

# GATKA

(MARTIAL ART OF THE SIKHS)

Gatka is the traditional Martial Art of the Sikhs, which was introduced as a means of self defence by the 6th Guru of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib ji. ~~It was~~ <sup>and</sup> later popularised by the 10th Guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji.

Now a days Gatka has come to be associated with the Nihangs while earlier in the days of the 6th to 10th Gurus, ~~every~~ sikh warriors ~~were~~ trained in the finer aspects of this art before stepping into the battle field. Even Maharaja Ranjit Singh laid a great deal of stress on Gatka.

Every year ~~of~~ the Nihangs gather at Anandpur Sahib (Birth place of Khalsa) in the month of March on the occasion of 'Holla Mohalla' and gave a breath-taking display of this traditional art ~~because~~. In the time of 10th Guru, the Guru Gobind Singh also gave ~~the~~ training to the warrior Sikhs and displayed the Gatka art. This art has now become more of an exhibition sport at the numerous rural sports festivals which are held in many states of India (Punjab, Manipur, Kerala, Gujrat etc.) and also international level (U.S.A., U.K., Russia, Germany, Malasia, Singapore ...) Many Gatka Akhara to display this art.

The finer aspect of the Gatka is sword and

and shield which <sup>are</sup> the two most important weapons used in Gatka, primarily <sup>these</sup> ~~was~~ taught to Sikh warriors as a means to defend themselves. The Sikh Gurus had prohibited the use of Gatka for offence but the 10th Guru allowed the Sikhs to ~~to~~ fight with enemy when the serious problems could not be resolved by ~~the~~ dialogue ~~methods~~. Guru Gobind Singh ji mentions in the Zafarnama -

ੴ ਕਰ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਮਤਿ ॥  
ਜਗਤ ਮਨੁ ਬਾਰਨ ਬ - ਸਮ ਸਾਹਿ ਰਮਤਿ ॥

During festive occasions the traditional Sikh warriors ~~used to~~ exhibit their <sup>Gatka</sup> skills using many types of swords and other traditional weapons.

'Gatka' is the name of little wooden sticks (three of four feet long) which is the basic training stick of the martial art.

'Marahati' is the very important weapon of Gatka art which consists of a long heavy wooden baton both ends of which are made of metal. The Marahati is primarily used for strengthening the muscles of the arms and improving ~~the~~ foot-work (Pentra). besides, of course, warding off an attack <sup>by</sup> ~~by~~ ~~arrival~~. The expert foot work ~~explained the Gatka the expert~~ was very important for the traditional warriors who fought with swords.

'Bahadur yudh' is ~~the most important feature of~~ ~~gatka that is~~ self-defence without the use of any weapons. In 'bahadur yudh' a person ~~is~~ taught the art of striking those sensitive parts of a human body which could render an opponent helpless during a duel.

Many other traditional weapons used in gatka like 'Chakra', 'arrow & bow', 'Knifes', 'Gadha', 'Khanda', 'long sticks', 'Sucha Bana' and many types of words ~~etc~~, which were mentioned by ~~the~~ Guru Gobind Singh ji in the Dasam Granth and Saral Lok Granth.

ਮਨ ਤਿਖਰਾ ਖੜਿ ਖੜਗ ਤੁਖਰ ਤੁਖਰ ਮਾ ਤੀਰ ॥  
 ਸੋਹੇ ਸੋਗੀ ਸੋਗੀ ਸਾਹੇ ਸਾਹੇ ਯੀਰ ॥  
 (ਰਸਮ ਗੋਬ, ਪੰਨਾ 717)

10th Guru believed that the many types of weapons are my Pir (Guru) and the power of sword won the many Dharan Yudh.

ਕਾਲ ਤੁੰਗੀ ਕਾਲੀ ਤੁੰਗੀ, ਤੁੰਗੀ ਤੁੰਗ ਮਾ ਤੀਰ ॥  
 ਤੁੰਗੀ ਤਿਖਰੀ ਕੀਤ ਕੀ ਮਾਰ ਤੁੰਗੀ ਕਗ ਯੀਰ ॥  
 (ਸਰਲ ਲੋਕ ਗਾਠਾ)

In the Saral Lok Granth, the 10th Guru mentioned many important names of traditional weapons



high used in the Gatka art.

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ਘਟਾ ਖੜਕ ਖਗ ਖੰਡ ਮਸਿ ਸੈਣ ਸੋਗੀ ਕਤੀ ਉਪਾਗਤਿ ॥  
 ਸਾਗਿਸੀ ਸਾਂਗ ਸੈਣ ਤੇਮਰ ਖਕਤੀ ਸਮੁੀ ਤਾਲਾ ਸੈਜਾ ਪਾਗਤਿ ॥  
 ਜਮਘਰ ਨਬਰ ਬਿਛਕਰ ਕਟਾਗੀ ਸੁੀ ਕਤੀ ਘਾ ਜਮਰਾੜ ਉਪਾਗਤਿ ॥  
 ਸੁਮਾ ਸੈਣ ਚਲਮ ਚਲਿਟਿਨ ਸੁਨ ਡਿਮੁਲ ਫੁਲ ਚੁ ਤਗਤਿ ॥  
 ਕਰਕ ਕੁਠਾਰ ਦੁਪਾਰ ਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਗੀਆ ਕਪਰ ਸਤਪਾਰੀ ਕਲਾਵਤਿ ॥  
 ਡੋਗ ਡੁਕਕੇ ਗਵਾਈ ਨਾਰਾ ਖਿਓਖਿਯਾ ਸੁਧ ਭਰ ਖੁਤਿ ਭਰ ਕਾਵਤਿ ॥  
 ਖਲਕ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਖਲਕ ਡਾਂ ਖਲਕ ਗੈਸ ਖਲਕਿ ਸੈਵਨ ਤਰਪਾਵਤਿ ॥  
 ਪਸਰ ਪਗਰਿ ਖਗਰ ਖਾਨਿ ਗਵਾਤਿ ਉਲਕਾਪਾਤ ਕੁਮਕੰਧ ਕਾਵਤਿ ॥  
 ਗਿਰ ਤਰ ਉਖੜ ਉਖੜ ਭੁਚਿ ਡਿੰਗਤਿ ਖਰਕ ਭਰ ਵੇਢੀ ਕਰਕ ਉਚਾਵਤਿ ॥  
 (ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸੋਗ ਸੈਣ, ਪੰਨਾ 673)

In 'Sastarnamala', (a famous piece written by both Gurus) Guru  
 Jobind Singh Ji mentioned the many important names  
 of traditional weapons used in fighting in the Gatka art.

Gurbani is an essential part of Gatka  
 as this increased the concentration power and unites  
 the heart and mind.

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