

# *Place of Dasam Granth in Sikh literature*

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Literature relating to Sikhism is generally perceived in two categories. In this context one is the primary or source literature and the second relates to secondary or supporting literature. So the primary source always remains the word of the Guru (Bani) and in the secondary source all the supporting literature is included. Dasam Granth (Dg here after) is included in the both because the Bani of Guru Gobind Singh is also included in it. Due to this reason only, Sikh literature is so inter dependent that if we are to comprehend the one properly, then the clear understanding of the other becomes must. Unfortunately instead of grasping the development and placing of the required source in a perspective, we often decry the grace by hysterical out bursting about DG. In this dilapidating process, all kinds of the contextual exquisite beauty of our primary and secondary literature, either gets enfeebled or enters in deep trouble. With this the responsibility of the custodians has been marginalized and the Sikhs are becoming indolent rather immune towards the theoretical and theological erosions happening day by day in the area of Sikh studies. Better we should understand that infuriated outbursts are not enough to tackle these sensitive issues, which I myself have confronted during my studentship of Sikhism and awareness I got during my social interactions. I am clear that all these emotional efforts being pointed out will not help solving the problems and are already causing inextricable confusions in the area of Sikh studies. For long we have turned our backs towards communitarian reading habits and without further delay it should be taken up among the much needed concerns of the Sikhs. Directionless scattered efforts are also going waste. If we love our heritage we have to be well prepared to defend it academically also. Never before the crisis about our source-literature was as terrible as it is today. It is really in idiomatic sense, like Iron Age (Kalyuga) for us, which for others, even

at the cost of Sikh spirit may be post modern approach in the western sense, especially for our contemporary consciousness. Much earlier General O, Moore Creagh (Indian Studies London,44-64) observed about Sikhism that “Today Sikhism can stand the shock of modern thought and remain unaffected by it”, which is being wronged by the whimsical writings of community scholars with reference to DG. The reason looks that proactive possibilities have lagged behind and now even the defense becomes possible only in the idiom of the attackers. Communitarian ignorance about our own heritage is being exploited by tendentious scholars working in the area of Sikh studies because they know that ignorance always punctures defense. Doubts, even if related to scientific queries, should lead to truth. But Sikhs are pushed towards the labyrinth of provocations by mingling the authentic or primary sources and inauthentic or secondary sources with each other. Inauthentic sources are definitely layered; complex and fluid for different reasons and all efforts to give legitimacy to it are paradoxical outcomes in its expression. This is being said because many provoking issues are being raised in the recent literature relating to DG. This will be the thematic concern of this paper.

The spirit to disagree for disagreeing is always considered healthy and creative approach for any community but now it looks that the same with the Sikh scholars has been replaced by the politics of the sacred. In Sikh spirit there is enough space for resolving conflicting opinions through dialogue, known as congregational resolve (ਸੰਗਤੀ ਚੱਲ). But the scholarship with the belief that Sikhism is in the continuity of Hinduism among the Sikhs is out to prove that from the angle of Sikh spirit there is no difference between SGGS and DG. One of them contradicts himself by saying that both are one in form (ik roop hai) but not equal in status (ik smaan nahin). SGGS for him is for humanity and DG is for khalsa (baptized one) only. He believes that Guru created this narrative for teaching the techniques of keeping politics a part and parcel of religion. He takes up ‘Krishnavtar’ without depending on its text and concludes that it is easy to understand spirituality but is difficult to apprehend the play (BN) of spirituals. He does not care to take up the question that why Sikhism is in continuity of Hinduism? The root of this position lies in colonial writers. For

instance Cunningham writes in his book 'History of the Sikhs' that "they (Sikhs) are not discouraged by defeat and they ardently look forward to the day when Indians and Arabs and Persians and Turks shall all acknowledge the double mission of Nanak and Gobind Singh". The defenders of DG look like a possessed mind that is out to exploit the committed-innocence of the Sikhs for their vested interests. Even the quotes in defense by these scholars are given without caring for the context. Such efforts are unnecessarily pushing the Sikh-community towards confusions. In this situation the need of the time is to reconcile the conflicting points in the light of Granth and Panth. It can be possible only if the contesting scholars with extreme positions rise above the ego boundaries. In this light the starting point should be that the source-Sikh-literature remains Bani only along with all that which is approved in the spirit of Granth and Panth for singing (Kirtan) in the Sikh-gatherings (Sangat). According to internal evidence of SGGS for defining, Bani is the embodiment of the Guru and the Guru is embodiment of Bani. All the Banis are Nectar and if the seeker lives up to its teaching, Guru in person stands by the seeker:

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥ਮ.੪, ੯੮੨

So only the Bani which in Sikh spirit is established as Sabad-Guru also, is unique contribution of Sikhism in the area of spiritual history of the world. Sabad-Guru is known also as spirit (joti) and methodology (jugati) for the seekers of Sikh-spirituality. The founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak himself laid the foundation of Sabd-Guru through answering the question put by the contemporary Sidh-Yogis. The question is how the Lord ferry the human across the terrible ocean of life? Guru answered, by accepting Sabad as Guru and making the tuned-meditation or tuned-consciousness (surat-dhuni) as disciple (chela). With this the spiritual exclusiveness is clearly negated (1/942-43). In the continuity of Sabad-Guru as primary spiritual concern for the custodians of Sikhism, Guru Arjan compiled (1604) Sri Guru Granth Sahib and authenticated it for all times to come. Panth (Sikh brotherhood or collective consciousness of khalsa) as custodian of SGGS was finally declared in 1699 by the Tenth Guru Gobind Singh and again in 1708 at Hazur Sahib Nanded he ordained the seekers

of Sikhism that now onward Granth will be the Guru of the Sikhs (Guru manio Granth). With this one and only one Granth (SGGS) stands without any parallel in Sikhism. The often quoted quotation from 'Bansawlinama' of Kesar Singh Chhibber tells clearly that Tenth Guru himself answered the question concerning the literature created at Anandpur Sahib, known as 'Chhota granth' (DG). It should not be taken in the spirit, supposed and expected for SGGS. First of all 'dham' here is a place and stands for Anandpur Sahib. Then many playmates (khidaave) are the writers (likhaari) known as 52 poets. Operative part in this quotation is not even 'Granth' rather play (khed) only. No body knows the secret of this not being incorporated in SGGS. The quotation in original runs as under:

ਛੋਟਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਨਮੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਕੇ ਧਾਮ। ਸੰਮਤ ਸਤਾਰਾਂ ਸੈ ਪਚਵੰਜਾ, ਬਹੁਤ ਖਿਡਾਵੇ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਨਾਮ।

ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਸੀ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਹਥੀਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਤੇ ਖਿਡਾਇਆ। ਸਿਖਾਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ, ਜੀ! ਨਾਲਿ ਚਾਹੀਏ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ। 223

ਬਚਨ ਕੀਤਾ, 'ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ ਉਹ, ਇਹ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਹੈ ਖੇਡ'।

ਨਾਲਿ ਨ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ, ਆਹਾ ਪਿਆਰਾ, ਕਉਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ਭੇਦ। 224 (ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਿਬਰ, ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ)

The extreme positions of very acceptance or rejection that the DG was authored by Guru Gobind Singh, has been continuously landing its custodians into traps. In order to strike a balanced view, let us try to understand the available variations in the Sikh-literature. The contemporary compulsions concerning the authenticity of DG is another important factor to be kept in view for analyzing the given text. Dr. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia tried to 'understand the Dasam Granth' in his book "Liberating Sikhism From 'The Sikhs'" (Unistar, 2003, pp 76-79) as 'The Dialectic Sublime of Guru Gobind Singh'. For him the authenticity of DG has remained unresolved because of 'the baffling variety of contents; mind-boggling diversity of genres; languages, dialects and diction'. Thematic variety for Ahluwalia becomes 'unique metaphor of India's composite heritage'. But he concludes that 'the spiritual status of being the Sikh Scripture vests in Guru Granth Sahib, though the Dasam Granth is also highly revered'. For resolving the controversy he does not offer much and after evaluating the extreme positions in his scholarly style, he observes that "Sri Guru

Granth provides the sovereign doctrinal identity of Sikhism; the Dasam Granth relates this distinctive identity to the composite Indian heritage'. No doubt Sikhism stands for pluralistic approach but it does not help for resolving the authenticity problem of DG.

Keeping in view the placing of DG in Sikh literature, the critical approach looks absent. In the absence of Panthic resolve of the issue, available efforts are either neutral opinions or vested resolves. It looks that the inability to carry on the reviewing approach in a dialogical style and that too in the spirit of Granth and Panth, most of the literature is directed towards the easy resolves. A continuing imbalance is still looking for collective resolve, for which the middle path is the only alternative. Lack of vision and will in Sikh studies is also there.

DR Sher Singh in his book "Philosophy of Sikhism" (SGPC, 1998) while writing about DG keeps in view the references available in Sikh literature and resolves that DG does not help much towards 'the philosophical exposition of the doctrines of Sikhism'. He clearly admits that 'there are conflicting remarks met within English literature about the teachings of Guru Gobind'. On the basis of the opinions of Trump, Malcolm, McAuliffe, Cunningham and G.C. Narang he concludes about DG as under:

- a. Relapsed into Hinduism.
- b. Absolutely separated the Sikhs from Hindus.
- c. Under the tenth Guru the Sikhs became intolerant.
- d. Sikhs were extremely, not at all fanatics, unsophisticated and simple with open honesty.

No resolve looks possible through these observations. Even Dr. Sher Singh admits in the spirit of Nirmalas that 'it is purely an academic interest to have some comparative insight into the teachings of other faiths.' He again gives the opinion of Nirmalas who believe that DG was written by Guru but the 'purpose of this was not to give us a rival sacred book but to throw sidelights on the Adi Granth'. Along with this he quotes McAuliffe that 'DG is a collection of the works of various poets of the court of the tenth Guru and that only a small portion of it can be ascribed to Guru Gobind Singh' (59). He comes out clearly that a strong opinion was always there among the Sikhs that 'Guru can never be the author of the long episode of Pakhian Chritra or Triya Chritra. He substantiates this opinion on the authority of

Dr. Mohan Singh Diwana (History of Punjabi Literature) that 'it is below the dignity of Guru to deal with the wiles of women.'

It can be seen that the dominant aspect of Sikh literature is with questions, assertions and doubts. It can be said that sticking to the exclusive approach like accepting DG as Guru-creation or rejecting the same as Guru-creation will not end any where. Inclusive approach towards the text available can help us to contest it from the Sikh point of view. The questions being focused in this paper are like DG is definitely an integral part of our heritage, but we are yet to resolve that what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in the available text. We will also carefully take up that to what extent the Granth and Panth methodology helps us to resolve the controversy concerning authenticity? Along with this it will be relevant also to confront the following queries also before determining the place of DG in Sikh literature:

1. How DG went deep into the Sikh psyche through the yester years?
2. Who got benefited out of this controversy?
3. Is there any politics behind supporting or opposing DG exclusively?
4. Why the supporters of DG as Guru-creation for long time, were not from the main stream?
5. How the decisions of Akal Takht Sahib have been affecting the controversy?

The answers to all these questions are inherent in controversy relating to DG. We all know that respect for the script of Bani (gurmukhi) was so deep in particular with the Sikhs and in general with the Punjabis. It is why any thing written in Punjabi found as waste was respectfully put in flowing water. This sentiment gave respect to any hand-written manuscript available. It was considered sacred service to copy Bani for serving the needs of the Sikh-seekers. Committed-innocence among the Sikhs must have accepted every thing in the name of DG in good faith. They were not aware about the politics of manuscripts and never felt the need for critical acceptance. From here starts the business of manuscripts. After the authentication of SGGS, only unauthenticated material came handy for the dealers in manuscripts. Forces contesting Sikhs and Sikhism exploited the space created by the manuscript writers. While confronting all this, what needs to be accepted is that the Bani of

Gurus was copied and distributed among the Sikhs. On the whole it should also be kept in mind that only selected portions of DG can at the most be considered the part of collective communitarian memory, only those Banis, which were accepted as the Banis of Tenth Guru without any trace of doubt. Banis, which form part of Amrit ceremony (1699) and allowed in Kirtan are considered authentic. Other compositions included in DG can be categorized as historical narratives like Apni Katha and Zafarnama; wonderful acts (Leelah) like Avtaar Leelah and translations; and the third Triya charitar (TC here after) and Hakayats.

The problem in hand is this that any thing related to Guru Gobind Singh became respected-inheritance with the Sikhs of any shade as mentioned above. This sentimental approach among the Sikhs confused the above categories and from here starts the history of DG. For long Sikhs were pushed away from the societal mainstream by the contemporary rulers and this also provided opportunity to the interested parties for toying with text, now known as DG. The present text of DG has a history based on Sikh literature. The authenticity of its authorship remained doubtful throughout. The reason is the problem of identifying the contribution of 52 poets who were supposed to translate the literature of their faith into the language of the common man (ਦਸਮ ਕਥਾ ਭਗੋਤ ਕੀ ਭਾਖਾ ਕਰੀ ਬਨਾਇ) which can inspire for fighting for truth (ਅਵਰ ਵਾਸਨਾ ਨਾਹਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਧਰਮ ਯੁਧ ਕਾ ਚਾਇ). Whatever was written by the poets (52)<sup>1\*</sup> for serving the assigned purpose is supposed to be the part of the text of DG. These poets must have served as copiers of their writings as was the customary among the Sikhs in those times. But the effort for compilation of the literature created at Anandpur Sahib was started by Bhai Mani Singh, which was followed by Baba Deep Singh, Bhai Sukha Singh of Patna and others. All such efforts never helped to finalize the authentic text of DG. Even the name and text of DG went on changing and provided space for interpolation. Never the naming ceremony of DG was ever held either by Guru Gobind Singh or by Khalsa Panth. What is being contested today was always there and the contesting Sikhs remained divided about the authenticity of its authorship. This all relate to the conflict between the traditionalists and the main stream Sikhs. Traditionalist like Udasis, Nihangs and priestly class almost remained parallel to mainstream Khalsa and this remained

more than difference of opinion. For example at the times when Udasi and Mahants were in control of management of Gurdwaras, even in Punjab, DG was placed along with SGGS in most of the Gurdwaras. It was the time when idols were displayed in parkarma of Golden Temple. With the dawning of Singh Sabha movement, the conflict between Pujari-class and Khalsa-awakening was rooted in preferring tradition over the awakening. With the prevailing of Khalsa-spirit, the presence of DG in Gurdwaras became a happening of the past. The problem of spurious literature was on the agenda of Singh Sabha movement. Shamsher Singh Ashok was established scholar of Singh Sabha and he has recorded in his book “Punjab Dian Lehan” (P.180) that doubtful parts of Sikh literature should either be deleted or corrected. Edited versions with footnotes of “Suraj Parkash” and “Gur Bilaas” are in this spirit. Even in the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh DG was not playing any part as sacred Granth among the Sikh community. There are references of the authenticated Banis of Tenth Guru in the books of colonial historians like Wilson (1848) and Cunningham (1849) but they did not mention at all about DG.

Thus the textual problem of DG remained complex because of either ignorance or greed of the easily approachable copiers of DG, who added unwanted matter in the text. When edited with a purpose even truth causes spiral commotion. Even the debate within the custodians of the DG is becoming difficult because of the extreme positions among the contesting-scholars. For reaching some sort of consensus, delicate challenge of swimming across the flood of questions, queries and doubts is there. First of all, for the truth of the Guru or Sikh ideology, the only authentic source is SGGS. The text of DG under discussion is still to be authenticated even with the contesting parties. Text of DG perennially has been serving the cause of anti-Sikh forces right from colonial rulers to RSS now. For this reason Sikh spirit and the text of DG remained in conflict to the extent of turmoil. Non-serious communitarian approach is helping for creating space for easy erosions continuously. By remaining indifferent or believing what to me, will help the exclusivist scholarship and the problem will become complex day by day. Using the methodology, pondered and provided by Gurus (Granth and Panth) can help to identify the possibilities for consensus in the Sikh spirit. For investigation the place of DG in Sikh literature, it should be kept in mind that only one text

Sri Guru Granth Sahib is authenticated and it is operative for all purposes as Guru in person for the faithful. There is no doubt about it that no other Granth can ever become to the supreme level of SGGS. This opinion was reiterated by SGPC in 1973 sent to S. Santokh Singh of Cottage, Lower Mall Kasauli (HP) regarding his religious inquiry. The official letter no. 366723 dated 4-8-1973 records that “In the relation to your letter dated 6-7-1973, opinion of Singh Sahiban Darbar Sahib and Jathedar Sri Akal Takhat, is as follows and is being sent to you:

1. Dohra Raj Karega Khalsa which is read at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, and other Gurudwaras is based on Gurmat. Because, reading Dohra is a Panthic decision. No body should doubt this decision.
2. Chritopakhyan composition which is included in Dasam Granth is not Dasmesh Bani. It is a copy of old Hindu mythological stories.

The position of SGGS as living Sabad-Guru is duly supported in Sikh-literature also. The often quoted common belief among the Sikh community is that SGGS is God-given text (ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥ ੧/੭੨੨). In it resides Almighty in spirit and makes it the body of the Guru in person. To be with its spirit and methodology (Joti Te Jugati) creates the possibility of spiritual realization through Bani for the committed seekers.<sup>2\*</sup> In spite of all this a section among the Sikhs is trying to create confusion among the community by saying that DG deserves to be displayed (ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼) along with SGGS. Argument with them is that it was happening in yester years. They should understand that what has been left behind in the spirit of Granth and Panth can not be resurrected. Keeping in view this the Jathedar Akal Takhat Sahib Bhai Joginder Singh Vedanti's public observation that DG is Sikh Panth's historical literature (ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਸਾਹਿਤਕ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ). But it can not be treated at par with SGGS (ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਮਾਨਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ). This statement of Jathedar was given to press on 31 January, 2008 at the last rites of Mahant Tirath Singh at Goniana Mandi (Bhatinda), which was published in the news paper Ajit (Punjabi) dated 31 January 2008. Jathedar clearly observed there that “DG debate is unnecessary. DG is Sikh Panth's historical literature, but can not be treated at par with Sri

Guru Granth sahib ji, as 10<sup>th</sup> Guru ji himself sanctioned (gave Gurgaddi) only to Guru Granth Sahib ji. Therefore, Dasam Granth Parkash can not be done parallel to SGGS ji.” Evidence quoted by Dalip Singh in his book “Guru Gobind Singh And Khalsa Discipline” is available for rebutting the spirit of Avtar narratives. This evidence relates to the reporting of Mughal reporter present at Anandpur Sahib. He recorded Guru’s address that “I wish you all to embrace one creed and follow one path, rising above all differences of the religion as now practiced. Let the four Hindu casts who have different dharmas laid down for them in Shastras, having institution of ‘Varanashram Dharma’, abandon them altogether, and adopt the way of mutual help and cooperation and mix freely with one another. Do not follow the old scriptures. Let none pay homage to the river Ganga. Other places of pilgrimage, which are considered to be holy in Hindu religion or worship of Hindu deities, such as Rama Krishna, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Chandi etc., but all, should cherish faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak and the successor Gurus. Let men of four castes receive my Baptism of the Double-Edged Sword, eat out of the same vessel and feel no aloofness from or contempt for one another”(1992, p 204). At this time reference of DG is not any where and clear directions in the address are against the spirit of 75% text of the DG. If the authority for all the arguments forwarded is Guru Gobind Singh himself in above two references, then no body should have the right to declare DG as the creation of Guru Gobind Singh. Now it becomes little bit easy to conclude that no where in Sikh-literature the references are available in favor of declaring DG in its given form a sacred text like SGGS. But the efforts to replace the reality through the unauthentic text of DG are being discussed here.

Arguments in favor of the unauthentic text of DG started with the letter of Bhai Mani Singh and it still goes on. For it I quote S. Jagjit Singh from his paper “Dasam Granth The Real Issue” as under:

“The so called letter of Bhai Mani Singh to Mata ji is a document which has been given importance by some scholars for the purpose of connecting the compilation of ‘Dasam Granth’ with the name of Bhai Mani Singh. This letter claims to record the rumor of Banda having escaped from the custody, who was arrested and executed in 1716 AD. History records that he was neither arrested neither earlier nor escaped custody.

Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi, in his 'Kartritav Dasam Granth', has given solid reasons for suspecting it to be a fictitious document. The shape of letter and the liberal use of Bindi of Gurmukhi script in Bhai Mani Singh's alleged letter are quite different from the other writings of his period. Also, in writing this letter, a metallic nib appears to have been used, which was not available at that time in India (For deatail see 'Kartritav' pp. 38-45). Above all, in all the Gurmukhi prose writings of that period (e.g. the Hukamnamas of Guru Gobind Singh and Banda), words constituting a single sentence were joined together without leaving blank spaces in between them. That this classical method of writing Gurmukhi was in vogue right up to AD 1867, is shown by a copy of the newspaper 'Akhbar Sri Dabar Sahib' published in that year (Kartritave, pp. 39-45). For our purpose, this fact alone is enough to clinch the issue that the old style of writing Gurmukhi is to be found, without exception, in all the available early manuscripts (e.g. 'Sikhan Di Bhakatmal'; Janamsakhi Bhai Mani Singh jee kee; and the claimed manuscript Bir of Dasam Granth itself) associated with the name of Bhai Mani Singh and listed in 'Punjabi Hathlikhtan Dee Soochi' by Ashok Singh. Now, the words in the sentences of Bhai Mani Singh's so-called letter are clearly not joined together and are definitely separated by blank spaces in between them (Kartritav, Photostat copy on p. 48), as it is done in the modern style of writing Gurmukhi. This one-time drastic innovation, solely in Bhai Mani Singh's letter, is in glaring contrast to all other writings of his period or of the period that followed him closely.

We can not therefore, escape the inference that this letter was a forged one. Gyani Harnam Singh Balbh claims to have secured it from 'some old fsmily' of Delhi in 1929, without specifying that family ( "ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਿਖ ਘਰਾਣੇ" Kartritav, p. 39). The earlier history of the letter is also unknown. And the doubts and suspicions regarding this letter are further compounded by the strange conduct of its custodians, who gave a Photostat copy of it to Dr. Jaggi, but did not comply with his repeated requests to show him the original document (Kartritav, p. 40). He, thereby, deprived Dr. Jaggi of an opportunity to have a look at the condition of the original paper used in order to form a probable estimate of its age, .Apparently looks an attempt to hide, what is not genuine" (Appendix, p. 23). This letter is

also proved not genuine with reference to Giani Gian Singh and Bansavalinama (Kartritav, p 30, 40 & 41). Scholars, who are in habit of opting for selected internal evidences, quote for supporting the similarities especially relating to style and language of different writings, included in DG. These quotes are at the most a part of the literature of that time and not in any way becomes helpful. It is actually a style for willfully misleading. For instance think about the scholars who are going to the extent of seeing same spark of enlightenment in Bachittar Natak (BN here after) and Triya Charitar (TC here after). While supporting this they do not quote from TC at all. Some confusion is being created also with reference to Bhai Desa Singh's quotation that 'Bani from both the Granths should be selected to memorize.' The context is that Japuji and Jaapu Sahib are included for recitation (pathh) in the early morning along with Rahraas and Sohila are slated for the evening :

ਪ੍ਰਾਤਹ ਉਠ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰਿ, ਪੜਹਿ ਜਾਪੁ ਜਪੁ ਦੇਇ। ਸੋਦਰ ਕੀ ਚੌਂਕੀ ਕਰੇ, ਆਲਸ ਕਰੇ ਨ ਕੋਇ। 37

ਪਹਰਿ ਰਾਤ ਬੀਤ ਹੈ ਜਬਹੀ। ਸੋਹਲਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰੇ ਤਬਹੀ।

ਦੁਹੂੰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮੈਂ ਬਾਨੀ ਜੋਈ। ਚੁਨ ਚੁਨ ਕੰਠ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਤ ਸੋਈ। 38

The operative part of this quotation is the selection of the Bani for committing to memory from both the Granths. It does not support DG as a Granth like SGGS. Only selection from DG can be considered at the most. This Bani is that which was very much in vogue with Sikhs. Word Granth should neither be a problem nor help for the issue of authenticity, because certain writings are included in DG which were known as Granths like "Gyan Parbodh Granth", "Shashtar Naammaala Granth" and "Pakhyano Charitar Granth". Variations in the available copies of DG indicate towards the unauthenticated text. For example the copy known by the name of Bhai Mani Singh ends at Hakayats (ਤਿਸਕਾ ਭੋਗ ਹਕਾਇਤ ਪਰ ਹੈ) and the copy known by the name of Baba Deep Singh ends at Kabits (ਭੋਗ ਸਫੁੱਟਕ ਕਬਿਤਨ ਪਰ ਹੈ, ਇਹੈ ਪਾਛਾਨ ਸਿਆਨੈ ਰਰ ਹੈ). Efforts for one text have been there but problem is still to be solved. In this direction the latest effort as indicated above also, was done by Punjabi University Patiala and the same is published without TC and Hakayats.

In the defense of the given text of the DG, most referred argument is based on 'Sodhak Committee' (1897). Report assumed on two bases. One, certain Banis was written at

Anandpur Sahib. Two, The use of certain Banis for sacred purposes by the community proves the sacredness of DG. The analytical analyses of the report by Dr. Jaggi concludes that authentication of DG was not included in purpose of Sodhak Committee and their primary concern was correcting the ‘pathh’ of DG after consulting the various manuscripts with different ‘pathhs’ (ਪਾਠ). Most of the members of the committee were neither from the main stream nor established Panthic-scholars. Even the funding for this project was for a limited purpose. No methodology was adopted for doing the allotted job ( Katritav, pp. 35-37). Clearly Sodhak Committee report serves the purpose of priestly class. Conclusion of all these arguments is that Bani stands for spiritual experience and other writings, other than Bani, included in DG are narratives only and were written for the needs of the time. Padam is supporter of this line and gives the quotations in defense but often out of context<sup>3\*</sup>. Certain neo-scholars are stretching such arguments to the extent that Kharag Singh of Krishnavtar is proto-type of five beloved ones (Panj Pyare). Baseless statements are being forwarded putting SGGS and DG, same in spirit (ਇਕ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ) but not same in status (ਇਕ ਸਮਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ). DG for them is exclusive text which takes care of Khalsa concerns only, while SGGS for them is inclusive in nature and takes care of the spiritual concerns of humanity. Perhaps they do not know that putting such irrelevant arguments for vested interest will create a space for putting the Granths (SGGS and DG) against each other. There is a lobby armed with arguments from the non-Sikh writers of Sikhism, who believe that Sikhs are the Kesadhari Hindus. The space is being provided by such interested parties for conflict between Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Such divisive efforts within Sikhism, by anybody, who is limiting both SGGS and DG into pure spiritualism versus workable theology, can not claim himself a scholar of Sikhism. Blind love for DG for any reason, can not be justified, even by putting it in harmony with SGGS through the example of, mutually related commonness either between Golden Temple and Akal Takhat Sahib, or Miri and Piri and Sant and Sipahi. This is clearly using the right for the wrong and that too unnecessarily.

Even in the above mentioned context, there is no need of quoting ‘bhakha kari bnaye’ lines of BN that ‘Dasam-narrative in spoken language is only for religious battle’, proves DG a

exclusive Granth 4\*. In Sikh literature clear evidences are available that ‘Dasam katha Bhagaut ki’ is translation of the discourse in tenth chapter of Bhagvat Puran and has nothing to do with Dasam-narrative. It is also established fact that all the Chaubisavtar are the faithful narratives from Shivpuran (Brah), Bhagvatpuran (Narsinh), Padampuran (Ram), Brahmavtar (Brahm, Baibarat, Bhavishyai, Markanday), Harivanshpuran (Dhanvantri) and for simple reason could not be from pen of Guru Gobind Singh5\*. In the very beginning of ‘Avtars’ is said that God takes birth (ਅਵਤਾਰ) for unburdening the miseries of the earth.

ਜਬ ਜਬ ਹੋਤਿ ਅਰਿਸਟਿ ਅਪਾਰਾ। ਤਬ ਤਬ ਦੇਹ ਧਰਤ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ।

ਕਾਲ ਸਬਨ ਕੋ ਪੇਖਿ ਤਮਾਸਾ। ਅੰਤਹ ਕਾਲ ਕਰਤ ਹੈ ਨਾਸਾ। 2, ਚੌਬੀਸ ਅਵਤਾਰ

The spirit of the above quotation is clearly in the continuity of the spirit expressed in Bhagvad-Gita and goes against the spirit of Guru Nanak through Guru Gobind Singh, which was started afresh transcending the limitations of either continuity or amalgamation. Along with the theoretical traps like this, theological pitfalls are also there in the text of DG. For instance how can Guru be apologetic like an ordinary poet by saying that does not laugh at my mistakes (ਨਿਰਖਿ ਭੀਲਿ ਕਬਿ ਕਰੋ ਨ ਹਾਸੀ/28). So not only many references but most of the text are not easy to swallow where spirit of Sikhism is clearly either contradicted or marginalized. How can Guru be of the opinion that women are not serving the husbands, in case they are in agitated mood or lacking the urge for sex. In such situation husbands are not the need of wives? Can Guru say that sex is the only relationship between husband and wife? ਨਾਰਿ ਨ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੈ ਨਿਜ ਨਾਥੰ। ਲੀਨੋ ਹੀ ਰੋਸ ਫਿਰੈ ਜੀਅ ਸਾਥੰ॥

ਕਾਮਿਨਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਕਹੂੰ ਨ ਸੰਤਾਵੈ। ਕਾਮ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕੋਊ ਕਾਮ ਨ ਭਾਵੈ। 4, ਚੌਬੀਸ ਅਵਤਾਰ

Such literature has been part of Hindu literature and scholars of the area are questioning it continuously.. Recently Renuka Narayanan, a regular contributor of Hindustan Times (Faithscape, dated May 18, 2008) observed with reference to Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, 4:5.6, that Rishi Yajanvalkya, lawgiver and author of the Shukla Yajur Veda, taught his wife Maitreyi that “a wife does not love his husband for his sake but for the sake of the self”. The above quotation is easy to understand in the light of this observation. But in no way Sikhism stands for such exclusive and profane incentive of ones desire for happiness (manmukh).

Sikhism fought against caste system which was eliminated in Sikhism through the 'Naash model' (dharma naash, karam naash, bharam naash e.t.c) at the time of Amrit-ceremony in spirit of Khalsa-doctrinal-freshness. Where was the need of the Guru to stand for defending 'Avtars' as role model? The context of the quotation in reference is clearly of upholding the Vedic-spirit of cast by birth where kashatris were serving Brahman and Vaishyas were worshiping Kashatrias. But Shudras were serving all (Chaubis Avtar, 838-839). These references are being given here for making out that sudden need of such literature is beyond imagination in the context of the development of Sikhism. Defenders of DG are shutting their eyes and ears towards the fact that where little bit possibility of confusion or misunderstanding was felt, clarifier comment is given by the Guru in SGGS (see slokas of Baba Farid). Major part of DG is written by some of the poets and very small part can be accepted as Bani of the Guru Gobind Singh. My considered opinion is that absolute rejection and absolute acceptance of DG with conflicting concerns should not be pursued.

It looks that most of the writers opting for DG as Guru-creation are unable to build up the rebuttal of the interpolations creped into the text.. Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi is perhaps the first who did the needed job and rebutted all the interpolated arguments used by the defenders of DG one by one along with taking care of internal evidences also<sup>6\*</sup>. P.S... Padam took seven points for defending the DG but DR. Jaggi rebutted eleven points of the defenders. .After duly rebutting all the arguments of different scholars with support from Sikh literature concluded that DG is not one Granth. In the present form DG is haphazard collection of heterogeneous material of different granths. All this shows helplessness of the scholarship with extreme positions for resolving the DG-controversy. The reality of DG is now shrouded in the darkness of doubts and emerges as Herculean task. The only remedy for this lies in editing the given text by the collective wisdom of the Sikh-custodians in the light of Granth and Panth. There are scholars among the custodians, who use selective references for defensive mechanism in a style of telling only. This is supposed to result in demanding space for listening only. It will be relevant to give reference of Sirdar Kapur Singh's much respected book "Parasharaprasna: The Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh", reproduced bu Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar. In it the Khalsa-theology in particular and Sikh-ideology in

general is detailed. Most of the quotations are from DG. Even selective lines from ‘pakhyans’, for defending the use of sword in need (p. 107). All the references from DG in this book are those only, which are already approved for ‘Katha’ and ‘Kirtan’. It seems to me that most of the problem regarding DG-controversy is rooted in the hysterical bouts of uncertainties about DG. In our emotional approach with mental gymnastic of all kinds, the grace and strength of our literature is in troubled waters. We are forced to face the politics of textual analyses without caring for the contemporary compulsions of the source writers. The greed of keeping Sikhism in continuity of Hinduism is the major reason behind the DG relating problems. Sikhism withstood the onslaught because hijacking of the text can never be the hijacking of the truth. It can be better understood keeping in view the episode of ‘Kartarpuri Bir’, which Makhan Shah Lubana snatched from ‘dhirmalias’. The same was returned after Guru Tegh Bahadur ordered to do so. Ninth Nanak shared with his followers that if the custody of the Bir makes one Guru, then let them have it. So the text of the DG remains hijacked by the different people, on different times and for different reasons. For instance recently one scholar observed that denial of DG as Guru-writing is step towards denial of SGGS. He deserves pardon only in Christian sense, if he does not know what he is saying? Scholars who are finding arguments for argument sake will have to reach the extreme like rejecting or selecting the available text of DG absolutely. A middle path is possible and its treading is possible only by joining and meeting together in the spirit Guru expects from the Sikhs. Guru is expected to save his Sikhs from the critical tricks and helps to resolve the riddles with peace and poise:

ਬਿਖੜੇ ਦਾਉ ਲੰਘਾਵੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਹਜ ਸੇਤੀ ਘਰਿ ਜਾਤੇ ॥ਮ.5, 1185

The sad and challenging aspect of the issue in hand is that communitarian consensus for the text of DG is still to be reached. But the efforts for reaching the consensus are available in Sikh literature is there as the part of record. Bhai Mani Singh was posted in Amritsar in 1721 AD. During his stay at Amritsar according to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, he collected with great efforts the Bani of Tenth Master and the translations of Sanskrit granths for including all in one volume. The clear reference of translations from Hindu literature

indicates the spirit behind the certain writings included in DG. This effort was taken up for open debate at Damdama Sahib (known as ‘Guru Ki Kanshi’ also) and the vocal opinion among the gathering at that time, was for dividing the text in two volumes, wherein Bani of Guru and the historical narratives should be included in two different volumes. But it was almost resolved that the ‘Triya charitars and 11 Hakayats’ should not be included in any volume. Nabha further observes that Bhai Sukha Singh of Patna with the blessing of ignorant and careless writers (perhaps copiers) prepared many recensions (Birs) which resulted in all sorts of distortions or interpolations.<sup>7\*</sup>

In spite of all this we can not run away from the textual reality of DG. It is such a narrative literature, which tells us about the socio-cultural memory in its contemporary context and its investigation can help us to travel in the past. But its present text is needed to be evaluated in the light of ‘Granth and Panth’ for reaching at the much needed authenticity of DG. Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi is the first who did analytical study for determining the authenticity of DG, but more incessant academic studies by the scholars are still needed. Until authentic text, duly contested in the spirit of Bani and collectively accepted by Panth is reached, the investigation for authentication of DG should go on. The perception in reference will be shaped by cognitive structure but opinions some time travel beyond it. Thus space is created for the factors which can influence the truth even. For instance Professor Gurbachan Singh Talib thinks that the writings included in DG are ‘invoking India’s heroic traditions’ and in support of it observes “Guru Gobind Singh came to a heritage calling for heroism and vision to infuse the spirit of idealism and patriotism among a people, whom centuries of alien rule had turned supine, and whose only reaction to their situation was a sullen attitude of aloofness”<sup>8\*</sup>. The scholar like Talib should have opined, keeping in view the holistic context of Sikhism. The distinction being mentioned here with reference to DG, can only be understood with reference to the continuity of Guru Nanak only. Without this comment he (Talib) inadvertently turns his back towards the contribution of nine Gurus 1469-1665). Out of context quotations will have to form the warp and woof of confusion, where solutions become distant.

The legacy of Sikh literature is challenged by modernity and scholars in the area of Sikh studies are drifting away from the original sources. Even the oft quoted sources are tried to be supported by the western sources for so many reasons. Talib with reference to “fascist idea, that history is a shadow of the personality of a few extraordinary individuals” under the influence of western thinkers, reaches the self evident truth that “In Guru Gobind Singh’s words the mute, unnamed, countless millions, humble workers, appear to rise to claim exaltation from his generous heart, cherishing the humble.”<sup>9\*</sup> While talking about three versions of Chandi-Legend, Talib clearly opines with reference to Macauliffe that “these versions are apparently by two different poets. Moreover, in each of these there are long passages in tone of adoration of the goddess as coming from one who subscribed to the creed of Durga-worship. This itself would throw strong doubt on Guru’s authorship of these versions, should any one seriously think of advancing such a claim”.<sup>10\*</sup> Such analysis does help to decide the authenticity of DG. In the whole text of DG, only selected references with very low percentage are available in most of the compositions, which can be from the pen of Guru Gobind Singh. In order to come out of this tendentious trap, thinking on the line is needed that “the voluntarist and the creative aspects of Guru Gobind Singh’s genius are evident in some of his poetic compositions that are scattered passim in the Dasam Granth”<sup>11\*</sup>. So editing of DG by the custodians is needed to determine that only parts of DG, which are in continuity of Nanak, can be accepted as authentic. This I am saying on the basis of the seal (DeGo Tego) used by Khalsa sovereigns that ‘the gifts of Bounty and Might and Victory and Glory unending poured in from Guru Nanak’s benediction on Gobind Singh’.<sup>12\*</sup> The author of ‘Gur-Bilas Patshahi 10’ also mentions that the protection of Akal Purakh is assured, ‘while one cherishes Guru’s words and maintains prosperity-for-all and wielding the sword’.<sup>13\*</sup>

A sort of cold war on the issue of DG is going on among the community and the possibilities of consensus look bleak. Even the institution like Akal Takht Sahib where Sikhs are supposed to assemble for reaching an agreement about the absurd digressions about the issues raised in DG, nothing is as conducive as it seems, allowing the community to be at war with each other. Here I will like to share with you the news report published in Punjabi

News Paper (ChardiKala) dated 12 November 2006 under the caption ‘Sabad-murati Sri Dasam Granth Babat Aduti Vichaar Goshaty’. In this seminar held at Ludhiana, Singh Sahib Gyani Gurbachan Singh Head Granthi Sri Darbar Sahib and now Jathedar Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar observed that ‘the creator of SGGS and DG is in the same spirit (rachanhar joti iko hai). Problem is with writing (rachna) and not with Writer (rachnahar). The trap starts when somebody in position says that same streak of thought-process flashes in both the Granths and this is the sacred methodology (jugati) for reaching Almighty. The participants of this seminar denied any controversy concerning DG and one of them went to the extent that through ‘Triya charitar’, Guru taught to live as ‘maryada parshotam’. Jathedar Takht Damdama Sahib also participated. Discussing DG as text does not disturb much but dealing it as authentic text of Guru is emotionally disturbing, which aims at closing the resolving possibilities. Punjabi University Patiala through the department of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Studies as mentioned above also, tried to take a step towards adopting acceptable text by eliminating total Triya Charitar and Hakayats from the published text. The text was prepared by long time research scholar with SGPC, Randhir Singh. The members of the text authentication committee for finalizing the text were Dr. Taran Singh, Professor Gulwant Singh, Dr. Prem Parkash Singh and Dr. Jit Singh Sital. This institutional academic-effort to my mind can be adjudged as the preservation of heritage by the scholars for the readers and researchers. I was associated with the project as a senior member of the department. The guiding spirit with the committee was that the latent in Nanak became patent in Guru Gobind Singh. So any part of DG showing Tenth Guru in continuity of Hinduism can not be considered Guru’s writing directly or indirectly. The reason behind this is the long standing quality of Hinduism, which is often revoked by the Gurus and the Sikhs and in due course created Khalsa-flame still alights through out the world. The flame can be extinguished if Sikhism continues to relapse. Keeping in view this background the place of DG in Sikh literature is being reviewed.

Let us start from the latest western contributor W.H.Mcleod, who now becomes part of Sikh literature. Though he claims to form his opinion on the basis of Sikh literature, but it is not easy to swallow. He opines that ‘for some Sikhs the Dasam Granth may perhaps rank

equally with the Adi Granth, but they would be very few in number....During the eighteenth century the DG was treated, together with Adi Granth, as the incarnate Guru but over the last century doubts have surrounded it and apart from brief outbursts the question has been largely shelved' 14\*. It seems that it is not of permanent interest to him that compiling DG with Adi Granth by Bhai Mani Singh was never accepted as such by the Sikhs of any hue. Even at Damdama Sahib only DG was discussed without clubbing it with SGGS. Even revered displaying (Parkash) at two Takhts (Hazur Sahib and Patna Sahib) can not be taken as 'rank equally'. Perhaps for this reason Mcleod says that 'the scripture known as the DG occupies an uncertain position' 15\*. He says further that 'on the whole the contents of the DG are simply not known, neither to Sikhs and nor of course to others'. He is admitting this truth to emphasize the contents of his theses and says 'certainly depending on 'as tradition relates' and Singh Sabha assertions, khalsa Sikhs & Sikh of khalsa, Tat Khalsa leaders were men who had been educated in schools provided by the British and who had been molded by the Victorian notions of truth and respectability...the sidelining of DG had begun. His (Kahn Singh) only critical reference occurs at the very end where he notes the introduction of Hindu material in the later recension produced by Bhai Sukha Singh of Patna 16\*. Mcleod is of the opinion that elite among the Sikhs never took the available DG as Guru's creation. According to him " Teja Singh Bhasaur, had publicly both denounced and renounced the volume early in the twentieth century, declaring it to be the product of some misguided poets who had been members of Guru Gobind Singh's entourage" 17\*. But he is not in favor of the extreme positions of either rejecting or accepting like certain Sikh writers and sticks to the position that 'the remainder (beyond authentic Banis), however, was fit only for an ignominious casting out, having been drawn from explicitly Hindu sources (non-canonical)' 18\*. He quotes Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi and reiterates the position emerged at Damdama Sahib and says, 'others maintain that the contents of the DG should be divided in two parts, namely the works attributed to Guru Gobind Singh and all others' 19\*. After reading all this no body can think that Mcleod believes in keeping the controversy alive over DG. At the cost of his position, reflected in as quoted here, he concludes "Not that I am not denying that Guru Gobind Singh may have composed these works. I am not saying that these

compositions could not have been his work. This probability certainly exists. One can not overlook a claim simply because it is based on tradition, particularly when the tradition is such a strong one and when there is no apparent evidence that it is mistaken. The Chaupa Singh Rahit-nama provides some evidence from the mid-eighteenth century favoring the acceptance of both the Jap and Akal Ustat as authentic works by Guru Gobind Singh. It also cites several extracts from Bachitar Natak, claiming that they were by Guru Gobind Singh”20\*. The confusion Mcleod wants to create with reference to Chaupa Singh (died 1723 AD), was chhibar Brahmin whose authorship is also doubtful. An internal evidence of the said Rahatnama proves that Bhai Gurbakhash Singh father of Bhai Kesar Singh authored it 21\*. I read the text and unable to find any support for DG as such. The only reference about two Granths (ਦੁਹੁੰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮੈ ਬਾਨੀ ਜੋਈ।ਚੁਨ ਚੁਨ ਕੰਠ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਤ ਸੋਈ।) has been explained above that it refers to the authenticated Banis of DG. Contrary to this copying Adi Granth for presenting free to Sikhs (prem bheta) and pondering over the Sabd is clearly instructed. Perhaps for this reason better sense prevailed and he covers the truth under the canopy of ‘Sri Mukh Vak’ and opines “By all means dismiss the remainder of DG, with its Hindu myths and hints of salacity, but let us gladly retain the works which are labeled Sri mukh vak patshahi 10 (SMV here after) as those of Guru Gobind Singh”22\*. But Dr. Jaggi has given detailed analyses with reference to Dr. Dharampal Ashta and Bhai Randhir Singh, which Mcleod deliberately avoided to take notice. Jaggi doubted the authenticity of SMV and proved that its authenticity does not stand any scientific scrutiny23\*. Without any valid base Mcleod is trying to put the educated Sikhs against the devout class of the community for argument sake with his observation that the problem at least is with those who have been brought up with a western sense of reality and quoted ‘hem kunt parbat/apni katha’. The conclusion Mcleod reaches at becomes clear when he quotes that “questioning authorship, Surjit Hans’s basis his view that it must have been written by one of the Guru’s close followers rather than by the Guru himself on the message of the poem as a whole. It is he writes, a ‘mythological account’ of the Guru, and for him BN stands for it in the beginning of the Gur-Bilas style24\*. A common couplet in BN (99<sup>th</sup> of first chapter) and TC (12<sup>th</sup> of

charitar 266) for defenders, are the words from the same pen. They assert that these two couplets does not contradict the Sikh spirit. The assertion of these couplets is that worst sins blush before the sins committed in the name of religion and God does not reside in dormant stones.<sup>25\*</sup> Certain supporters of DG used it to prove that both ( BN and TC) are written by Guru Gobind Singh. But contrary to it, this similarity shows that this was deliberate effort of some writer, for providing authentic touch to his writing.

Story in TC 266 is little bit differently narrated. A princess with her four brothers is studying with Brahmin teacher. Princess goes on contesting for converting her teacher from idol-worship to Mahakal- worshipper. Arguments she used are no doubt look in Sikh spirit but not in Sikh idiom. Her arguments against pandit's arguments successfully brushed with Hinduism. To be victorious, she arms herself with the same trick, in style of TC, which for any writer can be more powerful than the truth itself. The result of the episode is that she defeats Brahmin with her threatening tricks more like a woman and less like an empowered student. She forces her teacher by saying that if you are not conceding my dictates, then I will complain to my King father that you have outraged my modesty. Frightened teacher surrenders to her dictates. First he was intoxicated and then he was forced to throw his idols out. Like this she forced him to be a servant of Mahakal 26\*. I am unable to understand that what kind of Sikhi is being preached through this semi profane episode of TC? Such scattered references nearing Sikh spirit helps to create conflict only. For example the hero of the fully profane episode 272, Bir Karan, is described with the qualities of Deg Teg. This oft-quoted word was in the air in those times and it could be used by any poet there. If few such references happen to be there in the text running into hundreds of pages, then it is easy to imagine that how the text of DG was coming up?

The very presence of 52 poets at Anandpur Sahib for many years is enough evidence for the ongoing atmosphere there with creative possibilities for the sort of literature included in DG. Evidences in Sikh literature are available that whatever written there, was named Vidya Sagar Granth (VSG here after). Evidence is also available that writings of the poets in the guidance of Tenth Guru were so huge a volume that the VSG weighed nine mounds. Unfortunately every thing in that big volume was lost at the time of leaving Anandpur Sahib

27\*. It is clear that the pattern of VSG was to include everything written by the writers present there at Anandpur Sahib. Total loss of VSG proves that whatever was collected by Bhai Mani Singh from individuals, related to the lost VCG. Unless the story of loose sheets collected by Bhai Mani Singh is not resolved, the text of DG will remain doubtful. Kesar Singh Chhibber in his Bansavalinama clearly observes that the loose sheets with Guru's own hand writing were used for writing more Bani on these:

ਖਾਸ ਦਸਖਤੀ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਥਿ ਆਏ।

ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਰੋਬਰ ਨਾਲਿ ਸਭ ਬਾਣੀ ਹੋਰ ਲਈ ਲਿਖਾਇ।

This earliest evidence is also based on the memory and hearing of the author (ਸੁਨੀ ਸੁਨਾਈ ਬੋਲਕੇ ਜੋਇ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਯਾਦ). Evidence is also available that the name DG of the collection of different granths is not very old. It is why the name of the Granth now in question was 'Bachittar Natak Granth' 28\* in the beginning. This name was given on the authority of Guru Gobind Singh that Granth is SGGS only and this (BN) is our play (asadi khed). Another evidence for this is that all the writings included in DG were already named as independent granths, such as Gyan Parbodh Granth, Shashtar Nammala Granth, Pakhyano Charitar Granth at al. In the DG under discussion the number of writings is different in different manuscripts. Gyani Gyan Singh refers to two different recensions, one ends at Hakayat and the other at Kabittan. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha recorded in Mahankosh (616) that what Bhai Mani Singh collected with great effort and edited as Bachitar Natak Granth is of two types, one is Bani of Tenth Master and the other is translations of Sanskrit Granths. Sikhs from the very beginning were divided over the authenticity of DG. First communitarian discussion was held at Damdama Sahib (now the 5<sup>th</sup> Takht of Khalsa in Bhatinda district), known as 'Guru Ki Kanshi' also. Consensus was about to reach that the Granth be divided into two by separating Guru's Bani along with historical narratives from the rest. There was almost unanimity for not including in any one, Triya Charitar and eleven Hakayats. During discussion Bhai Matab Singh on his way from Bikaner to Amritsar reached there. Keeping in view his mission of teaching Masa Rangarh a lesson for desecrating Harimandir Sahib, the situation turned emotional. Decision was attached with

his success or sacrifice of Sukha Singh Mahtab Singh. Nabha is of the view also that with the blessings of ignorant writers and cunning copiers many birs were prepared which carried all sorts of distortions.<sup>29\*</sup> Gyani Gyan Singh points out to such distortions with reference to Bhai Charhat Singh s/o Bhai Sukha Singh of Patna that they imitated the hand writing of Guru Gobind Singh and made additions in the name of the Guru. This he did for charging more from the faithful customers:

ਸੁਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ ਔਰ। ਰਚੀ ਬੀੜ ਪਟਨੇ ਮੈਂ ਗੌਰ। .....

ਪੁਨਾ ਚੜਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂ ਕੇ ਪੂਤ। ਅਖਰ ਦਸਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਸੂਤ।

ਕਰਕੇ ਪਾਂਚ ਪਤਰੇ ਔਰ। ਗੁਰ ਤਰਫੋਂ ਲਿਖ ਪਾਏ ਗੌਰ।

ਔਰੈਂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਈ ਉਨ ਲਿਖੇ। ਅਖਰ ਗੁਰ ਸਮ ਹੈ ਹਮ ਪਿਖੇ।

ਦਸਖਤ ਦਸਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਕਹਿਕੇ। ਕੀਮਤ ਲਈ ਚੌਗਨੀ ਚਹਿਕੈ।

It is established truth that no Granth was prepared by Guru Gobind Singh himself. Rather he positively opined that there is no need of a separate Granth. Role model for preparing Granth is SGGS and with this is established that Guru-status for all times to come, was given by Guru Gobind Singh himself to SGGS in 1708 at Naded. Who does not know that one reason behind the editing of SGGS by fifth Nanak himself was getting rid for ever from the confusion-creating interpolations by the copiers for any reasons. Copier is expected to be scholar of the area of work. If business is preferred to the sacred task then the outcome is like DG. It is like making temporal comments upon the eternal issues. Language-age aims at corrections of the words and sticks to it even at the cost of revealed excellence (Bani). For example in 'Var Majh' the word 'sangeet' is there as 'sigeet' and 'sageet' also. Doubting the variety without caring for the context creates Mcleodian scholarship. DG provides a lot of space for emotional champions and critical scholars.

The unauthentic text of DG gives space for the availability of so many hand-written and published Birs. But often quoted or referred Birs for forming opinions among the researchers are five, in the name of Bhai Mani Singh wali Bir, Moti baag Gurdwara Patiala wali Bir, Sangrur diwankhana wali Bir and Takht Patna Sahib wali Bir. All these Birs were named BN in the beginning. The name Dasam Granth was given much later in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. And

in most of the Birs indications are available in the index of the Birs, from which it is not difficult to conclude that efforts were for giving authentic impression without caring for the inherent faults\*25. The very indexes of the Birs tell the truth that the copiers often played with the texts for serving their own interests\*26. It is why the published DG is still to be standardized like the role model SGGS. For determining the place of DG in Sikh literature, it can be divided into three categories:

1. Historical sources like Bhai Santokh Singh and Sarup Das Bhalla.
2. Academic sources like Ph.D theses and the books.
3. Traditional sources like Bhasauriye, Singhsabhiye.

According to Sarup Das Bhalla DG was written in 1776 CE (1833 B.) and termed it “Bed Bidya Parkash”. For its preparation in the speaking language (Bhakha), the experts who had already reached Anandpur Sahib for their social safety threatened by the rulers of the time in their respective areas, asked to do the job. It was instructed that invited expert should bring his book (Puran) with him. Sikhs were deputed for search of such persons. All invited scholars were given the honor due without any discrimination. Punjabi-knowing persons were associated with them. Among them were Nanua Bairagi, Syam poet, Nischal Faqir and Brahm Bhatt and he admits that most names I do not know. But the experts of four Vedas, 18 Puranas and Six Shashtras were there. Chaubis Avtars and 400 TC were created and presented to Guru. Writers went back with lot of wealth.31\*. Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi dealt this reference in detail and comes to the conclusion that experts of Indian classical tradition were invited. They were provided Punjabi knowing assistance. Syam poet was one of them as mentioned above. They created Chaubis Avtar and 404 TC and Guru heard these happily. All this was included in VSG. Guru admitted that this will be interesting reading for the elite (ਸੁਰਮ ਸੁਰਮਾਨਾ). These writings are of poets and Guru approved it. He further opines that the writings of the poets in due course were associated with the name of the Guru. This reference becomes important for two reasons. One that the situation explained here is relevant to the time of happening and secondly that the name Syam is not used for Guru Gobind Singh 32\*. Bhai Santokh Singh for Dr. Jaggi does not contribute much towards the

authenticity of DG. In his voluminous work references about 52 poet and VSG are there. He concludes that there is no reference as DG in Suraj Parkash. He is also of the opinion that the historians like Wilson, Cunningham, Macauliffe and Indu Bhushan Bannerji do not mention DG as the writing of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>33\*</sup> These historians refer only those Banis which were accepted in the spirit of Granth and Panth. But the controversy is between two approaches. One approach is of those, who believe that Sikhism is in continuity of Hinduism. The others are those who believe that Sikhism is an independent religion. All the PhD theses relating to DG are based on the evaluation of the given text and have nothing to do with the authenticity of the text or the authorship of DG. Dr. Jaggi single handedly deals with the authenticity and comes out with analyses and the research work done at university level. In the long list of university scholars Dr. Dharampal Ashta (1958), Dr. Harbhajan Singh (1959) and Dr. Parsinny Sehgal (1961) completed their research degrees from different universities on the published versions of DG. But this list goes on with Dr. Maheep Singh, Dr. Malik Singh (Agra University), Dr. Dharampal Maini (Bhagalpur University), Dr. Shameer Singh (GND Amritsar), Kamla Kaushal (Agra University), Susheela Devi, Nirmal Gupta and Bhushan Sachdev ( Punjab University Chandigarh) and Mohanjeet Singh (Usmania University). Authenticity of DG was not an issue with all these scholars and on the basis of selective Banis, the DG as such was considered from the pen of Guru Gobind Singh. This shows in general its religious and literary importance as a given text. Only Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi dealt the given text of DG critically and established that in this given text the Bani of Guru Gobind Singh is also included. For analyses of these academic efforts, independent project is needed.

I want to conclude with this that what was latent in Guru Nanak became patent in Guru Gobind Singh (Bannerji). He created Khalsa in his own spirit and proclaimed through it, his humble and fearless mission:

I am servant to the Supreme-Being. And have come into the world to witness its play.

I speak the Word as I have heard it from the Lord;

And suppress not Divine Truth for fear of mortal man.<sup>34\*</sup>

The realization of this Khalsa commitment lies in upholding the Khalsa values at any cost:

For this I have come into the world, The Lord God sent me for the protection of righteousness

That I spread the Truth everywhere, and defeat and destroy the wicked and evil doers

For this mission I have taken birth, let all holy men know this in their minds

To spread the Truth, to uphold the holy men, And to extirpate the wicked root and branch.<sup>35\*</sup>

All this is possible if the humans are emancipated from the senseless practices in the name of religion. This is the primary duty of the Khalsa:

I have exalted to thee to be my own son. To propagate the true faith

Go thou into the world, And turn mankind away from senseless practices.<sup>36\*</sup>

In order to live in the spirit of whole-life religion, one will have to understand that divinity by birth is not a part of Sikhism. Khalsa is Guru and Sikh in one and fallibility can never be Divine incarnation. So the follower of the Sabad-Guru should not confuse the reality with fallibility:

Any who name me Supreme-Being, shall all fall into the pit of hell

Know me to be His servant, understand this to be without a doubt true.<sup>37\*</sup>

If this is kept in mind as touch-stone for identifying the Bani of Guru Gobind Singh from DG, then it will not be difficult to understand that whatever is difficult to swallow as Bani, for which touch stone is Sri Guru Granth Sahib, should not be considered from the pen of Guru Gobind Singh. Anything acceptable in the spirit of Granth and Panth from DG should not be resented for rejecting sake. Dreaming and believing sometime becomes proactive and more important than the reactive acting and planning. The lacking of digestive immunity and appreciation for difference of opinion is a problem with contesting extremes on the subject in hand. In such situations Akal Takhat Sahib has been playing important role for striking collective resolve (traditionally Gurmata). The latest directions of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib for the community to follow in translation are as under:

## Sri Akal Takhat Sahib

Sri Akal Takat Sahib, Sri Amritsar, Panjab, India

No: A:3/08/3143 June 06, 2008 Resolved and adopted in a meeting of the five high priests at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib today (June 06, 2008) Jeth 23, Sammat 540, Nanakshahi

Resolution in the name of the Guru -Gurmata # 1

Tercentenary (300<sup>th</sup> Gurta Gaddi Diwas) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib's coronation is a golden opportunity for the entire Sikh Panth, to submit in faith to the ideal of oneness of "*Guru's Granth-Guru Panth.*" In obedience of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's last command "*Accept Granth As Guru. This is my order for the Panth.*" The Sikh Panth has always stood by it and has been consistently blessed with guidance by living Light, eternal Guru for the solution of every national crisis. The current controversy about the Dasam Granth is totally uncalled for. No one has any right to create controversy about the specific writings contained in Dasam Granth that have been recognized and accepted by the Sikh Panth for Sikh Code of Conduct, prescribed recitation in daily prayer and Sikh baptismal ( Khandey De Pahul). Be it known to the entire Sikh Panth that Sri Dasam Granth is an integral part of Sikh literature and history but, Guru Gobind Singh Ji did not recognize it equal to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Since, he bestowed Guruship only on Sri Guru Granth Sahib, therefore, no other Granth can be installed along with Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

Signed Joginder Singh Jathedar

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