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Titolo Drinking from love's cup: surrender and sacrifice in the Vars of Bhai

Gurdas Bhalla / / selections translated with introduction and

commentary by Rahuldeep Singh Gill

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Sommario/riassunto

"Bhai Gurdas Bhalla (d. 1636 CE) is widely considered the most important non-canonical poet in Sikh history, having shaped the theology and ethics of the tradition for centuries. His poems, which offer an authoritative illustration of Sikh life in the early seventeenth century, defined Sikh identity during a tumultuous period of upheaval. In Drinking from Love's Cup, Rahuldeep Gill brings together for the first time a collection of the revered poet's early work, masterfully translated into English, alongside the original Punjabi text. The magic of Gurdas's poetry, says Gill, is the fusion of Islamicate narrative with Indian heroic literature to speak about death, martvrdom, and the spirit's absolution in love. Gill challenges the traditional scholarship surrounding the dates of Gurdas's writing, suggesting that Gurdas wrote his poetry to console the Sikh community when it was in mourning over the execution of the fifth of the Sikh founders, Guru Arjan (d. 1606), by agents of the Mughal Empire. Gurdas in his verses immortalized the fifth Guru's role as a martyr and encouraged the faithful to stay involved in the community, resist hegemony, and reinforce Sikh beliefs during the sectarian upheaval. Rhythmic, elegant, and lucid, the poems weave Sikh scripture into the lyrical fabric of Sikh spirituality. Gill brings a contemporary flair to Gurdas's moving stanzas and in his commentary unearths fresh insights about his life and context"--