

*"The author arguably cites credible citations to Dasam Granth proponents and presents evidence doubting the veracity of the currently prevailing edition of Dasam Granth and concludes that the only venerable Granth for the Sikhs is Guru Granth Sahib. In retrospect the "Khalsa Panth" undoubtedly is the only Sikh entity that is collectively authorized to make and accept any change based upon the doctrines enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib acceptable to the Guru Panth as proclaimed by Guru Gobind Singh ji"*



# GURU GRANTH SAHIB

## The only Sikh canon

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On October 6th, 1708 A.D., the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh ji passed on the succession of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib and said "The Guru's spirit will henceforth be in the Granth and the khalsa. Where the Granth is with any five Sikhs representing the Khalsa Panth, there will be Guru". Sikh religion is an integrated faith with unity of thought bestowed upon us by Guru Nanak Dev ji through nine successive Gurus whose teachings are embodied in Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Gobind Singh made the Panth distinctive by introducing the ideology of corporate Guruship while maintaining the principles of 'Shabad Guru'. The perceptive Guruship continues the spiritually transformed role of Gurus in human form to one Guru Granth, Guru Panth and homogeneous Maryada. This unique ideology makes Sikhism a practical and universal modern religion. However, his ideological inception and codification of Guru Granth Sahib as the only Sikh canon has come under scrutiny since the introduction of Dasam Granth. Dasam Granth's origin, authorship and message have been actively debated, for last 200 years, not only by Sikh and non-Sikh scholars, but also theologians, Sikh spiritual leaders and the entire Sikh Panth as well. Amongst the Sikh community, the issues pertaining the Dasam Granth have led to a divide and established two clear points of view: one that of its unconditional acceptance and the other of total rejection. Disagreeing with both, the author presents evidence to initiate a Gurmat-based transparent and independent

inquiry into the context, historical and textual evidence through academic parameters to draw a conclusion acceptable to the whole Guru Panth.

Evidence shows that individual Granths like Chritro Pakhyan, Chaubis Avtar, and various compositions like Bachittar Natak (with fourteen Cantos) were available individually. But, compilation of all these together by insertion of sachi Bani and some other writings of the tenth Guru (Patshahi Dasm) and other similar Chhands, which were popular in Sikh usage in Gutkas or oral remembrance of Sikh families, into one heterogeneous Bir: Desmi Patshahi Da Granth without any sanctification by Guru Gobind Singh Ji seems to have been carried out by individuals with nefarious intent. Literature pertaining to religion or otherwise must be evaluated in reference to History. The mystified appearance of the Bir becomes further cloudy when historical sources attest to the fact that Charles Wilkin wrote in his account: to translate at some future period the Granth he saw, in Hindoove with many Sanskrit words, in 1781 A.D., at Patna "which appeared later". This Bir categorized as MSS D5 Punjabi/Colebrook HT in British library, appeared on the scene in later part of 18th century. Henry Colebrooke, an attorney and administrator in Calcutta procured Dasm Patshahi Granth in Gurumukhi (BL MSS Punjabi 5D) whose title page read as Nanak Panthi Kabhya in Devnagri with notation at the top in Devnagri: Dasm Patshahi Ka Granth. Historical testimony also proves that Henry Colebrooke never came to Punjab to look for this Granth.

Further academic exploration of the 18th century history reveals that

several Indian, Persian and over thirty European sources are devoid of the Dasam Granth. Its existence was first published in early 19th century literature by none other than the British. In 1810 A.D., the title "Dasm Patshahi Da Granth" was first reported by Malcolm in his book "sketch of the Sikhs". By 1895, such Granths, first as thirty-two hand written Birs with variable pattern of compositions, and then later six printed versions of such Birs, surfaced in Sikh institutions in Punjab. The basic dilemma for Sikh Panth is "Which is the original authentic Bir of Dasam Granth compiled and authenticated by the tenth Guru or compiled by Bhai Mani Singh that matches all contents and arrangement as noted in the Bir presently in circulation as Dasam Granth? Where is the original Bir or Granth, does it actually exist?" Sodhak committee who edited and published the current Dasam Granth in 1900-1902 A.D., failed to respond to this basic question.

Historical, textual and academic analysis of various available Dasam Granth Birs or manuscripts, clearly leads to evidentiary and comprehensible truth that there was no Bir or Granth, or manuscript of Dasm Patshahi Da Granth or Bachittar Natak Granth that matched the contents of current Dasam Granth as corrected in 1895-1896 and first published by Sodhak committee in 1897. It has satisfactorily been refuted that Dasam Granth was nonexistent in Punjab prior to late 18th century. Dasm Granth can neither be traced nor attributed to Bhai Mani Singh Ji or Baba Dip Singh Ji, or to Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The presently published Dasam Granth, which has been available since 1897, is a heterogeneous Granth and appears to be created and compiled in the late

18th century under the guidance of Nirmala Atma Ram at Calcutta and promoted by Mahants: Nawal and Dayal Singh, and Granthi Sukha Singh at Patna by transliterating a Hindoove language manuscript "Nanak Panthi Kabya" to Gurmukhi Granth, "Dasm Patshahi Ka Granth" presently located in British Library London cataloged as MSS D5 Punjabi. They inserted into it "Nitnem Banis", "first paragraph of Ardas" and "some other writings of Patshahi Dasm and other similar Saloks" which were popular in Sikh usage (Gutkas or oral remembrance of Sikh families) into this Granth to lend credibility. Interestingly, Henry Colebrooke never came to Punjab to look for this Granth. Patna was an important city of Bengal state under British influence. Therefore, it appears that Henry Colebrooke assisted in creating, compiling and researching this Granth and titling it as "Dasm Patshah Ka Granth" after procuring it from Nirmalas - Atma Ram at Calcutta and the Mahants of Patna where Charles Wilkin went earlier in 1781. Henry Colebrooke then deposited the Granth in British Library where Charles Wilkin was a librarian.

The British in early 1800s enjoyed the fast declining fortunes of Mughals at Delhi. But it was short lived because of the rising strength of the Sikhs in the North. The British were acutely aware that the driving force of the Sikhs energy and strength was through their unflinching and firm belief in Guru Granth Sahib. They intentionally and ingeniously assisted in creating, compiling and promoting "Dasm Patshahi Ka Granth" to gain entry into Punjab, for geographical expansion and to serve missionary needs. Malcolm assisted in the transplantation of this Granth in Gurdwaras in Punjab through the Nirmalas and Shahids in order to create confusion and division amongst the Sikhs and achieve British Political and Missionary Goals. On comparison and in lieu of the afore mentioned findings, one can assert that the currently published Dasam Granth is in fact a copy of the Colebrooke Bir (MSS D5 Punjabi). Also, the present Dasam Granth, corrected and published by the Sodhak Committee with minor variations, is identical to the