

**Stop Veiled attack on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji under Cover of Research. Stop Connecting Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji with Manuscripts containing Kachi Bani ( Apocryphal Hymns) without any authentic Evidence. Stop Distortion of Sikh History. Coalition Request for seminar on “Dating of MS-1245 and the Authenticity of Draft Theory based upon MS-1245, Bahawal and Vanjara Pothi(s)”. Stop playing With Religious Sentiments of Sikh Community.**

# WORLD SIKH NEWS

*because the truth needs to be told*

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## Stopping Academic Fraud

*In response to the contentions of wide sections of the Sikh community about the work and motives of Prof Pashaura Singh, Dr. Charles Louis of University of California Riverside has dismissed the complaint of the Sikh Community of Southern California, citing 'tolerance of ideas'. But the issue is not only more than that, but rather has nothing to do with the concept of tolerance. It has to do with academic honesty and validity of data. The Sikh community has now written to Mr. Timothy P. White, Chancellor, University of California Riverside, detailing and reiterating its position and awaits a response. We reproduce here an excerpted version of the letter to the Chancellor.*

Dear Dr. White:

This letter is in reference to your reply dated January 22, 2009 regarding enquiry into Prof. Pashaura Singh's academic scholarship. Having gone through your letter, we feel that our concerns have not been taken into account in their right perspective. Instead the whole exercise appears to be an attempt to wrap up the issue, under the carpet, and no effort made to bring out the truth, in which we are interested. You have rightly pointed out that "Research misconduct means fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism... in reporting research results."

Dr. Charles Louis of UCR dismissed the complaint of the Sikh Community of Southern California, entirely on the basis of 'tolerance of ideas'. The complaint, whereas, has no conflict with the university's policy of tolerance of ideas or freedom of speech, and independence of research. Rather it specifies and demonstrates that Prof. Singh has falsified and fabricated his data which formulated the basis of his publications that

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facilitated his academic appointment. The three manuscripts namely No. 1245, Bahawal and Vanjara Pothi(s) which he used for most of his key publications have no inherent evidence being prepared by the 5th Guru before compiling the sacred book of Sikhism, "Aad Guru Granth Sahib". The pitfalls of these manuscripts are fully explained in our original Summary Complaint. Prof. Singh's research questions the sanctity and authenticity of the sacred scriptures of Sikhs and therefore, hits at the basis of Sikhism without offering any credible evidence.

The three manuscripts are in Gurmukhi script and written in a conventional way of old style scribing where letters are joined together and the words are not written separately. Therefore, they can only be read by an expert who can read Gurmukhi script and is able to decipher manuscripts before drawing any conclusions about their authenticity.

We request the university to reconsider our complaint under the light of this factual evidence.

In keeping with the norms of the academics, appointing an investigative expert for reading Gurumukhi Manuscripts would make a better sense. An investigator (such as this), we are certain, would have found Prof. Singh's research is fabricated. Similarly, there are glaring examples of falsification in manipulating research materials. Unfortunately your letter underlines that there is no evidence regarding fabrication and falsification in your response to our summary complaint submitted to you. Here we are reproducing a portion of that summary complaint in which we have quoted the references of the books and the manuscripts in question. We feel it provides enough evidence to prove that fabrication and falsification have been an integral part of Prof. Singh's work.

Entire foundation of Prof. Singh's research is based on the interpretations of hand written religious manuscripts: MS 1245, Bahawal, and Vanjara Pothis. These are written in many dialects of Punjab, though the main language is Punjabi. The style of writing of these manuscripts is quite cumbersome i.e., they are written in running style where the letters are joined to each other, making it very difficult to read and interpret. A manuscript expert is necessary to read and interpret them.

As requested in our summary complaint: Did you ask any expert to look into the manuscripts in question? If not then the evaluation is invalid, faulty and full of academic flaws. Was an expert detailed to look into the manuscripts to fully scrutinize Prof. Singh's research? We will appreciate if that was the case. If so, what were his/her qualifications and expertise in interpreting the manuscripts? What were the findings of the expert based on review of the Manuscripts and Prof. Singh's conclusions published in his work we had asked to investigate specific questions as noted in our summary complaint submitted on November 2008.

**There is enough evidence to prove that fabrication and falsification have been an integral part of a religious 'Draft Theory' on compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. UCR must get opinion on the issue by an Independent Sikh scholar well-versed in interpretation and**

**analysis of old Gurumukhi manuscripts in order to decide the issue of Fabrication and Falsification”.**

We know that it is a secret process; however, Sikhs have the right to know the qualifications of the expert without knowing his/her name.

Specific Examples of Fabrication and Falsification are as follows:

In our written request and subsequent meeting with you on Sept 26, 2008 regarding the investigation into the research work of Prof. Singh, currently a professor of Sikh Studies at the University of California Riverside, it appears he committed an act of academic fraud under the disguise of publishing original research on Sikh Scripture. We have already brought to your notice that ever since his PhD thesis, “The Text and Meaning of the Adi Granth” submitted to University of Toronto in 1991, he has been in the thick of controversy especially by his use of debatable source namely MS#1245.

When the Sikh scholars confronted him on his methodology to date the above document and his wrong premises, in June 1994 he appeared before the Akal Takht and submitted in his own hand writing that he is guilty and promised that he will rectify that wrongs done by him. After that he has published two books: The Guru Granth Sahib Canon, Meaning and Authority, OUP, New Delhi, 2000; Life and Work of Guru Arjan, OUP, 2006 and an article ‘Vanjara Pothi: A New Source in the Formation of the Sikh Canon’ Textures of the Sikh Past, ed. Tony Ballantyne, OUP, 2007.

An examination of the above works reveals that Prof. Singh is again on his old game of misstatements and misrepresentation of facts. He is not only playing fraud but also playing with the religious sentiments of the Sikh community. He simply found an easy way to manipulate his research in order to show originality of his findings. Ironically, the scholars who approved his thesis and helped him to get professorship, neither saw nor scrutinized the manuscripts (Drafts) that formulated the basis of his Ph. D. dissertation and future researches.

On behalf of the Sikhs of North America, we fervently appeal you to reconsider our request

The following points fall under the category of fabrication and falsification used by Prof. Singh:

1. Baba Budha’s Association with MS 1245:

Prof. Singh states “It is quite possible that the manuscript was placed in the custody of Bhai Budha and his descendants may have preserved it as a scriptural relic” (2000, p. 43).

No source validates it except the manuscript dealer’s note which has been taken on its face value by him. Fabrication

2. Guru Arian’s Association with MS 1245:

Prof. Singh asserts, “When the emperor[Akbar] met Guru [Arjan] towards the end of



1598, he had seen same collection of Sikh writings.....Perhaps it was the GNDU manuscript [1245] which was under preparation at that time” (2000, p.45).

It is only a conjecture. There is no internal and external evidence that Guru Arjan has prepared MS 1245. Fabrication and falsification

### 3. Scribe of the MS 1245:

Earlier in his thesis he has concluded that Bhai Gurdas is the scribe of this manuscript. Now he shuns reiterating it but claims, “Finally, a careful examination of the manuscript [1245] reveals that the entire writing work has been done by one hand only” (2000, p.43). It is a gross misrepresentation of facts as one can see hand writing of different scribes in the manuscript under discussion. Fabrication

### 4. Guru Arjan and Bhagat-bani:

On the basis of MS 1245 Prof. Singh concludes that “Presumably he [Guru Arjan] was collecting the hymns of the Bhagats separately in another volume to include them later in the final recension.” (2000, p. 50). Where is this volume? He has no answer. Perhaps he will present it sometimes later on. Fabrication



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### 5. The issue of Kachi-bani:

It is a fact that the Mina Gurus were circulating their writings in the name of Sikh Gurus. In MS 1245 there are more than 48 apocryphal writings of which 20 are entered in the name of Guru Arjan. Pashaura Singh hides this fact in his thesis presented to University of Toronto (p.9.f.n.32). Falsification

The apocryphal writings attributed to Guru Arjan have not found any place in the Adi Granth. It proves that MS 1245 has originated after 1604 and belongs to a different tradition of Gurbani.

### 6. Involvement of Maharaja Ranjit Singh:

Prof. Singh says “It is quite possible that Maharaja Ranjit Singh appointed a council of prominent Sikh scholars to prepare an authorized version of the Adi Granth” (2000, p.227).

It is only a figment of imagination. There is no official chronicle of Ranjit Singh or of his times to certify the above statement. Falsification

### 7. Theory of ‘Working Drafts’:

For textual studies on any Scripture one requires the sources that have their origin in the pre-canonical stage. Their antiquity, authority and authenticity have to be established on the basis of academic norms. Besides one is required to identify the

tradition from which these sources have descended. Every manuscript has a purpose therefore a scholar has to find out the purpose and use made of these manuscripts. In his thesis Pashaura Singh has projected MS1245 as an early draft of the Adi Granth. Now in order to prove his pre- conceived formulations he flaunts the theory of 'Working Drafts' and asserts, "In addition to MS 1245, Bahoval, and the Vanjara Pothi(s) must be regarded as one of the 'Working Drafts' prepared by different scribes under the direct supervision of Guru Arjan"( 2006,p.142; 2007, p.29).He places them in pre Adi Granth period i.e. before 1604 and claims, "All these Pothis were kept in the Guru's archives at Amritsar" (2006,p.161; 2007, p. 55).

Firstly, his 'Working Drafts' theory of the Adi Granth finds no validity in the Sikh history. No internal and external evidence support that these manuscripts have been prepared under the direct supervision of Guru Arjan. The Bahoval and Vanjara Pothi(s) carry no colophon mentioning about the scribe, date and place of their scribing. Therefore Pashaura Singh's claim that they have been prepared under the direct supervision of Guru Arjan is highly illogical and untenable.

Similarly, MS#1245 which he calls an 'early draft of the Adi Granth' and places it in 1599, carries a colophon on folio1255 in which death date of Guru Arjan i.e. Jeth Sudi 4, 1663 BK. (1606 CE) has been recorded. However, Pashaura Singh in order to prove the earlier origin of the manuscript states that, "This was perhaps inserted later in the blank folios" (2006, p. 51).



This is not an honest deduction as the relevant entry has been made by the primary scribe with the same pen and bears the same shade of ink. In fact the manuscript continued to be written after that. Even a scholar with a rudimentary knowledge of manuscriptology would hesitate hundred times to place it before 1606 CE. In fact Pashaura Singh has played an academic fraud which needs condemnation by all the scholars irrespective of their position and affiliations. Fabrication and falsification

#### 8. Misrepresentation of Facts:

In Vanjara Pothi there is an apocryphal composition Sahansar Nama attributed to Mohalla 6.Scholars know well that Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru has not authored any composition. It was Prithi Chand, the Mina guru who wrote kachi-bani in the name of Nanak which is found recorded in the Mina works under the authorship of Mahalla 6. Pashaura Singh knowingly attributes it to Guru Hargobind and misleads the scholars, "Interestingly the last composition was added later on with a different pen" (p.53). However a close look at the manuscript reveals that it is in the hands of primary scribe written with the same pen and is in the same shade of ink. Falsification

#### 9. In Conclusion:

There is no politics in opposing Prof. Singh holding a Sikh chair in UCR. It's purely an academic issue that needs an independent and impartial investigation. We are interested in truth. Therefore, we request again for reconsideration and looking into Sikh community's Intellectual Property Rights and academic concerns. There is enough evidence to prove that fabrication and falsification have been an integral part of

a religious 'Draft Theory' on compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. UCR must get opinion on the issue by an Independent Sikh scholar well-versed in interpretation and analysis of old Gurumukhi manuscripts in order to decide the issue of Fabrication and Falsification".

Please note that, recently, Prof. Singh wrote to us for a meeting. We responded that as Sikhs we have high regards for him and his family emphasizing that we carry no ill-will against him or his family. Our issues are purely concerning his academic research and inferences pertaining to Sikh scriptures and suggested a seminar on the issue in presence of discussants qualified as professors retired or presently working in any university with expertise in Gurumukhi script and well-versed in the reading of Sikh Scripture especially the old Sikh manuscripts. Proceedings of which would be published, circulated among the Sikh academicians and the Sikh community. We have not received a reply so far. For details we are attaching the letter dated April 14th 2009.

Sincerely  
Members of Coalition and Watchdog Agency