Psycho social terrains and social formation:
Spiritual teaching of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

Hardeep Singh
Assistant Professor,
Centre of Professional Enhancement,
Lovely Professional University,
Phagwara, Punjab (India)

Abstract
Since time immemorial, society has been strangulated and utterly dominated by multifarious socio-culture barriers resulting in detrimental repercussions for the mankind. The gargantuan dominance of affluent over underprivileged, elite over lower class, ever so and abysmally superior anarchy and many others societal horrors have butchered and catapulted the humanity and torn away the social and moral fabric asunder. The state of womanhood has always been a matter of colossal concern. This article is an attempt to elucidate Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s impact on the socio-psycho elements of mankind with profound examples from Guru’s life and Gurbani.

Keywords: Educational Philosophy, Social Construct and Scientific Journey.

Introduction
The phase of Guru Nanak Dev Ji synchronized with the phase of abject tyranny and chaos. The period was marked with absolute disintegration and disarray. There was sheer pandemonium on the land of five rivers. The caste system was on the pinnacle with untouchability, corruption, robberies, materialism and duality of character prevailing at their best. The way people were conducting themselves was quite abysmal as lack of knowledge and wisdom was in full swing which kept their lives in darkness and ignorance. In this time of despair and dejection, Guru Nanak Dev Ji brought a new leash of life.

Gurbani mirroring his Educational Philosophy and Scientific Temper:
Through his writing, Guru Ji has paid enough emphasis on the role of education along with the understanding the scientific bravura of this grand universe. In his hymn Vidya vichari tan parupkari, Guru Nanak Dev Ji stressed on the fact if one is looking for true education; he or she needs to do the welfare of mankind.

During his time, he played an instrumental role in setting up schools in order to educate the society. Also, he differed on the belief that women were inferior to Men. He mentioned, So kyun manda aakhiye jit jamme rajaan and displayed his pain and grief at women being looked down by the society.

His Scientific acumen was deep rooted and based on logic and reasoning. The modern day emphasis of education on the flourishing and development of Science was very much visible in his preaching and philosophy. In his bani, Japji Sahib, he mentions, Lakh aakasha aakash, lakh patala patal. Almost 550 years back, he opined about the presence of many planets and sundry in the cosmos which has been explored and
substantiated by the present lot of Science enthusiasts thus making his Gurbani extremely informative along with praising the unfathomable creation of the Almighty. Guru Sahib doesn’t stake any claim to be a scientist. He is awestruck with the great expansion of universe including variety of creature, meticulous design and exactness of working of the whole network. Guru Nanak delineated his philosophy that there exists one and only great Lord by theorizing a mantra, Ek Onkar which is appearing in different shapes, colors and forms and living within the designated abiding laws of Almighty. He professed Hukam razai chalna Nanak likhiya naal…. He asserts his view on creation of universe and says that God himself creates universe and dissolves the same, Dhahe dhah usare appe. Guru Sahib unequivocally proclaims the endlessness of this gigantic cosmos consisting of innumerable planetary systems and other peripheral elements: Tithi khand mandal varbbhand, Je ko kathe tan ant na ant. Guru ji stresses that the entire universe was created from a zero space.

His perspective and study about the solar system sync with many scientific theories. Baba Nanak’s assertion in reference to this cosmos dramatically harmonizes Big Bang Phenomenon. Also, he believes that consummate Supreme is ultimate and flawless and so as the entire sphere He architected. He asserts Ih jag sache ki hai kothri sache ka vich vas….. Many renowned Science experts applaud this gargantuan structure of astronomical proportion though fall short of accepting the theory that there lies a chief artist courtesy whom such monumental artistry came to existence. On the contrary, Baba Nanak’s wonderstruck countenance pertaining to the colossal structure of universe nullifies the irrationality of obdurate science wizards.

Furthermore, Baba Nanak’s stream of thoughts regarding life’s genesis are very much pragmatic and have a layer of science attached to it. In the beginning, gaseous elements were formed which got converted into water and subsequently water gave birth to life. Jal te tribhawan sajiye ghat ghat jot samoi. Guru Ji asserts that life’s expansion occurred with the transformation taken place on earth. Guru Sahib maintains that there is no sameness among personals even if their origin comes from One, Ikat roop phire parchhana koi an kis hi jeha. Even the biological facets have established this theory. Baba Nanak’s observation about myriad subtle elements in our body is quite amazing as he says, Is kaya andar vast asankha.

Presentation of a New Social Construct:

Guru Nanak Dev Ji has made an indelible mark in changing the mindset of people and presented a fresh outlook of society by bringing in an egalitarian approach. Guru Sahib in one of his creations Raag Maru in Arbad narbad Dhundukara, talks about the history of Brahmand. “Arbad narbad dhundukara/dharn na gagana hukam apara/na din rain na chand na suraj sun samadh lagaeda…….” There was the non existence of the entire Copernican system with presence of nothing in terms of life and ambience. At the same time, there was no existence of any lavish ceremonies. Even there were neither tyrants nor victims. It was the will of the Supreme that it all came with immeasurable mysteries and extensions and became a part of this society and got engulfed in the hands of materialism. As the creation progressed, we as a society witness inequality, cruelty, corruption and infinite contradiction vis-à-vis spiritual groupies which provided the platform for the present day societal fabric. Guru Sahib condemns such superficial and deliberately infused contradiction which led to a state of
conflicting and confusing scenarios which is aptly described as “Kurh raja kurh parja kurh sab sansaar.” Tyrants exhibited their power on the feeble and deserted them. He states that Sach, the ultimate fact is abandoned by wickedness and injustice. Guru Ji condemns this state of affairs. Further, he provides a sanguine articulation, he says,” Kurh nikhute Nanka orak sach rahi.” Guru Sahib in his great wisdom proclaims that despite all the pessimism around, it is the triumph of Sach which is going to prevail in the long run. Touching another element of human life which encompasses happiness and grief, Baba Nanak professes his philosophy in a unique manner. In Buddhism, the concept of Dukh, remains the principal force. It is the beginning of its spiritual reflection and all efforts, physical austerities and penances. However, Baba Nanak has a completely opposite viewpoint. In his view, Dukh Daru, Sukh rog bhaia that is Dukh is cure while Sukh is medicine. Teaching the society with his sermons, he says that suffering leads to meditation, reflection and sublimation, it is a connector that connects us with the Almighty whereas Sukh leads to indulgence, luxury and degeneration. Pain acts as nectar that eradicates the suffering and paves the way to reality and patience. The theory of accepting happiness and grief as the Hukam of Divine is an integral philosophy that Gurbani professes to its Sikh.

Significance of the study:

As the world has shaped into a huge global village where there are unprecedented opportunities and challenges and we have taken rapid strides in our endeavors, perhaps ignorant of the fact that without Truth, Knowledge, Equality, Justice and Brotherhood things will fall apart .As a society we must inculcate the teaching and guidance provided by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Sahib’s teaching goes beyond any societal barrier or boundary. Being an Avid traveler, Guru Sahib travelled a colossal distance around the globe that too for almost 25 long years in his quest to maintain dialogue with people and to illuminate them. Through his bani, not only he inspired people towards meditation but also brought innumerable changes to the social fabric to a great extent. He condemned the oppression and inhumanity, raising his voice for the oppressed and subjugated. He condemned the invasion of Babur, emphasized on befitting and legitimate status of womankind which is categorically crucial for the benefit and advancement of the society. Truth, placidity and solemnity always remain the cornerstone of his spiritual journey guiding one and all. Guru Nanak Dev Ji teaching’s offers a magical and captivating string of way of life. It describes life as a triad of honest earnings (Kirat karo, naam japo, wand chakho) partaking life’s dividends with the underprivileged while chanting the name of Almighty who showers His blessings on all. It also conveys a message that such omnipotent and omnipresent Lord needs to be revered and appreciated. To summarize, there is immense to learn and assimilate form Guru Nanak Dev Ji spiritual journey which can be absolutely instrumental in our lives making a difference in colossal proportion from both the spiritual and cognitive viewpoint.