

But, I was dismayed by what I discovered. It was as if for my whole life I had been fed one long string of lies. I will not repeat what I discovered on these pages, but suffice to say, I am staunchly against paedophilia, incest, genocide and the legitimisation of rape.

As a student of history, I was well aware of the correct verification procedures that need to be undertaken to ascertain the validity of a source. My Islamic sources were accurate, but I remained in denial for about a year or so.

I tried to purge the facts from my mind, but it was no use; whenever I tried to continue my studies into Islam, I simply found more and more that I disagreed with.

The Islamic idea that the role of woman is primarily procreation and raising children and not much else tipped me over the edge.

I decided that I was Muslim no more. I, of course, kept this decision to myself.

However, although I abandoned Islam, I was still very much a spiritual person; I still believed in God, although it was no longer the Islamic Allah.

It was in my final year at university that my life was to radically change, never to be the same again.

My study of Islam had also led me to look into other religions. I did not know much about the Sikh faith, I must confess, but the more and more I looked into it, the more and more I was attracted to its philosophy of humanitarianism, egalitarianism, charity, a strong work ethic and the equality of woman and man. It is a simple philosophy, and a beautiful one.

I became wrapped in a study of Sikh Scripture and history; so much so that I decided to undertake my history dissertation on Sikh philosophy. I did not dare tell my family though; they have an unhealthy hatred for non-Muslims generally.

I did not even tell any Sikhs; I didn't even know any! Work for my dissertation led me to a Gurdwara library, and of course the Gurdwara itself. I tried to stop myself, but I couldn't. I was becoming more and more obsessed with Sikh dharma and I knew that I agreed with its philosophy. It wasn't a conscious thing really; I didn't wake up one day and announce to myself and the world "I am a Sikh."

It just felt right; all the things that I believed in were to be found in Sikh Scripture.

One day I decided to sit in the main hall and listen to a recitation of Guru Nanak's Japji Sahib. I knew the meaning of the words because I had studied them for my dissertation, and my parents spoke in chaste Punjabi. But even so, I was moved. I had never heard the words spoken as a melodious prayer.

I have not told my parents about my new faith, nor do I intend to. I have not told many Sikhs either. Those Sikhs who do know have embraced me with open arms. The Sikh circles that I move in now confirm to me every day that I made the right choice: they live Sikh dharma through their actions – through their kind-heartedness and exemplary etiquette. I am at a happy point in my life.

And I got a First for my dissertation!

I just wanted to share my story,

Guru Rakha, Khadijah Kaur"



www.ProjectNaad.com

Muslim Converts to Sikh Dharma

Sikh Dharma

PROJECT NAAD
www.ProjectNaad.com

Introduction

A common misconception among many, including some Sikhs, is that people of other faiths can not and do not convert to the Sikh way of life.

This leaflet provides a list of former Muslims, some famous, others less well known, who have converted to the Sikh way of life, and ends with the personal story of a Muslim woman who has embraced Sikh philosophy and its lifestyle.

The purpose of this leaflet is purely educational; it does not seek to malign any individual or faith.

Muslim Converts

Alia Kaur, formerly Alia Hussain – Born in Leeds, Alia Kaur is the sister of 7/7 London suicide bomber Hasib Hussain. Kaur embraced the Sikh way of life in the late 1990s. Her strict Muslim family disowned her after discovering about her conversion.

Muskan Kaur, formerly Muska Kakar – Muska is the daughter of a high ranking Afghanistan Army official in the Hamid Karzai administration and comes from a devout Muslim family. She now lives in the Holy city of Amritsar and has become something of a celebrity in the Punjabi media.

Ayesha Kaur Duggal, formerly Aisha Jafri - Born in Lahore, Ayesha is a medical doctor who studied at Lady Harding Medical College in Delhi. She is the wife of the eminent Kartar Duggal, author of several exegeses on Sikh Scripture and philosophy, and the sister-in-law of poet Ali Sardar Jafri. Ayesha was married at the Golden Temple in Amritsar according to Sikh rites.

Shemina Kaur, formerly Shemian Hirji - A Canadian born Muslim who, prior to her conversion to Sikh dharma, had published several scholarly papers, including 'Teachers of Punjabi Sikh Ancestry: Their Perceptions of Their Roles in the British Columbia Education System', written as part of her Master's thesis. She was murdered in a suspected honour killing for leaving Islam. May

her soul rest in eternal peace.

Ajmer Singh, formerly Abul Turrani - A spy working for the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, Ajmer Singh took Amrit at Anandpur Sahib in 1699 by the hand of Guru Gobind Singh himself.

Latif Singh Diaye - Latif is the son of renowned Senegalese-American Imam Xadir Diaye. Latif is a court stenographer and the author of 'My Life As A Black Sikh'. Due to his father's ultra-liberal interpretation of Islam, there was no issue with his apostasy and conversion into the Sikh faith.

Shaheed Lachhman Singh Babbar, formerly Bashir Mohammad – Babbar was a former Punjab police officer who embraced Sikh dharma when, ironically, in the company of Sikh separatists whose organisation he was attempting to infiltrate.

Kuldeep Manak, formerly Latif Muhammed - A famous Punjabi singer who, after he embraced Sikh philosophy, released a number of Sikh devotional tracks.

Bhai Gurmohinder Singh, formerly Mahana Ali - Now a Sikh clergyman, Singh embraced Sikh dharma in 1947. He was part of a rare East Punjabi Sikh delegation that was later received by former Pakistani premiere Nawaz Sharif.

Sant (Saint) Lakhbir Singh, formerly Karim Baksh – Born to devout Muslim parents, Singh converted to Sikh dharma in 1903.

Allayar - A wealthy Muslim horse dealer of Delhi who, after his conversion, became a Sikh preacher during the time of Guru Amar Das.

Ajmer Singh, formerly Ibrahim Brahmi - A Muslim recluse of the city Chhatteana, he received Sikh baptism by the hand of Bhai Maan Singh.

Dindar Singh, Mir Nasir Singh and Ali Singh - All soldiers in Banda Singh Bahadur's famous Sikh army.

Testimony

Khadijah Kaur, now a cherished member of the Holy Sikh Communion, has decided to share her story of how she came to fully embrace Sikh philosophy. Although she wished to give specific details of her conversion (her name, university, course etc) her name has been changed because, according to Islamic Law, if one leaves Islam the punishment is death, and Islamic organisations could not guarantee her safety.

Khadijah's story:

"As a child, I was taught the Quran by rote. Although none of my family speaks a word of Arabic, I learnt how to read and write it. I was taught about the teachings of Islam and its undoubted superiority over all other religions and philosophies. I was also told that Muhammed was the most amazing human to ever live, and that he was God's special messenger.

But I am a born sceptic and a born scholar.

Throughout my formative years, my curiosity about Islam was burning. Why had I never seen an English translation of the Quran? Why did my mother keep telling me not to socialise with the kuffran (non-Muslims)? Why was I never allowed to go to the Mosque?

Whenever I asked my mother these questions, she replied that Islam does not allow one to question, it is akin to blasphemy.

I hit 18 and university life dawned. I was going to study history and I was looking forward to the prospect of doing some real scholarly research on Islam at the university library.

My first major interest was the life of Muhammad, a man who I had been told was the epitome of humanity. I was really looking forward to reading about a man who I thought stood for justice, tolerance and equality.