW IEK TUXY KRN VWLI BYVI IESQRI SMWN HY, DUNIAW  
DW RWJ, QY RUP NWSVMQ HN, QOVY HI IDN RIHX VWLY HN[ IJS  
MNU`K NUM PRBU DW NWM IML JWDW HY, AUS NUM (MOH,  
MWIEAW DY) HNYRY IVC CWNX IML JWDW HY[ SRI GU: GRM: SW:  
DRPN, POQI 6, PMNW 5-6**

Materialism is like love for an immoral woman, a wicked witch practicing witchcraft.

Mundane political power, beauty is transitory, lasting few days.

One who is blessed with Naam –God's praise- finds enlightenment in the darkness (of materialism). (GG S P. 795-6)

**Note:** Even a high school student knows that words in any language have multiple meanings. The appropriate meaning depends upon the context the word is used in. The Sanskrit word Maya's meanings include mother, wealth, illusion, delusion, enchantress, temptress, materialism, divine creation, etc. In Sikh

scriptural anthology word Maya has been used extensively in various contexts with appropriate connotations. In the above verse Maya means materialism.

### **World is Maya, Maya is Illusion, Delusion, Fraud, Deception**

Apparently Joseph Davy Cunningham and W. H. Mcleod understood the concept of Maya better than Doris Jakobsh and her educators and examiners. J. D. Cunningham describe Kabir's view of maya and in his published Ph. D. thesis '**Guru Nanak And The Sikh Religion**' Mcleod mentions 'Maya', with the above connotations, at least half-a-dozen times.

"Maya or illusion, which allows sensation to be a true guide on this side of the grave, but sees nothing certain or enduring in the constitution of the material world; a doctrine eagerly adopted by the subsequent reformers, who gave it a moral or religious application. Kabir likens it to delusion or evil or to moral error in the abstract.", **History of the Sikhs** Pages 27, 308.

**Maya:** (in Vedant ) cosmic illusion; (in Sant and Sikh thought) the corruptible and corrupting world, with all its snares, presented to man as permanent and incorruptible and so masquerading as ultimate truth. In the Sant and Sikh usage the term has strong moral overtones and is frequently symbolized by lucre (money) and women." **William Hewat Mcleod, 'Guru Nanak And The Sikh Religion'**, Glossary, page 243

"Maya in the thought of Guru Nanak is not the cosmic illusion of classical Vedanta. The world is indeed maya, but it is not unreal. It is illusion only in the sense that it is accepted for what it is not. Delusion is more appropriate word. The essence of the world is its impermanence. It is real, but it is impermanent, both in the sense that it is itself perishable and in the sense that its attributes cannot follow a man after his physical death. It offers qualities which are accepted as both good and desirable, but which constitute a fraud, a deception." *ibid*, page 185

"To men his (Guru Nanak's) repeated appeal was that they should renounce their love of the world and all worldly attachments. These are maya and they are to be renounced, for in the experience of every individual they (attachments) must inevitably betray the trust which is put in them." *ibid*, page 171

### **Biblical Depiction of Maya**

*The Bible book of Revelation was revealed to the apostle John on the island of Patmos in the year 96 C.E. Of those symbolic pictures that John saw in vision, one was of a gaudy, brash harlot, called 'Babylon the Great', mother of the harlots and of disgusting things of the earth." In what condition was she? "I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus." Revelation 17:5, 6.*

*Whom does this woman represent? In the same vision, John hears an angel say; “come, I will show you the judgment upon the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, whereas those who inhabit the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Revelation 17:1, 2, 18. Mankind’s Search for God page 368*

### **God’s Gender**

One doesn’t have to be a genius to know that, only a physical form has gender. A soul or spirit does not have gender. Displaying her morbid obsession that the Ultimate i.e. the God or divine power should be conceived as feminine instead of the universal concept of the God as a father figure, Doris Jakobsh singling out Sikhism complains,

*‘the ultimate in Sikh scripture was most often conceived in masculine terms, as Akal Purkh, Karta Purkh’. Page 11*

Note: -Doris Jakobsh plagiarizes her doctoral supervisor Harjot Oberoi’s sentence.

*‘In early Sikh tradition God was almost exclusively conceived in masculine terms (Akal Purkh, Karta Purkh) and metaphors (the devotee as a bride yearning for God the bridegroom).’ Harjot Oberoi, The Construction of Religious Boundaries, Page 97*

Doris Jakobsh has not bothered to take her prejudicial blinkers off and look around that the world’s half-dozen major, monotheistic religions vocalize the concept of god similar to Sikhism. Only the ancient polytheistic religions with penchant for mythology and matriarchal societies idolized feminine godheads and goddesses. The polytheistic Hinduism still has innumerable goddesses, though inferior to numerous masculine gender gods and demigods.

*During most of the last six thousand years, mankind has searched, with greater or lesser zeal, to find that ‘absolute spiritual reality’. Each major religion has given that reality a different name. But the Bible gives this reality name, gender and personality-Jehovah, the living God. Jehovah is the true end of mankind’s search for God. Jehovah has revealed himself as the God of prophecy who can tell the end from the beginning. He said through Isaiah the prophet, “Remember the first things of long time ago, that I am the Divine One and there is no other God, nor anyone like me; .....” Isaiah 46:9-11; 55:10, 11 Mankind’s Search For God, page 366-67*

*“He has revealed to you the book (Koran) with the truth, confirming the scriptures which preceded it; for He has already revealed the Torah and the Gospel for the guidance of men, and the distinction between right and wrong.” Surah 3:2, NJD, ibid page 285*

We wonder why she does not complain to her ‘Ultimate’ for having sent all the male prophets, Avatars and messengers, including Isaiah, Moses,

Abraham, Zeno, Confucius, Jesus Christ, Mohammad, Nanak; and cultists Jim Jones, David Crush et al?

W. H. Mcleod, considered to be mentor of the fraternity with which Doris Jakobsh is said to associate, does not have any compunction about addressing the Ultimate Reality or God as masculine gender. In his book (published thesis) 'Guru Nanak And The Sikh Religion' he uses the term 'He' for the God several times.

### **Flagrant Omission**

In her zeal to heap negative criticism on Sikh scriptures, Doris Jakobsh flagrantly omits word Manmukh from her distorted translation of the verses below to suit her objective.

*"Further, women are exalted when obedient and subservient as wives to their divine husbands and men are ridiculed when they are not dominant."  
Men obedient to their womenfolk,  
Are stupid impure, filthy, stupid,  
Men lustful, impure, their womenfolk council follow. (AG. P.304) Page 12*

The above verses along with true meaning are given below

**MNMUKW DY ISR JORW AMUR HY INQ DYVIH BLW]  
JORW DW AWIKAW PURK KMWVDY SY APIVQ AMYD KLW]  
KWIM IVAWPY KUSUDU NR SY JORW PUIC CLW] PMNW 304  
(KWMI) MNMUKW DY ISR QY IESQRIAW DW HUKM CLDW HY,  
AUH, AUHNW NUM (IRJWAUX LEI) SDW CMGIAW CIZW ILAW KY  
IDMDY HN[  
JO (IHRSI) MNUK IESQRIAW DW IKHW KMWVDY HN, AUH PIQQ,  
KMLY QY MURK HUMDY HN[  
PR KWMI, BYVY NR HI IESQRIAW NUM PUC KY CLDY HN[**

Over the impious men, the women rule,  
these men reward them with gifts (for sexual favors).  
(Lustful) men who listen to women are base, silly and simpletons  
But, only lustful, devious men,  
Take directions from women. Page 304

**Note:-** Just like Doris Jakobsh, many Sikh and non-Sikh scholars, clerics and theologians misinterpret Sikh scriptures when they translate a select verse or two of a hymn in isolation. A Number of hymns with a common theme are compiled together forming a continual string. Any given hymn has to be interpreted in conjunction with all its verses and other hymns within a common theme.

### **Concept of Spiritual Union in Sikh Scriptures**

Doris Jakobsh expressing her skepticism of Gurus' concept, intent and understanding of enunciation of spiritual union of the divine spirit as male and mundane male's spirit as female, she insinuates in her usual jargon,

*“What is not clear is whether the male guru in fact understood their enunciation to be feminine, or whether the representation of sacred speech in the feminine form was simply indicative of social, cultural and religious surroundings. To move a grammatical feminine form of speech to the theological underpinnings (basis) of the gurus' egalitarian ethos is conceivably more a reading into the term bani (voice) than a reflection of the actual intent of the gurus.”* Page 11

Doris Jakobsh's skepticism is indicative of lack of knowledge of world's major religions' scriptures, theologies and histories even. Duncan Greenlees, who obviously studied the subjects more keenly, writes,

*“One of the Gurus' favourite themes is the spiritual courtship and Marriage of the soul with God—a theme full of unfathomable depths of meaning which can be, even partly, grasped only by those who are on the Mystic path. It is an ancient theme and in near East along one of its Babylonian lines can be traced back to the story of Tammuz. The Sufis speak this language; so do the vaishnavas; and so do many Catholic saints; and from age to age have certain of God's chosen 'brides' sung thus immortal song in words of thrilling warmth and ecstasy. St. Teresa of Avila, the writers of the odes of Solomon and the Manichean Psalms, Sri Jayadeva, Rabia and Andal, Mira and Hafiz are among those who spoke this mystic language and enriched our world-literature with gems of devotion. But no recognized scripture in the world so lingers on this theme as the *Guru Granth Sahib*, which lovingly recurs to it from time to time throughout its many pages.”* **Duncan Greenlees, The Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib, page 173**

### **Love of Divinity Expressed in Profane Language**

Exhibiting either her utter ineptness to interpret Sikh scriptures truly; or her prejudicial mindset regarding Sikh scriptures, she lobs an innuendo at Guru Ram Das and quotes a verse from his hymn,

*“While earlier gurus had addressed the divine in the female voice as a symbol of their submission, with guru Ram Das the symbol takes on a more palpable (obvious) reality, indeed, love of the divine came to be expressed in utterly '**profane**' language. Further, the female perspective towards the 'body' of the guru is conspicuously emphasized, the corporeality of Ram Das is central in these writings.”*

*“Looking again and again at the body of the guru has filled me with intense joy.”* Page 32

### **Appearances can be deceptive**

If I hadn't had social contact and dialogue with Doris Jakobsh, though for a short period of time, I would have thought she has a perverse mind, but that is not the impression I got from her personality. So, either she fooled me or she has been led astray by her mentors and educators. Her examiners, who accepted her perverse interpretation of the sacrosanct verse as the true version, are advertent or inadvertent accomplices in disparaging Sikh Guru and Sikhism. Here is the verse, along with its true interpretation, that Doris ignorantly or mischievously misinterprets,

**HAU VYIK VYIK GURU IVGISAW GUR SIQGUR DYHW[17] PMNW  
726**

**ARQ: MYN GURU NUM VYK VYK KY, SIQGUR DY SRIR DY DRSN  
KR KY KUS HUMDW HW[**

**Meaning:** I, looking again and again at the Guru, true Guru's persona (audience), am elated.

It is novel style of co-authors of Sikh scriptures to enunciate themselves as a humble disciples of the Guru to edify the religious concepts and tenets. The above verse expresses a Sikh's exultation at the Guru's audience, not profanity or carnal lust. We wonder how she and her ilk would interpret the same verse in relation to Guru Granth, that now personifies Sikhs' perpetual and true Guru?

The English dictionaries describe two main categories of love; Passionate and Platonic. The former includes sexual desire or sensual lust and the latter includes variety of asexual loves. Either Doris Jakobsh hasn't experienced platonic love or she deliberately misconstrued the devotional love between a Sikh and the Guru in a bid to please her mentors, educators and examiners.

### **Nanak's vision of Ideal woman**

*"However , procreation, procreation of sons specially, was central to Nanak's vision of Ideal woman. An oft-quoted verse, supposedly indicative of Guru Nanak's positive evaluation of womanhood, points to an appreciation of woman only vis-à-vis the procreative process."*

*"We are conceived in the woman's womb and grow in it. We are engaged to women and we wed them. Through the woman 's cooperation new generations are born. If woman dies, we seek another, without woman there is no bond. Why call her bad who gives birth to rajas? The woman herself is born of the woman, and none comes into this world without the woman: Nanak, the true one alone is independent of the woman. (Adi Granth, quoted in Grewal 1993:5)"* Page 24-25

Poor Doris Jakobsh, who is of European extraction, obviously lacks the adequate background and knowledge of the socio-religious environment in India

at the time of Guru Nanak's advent and inception of Sikhism. As mentioned earlier (see page 4) women were lumped with the larcenists, idiots, animals and untouchables in the predominantly Muslim and Hindu societal hierarchy. The reformist Gurus founded and nurtured Sikhism and courageously advocated its egalitarian credo to obliterate the diabolical inequalities in the existent socio-religious system. The verse in question is inserted below.

ਭੰਡਿ ਜਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿਮੀਐ, ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣ ਵਿਆਹੁ॥ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ, ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ॥  
ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮੇਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥ ਆਸਾ ਦੀ ਵਾਰ, ਮ: 1 ਪੰਨਾ 473

In woman we are conceived, in woman we grow.

To woman a man is betrothed and wedded.

Through woman the family and social circle grows.

Through woman procreation continues.

Why vilify her (woman) who bears the great Rajahs. Nanak, page 473

**Note:** Our meaning of the verse is not much different from Grewal's, however it is dubious inference Doris Jakobsh has derived for ulterior motive that we are negating.

To misconstrue Guru Nanak's verse is indicative of interpreter's ignorance or diabolical mindset. Interpreted in its true essence the given verse exemplifies Guru's benevolent quest to encourage society at large to restore the downtrodden woman to its rightful socio-cultural and religious status.

### **Guru Nanak perceived his conjugal relationship as a Burden?**

*"Given the nature of Janam-Sakhis, they cannot be understood as necessarily biographical but rather as responding to the needs of the later community within which this genre (type of literature) developed. (Mcleod 1906: 17)"* Page 27

*"While the historical elements of this literature (Janam Sakhis) must be questioned, it does point out to later understanding of the gurus, and indeed, of the role of women in the ensuing society. In the B40 Janam-Sakhi Guru Nanak's wife pleaded with him: You showed no affection when you were with me. Once you have gone to another place you will never return. Further, though strongly critical of the ascetics, Nanak relegated the running of the household and raising of his children to his wife and extended family. There are also nuanced (slightly different) implications that he perceived his conjugal relationship as a burden, an obstacle that needed to be overcome."* Page 28

Both, Mcleod and Jakobsh acknowledge that Janam Sakhis are questionable sources of historical facts, yet Doris has temerity to censure Guru Nanak for dereliction of domestic responsibilities and perceiving conjugal relationship as burden. Her ambiguous arguments based on 'questionable Sakhis' and 'nuance implications' as references are indicate she is hell-bent on casting aspersions on Sikh Gurus and Sikhism. From the dubious and the self

controvertible nature of her statements, it is obvious Jakobsh's accusations are mere conjectures and diatribes.

### **Mata Ganga asks Bhai Buddha for Niyoga?**

*“An insinuating booklet, depicted by members of the Tat Khalsa as insidious to the honor of Mata Ganga, the wife of Guru Arjan, united Sikh women in protest meetings; vehement objection to the booklet came to be expressed not only in women's meetings but also through letter-writing campaigns. The booklet by Rounaq Ram and Bishambar Dutt, ‘Khalsa Panth ki Hakikat’, depicted Mata Ganga asking Bhai Buddha for niyoga, permitted by her husband. Niyoga was a form of conjugal relations prescribed by swami Dayanad of the Arya samaj, for those who were ‘without control of their senses’ and wished to have legitimate progeny.”* Page 247

Reading Doris Jakobsh's (anti)thesis, **‘Relocating Gender in Sikh History’**, reveals her devious mindset. Here she has stooped too low into the literary sewer to scoop up sewage that she ascribes to Dayanand and Rounaq Ram and Bishambar Dutt of Arya Samaj, precursor to RSS. Doris Jakobsh's mention of the diabolical insinuation of niyoga involving Baba Buddha Ji and Mata Ganga Ji smacks of diabolical mischief and abomination.

If considered objectively the names Rounaq Ram and Bishamber Dutt can bear no amicable association or allegiance to Tat Khalsa. And Tat Khalsa is not even mentioned in the works of the contemporary prominent Sikh scholars during the Singh Sabha or Khalsa Diwan period. The only popular Tat Khalsa that the majority of Sikhs are familiar with is the one that came into being vis-à-vis Bandai Khalsa in 1714 CE. There is a gap of more than a century between birth of that Tat Khalsa and Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj. Dayanand was born in 1824 CE and he founded the radical Hindu organization Arya Samaj a quarter of a century later.

### **Doris Jakobsh's pro-active Dasam Granth stance**

Doris, who, in all probability hasn't even seen the so-called Dasam Granth, let alone study its Hindu mythological, occult and erotic compositions, joins the clique that ascribes its authorship, in totality, to Guru Gobind Singh and professes it as Sikh scripture without any substantive argument. In an insidious attempt to attribute Dasam Granth's authorship to; and single out Guru Gobind Singh as the Hindu goddess Durga's idolater in contrast to the predecessor Gurus, she quotes Nam Dev's verses ascribing these to the Gurus, she writes,

*‘Singh (Nikki Gurinder Kaur) attempts to accommodate the writings of the tenth guru and the clear rejection of the earlier Gurus of the goddess within Sikh sacred Sikh scripture, particularly with regard to the following verse’  
Whoever worships the great Mother*

*Shall though man, be incarnate as woman (AG, page 874) page 15*

Doris Jakobsh is either a charlatan or naïve, who has been misled about authentic philosophy, scriptures and history of Sikhism. How else would she attribute the Nam Dev's above verse to the earlier Gurus in an attempt to imply that Guru Gobind Singh was an idolater as opposed to the earlier Gurus? Nam Dev, an eminent Hindu holy sage, was venerated by the Sikh Guru Arjan by including his scripture into the sacrosanct Guru Granth.

**MHW MWEI KI PUJW KRY] NR SY NWIR HOIE AAUQRY] NWM  
DYV, PMNW 874**

**ARQ: JO MNU`K DURGW DI PUJW KRDW HY, AUH MNU`K QON  
IESQRI BX KY JNM LYNDW HY (BWV, PUJWRI AWPXY IEST DY  
RUP DWRN DW IECU`K HUMDW HY]**

**Meaning:** The man who idolizes goddess Maha Mae (durga) reincarnates as a woman, (because an idolater aspires to acquire idol's image).

And then, in her convoluted scribbling style, she quotes the verses from Dasam Granth '*In what appears to be an uncompromising tribute to Durga, the Dasam Granth states*,

*The sovereign deity on earth, enwrapped in all the regal pomp,*

*To you be the victory, O you of mighty arms. (Dasam Granth, Akal Ustati: P. 44)' Page 16*

Note: I searched Akal Ustat, but did not find the relevant verses matching the above excerpt in English translation.

### **Enemy of my enemy is my friend**

Picking up on the axiom Doris Jakobsh goes to great lengths to laud charlatan Dayanand and his radical offspring Arya Samaj and derogate Singh Sabha, the only true Sikh reform movement. Touting formers' purported achievements and criticizing the latter, she covers half-a-dozen pages with her usual verbose and bombastic jargon, most of which is irrelevant to the subject of her thesis. Sharing the laurels with Dayanand's radical Hindu Arya Samaj, are Namdhari and Nirankari movements, although in all probability she is not aware that there are two Nirankri movements, the Asli (original) and the Nakli (spurious). Both, Namdhari and Nakli Nirankari are now cultist sects hitching a free ride on Sikhism's bandwagon. Showering praise on Dayanad and deriding Singh Sabha she professes,

*"The Arya Samaj, though founded after the initiation of the Amritsar Singh Sabha, was the most far reaching and influential of the initiatives in Punjab with regard to the question of women. Dayanand gave concise description and regulations for the timing and circumstances surrounding the sexual act between marriage partners." Page 120.*

*“The Singh Sabha movement, inaugurated in the late nineteenth century, has been presented as being induced and undergirded (supported) largely by the immutable forces of Sikh scripture.”* Page 121

*“These new elites, having imbibed a liberal western education, decried undesirable aspects of the Sikh tradition: however, they were unwilling to reject that tradition outright.* Page 13

*“Studies on the reform process within Sikhism in the nineteenth century have tended to focus on the movement championed by the Raj, the Singh Sabha movement. This reform endeavour was, as earlier stated, initiated by individuals who by virtue of their assimilation into British educational framework had moved up the social hierarchy into positions of power and prestige, traditionally reserved for members of the aristocracy and religious orthodox leadership. The exploits of these new elites have tended to strike the imagination of a great number of scholars.”* Page 118

*“British influence on the Singh Sabha is undeniable particularly in the light of the preferential treatment given the Sikhs by the Raj. Correspondingly, Singh Sabha leaders exhibited admiration and unequivocal support towards their rulers.”* Page 121, 122

*“Thereafter, and most predominantly, Singh Sabha reforms regarding Sikh women were largely in response to the highly developed gender ideology of the Arya Samaj. Increasingly aware of the threat as well as the successful initiatives of the Arya Samaj, they incorporated many of the premises of Swamy Dayanand’s vision, all the while insisting that their initiatives were solely and surely founded in Sikh scripture and tradition.”* Page 122

### **Prejudicial Inference**

Either due to lack of diligent study, miscomprehension or prejudice Doris Jakobsh quotes erudite Sikh Scholar Bhai Gurdas’s Vaar (ballad) 26, paurdi (stanza) 24 to infer erroneously that he questioned Guru Hargobind’s leadership roles. W. H Mcleod, quoted the same lines in ‘Who is a Sikh’ pages 23-4 and ‘The Sikhs’ page 93. Paraphrasing (plagiarizing) Dr. Mcleod’s comments, without reference to his works, she postulates,

*“Regardless of the actual origin of politicization of the Sikh leadership, sources indicate that the new direction taken by the young Guru was not without critics. The beloved scribe Bhai Gurdas (cited in Macauliffe 1990, Vol. VI: 76-7) questions Hargobind’s directives.”*

*People say the former Gurus used to sit in the temple;  
the present Guru remainth not in any place.*

*The former Gurus sitting on their thrones used to comfort the Sikhs;*

*The present Guru keepeth dogs and hunteth.*

*The former Gurus used to compose hymns, listen to them, and sing them;*

*He keepeth not his Sikh followers with him;  
But taketh enemies of his faith and wicked persons as his guides and familiars.  
I say, the truth within him cannot possibly be concealed;  
the true Sikhs like bumble bees are enamoured of his lotus feet.  
He suppoteth a burden intolerable to others and asserteth not himself.* Pages 36-7

Charged with zeal to malign Sikh Gurus and votaries Doris misconstrues the very essence of the stanza. While they are right about '*the young Guru was not without critics*', but they are absolutely wrong when they say, '*The beloved scribe Bhai Gurdas questions Hargobind's directives*'. In the first six lines Bhai Gurdas describes criticism of the Guru by the anti-Sikh elements; in the last two lines he portrays the Sikhs' unwavering faith in the Guru and determination to stick with the Guru, despite vitriolic criticism of the Guru. According erudite Sikh Scholar Bhai Vir Singh, Truth can't be hidden by hiding: To Guru's lotus feet, Sikhs are attracted like honey bees.

(Because the Sikhs know the Guru/they have to) bear the unbearable (antagonism);

but not to show himself/themselves off. Bhai Vir Singh, Varan, Bhai Gurdas, page 417-18

### **Max Arthur Macauliffe's Version**

"The Sikhs not knowing the Guru's real motive considered that he was too much occupied with Muhammdans and military exercises. It is true that he excessively pampered Painda Khan in every way, and used frequently to present him with offerings made by the Sikhs. This caused great heart-burning to others. It was decided that a deputation consisting of Bhais Tilak, Tirath, Niwala, Krishan, Tulsi, Takhtu, and others should wait on Bhai Gur Das, now old man, possessing much influence with the Guru, and endeavour to persuade him to remonstrate (plead in protest) with the Guru on his general conduct.

"Bhai Gur Das told the Sikhs that, though the Guru was blameless, yet in order to silence his detractors it was advisable to send for Bhai Budha (Buddah) to apprise the Guru of the scandal that had arisen." Max Arthur Macauliffe, 'The Sikh Religion', vol. 4, pages 76-7

For brevity's sake, I have touched upon Doris Jakobsh 's salient insinuations, innuendos and conjectures against Sikh Gurus, Scriptures, Sikhism and Singh Sabha. Our opinion regarding inability to comprehend Sikh scriptures is vouched by Dr. Mcleod's another student. **Dr. Pashura Singh, Michigan University**, in the review of Doris Jakobsh's published (anti)-thesis states, '**Doris' preoccupation with jargon does not let her understand Guru Granth Sahib's vocabulary, imagery and key themes.**